

**A place where you can “feel like you are a human”:  
An ethnography of the Pretoria Boeremark**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This ethnography shows how certain aspects of the Pretoria Boeremark can be seen to have symbolic resonances with contemporary South African society. Reflecting both economic and cultural practices since 1994, as well as the ways in which it can be construed as being paradigmatic of Afrikaans whiteness in the post-Apartheid era, and how dissonance within this dominant whiteness can be created in the neo-liberal nature of South African society. Markets are amongst the most ancient forms of commercial exchange as well as, in South Africa today, being at the forefront of a globalised cosmopolitanism. The Pretoria Boeremark straddles this divide, being both a source of household provisioning and a ‘modish’ place to sample culture through food. An exploration of the Boeremark’s history, its location in the changing Pretoria suburb of Silverton and its adoption of “free-market” principles lays the foundation for a descriptive ethnography of the market. This ethnography, constructed from participant observation and interviews with vendors and customers, explores the ways in which commercial and non-commercial exchanges at the market lead to what Carsten’s calls “practices of relatedness” and how these practices serve to construct the market as a, nominally, Afrikaans cultural phenomenon. All these explorations come together to illustrate the Boeremark, based on the entanglement of economic, social and cultural aspects of the market, as a possible microcosm of South African economic and cultural practices.

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# **PLAGIARISM DECLARATION**

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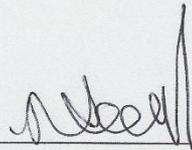
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## **1. LAYING THE TABLE**

The PA system was set up in the corner by the lapa. The market manager, the chairman of the Transvaalse Landbou Unie (TLU; Transvaal Agricultural Union), the dominee (pastor) and the vendors had all gathered and it was time to say goodbye. First up was Johan van Wyk, the manager, who explained the logistics of the new location and, before introducing the dominee, briefly referred to the Bible and how Jesus was often described being in marketplaces. So started the gedenkdiens (memorial service). The dominee read Matthew Chapter 11 in Afrikaans, and a discussion of the verses followed, with the dominee referring to the gathered crowd as “mark mense, julle is Boeremark<sup>1</sup> mense” (market people, you are Boeremark people). He continued by asking: “How often was laughter shared here? How many friends have met here? How many coffees were doctored here? How many times did husbands get frightened when their love took out the credit card? 13 years maybe doesn’t feel that long, but just ask the men who have been married for that long (laughter).”<sup>2</sup> He then asked that everybody bow their heads in prayer and prayed: “We ask in anticipation for Your hand of mercy over what is to come, not because we deserve it, but alone in Jesus name, amen.”<sup>3</sup> “Amen” the crowd chorused back. Here ended the service, and so started the “Great Trek of the Boeremark”.

- Research Diary entry: 1 July 2017

### **1.1 Introduction**

The “Great Trek” was the movement of the Pretoria Boeremark from the grounds of the Pioniersmuseum to another site just under 2 kilometres away and still in Silverton. This would be the second time the Pretoria Boeremark had to move since its inception in 1992 (see Figure 1 below). Originally the market was held on an open field across from the CSIR (Council for Scientific and Industrial Research). Where the bridge over the highway now stands was the parking area for the market and the building of this bridge meant that the Boeremark had to move to the Pioniersmuseum in December 2004, as will be explored more extensively below. This time the circumstances surrounding the move were more complex. The reason for this is that the Pioniersmuseum belongs to the state, but is managed by Ditsong, which is an agency of the Department of Arts and Culture, and is responsible for the management of 8 museums in Gauteng (Ditsong, 2016).

In my interview with Johan van Wyk, the manager of the Boeremark, he explained that Ditsong had put the hiring of the Pioniersmuseum grounds out on a tender and that the market had to make a presentation stating why they should be the preferred bidders (van Wyk, 2017). He was hopeful that they would be granted the tender simply because they “had a history of 12 to 14 years at the market”

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<sup>1</sup> The direct translation from Afrikaans is “farmers’ market”.

<sup>2</sup> My translation from: “Hoeveel keer is hier gelag? Hoeveel vriende het hier ontmoet? Hoeveel koffies is hier gedokter? Hoeveel keer het mans geskrik as liefie die kredietkaart uitgehaal het? 13 jaar voel dalk nie lank nie, maar vra vir mans wat al so lank getroud is [gelag]”, maar dit sou “nie ophou nie, dit gaan net na ‘n ander plek toe.”

<sup>3</sup> My translation from: “Ons vra in afwagting U hand van genade oor wat kom, nie omdat ons dit verdien nie, maar alleen in Jesus naam, Amen”

and the market simply rented the premises “at a time that no one else wants to hire it”, namely from 5 to 10 on Saturday mornings, and no one “wants to have a party at the Boeremark at 5 on a Saturday morning” (van Wyk, 2017). This would be advantageous to Ditsong since the museum would still have the opportunity to rent the premises out again for other functions, allowing them to “make double the money on one day” (van Wyk, 2017).

Having a meeting after the market was an unusual occurrence so on the morning of 15 April, all the vendors were curious as they gathered together. At this meeting, an emotional Johan announced that Ditsong had terminated the Boeremark’s contract for the hiring of the premises with one month’s (or 4 markets’) notice.<sup>4</sup> Throwing, as two vendors put it to me, “a very stable market that’s been here for 20 years into absolute chaos”, and creating “a lot of uncertainty” about what would happen to the market (Hadley and Hobson, 2017). It also aroused great consternation amongst all the vendors in attendance, with some comments including “we must get away from the state”; “this is ANC politics, that’s the problem”<sup>5</sup> and “I hope they solve this issue because a lot of us rely on this market.” Johan continued by stating that the market management had already sent a lawyer’s letter to Ditsong and that management was “exploring all options” as well as using the example of Hellen Zille “being misunderstood” to warn people against using social media.<sup>6</sup>

The next Saturday there was another meeting after the market had closed for the day. Johan explained that the market management had held a meeting with Ditsong, in which they had stated that they were “open to bargaining”, although the meeting had included some “hard words” namely: “You aren’t going to move us from here in three weeks”.<sup>7</sup> As a result, Ditsong agreed to provide the market with a stay of execution until 8 July.

He continued by saying that Ditsong had scrapped the previous tender (which he insisted to me he was sure the market had won) and had initiated a new tender process for the market, and that he would be making a presentation soon to bid for the tender to be able to hire the premises. He finished off by thanking people for the prayers, noting that “if you ever had doubts about the power of prayer, today I quiet them.” He further stated that “the market will move, whether it’s in some months, or 5

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<sup>4</sup> Thus, initially until 6 May.

<sup>5</sup> My translation from “Ons moet wegkom van die staat af” and “hierdie is ANC politiek, dis die probleem.”

<sup>6</sup> This was soon after the Premier of the Western Cape province had caused an uproar by posting on Twitter that the consequences of colonialism were “not only negative”.

<sup>7</sup> My translation from “Harde woorde” and “Julle gaan ons nie in drie weke hier skuif nie”.

years or ten years, I don't know.”<sup>8</sup> He also warned the vendors that “there are people here amongst us who want to take our people away”, but insisted that he knew that “our people are loyal.”<sup>9</sup>

The market continued as normally as possible for the next couple of weeks, with Johan reassuring the worried vendors that everything would be okay. He told me privately that they had made a presentation to Ditsong on 18 May, with a focus on “marketing the museum”, the market’s prestige as “the second largest weekly event in the city, according to the city council”, and the “stunning example of multiculturalism” presented by visitors to the market. They were now waiting for the announcement of the winner of the tender, which was supposed to happen before the end of the market’s hiring of the venue.

In the end, the market’s lawyers were informed by Ditsong’s lawyers that they had not been awarded the tender; interestingly, at the time of writing, no official outcome to the tender process had yet been announced. So the planning for the Boeremark’s second “Great Trek” began in earnest.<sup>10</sup> This type of episode is not, however, exceptional in terms of markets. In fact, marketplaces moving and travelling are as old as markets themselves.

In this mini-dissertation, I argue that the Pretoria Boeremark can be viewed as a microcosm of South African economic and cultural practices based on the entanglement of economic, social and cultural aspects of the market. Specifically, I show how certain aspects of the Boeremark seem to have symbolic resonance with contemporary South African economic and cultural practices. Specifically, I show how the Boeremark exemplifies post-Apartheid economic practices of the South African state more broadly, as well as the ways in which it can be construed as being paradigmatic of Afrikaans whiteness in the post-Apartheid era, and how dissonance within this dominant whiteness can be created in the neo-liberal nature of South African society. To do this, I must first provide some historical context.

## 1.2 A Brief History of Markets

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<sup>8</sup> My translation from: “As julle ooit getwyfel het oor die krag van gebed besweer ek dit vandag.” and “Die mark gaan skuif, of dit binnekort of oor 5 of tien jaar is weet ek nie.”

<sup>9</sup> My translation from: “Mense hier onder ons wat ons mense wil wegvat” and “ons mense is lojaal.”

<sup>10</sup> See the pamphlet: Appendix A

Markets<sup>11</sup> and marketplaces have been around at least as long as towns and cities have existed. The development of towns, cities, and even states and empires, are intimately linked to the development of markets. As Berdan (1989) writes, “markets and marketplaces were a usual part of the landscape of early states and empires” and there is evidence to suggest that “market networks”, that is the process of “institutionalized transactions of commodities... channelled from an area of high supply to one of high demand”, existed in Mesopotamia as early as 4 000 BCE. This was because the development of agriculture allowed for surpluses in food production, which allowed a section of the population of early states free to “pursue non-agricultural specializations such as religious offices, political positions, craft production” and other roles which did not require agricultural labour. Yet these non-agriculturalists needed food for subsistence, and the agriculturalists needed tools, cloth and crafts, and thus, marketplaces came into existence to assist the “movement of goods from producers to consumers” (Berdan, 1989).

By the start of the Common Era, the marketplace as we think of it today - a bustling outdoor space filled with sounds, smells and products - had already come into existence with early states possessing “a range of small-, medium-, and large-scale marketplaces”, allowing for the “regular provisioning of all households, from small cottages to elegant palaces” (Berdan, 1989). There also exists evidence from ancient Greco-Roman society of travelling markets and fairs which were often held in temple precincts (Esler, 2000). These developments in Europe continued after the fall of the Roman Empire, as Black (2012) writes in her study of the Torinese market of Porta Palazzo, where “the dangerous nature of selling goods in public spaces” meant that most trading “took place inside monasteries and on church property or within the walled confines of castles, where vendors paid for a space to sell their goods”. Similarly, at the Pretoria Boeremark and other contemporary markets, vendors pay a fee for stall space and the ability to sell their goods.

The development of markets did not just happen in Europe, but across the world, including the Americas, Asia and Africa. It could even be argued that the beginning of colonialism in South Africa was due to markets and not just in the sense of Europe seeking out new markets. The original Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie; VOC) settlement was designed as a refuelling station for ships on their way to the East and some of the first settlers were ex-VOC

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<sup>11</sup> A “‘market’ [refers to] the social institution of exchanges where prices or exchange equivalencies exist. ‘Marketplace’ refers to these interactions in a customary time and place...A market can exist without being localized in a marketplace, but it is hard to imagine a marketplace without some sort of institutions governing exchanges” (Plattner, 1989). I will be using the terms market, *mark* in Afrikaans, and marketplace interchangeably to refer to what Plattner terms a marketplace.

employees (Giliomee, 2004). This happened as early as 1657, five years after the establishment of the colony, when the commander Jan van Riebeeck allowed some Company employees to settle at the Cape. They were given a plot of land on which to grow vegetables and fruits and raise livestock, which they were then compelled to sell to VOC ships stopping over at the Cape at prices determined by the Company (Giliomee, 2004).

Not long afterwards, close to the Company's Garden, Greenmarket Square was established. This square has been a market ever since. Although it used to sell fruits and vegetables, as well as being a slave market, it today mostly caters to tourists with “a blend of cross-continental merchandise, combining the many traditions of Africa, from the Masai to the Xhosa, the Zulu to the Bade tribe from the West African country of Senegal”, as well as “glassware, jewellery, clothing, footwear, music CD's, sunglasses and paintings” (Greenmarket Square, 2016).

When Pretoria was first laid out in 1857, the area now known as Church Square was originally called “Market Square” and was the “commercial and social core” of the city where the new city's inhabitants “mingled, did business and worshipped” (Pienaar, 2006). This seemed to be a pattern whenever settlers established new towns, as Rosenberg (2012) writes of Durban: “In 1840 the Boer Volksraad commissioned the drawing up of a town plan. The plan... followed a tradition of South African town plans with a grid layout and a focus upon a central market square”. Callinicos (1987) echoes this when she writes of the early years on the Rand: “out of the veld emerged mine shafts, tents, shacks and rough tracks. Then came the market square, noisy with traders, farmers, peddlers and transport riders”. Johannesburg had its very own market and market square by 1893 (Joburg Market, 2016). By the end of the nineteenth century, there were four markets in Durban alone, as Vahed (1999) describes: “these were the City Market in Warwick Avenue where all selling was done by whites, a Native Meat Market in Victoria Street for African traders, an enclosed Indian Market in Victoria Street comprising stalls where groceries, cakes, baskets, flowers, curios, and other items could be bought in addition to fruits and vegetables, and, finally, a street market in Victoria Street which was known as the 'Early Morning' or 'Squatters' Market which specialised in the sale of fruits and vegetables”. These markets and similar ones in towns and cities across South Africa would, however, decline and disappear fairly soon.

By the late nineteenth century, markets in the USA started to decline, and much the same thing happened in South Africa, albeit slightly later on. The reasons for this are complex combinations of increased urbanisation and its accompanying urban sprawl, which moved farmers further away from

consumers; improvements in refrigeration, processing and transportation systems, which allowed food to be transported greater distances before having to reach consumers; as well as “innovations in transportation, insecticides, herbicides, fertilizers, preservatives, and mechanization”, that “allowed for land specialization that favoured large farms” (Robinson & Hartenfeld, 2007), leading to greater industrialisation of farming and the emergence of “agribusiness”.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the way in which the inhabitants of cities and towns had provisioned themselves with the necessities of life for the greater part of history started to disappear in the twentieth century when the “food function of such marketplaces was replaced by chain stores, and later by supermarkets” and the other goods obtainable from markets were now to be found in “central shopping districts” and eventually in “shopping malls” (Plattner, 1989).

Plattner (1989), by contrasting malls with the marketplaces of developing states, comes to the conclusion that the shopping mall is the “marketplace of the wealthy industrialized societies” and South Africa, despite being only moderately developed and wealthy has certainly embraced malls. In fact, the treasury (Economic Analysis Unit, 2012) states that South Africa's malls “offer a full variety of formats that are similar to those in the United States”. In 2012, there were over 600 shopping centres in Gauteng alone (Economic Analysis Unit, 2012). However, these make up only one side of South Africa's “dualism” in national food markets, with the other side being a “well-organized informal food marketing system” (Chikazunga et al., 2007). This system has recently been shrinking with the expansion of retail chains into “non-traditional areas” like townships and “former homelands” and in so doing “replacing traditional markets such as informal wet markets and green grocers” (Chikazunga et al., 2007).

Thus, the domination of shopping centres and the meteoric growth of supermarkets would seem to have consigned the venerable marketplace to relic status, as just one more discarded object on progress's super highway. This is, despite appearances, not what has happened at all, as recently there has been a resurgence of markets. In the USA, this started in the 1970s with the passage of the “Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976” which gave funds and support to farmers to directly market their goods to consumers; this led to an explosion of markets from about 300 in 1971 to over 3 000 in 2001 (Brown, 2002). In South Africa, the trend started later and in different circumstances. Apart from a handful of markets, like the Bryanston organic market (which started in

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<sup>12</sup> Refers to “an industry engaged in the producing operations of a farm, the manufacture and distribution of farm equipment and supplies, and the processing, storage, and distribution of farm commodities” (Merriam-Webster.com, [a], 2017).

1976), the Irene village market (1989), the Pretoria Boeremark (1992), and the Wild Oats Market in Sedgefield (1999), the trend appears to have started in 2006 with the opening of the Neighbourgoods Market by two entrepreneurs in Woodstock, Cape Town, as an “independent initiative” to “revive and reinvent the Public Market as a civic institution” (Neighbourgoods Market, 2006).

The opening of Neighbourgoods helped “club-hopping Capetonians [realise] that they could dance all night then nurse their hangovers the next morning with a cup of free-trade organic coffee and a honey-cured bacon and free-range egg sarmie in a shabby chic Victorian warehouse” (Gray, 2011). This led to the view that “being conscious of where your vegetables came from” was now “cool”, along with “knowing what set handmade, wood-fired ciabattas apart from store-bought loaves”, and even “how to discern between hand-pulled fior di latte and those tennis ball-like globules passing for mozzarella in supermarkets” (Gray, 2011). Since then, there has been an explosion in markets leading to them becoming a “Saturday-morning social institution in cities across the country”, rather than what they used to be: namely, a “means for farmers to offload the glut of their fresh produce to villagers” (Gray, 2011).

There are currently 24 markets happening either every weekend or once or twice a month in Gauteng with the number rising to 67 nationally (Market Scoop, 2016). Most conform to the paradigm of discernment about cheese, knowing the differences between artisanal and mass-produced bread, and stock “trendy foods” like kale or quinoa (Error, 2016). Some combine food stalls with hand-made crafts and live music and beer tents. They are not the provisioning markets of the past; rather, they are hip and trendy places to spend a Saturday or Sunday morning.

All this history brings me back around to the Pretoria Boeremark, which stands between these two different conceptions of what a market is. On the one hand, it has some specialised “artisanal” goods like macaroons and crepes, and even some “trendy foods” like kale, which are more generally found at the new breed of markets targeted at more “discerning” consumers. While on the other hand, it stocks goods for general household provisioning, as markets have done for thousands of years.

### **1.3 Chapter Outline**

Despite markets’ ancient antecedents, research regarding these modern incarnations is meagre, with most literature on periodic markets, such as the Pretoria Boeremark, still “devoted largely to non-western contexts and economic analyses” (McGrath, Sherry, & Heisley, 1993). So much so that a 2002 inventory and review of research on farmers’ markets concluded that “the literature on farmers’

markets is found to be scant, leaving ample room for new and exciting explorations of this venerable institution” (Brown, 2002).

Since there are still a relatively small number of studies, mostly in the United States and none in South Africa, there are a limited number of sources that I could rely on. Moreover, while my research incorporates aspects of economic anthropology, it is broader than this. This is because the study of economic life, that is the study of the “activities through which people produce, circulate and consume things, the ways that people and societies secure their subsistence or provision themselves” (Carrier, 2012) in relation to markets, only comprises a “sub-set of economic life” and thus, it needs to be set, like “other forms of circulation, or production or consumption” within “larger social and cultural frames”, so that it renders visible the ways in which markets “affect and are affected by other areas of life” (Carrier, 2012).

Consequently, I have first laid out some background regarding the drama of the Boeremark’s “Great Trek”, as well as the history of markets more generally. This is followed by my chapter outline, methods and ethics. The next part of the first chapter contextualises the location of the three different Boeremark sites (namely, Persequor Park, the Pioniersmuseum and the new Krige Street location) within the historical background of the Pretoria suburb of Silverton. In the process I render visible the way in which the market has been shaped by its “material particularities of place” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). I then briefly sketch the history of the Boeremark with special emphasis on its transition to a “free-market” system. This is followed by a brief exploration of the South African economy’s transition from the 1980s.

The second chapter examines the economics of the market in terms of how, as Robinson & Hartenfeld (2007) put it, “buyer and seller meet...to make a trade”. The Pretoria Boeremark is “primarily” an economic institution, and thus, has to be analysed with reference to this. Although as Harvard Professor of Anthropology, Theodore Bestor suggests in his influential work *Tsukiji: the fish market at the center of the world* (2004), despite the “impelling hegemony of economic principles in contemporary life” which work to position markets, in the broad sense, as “culturally normal” and thus, “outside the expected scope of social and cultural analysis”, markets are nonetheless “cultural and social”. This is because firstly, “economic action is a form of social action”; secondly, “economic action takes place in social contexts”; and finally, “economic institutions are socially constructed”, which leads to the conclusion that “economic activity is firmly embedded in wider structures of social life” (Bestor, 2004). Therefore, economic activity is

“embedded in ongoing networks of personal relationships rather than being carried out by atomized actors” (Bestor, 2004). In other words, the economic aspects of markets are “inseparable from the social organization of the marketplace” (Bestor, 2004).

These observations are the basis for the third chapter, which examines the networks of personal relationships, which are created by the economic (and non-economic) exchanges that take place at the market, and how these function in terms of what Janet Carsten (2000) labels “practices of relatedness”. To put it slightly differently, this chapter delves into the ways in which the meeting of buyer and seller - the processes of economic exchange - illuminate “the ways in which people create similarity or difference between themselves and others” (Carsten, 2004).

Subsequently, the fourth chapter investigates the ways in which the forms of exchange that take place at the Boeremark and the “social organization” created by them impact the cultural landscape of the market. Culture is an animating force for the Boeremark and in markets more generally. As Rachel Black writes in *Porta Palazzo: the anthropology of an Italian market* (2012), by shopping in markets in Turin, she learned about Piedmontese<sup>13</sup> culture: the “food, the dialect, etiquette, and mannerisms.” She goes on to describe how the inhabitants of Turin, the “Torinese”, see the market as the “epitome of an open-air market and central to Piedmontese culture” (Black, 2012). Similarly, Bestor (2004) describes how Japanese food culture, by which he means not just the “abstract culinary principles of cuisine and the practices, both culinary and social, of cooking and eating”, but also the “myriad practical circumstances of the production and distribution of foodstuffs in social, political, historical, environmental, and at times global contexts”, forms the “market’s broad contours”. Therefore, since a market is “rooted” not merely in the landscapes and seasons, but also in the “social orders”, the “foodways”, and the “ethnic groups” of “its locale”, it can “provide particularly rich insights into how those elements intersect for a particular community” (Robinson & Hartenfeld, 2007). The “creation and ongoing functioning of a marketplace” meshes together “institutional structures, and cultural meanings” (Bestor, 2004). These cultural meanings are both imposed by society and created from within by forms of exchange and relationships of affect.

The final chapter places these different phenomena into a “wider ethnographic context”, which views the Pretoria Boeremark as a “specific location and social framework” where the exchanges are mediated by “cultural activity and political expression, nodes in flows of information, landmarks of

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<sup>13</sup> This refers to Piedmont which is a region of Italy bordering France and Switzerland, and of which Turin is the capital. (Merriam-Webster.com, [b], 2017).

historical and ritual significance”, and modes of “civic participation where diverse social, economic, ethnic, and cultural groups combine, collide, cooperate, collude, compete, and clash” (Smelser and Baltes, 2001). Or, as I put it, it takes the entanglement of the economic, the social and the cultural aspects of the market and shows how the Pretoria Boeremark can be viewed as a microcosm of South African economic and cultural practices. Specifically, this chapter shows how the Boeremark exemplifies post-Apartheid economic practices of the South African state more broadly, as well as showing how it is paradigmatic of Afrikaans whiteness in the post-Apartheid era, and how this specific manifestation of whiteness is open to a certain level of dissonance (or “bonnet slippage”) both at the market and in the broader arena of a neo-liberal South African society.

#### **1.4 Methods**

The methods employed consisted of fieldwork, specifically participant-observation as well as semi-structured interviews.

Hallinan et al. (2007) write that “fieldwork provides data about the lives of specific people and allows us to see alternative realities which can modify our culture-bound theories of human behaviour” (Hallinan et al., 2007). They advocate that ethnographic-based fieldwork offers “the most accessible means of getting to the heart of the questions about why and how groups of people do what they do in particular social contexts and settings”, while at the same time employing “descriptive methods”, which allow “rich data to be collected” (Hallinan et al., 2007). Participant-observation is one way in which to do this type of fieldwork and is defined as a “research method in which one learns about a group's beliefs and behaviors through social participation and personal observation within the community, as well as interviews and discussion with individual members of the group over an extended stay in the community” (Haviland et al., 2007).

Participant observation is the principal way in which I conducted my research about the Pretoria Boeremark. My previous studies were in philosophy and cultural studies, so ethnography and fieldwork were completely new to me. Thus, I was entered into what Black (2012) calls the “sink-or-swim school of ethnography”. At first, I wanted to make sure I “did it right” by reading endless textbooks and fieldwork manuals. This was until my supervisor told me that I needed to find a way that worked for me and that I should relax and just try to get to know the market and the people who make it up. Following his advice, I stopped trying to write field notes about every single person who walked past me. I also spent less time running around trying to meet all the vendors and spent more

time drinking coffee and browsing the various stalls, letting the process happen slowly and over time.

Thus, similarly to Black's (2012) fieldwork at the Porta Palazzo, my choice of interviewees was "somewhat organic", since these were "the people I got to know best as the outcome of a snowball approach to finding participants". However, I also took certain factors like race, gender and duration of experience at the market into consideration. This led to semi-structured interviews with the manager of the market, Johan van Wyk, as well as with 6 vendors and 6 visitors or customers of the Boeremark.<sup>14</sup> The manner in which I conducted my participant-observation and my interviews was guided by the ethical guidelines described below.

### **1.5 Ethics**

The American Anthropological Association (AAA) emphasises the protection of all research participants. Ethics specifically demands that the search for knowledge should not violate people's rights to dignity, privacy, and protection from harm.

The AAA's Code of Ethics (1998) states that researchers should investigate in what ways they could possibly cause harm to their research participants and then undertake all the necessary steps possible to prevent it. The AAA maintains that research should be transparent about the intentions, methods, and the possible after-effects of research findings. This means researchers should obtain informed consent from prospective participants. There were certain cases where proper informed consent was difficult, if not impossible to obtain. For example, when I was at the market, it proved problematic to get a vendor, or fellow customer, who started talking to me to first sign a release form before I continued the conversation. In these situations, I exercised what is termed "dynamic informed consent", which entailed obtaining consent in the midst of the research process, or continually renegotiating consent as the process unfolded. In my example, I told the person that I was there engaging in research, and that what they said might be used in my project. Since the conversations were in most cases either unstructured or open-ended, the process of obtaining consent was necessarily flexible and on-going.

The AAA also maintains that researchers should not fabricate or make up evidence. Additionally, the AAA maintains that researchers should share research results with their participants, and more so if such results are to be published.

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<sup>14</sup> A list of which can be found in appendix B.

These were the ethical guidelines I followed during the course of my research. Additionally, I have created pseudonyms for all of my informants and interview subjects as an additional measure to protect their privacy. This is with the exception of the manager, Johan van Wyk, since he is often quoted in the press and as such can be considered to be a public figure. He also gave me permission to use his real name.

### **1.6 The History of Silverton**

The Pretoria neighbourhood of Silverton has been the home of the Pretoria Boeremark since its inception. The new 670 Krige Street location and the Pioniersmuseum grounds are in the heart of Silverton, while the original Persequor Park location is just on the edge of the neighbourhood. This section examines how Silverton came to be and how as Black (2012), describing Porta Palazzo writes: “Yesterday’s milk scandals speak to today’s ‘bird flu’ paranoia. The past brings me closer to what I see now as common themes emerge, and I begin to see the continuity and change of this market over time”. Although the case is somewhat different with the Boeremark, since it only started in 1992, it still evidences some continuity with the history of its home neighbourhood.

The area that composes Silverton today emerges in historical records for the first time in 1858, when the farm “Hartebeespoort #308” was registered in the name of Dawid Alwyn Botha. On his farm, Botha built a simple grass-roofed house, which would later become the Pioniersmuseum. A section of this farm was sold a couple of years later to a German immigrant by the name of H.H. Mundt. Mundt had heard about gold being discovered in Pilgrim’s Rest and Lydenburg, and figured that a farm on the main road to the east would be a profitable investment. Soon after Mundt bought the farm, gold was discovered in Barberton, and traffic eastwards increased. In 1879 a mail coach service started and Mundt had the contract to supply fresh horses and built stables to this end. Mundt also built a series of rooms to provide overnight accommodation to people travelling to the gold fields, since his farm was “approximately a day’s travel from Pretoria” and thus, “a comfortable place to overnight” (Kritzinger, 1980). Mundt also had “new ideas about farming”, which he “applied speedily” and for this purpose “pig, turkey, duck and chicken cages were built behind the farmhouse. In addition, a herb garden, fruit trees and vegetable gardens were laid out from where “loads” of produce were sold at the Pretoria market (Kritzinger, 1980), at that time in the whole block between Pretorius, Helen Joseph, Sisulu and Lillian Ngoyi streets, where the state theatre stands today, and in the heart of downtown Pretoria. The location of Silverton along the main road (and later the railway to the east) is interesting since, according to Black (2012), in Europe “markets

can often be found at historical crossroads and along important trade and transportation routes”. Yet, in contrast to this, here it was the crossroads that provided produce to the market from its inception.

Towards the end of the 19th century, silver was discovered on a portion of Mundt’s farm. A company, the Silverton Mining Co. was established to exploit these reserves, and paid Mundt handsomely for the privilege, buying a north-eastern portion of the farm for ten thousand pounds; Mundt had bought the whole farm for only 1 400 pounds. The mining, however, came to nought and the company decided to invest its money in property development instead. In 1890 the piece of the farm they had bought was divided into 398 plots, a park and a square, and it was incorporated as “Silverton Township”. The town of Silverton was for a long while scarcely populated: one early inhabitant recalled that in 1905, there were only 10 families living there. These were mostly small farmers, a hotel boss and a man who ran a shop. Life was very basic as it was all “still veld” (Kritzinger, 1980) and almost every family had a “few cows, chickens, geese and ducks”, while water was “pulled out of wells” (Kritzinger, 1980). Development started to happen later though. In 1915 a leather tannery opened,<sup>15</sup> and in 1918 the first station master was appointed, although the train tracks had already been built during the last days of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (Kritzinger, 1980). A “Mrs Schuch” provided the first form of education on the porch of her house. Then in 1915 a “wood and zinc school building” was erected, but was eventually replaced with brick building in 1926.

By 1929, however, Silverton was still fairly sparsely populated with “houses with the appearance of agricultural plots”. This was because the plots were in general several hectares large. During the depression era, Silverton was filled with “poor whites”, and some residents of the area even said that “the Silverton of the thirties was synonymous with poverty” (Kritzinger, 1980). Jobs were primarily short-term piecework and transportation methods consisted of donkeys and the train, while all trade was in the “hands of Indians”. There were still a few houses where each resident had to provide their own resources, like water and sanitation. The situation was so bad that there “were even whites” who were living in shacks with bag walls. In 1935 a “health committee” was established to administrate the “health of the town”, including things like “barricades to control wandering livestock”, the establishment of a slaughterhouse as well as “building plans”, and “health services”. The (white)

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<sup>15</sup> This provides another contrast with Porta Palazzo, since “In growing cities in Europe, it was common to find illicit activities (illegal trade, prostitution) and undesirable trades (tanning and animal slaughter) at the fringes of urban settlements” (Black, 2012), which was often where you would also find markets.

population of Silverton at that point was a thousand, and they were not happy with having to submit to a local authority (Kritzinger, 1980).

The situation did not get better soon, as the town's development stopped during the second world war. (Kritzinger, 1980). Shortly after the war, the South African railways started construction of the "largest train mechanical facility in the Southern Hemisphere", leading to Silverton being referred to as the "railway camp" (Kritzinger, 1980). The facility provided jobs, but the town itself was still "scantly populated" with many "empty plots, cows and goats walking around, wells and boreholes" (Kritzinger, 1980). In 1942, after being represented by an appointed committee for seven years, the residents agitated for an elected administration. In 1942 the taxpayers of Silverton were able to vote for a town council composed of six members. The council made it a policy to "protect the poor man", and as such council tax was very low.<sup>16</sup> It seems to have worked excellently, as in the period from the establishment of the council in 1942 until 1958, the (white) population grew from 1 200 in 1942, to 1 500 in 1946, to 4 000 in 1958. This population growth is also exhibited in the account of life in Silverton of a Mr Thusi Engelbrecht, who moved to Silverton as a teacher for "non-whites" in 1944. In addition to his teaching job, he also had a herd of 30 Jersey cows from which he delivered bottled milk to houses in the neighbourhood. By 1955, however, with "more and more houses appearing which led to "pasture becoming less and less available", he had to stop the dairy, but consequently also did not have to "get up at four in the morning anymore" (Kritzinger, 1980). This is a time which today's Boeremark vendors would think of as "sleeping in", since they usually arrive at the market by 3a.m.

Two other important events happened in the 1950s. First was the proclamation of the "black township" of Mamelodi, slightly north-east of Silverton, in 1953, (SA History Online, 2011), with 60 houses being built and allocated by July of that year, and the population growing to 150 000 by 1980 (Kritzinger, 1980). The second was the proclamation of a "coloured township" on a section of the farm "Eersterust", which became the name of the township in 1958. Eersterust was located to the west of Mamelodi, almost directly north of Silverton. In 1962 the first housing scheme was completed and by 1980 "all the coloureds of Pretoria" who had previously been "living in different areas of Pretoria" were moved to this location, with the population being around 17 000 in 1980 (Kritzinger, 1980). The establishment of these "townships" meant that there was an easily available

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<sup>16</sup> For example: the Bosman flats' tax in Silverton was 23 pounds per year, the same flats' tax in Pretoria would have been 1 200 pounds per year (Kritzinger, 1980).

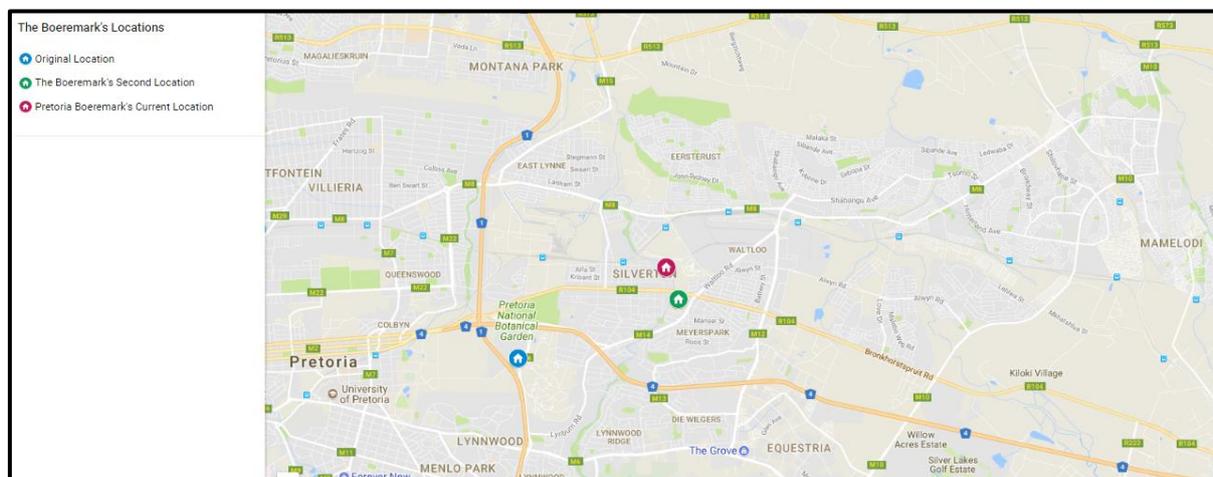
workforce for the industrial area of Waltloo (which was established in the area between Mamelodi, Eersterust and Silverton around the same time), and the growing “industrial enterprises” of Silverton.

In 1958 the town council of Silverton upgraded to a municipality as Silverton became a fully-fledged town, although this was short-lived as in 1964 Silverton was incorporated into “Greater Pretoria”, by which time Silverton and Waltloo had become “particularly sought-after areas for the establishment of industries of all kinds”, no doubt because of their proximity to Mamelodi and Eersterust. Some of the industries in these areas were Siemens, Barlows, “Norristan: Silverton Machine and Motor-works”, “Vanstone: Pretoria Electroplating Works”, “Pretoria Mat and Rubber”, the original Tannery from 1915 and other unnamed enterprises, to such an extent that the “industrial areas of Silverton” were “basically full” (Kritzinger, 1980).

All these developments accumulated to give Silverton its character as a white working-class suburb, but also as a frontier between Mamelodi, Eersterust and the middle-class suburbs of Pretoria East like Colbyn, Queenswood and Lynnwood. Yet at the end of Apartheid, the inhabitants of Silverton (like the working classes of Pretoria West that Sharp (2015) writes about in *Market, Race and Nation*) “lost most of the advantages that accrued to them in consequence of being classified as white”, including “preferential employment” which meant that they were suddenly competing with black jobseekers and living next to black residents in their formerly segregated neighbourhoods (Sharp, 2015).

The original farmhouse, which was still owned by the Mundt family, stood in Silverton throughout its development. However, it was mainly used as a storeroom since the Mundts had moved in to a Victorian house that had been constructed next to the thatched house in 1900. In 1961 the house and its surrounds were donated to the town of Silverton by the daughter-in-law of H.H Mundt. In 1972 the Pretoria City Council donated the property to the National Cultural and Open-Air History Museum (Kritzinger, 1980), which eventually became part of Ditsong and who still own it today. The house and its 3 hectare surrounds were restored and unveiled as the Pioniersmuseum by the state president in 1975. On Saturday, 7 April in 1979, the Pioniersmuseum held a fair dedicated to “antique horse carts” and “boeresports” (traditional folk games). They also sold coffee and tea, “pap en sous” (maize porridge and gravy), “kerrie” (curry) and rice, “vetkoek” (fried dough bread), “pannekoek” (pancakes), ginger beer, meat and “boerewors” (sausage) - all products that you could buy on a Saturday in the same place almost 40 years later at the Pretoria Boeremark.

The property in 670 Krige Street to which the Boeremark “trekked” in July 2017 is a 5-hectare piece of land on the Morelettaspruit which was originally bought in 1890 by a “oom” Pieter van Wyk, no relation of the Boeremark's manager, and which was in 1960 still producing “fresh vegetables” for Silverton’s residents. As recently as 5 years ago, it was still being used to grow Lucerne (alfalfa) and it is still zoned as an agricultural property today (Tshwane, 2017). Thus, despite the Boeremark having moved twice since its inception, it has in a way returned to its roots by being on this



particular piece of land. It is situated in a working-class suburb that would “become far more desegregated since the end of Apartheid than middle-class residential areas elsewhere in the city” (Sharp, 2015). This would lead to implications for the Boeremark in terms of the demographics of its clientele and its cultural expression.

Figure 1.

### 1.7 History of the Pretoria Boeremark

The history of the Pretoria Boeremark is in some ways unlike that of Porta Palazzo or Tsukiji or even the Bloomington Farmers’ market, since it only began in 1992, unlike the centuries or decades of the other markets. Nevertheless, like those other markets, it is a history of community, of shared joys and sorrows, of moving and staying put. Below I chronicle the Pretoria Boeremark since its inception.

The Pretoria Boeremark was started by the Transvaalse Landbou Unie (Transvaal Agricultural Union, TLU/TAU)<sup>17</sup> in conjunction with an entrepreneur in 1992, as an outlet for small farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers (van Wyk, 2017). This was the official line, although the

<sup>17</sup> A commercial farmers’ union originally established in 1897, and which today works to organise its members “in a united front in the interests of commercial agriculture as a profession, and the preservation of cultural lifestyles” (TLU, 2017).

“economic pressures” that were encountered by the “Afrikaans farming sector” because of “state deregulation” surely played a role (Davies, 2009). This process is examined in more detail below.

Initially, it was planned for there to be 2 markets, one opposite the CSIR where the bridge across the highway now stands at Persequor Park, and one at the Pioniersmuseum (which was later to be the market’s premises for over 13 years). It quickly became clear, however, that they had to focus “their attention and energy” (van Wyk, 2017) on one area, and since the market at the CSIR was more widely advertised and more people went there, the TLU and market management decide to focus on that one. The Pretoria Boeremark was first held on 10 October 1992, and it quickly became a roaring success, so much so that in 1993 the TLU decided to buy out the shares of the entrepreneur they had started the market with and so the market came to be, as it still is today, wholly owned by the TLU.

The Boeremark is operated as a “private entity within the TLU”: it has a directorship of 4 people, a manager and 4 administrators that help with the day-to-day running of the market. Currently the market manager is Johan van Wyk, who has been in charge of the Boeremark for over 20 years. In 2001, the government decided to create the “Blue IQ” initiative which “would create infrastructure and support and stimulate small businesses” (van Wyk, 2017). One of the initiative’s projects was the construction of an innovation hub opposite the CSIR and across the N1 highway in 2003/2004. For ease of access, there had to be a bridge built over the highway, and that bridge seized a large part of the market’s car park. The TLU had bought the land on a deferred basis, and in the end, they decided to sell the land back, because they did not want to spend money in developing it further and because it would be expropriated in due course anyway. The TLU decided that the market had to be moved, and it had to happen within a week. So, at the end of December 2004, the market finished up at the original property, and the next Saturday the market took place at the Pioniersmuseum as if nothing had happened.

Initially the Boeremark agreed with Ditsong, or the Northern Flagship Institute as it was known at that time, to a contract for the hiring of the Pioniersmuseum property for a period of 5 years. After that they signed a second contract for another 5 years, and since then they had been paying a steadily increasing rent without a contract, until the events relayed in the opening section took place. This meant that the Boeremark had to move once again.

The approximately 13 years that the Pretoria Boeremark spent at the museum grounds came to shape it immensely. The market expanded dramatically, from around 100 stalls when it got there to over

243 when the “Great Trek” took place in July 2017. Another massive change took place shortly after the market had moved to the museum grounds: in about 2005, a decision was made that shows “the massive implications” that a “management policy decision” can have on “a market, on a business and on the economy” (van Wyk, 2017). This decision was to move the Boeremark from a sheltered, protected economic model to a “free-market” system (van Wyk, 2017).

Since its inception the Boeremark had adhered to a system where certain vendors had the monopoly on certain categories of products. For example, there were two vendors who were allowed to sell food and coffee, and beyond that no vendors were allowed to sell the same kind of products. So initially there were vendors who drove from far to come and sell their food and their coffee and there was seating for 15 people, which was more than enough to accommodate everyone who drank coffee (van Wyk, 2017). Johan, on the other hand, was a strong proponent of adopting a free-market system at the market. This was informed by his involvement in the dissolution of the various agricultural control boards. These control boards were mostly introduced in the post-war period for a host of key commodities such as maize, wheat, meat and sugar, although they later covered a whole host of other produce as well, like bananas, soft fruits, apples etc. (Liebenberg, 2013).

The main purpose of these agricultural control boards was to improve “the domestic marketing of their produce” and to this end, each had “its own marketing scheme”; they also tended to provide a “single channel market” whereby the farmers “could only sell through the control board which then served as the only seller from that point on” (Liebenberg, 2013). The aim of these boards was to “improve price stability either through the control of price, or the control of the supply,” and they were extremely successful in these aims: by 1979, the 23 different control boards “marketed four fifths of the value of agricultural production” (Liebenberg, 2013). In the 1980s, however, a “revision of these support mechanisms” started taking place as part of “a larger process of deregulation” (Liebenberg, 2013).

Johan’s argument was that with these single channel systems, the farmer did not care about his produce since once it was packed and transported, it became the property of the board. In his experience, once the sectors had been privatised, it became a “much livelier industry” where the farmers were now involved in marketing and selling their produce. His proposals for implementing a free-market system at the market were initially met with “lots of opposition” from members of the board, but he now feels justified since “it worked” (van Wyk, 2017).

The shift to a free-market system took a while, since Johan wanted to make sure that he honoured the historical agreements with the various vendors, but when the one “oubaas” (a term of endearment for an old man) passed away and some other vendors moved into an old age home, the “market moved completely onto a free-market footing” (van Wyk, 2017). This led to an explosion in the number and type of vendors, so where there was one coffee stand 14 years ago, today there are 12. Now customers “can buy coffee in a tin cup”, or a “café latte” or “moerkoffie [ground coffee] made in the traditional way” and that is the “benefit of the free market system” (van Wyk, 2017). Another example given by Johan was that ten years ago, there was one lady selling vetkoek for R 25. Since she was the only person selling vetkoek at the market, when she stopped coming, they “opened it up” and now there are three vendors selling vetkoek, but each with a slightly different appeal. So each vendor has found a “niche” and today the quality is better than it was, and the price is still R25 or R30 (van Wyk, 2017). Johan believes that this all adds up to better deal for the clients who visit and shop at the market, since there is now a much wider variety of products available and at a better price. The market’s move from a sheltered system to a free-market parallels the shift that took place in the South African economy in a slightly earlier time period, and this aspect is briefly explored below.

### **1.8 A Concise Overview of South Africa’s Economic Transitions**

It is widely acknowledged that the South African economy can today be characterised as conforming to “an economic hegemony that panders to the welfare of local and global capital” wherein there is a “class-orientated and superficially non-racial economic coalition”, which is in most aspects, a part of the “neo-liberal genus of global capitalism” (Davies, 2009). What is less widely acknowledged is that the source of this state of affairs has its origin in the last decade of the Apartheid era.

The changes started to happen in the 1970s with a series of reforms initiated by P.W. Botha, the president at the time, in which a “heavily-centralised state” along with “capital elites, brought into the ruling fold” endeavoured “to restructure the ‘social and economic basis for capital accumulation’” with a view to “economic liberalisation” (Davies, 2012). Some of these reforms were in the agricultural sector which became increasingly market orientated; a process described in the previous section with regard to the agricultural control boards. These reforms led to a rise in prices, a reduction in subsidies and credit facilities for farmers, as well as greater interest charges on farmers’ debt (Davies, 2009), which meant that many farmers “bore the brunt of reform efforts” (Davies, 2012).

These measures would only be accelerated after the end of Apartheid, “which came amidst seismic shifts in global geopolitics” (Comaroff, 2004). One of the main shifts was the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, meaning the end of the Cold War, which also meant the defeat of communism as a political and economic ideology and therefore, a victory for liberal democracy, capitalism and more specifically, the neo-liberal variant of capitalism. Neo-liberal capitalism can briefly be described as following “the dictates of economic efficiency and capital growth”, engaging in “the fetishism of the free market” and having steadfast belief in “the exigencies of science and technology” (Comaroff, 2004). Thus, South Africa’s transition to democracy took place in a geo-political climate which placed great emphasis on the “triumph” of neoliberal capitalism which meant that there were “no ideological alternatives to laissez-faire” which even seemed plausible (Comaroff, 2004). In 1993, the de Klerk government (the last of the Apartheid era) unveiled the Normative Economic Model which had an “explicitly neo-liberal agenda” (Davies, 2009) and ensured that they received the backing of local (at the time, white) capital elites, who were “emboldened by the pre-emptive neo-liberal reforms” of the National Party (NP) government (Davies, 2012). This meant that the NP went into the transition negotiations as “the party of business” with the backing of an informal alliance between themselves, private local capital and international financial institutions (Davies, 2009). They boosted their negotiating position by relying on the “rhetoric of disinvestment and White flight”, as well as by making sure to “attack and disparage” any of the African National Congress’s (ANC) ideas that “ran counter to neo-liberal orthodoxy” (Davies, 2009).

This led to the ANC’s “developmental economic vision for the pursuit of its transformation aims”, which was initially based on the principles “enshrined in the Freedom Charter which emphasised collective economic ownership and the centrality of the state” (Mathebula, 2015). It was formulated in the “Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) base document” and was criticised by the mainstream media and numerous domestic and international business groups claiming the policies “bore socialist undertones” and were nothing less than “macroeconomic populism” (Mathebula, 2015). Soon, the negotiations came to be dominated by “neoliberal, market-orientated growth and development strategies” (Davies, 2012).

Nevertheless, the ANC adopted RDP as its manifesto for the general elections on 27 April 1994, in which it secured an emphatic victory (Mathebula, 2015). RDP was sold as being centred around “principles of democratisation, meeting basic needs, the development of human and economic resources and the management and monitoring of reconstruction and development”, as well as emphasising that the state had a central role to play through the building of infrastructure which

would help to realise reconstruction and development, and subsequently lead to growth (Mathebula, 2015). RDP also contained plans for an extensive welfare system which included free health care programmes for pregnant women and young children, school feeding schemes, an expansion of access to water, sanitation, energy, electrification and education, as well as the establishment of a number of grants, like the “Child Support Grant, Old Age Pension and the Disability Grant” (Mathebula, 2015).

RDP, despite its noble intentions, was “soon plagued by incapacity and subsequent implementation problems”, which led to “backlogs in the provision of basic services” (Mathebula, 2015). In September 1994, the ANC-led government released the “RDP White Paper” which focused on “growth and development”, in contrast to the RDP programme in the election manifesto, which had emphasised “development with growth”. Another contrast was the White Paper’s insistence on “the need to ensure fiscal prudence” along with the “need to redefine the role of government and the public sector” (Mathebula, 2015). This led to the RDP programmes experiencing severe funding constraints as well as criticism from, amongst others, the South African Communist Party who warned “against an economic restructuring that advocated for the subordination of workers to the interests of capital” (Mathebula, 2015). There was also criticism from South African big businesses who argued for “a more prominent role for markets in economic growth, fiscal discipline, consistency in economic policy”, and for the “promotion of investor confidence” (Mathebula, 2015). Business would get its way, sooner rather than later.

In early 1996, the Rand experienced a severe drop in value which prompted a currency crisis. This led to a massive increase in the CPI (consumer price index), as well as to banks increasing their prime lending rates to more than 13% per cent (Mathebula, 2015). In response, a “panic-stricken” ANC government unveiled the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) macro-economic strategy in June 1996, which had been created by a “carefully selected team” of “senior bureaucrats”, along with “international and local” academics and with “policy makers from the IMF and World Bank” (Mathebula, 2015). GEAR consisted of a set of neo-liberal fantasies, like “keeping the fiscal deficit at an acceptable low level”, keeping “inflation in check as it were”, the “deregulation of markets” as well as “aggressive lifting of exchange controls” along with “an expansionary fiscal strategy” and “decreasing public consumption expenditure” (Mathebula, 2015).

Effectively, GEAR was an economic policy aligned with neo-liberalism which prioritised “free market” neo-liberal reforms as the primary toolkit for achieving transformation goals. Thus, the

adoption of GEAR signalled the full “incorporation of South Africa into neo-liberal global circuits” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012), although in a paradoxical way, since neo-liberalism generally leads to a “retreat of the state”, whereas in South Africa, the state has been actively engaged in “entrenching the political economy of neo-liberalism” (Mathebula, 2015). Similarly, the RDP welfare system had remained and even expanded in the period since GEAR was adopted - another unusual occurrence since welfare of any sort is anathema to neo-liberalism. GEAR also illustrated how local white and Afrikaner capital had “found common cause, alongside ANC government, white and black capital elites, in the neo-liberal variant of capitalism” (Davies, 2012). As an aside, 1996 also saw the final death knell for the agricultural boards with the introduction of the “Marketing of Agricultural Products act” (Liebenberg, 2013). These policy changes would have a massive impact on the country and the Pretoria Boeremark and are examined in more detail in the conclusion.

This introductory chapter began by describing the circumstances that led to the Pretoria Boeremark’s “Great Trek” in July 2017, when it was forced to move from the Pioniersmuseum grounds it had been occupied for the past 13 years to a new location just under two kilometres away. I then went on to provide a short history of the ancient historical roots of periodic markets, as well as the development of these types of markets in South Africa, to situate the Pretoria Boeremark within this tradition of buyers and sellers meeting to trade. I also delved into the history of the Pretoria suburb of Silverton to show that the Boeremark, despite only starting in 1992, demonstrates noteworthy resemblances to its neighbourhood and that the neighbourhood it is situated in has had a marked effect on its development. The history of the Boeremark examined how the market originated and how it shifted to a “free-market” system. This was then followed by a concise overview of South Africa’s economic transitions from Apartheid to RDP and finally to GEAR. How this relates to the market will be examined in more detail in the conclusion. The shift in economic policy, in both the case of the Boeremark and the country, had a marked effect on the market’s vendors and its customers. Therefore, the next chapter focuses on the economic facets of the market.

## **2. SHOPPING FOR INGREDIENTS**

When I arrive at the market it is just after 5, still dark and bitterly cold. The parking area, however, is already filling up, and some cars are already leaving. I make my way to the “moerkoffie” stand where I buy a cup of traditional coffee (made by steeping a mesh bag filled with coffee grounds in a kettle) with added condensed milk to soften the bitterness, proceed to pull up a chair next to the fire to warm myself in the freezing July morning, and start observing. There is something slightly sinister about all these people moving from stall to stall in the dark. Disappearing from the battery-operated lights of one gazebo and suddenly appearing at another one with the only other light coming from head torches bobbing in the darkness between stands.

In the predawn gloom, the market seems endless. At the Pioniersmuseum, the stalls were packed closely together with a serpentine route between them which took a while to figure out. At the new Krieger Street location, the stalls are spread sporadically around the 5 hectares, and since it's the first market, no one knows who's where. Despite the confusion, as the rising sun fills the sky, so customers' hired trolleys fill up with merchandise. Some have potted plants and Protea bouquets. Others have a variety of veggies and fruits, while others still have mouthfuls of meat and batches of biscuits. Regardless of the change in scenery, the Boeremark is bustling with trade. Everywhere you look cash is being handed over in return for jams, spices, sauces, leather belts, second-hand books, or beaded key-rings. There are also exchanges of “good mornings”, recipes, plant care, and general friendly conversation, in accents ranging from Spanish and German to American and South African English, although the correspondences are predominantly Afrikaans.

By 9 the hum of activity has slowed down to whisper, and by half-past nine, the only activity is vendors packing up after another successful Saturday of sales.

- Research Diary entry: 8 July 2017

### **2.1 Introduction**

At first glance, the Pretoria Boeremark seems to be a market the likes of which has existed seemingly forever, where “buyer and seller meet one-to-one to make a trade” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007) and this is its primary purpose, just as it always has been at markets throughout history. This chapter focuses on the market as an economic institution and the ways in which it operates for “precisely - albeit not exclusively - economic purposes” (Bestor, 2004).

The Pretoria Boeremark at present consists of 243 vendors, although the new market location has space for more and Johan van Wyk told me that he feels that 320 vendors is the “optimal” size, serving around 6 000 customers every Saturday, although in winter this number is slightly less. This points to one of the first important considerations regarding the market as an “economic institution”: the proportion between sellers and buyers, matching supply to demand (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). That is: “customers must find enough vendors to provide the supply, variety, and competitive pricing that make a trip to the market worthwhile for them”, while at the same time vendors “must be

able to sell enough of their produce at a high enough price to support their efforts” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007).

Robinson and Hartfeld (2007) note that this economic equilibrium takes time: for “word to spread, for customers to establish their rituals and rhythms” and for vendors to stock “the quantities and varieties that customers want”. They attribute the success of the market in Bloomington, Indiana, which their book focuses on, to its longevity. It started in 1975 and in 2005 it boasted 3 600 customers per week being served by (on average) 91 vendors (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). This balance of vendors to customers may be one of the reasons that vendors at the Boeremark told me that they “feel that their sales have gone down” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017) and that there has been “a decline in the purchasing power of the visitors” (Mbiti, 2017). Although, as Miguel de Souza, who sells vegetables and fruits that he grows himself on a farm just outside Cullinan, described it, the reason is that “the economy is struggling at the moment” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). He expanded on this by saying that you can see “people are budgeting”: they “just stop by to say hello, and say that they’ll take the next week again” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017).

Despite decreased demand, supply just keeps increasing. Carla von Berg, who has been selling melkkos<sup>18</sup> at the market since 2007, told me that when she started, there were around 100 vendors at the market and currently there are almost 250 with plans to add more (von Berg, 2017). Tendai Mpfu, a client who has only been visiting the market since November 2015, says that one of the main changes he has noticed since then is that the market just “keeps getting bigger” (Mpfu, 2017). The cause for this expansion can be found, on one hand, in the free-market doctrine the Boeremark espouses, and on the other hand (and in combination with), the low barrier to entering the market as a vendor.

As explored earlier, the Boeremark today functions completely on the “free-market” system with regard to what is vended, which from Johan van Wyk’s point of view is one of the market’s biggest successes. Some vendors, however, do not agree with him. Miguel de Souza explained that when he first started selling at the market, “management was a lot more specific about what was being sold”. In such a way that “if a person wanted to come in with another veggie stall they would be quite circumspect as to where they put them in the first place, or whether they even allowed them in”. But he feels that “at the moment that doesn’t seem to matter.” He gave an example of another vendor

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<sup>18</sup>A traditional Afrikaans desert food, a creamy, cinnamon-sugar laced dish made primarily of milk, butter and flour, with the consistency of porridge.

who set up a stall across from them “reselling veggies which he buys at the [Tshwane] market” and which ends up taking a “chunk out of our business”. Miguel feels that these days “anybody who wants to sell, if there is space available, doesn’t matter what you do or whether there are 20 stalls of the same nature, the powers that be will let them in”. He does admit that this is part of the “whole competition thing” and that it means that “you just have to be competitive” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017).

The “whole competition thing”, the free-market system, is not, however, as free as Johan professes it to be. He informed me that there is currently a waiting list of over 60 people for vendors spots at the market, but that he and his management team try “to select interesting products” when a space opens up, so that “we don’t have too many cookies and not enough other products, to use an example” (van Wyk, 2017). He did also say to me that there were usually “three or four new vendors every Saturday” and also some vendors who “come for a month or three and then say that they’re not coming anymore”. This, he believes, is because they are the “type of people who think they’re going to come to the Boeremark and get rich if they’re here for a week”, while “everyone knows it just doesn’t work that way” (van Wyk, 2017).

In order to be successful at the market, you need to have “the character to be able to sell”, you cannot simply “sit on your chair and if someone asks, say: ‘that one’s two rand fifty’; you have to get up, you have to show interest”, and Johan states that lots of the vendors who don’t make it at the market have a good product, but “they don’t know how to sell it” (van Wyk, 2017). Black (2012) is in agreement, writing that to be a successful vendor at Porta Palazzo, one needs “a certain type of personality and keen social skills”. The market at Porta Palazzo is filled with vendors’ calls and banter, often of a sexual nature, which Black (2012) considers as performances which are essential to “communication, competition, and the creation of the...atmosphere of the market.” The calls and banter are essential to attract attention in a large market like Porta Palazzo, where clients and vendors generally remain anonymous to one another. However, in the smaller “*mercato dei contadini*” (farmers’ market section) of Porta Palazzo, there is almost none of this banter, since it is filled with “more regular shoppers” who tend to have long-term relationships with specific vendors and there is less competition (Black, 2012).

The Boeremark is more reminiscent of the “*mercato dei contadini*” than the general resellers section of Porta Palazzo, but it is also different culturally. Thus, vendors are not as explicit in trying to attract attention. There is one vendor at the Boeremark who would fit in well at Porta Palazzo

though, whose sales-pitch can often be heard around the market. He sells pepper spray and other self-defence items, including Tasers. These he demonstrates by pressing the button on the Taser creating a loud crackling sound, and following it up with shouts of “put the spark back in your marriage” or “this will wake up your kids”, often to the mirth of many shoppers in the vicinity. It does not, however, seem to make a big impact on how much he sells.

The low barrier to entry is another feature of the Boeremark that is markedly different from the Porta Palazzo market in Turin. At Porta Palazzo the only official way to sell at the market is to apply for and obtain a market permit from city hall, (since the City of Turin is responsible for the administration of the market); however, it is not assured that an application for a permit will be successful, since the licences are limited in number (Black, 2012). There are, nevertheless, informal ways of acquiring licences, and “newcomers” are able to “set up a business - at a certain price”, either by renting a licence from a vendor or purchasing a licence for anything from “150,000€ for a stall in the covered market to 30,000€ for an ambulant vendor’s licence in the resellers’ market area”<sup>19</sup> (Black, 2012). Like Porta Palazzo, the Tsukiji market is also strict with regard to who is allowed to sell at the market. The Tsukiji market is owned and managed by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG), which issues a total of 1 677 licences to vendors (Bestor, 2004). Licences cannot be “bought and sold at will”, although the TMG allows “transfers” of licences in some cases. Even if one wanted a licence, there are specific requirements that need to be adhered to, including having at least five years’ experience working at the market, being of good character, (i.e. one must “not be a convicted criminal or have a history of bankruptcy”), and having sufficient working capital. During the boom years of the 1980s, licences would transfer for ¥100 million or more, which is roughly “the cost of a fancy new house in Tokyo’s suburbs”. These days, following years of recession, “licences go begging for buyers” despite the price having dropped to ¥15 million<sup>20</sup> (Bestor, 2004).

However, Tsujiki and Porta Palazzo are, respectively, the “largest single marketplace for fish not only in Japan but in the world” (Bestor, 2004), and the “largest open-air market in Europe” (Black, 2012). A better comparison for the Boeremark with regard to ability to sell at a market comes from the Bloomington, Indiana farmers’ market mentioned earlier. Vendors at the Bloomington market fall into two different categories: “Reserved Space Vendors” who “claim the same space for the entire Market season by paying a fee in advance” and “Day Space Vendors” who “rent spaces

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<sup>19</sup> That is between R 450 000 and R 2.25 million.

<sup>20</sup> The price now is approximately R 1.8 million rand, while during the peak years, it was about R 12 million.

available each Market day” (Veldman, 2017). Spaces at the market are reserved according to the number of “vendor points” that a vendor has accumulated: these points are awarded “based on the number of seasons of participation and the number of days of attendance.” Those with the most points get to pick their spaces first, and any spaces not used on a specific day are awarded to “Day Space Vendors” on a first-come, first-served basis (Veldman, 2017). Thus, a “Day Space Vendor” may eventually build up enough points to become a “Reserved Space Vendor”. The market in Bloomington also only runs for specific seasons: there is an “April Market”, the “May through October Peak Season Market” and a “November Market”, all with different fees attached. To complicate matters further, there are small stands, large stands, and both small and large junior and senior stands. The fee for a large stand is \$18 per day for the April market, while “Reserved Space Vendors” pay \$90, or the same price since there are 5 of these markets. For the “May through October Peak Season Market” a large stand is also \$18 per day, but for “Reserved Space Vendors” the fee is \$468 (slightly cheaper than the daily fee which works out to \$486 for the 27 markets held in the time period).<sup>21</sup> The smaller and junior/senior stands are all slightly cheaper.

The process at the Boeremark is much simpler. For vendors who want to sell at the market, it is as simple as sending an email to the management mentioning the product they want to vend. When the management sends an email back, the prospective vendor comes to the next market and picks an open spot, at which they can then start selling the following Saturday. The costs involve a R 400 “entry fee” and then R 140 per Saturday, payable a month in advance if possible, or cash every Saturday morning. The market management does, however, state that despite the fact that the Boeremark works on a “free-market” system that they “reserve the right to place a moratorium on certain items” so that, as mentioned above, they do not “have too many cookies and not enough other products” (van Wyk, 2017). The process of allocating spaces at the new market was somewhat complex however.

On Thursday, 6 July, just before the first market at the new Krige Street grounds, all the long-standing vendors, who had been at the Boeremark since before it moved to the Pioniersmuseum grounds in 2004, could pick a location for their stalls. There were not many, less than 50, and the whole process was good-natured, with much banter and chat about the prospects the move would bring. The next day, Friday, all the other vendors did the same, but this exercise took much longer since there were now almost 200 vendors waiting in a queue to pick a spot. This situation was

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<sup>21</sup> Thus, the daily rate, when converted into Rands, is approximately R 234 for both the April and May-October markets.

exacerbated by the fact that there had been more spots marked out on the property than there were marked out on the map (see Figure 2). The mood was one of jovial excitement for the most part, but vendors were concerned about the risk of all the dry grass catching alight, since in winter many of them built fires to ward of the chill, and also that since it was only a large open piece of ground there were no trees and so in summer the sun would be beating down on them, and their produce by 7 in the morning. They were also worried about how muddy it would get when the rain finally came, and whether the customers would find them, and how much they'd be able to sell.



Figure 2.

The benefit of a market like the Boeremark or the one in Bloomington is that because of its accessibility, it gives vendors the chance to sell to customers for a fairly low entry price, much cheaper than it would be to set up a store of their own. Aubrey Hobson and Meryl Hadley have only been at the market for a couple of months, selling “gluten-free, sugar-free, vegan and vegetarian sweet treats”. They see the market as an ideal place to start and grow a business since the “outlay cost is not that great” and they do not have to rent a storefront, “don’t have any staff costs or any other overhead costs to consider”, they can re-invest the money they make into buying bulk, and in that way grow their profit margin (Hadley and Hobson, 2017). The Boeremark “provides a broad canopy under which to extend the smaller umbrellas of individual...businesses” and this broad canopy “provides enough presence to bring customers in”, which means that vendors do not have to worry about marketing costs and other “overheads” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). At the same time being at a market helps vendors to “gain business experience, develop personal skills, test-market new products”, and crucially for some, it helps them to achieve “economic stability” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007).

## 2.2 Vending to Live vs Living to Vend

Hans and Lien Sever are pensioners who live in a townhouse, (their “dollhouse” they call it) in Pretorius Park in the east of Pretoria and they are representative of the way in which the market helps some vendors to achieve economic stability. Hans retired in 1995, and since then they have been reliant on his pension to live, which they described as “a bit of a struggle” financially. In 2005 Hans’s cousin who was in the same boat started selling washable pillows in and around Bethlehem in the Free State where she lived, and recommended to Hans and Lien that they do the same. They decided to try it out and started selling to family, friends and fellow church members. They ended up selling some pillows to a member of the congregation, a lady who sells various Aloe Vera products at the Boeremark, who suggested they start selling at the Boeremark and organised a stall for them next to her. The pillows sold extremely well and Lien started making different shaped ones to add to her range. Then at the end of 2014, the factory they sourced their pillows from changed ownership and decided not to sell in small quantities anymore, so they scrambled to find a new product. Coincidentally, Lien’s sister was at that time making place-mats featuring the Big Five, proteas and various other South African designs to sell to international tourists who came to hunt in South Africa. When the shop she was supplying folded, she gave the rest of her stock to Lien and asked her to try and sell it at the Boeremark. As Lien tells it, sales started off “sluggishly”, but then picked up suddenly and she started making her own place-mats and later made pencil bags, tablet cases, tablecloths and other needlework. They have now been selling successfully at the market, first pillows and now the various needlework products, for over 10 years. As Lien told me “it’s not so profitable that you can buy a farm from the proceeds”, but “it helps” to supplement their income, make ends meet and have a little bit extra every month (Sever and Sever, 2017). Hans and Lien are not the only pensioners who are vendors and who use the market to increase the amount of money they have to live on each month.

Carla von Berg still works half-days as a church administrator, but she initially started selling at the market because she and her husband were “struggling with the pensions” that they had. She had always dreamed of having a market stall, so she jumped at the opportunity to supplement their incomes by selling melkkos, a product she knew she could make well. These days she sells so much every Saturday, over a 150 litres worth, that “she could make an income from melkkos alone” if she wanted to (von Berg, 2017).

A rough estimate shows at least 20 other vendors who make up this category and they are also not a uniquely Boeremark phenomenon, Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007) list a number of examples of

vendors at the Bloomington market who, without the additional income, “would be hurting” if they depended solely on their pensions.

Another category of vendors at the Boeremark use the market not to achieve “economic stability”, but rather they depend on it for their “only bread and butter” (van Wyk, 2017). According to Johan van Wyk, there are between 20 to 30 people who make up this group, and Hermes Everett is one of them. Hermes was born and bred in Eersterust, just around the corner from the market’s Silverton home, and has been working at the Boeremark since 1994. He started out by working for a lady who sold juice at the original Persequor Park grounds. Then one day the lady informed him that she could not afford to employ him anymore and that he would have to make another plan, so he walked around the market and realised that no one was selling serviettes. He decided then and there that would be his product. The next week he pitched up with 4 boxes full of serviettes and just packed them out on the ground as an experiment and promptly sold everything. 23 years later he is still selling serviettes at the Boeremark every Saturday, although he has expanded his range to more general kitchen articles, including toothpicks, dishcloths and paper towels, and he just recently started selling “enamel cups on a stand that you can’t find anywhere else”, which are selling well (Everett, 2017). Part of this is due to his personality, as he is a natural born salesman, always ready with calls, jokes and banter and would no doubt do just as well at Porta Palazzo, however, being coloured and therefore “born in Afrikaans” (Everett, 2017) as he put it, certainly helps him to connect with the majority of the Boeremark’s customers.

Hermes’ only form of income is his vending at the Boeremark. It is “because of the Boeremark that I have my house and my bakkie” (Everett, 2017). He has never tried selling at any other market or at a store because the market “works for him” and he has been successful because of it. During the week he drives around to shops and factories and buys their unsold and unwanted stock for a price he determines. He then packages it and sells it at the Boeremark on Saturdays. Serviettes that at supermarkets would cost 45 to 50 Rand he sells for ten or twenty Rand. He mentioned that people often ask him how he is able to sell his products so cheaply and he tells them that he “has a brain and two hands, which give him the ability to work” (Everett, 2017). He also works hard at his trade, telling me a story to illustrate this. One Saturday morning when his car was broken, he hoisted a large carry bag on his back and walked to the market, it took him an hour and a half, but “he couldn’t miss the market, because he had bills to pay” (Everett, 2017). On average, he sells around 200 to 300 packs of serviettes every market-day at an average price of ten Rand per pack. He now also provides serviettes to many of the vendors who sell prepared foods, a brief example of the intra-market

economy which is explored in more detail in the internal exchanges section below. Hermes claims not to have missed a single market in 23 years, explaining that is very important for him to be there every Saturday, so that if someone comes to him and says, “this packet is torn or these serviettes are not up to scratch” he can “replace them free of charge” (Everett, 2017). In his interview, he kept emphasising trust, between him, clients and fellow vendors, and quality, in terms of the products he sells, over and over again. Hermes’ story is unique in terms of the scale of his accomplishment, but also regarding the fact that he has achieved this through only selling at the Boeremark. Even at the Bloomington market, most full-time vendors do not solely rely on the market for their income (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007), although at Tsukiji and Porta Palazzo, it is only full-time sellers. Hermes is an example of how the Boeremark can provide not only bread and butter, but also bakkies and even big screen TVs.

The other main category of vendors is those who, as Hermes suggests, engage in it as a “side-line” – it is not their main source of income. All the other vendors I have so far referred to are of this ilk. Aubrey Hobson and Meryl Hadley both have full time jobs away from the market and are engaging in it as a hobby and a way to spread a message of healthier eating. Meryl especially, since she had cancer 12 years ago she needed an “anti-cancer” diet, but “cancer feeds on sugar” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017) and everything had sugar in it. They are happy to be in a position where they “can now provide something to people who want to explore alternative options” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017), which they concede is hard at the Boeremark where there is a lot of traditional Afrikaans food which contains lots of sugar, like pancakes and melkkos, and they understand that it takes a “big mind shift” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017).

Noah Mbiti, on the other hand, vends at the market primarily as a way to make an extra income. During the week, he runs his own graphic design and printing company and lives in Meyerspark, quite close to the Pioniersmuseum site where the Boeremark was previously held. One Saturday morning, about 7 years ago, he saw a lot of cars driving into the museum’s parking area, decided to see what was happening, and realised that there were “people making money just behind my backyard” (Mbiti, 2017). So he decided that instead of staying in bed on Saturday mornings, he may as well trade at the Boeremark to “make some extra bucks for the weekend” (Mbiti, 2017). He started off by selling caps and hats, since he had previously traded in head-wear at the Hatfield flea-market, so he “knows the product”, knows “how to source it”, can “deal with it properly” and, most importantly, he “knows how to sell it” (Mbiti, 2017). Later on, he expanded his range of products to include bangles and beaded necklaces, when he realised that there were a lot of visitors at the market

who were “woman and people who love ornaments and jewellery and stuff like that.” He makes the leather bangles and beaded necklaces himself, occasionally getting his daughters to help him thread the beads. Noah is an exemplar of a vendor using the market as a way to increase their business acumen and indeed one of the things he enjoys most about vending at the market is “getting to meet different people” and subsequently, learning more “about business” regarding “what people prefer and what they like” (Mbiti, 2017).

Miguel de Souza most closely represents the full-time growers that Robinson and Hartenfeld describe from the Bloomington farmers’ market. He and his wife, Jane, are now both retired, live on an almost 9 hectare farm just outside Cullinan, and describe their farming as “not a hobby”, but something to “keep them busy” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). They grow big volumes of tomatoes and cucumbers in greenhouses, depending on the season, as well as cauliflower and broccoli under 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> of shade netting. These large volume sales to the Tshwane Wholesale Market and local supermarkets like Pick n Pay and Spar are the main source of their income. They grow a larger variety in smaller quantities for sale at the Boeremark. In summer this consists of sweetcorn, peppers, brinjals, peas, beans, mangetout peas, butternuts, gem squash, rocket, baby spinach, and potatoes. In winter, they do a roaring trade in cauliflower, broccoli, and more recently, kale, all of which has become very popular with the growth of the “Banting diet” trend. These days they even take orders on Fridays where “people can order and get a box made up of Banting products or whatever vegetables” and which now “makes up about a third” of their sales (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). They are very proud of the fact that they have been told that they are “the Woolworths of the Boeremark”, which they see as a compliment regarding the quality of their produce. They also take great pride in the fact that they “don’t sell anything that they don’t grow themselves”, as well as being “as close to organic as they can come”, which they contrast with some of their “colleagues” who “buy things at the Tshwane market on Fridays and sell it at the Boeremark on Saturdays” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017).

They started selling at the Boeremark in 2003 because they were looking for an outlet for some of the extra produce they had and they have never looked back, although it is the social aspect of the market that keeps them coming back. Like full-time growers who sell at the Bloomington market, the de Souzas “have more than one sales outlet” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007), although most full-time growers who sell at farmers’ markets in the USA do so because if they did not, “as much as 22 percent of their produce would go unsold”, which means that they would not “be able to sustain their place on the land” without the “direct-marketing possible through the farmers’ market” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). Miguel and Jane also find that, in a financial sense, it is “absolutely

worthwhile” to sell at the Boeremark, since the market is mainly cash sales, it provides a ready source of income to pay wage bills, fuel and fertiliser, and is not necessarily declared to the revenue authorities.

### **2.3 Money, Money, Money**

The potential tax breaks might explain why many vendors regard talk about money as unseemly and why they seemed reluctant to reveal specific amounts. Instead, vendors preferred to say that vending at the market is “worthwhile” or that they make “some money”. As a result, there is no accurate assessment of how much money actually circulates within the market on any given Saturday.

The de Souza's are not the only ones who remarked on this side effect of the cash sales at the market. Hermes also picked up on this and regarded it as one of the main reasons why customers visit the Boeremark, since they “don't pay tax” (Everett, 2017); he did not mention the extent to which he declares his income to the tax man however. Two of the customers interviewed, Tendai Mpofu and Gertruida van Wiel, were also of the opinion that a lot of customers bought at the market because “you're not paying tax” along with the fact that the prices are “much better” (Mpofu, 2017) (van Wiel, 2017). The reason the prices are much better is possibly because the products are untaxed. Another customer, Aurene Spoor, is of the opinion that it is simply a matter of perception that the market is cheaper than the shops. Aurene has a background in food marketing and she believes that because things are packaged differently at the market than they are in retail outlets, this leads people to think that it is cheaper. She explained that at the Boeremark a chicken might be R 35 or R 40, although the price per kilo might be R 60, the same as at a supermarket, but you would never know. Similarly, mushrooms, which she often buys when she visits the market, are scooped out of a big wooden crate. So, you can say to the vendor “I have R 20 left, I want twenty Rands worth of mushrooms” and he will then weigh out an amount equivalent to R 20, whereas in a supermarket you either “buy a punnet of mushrooms for R 24 or R 48, or you don't” - at the market you have more options.

This difference in how products are packaged is also noted by Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007), who write that at supermarkets “you see those bags of lettuce that look kind of big, but there is really not much in there, and some of it is already going bad”, while at the market, the lettuce is not packaged, so what you see is what you get and it “will last two weeks in the refrigerator”. They, therefore, conclude that “it is actually cheaper at the market” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). The perception of cheaper products is in some cases well-founded, for example at the de Souza's stall, they sell their

produce at the same price at both the Tshwane market and the Pretoria Boeremark, meaning their prices are cheaper than one would find in a retail shop. They related an anecdote about selling pre-packaged cucumbers at the Tshwane market for R 10 each and then later the same day seeing one of their packaged cucumbers in a supermarket selling for R 22.

Despite products in general being cheaper at the Boeremark than in supermarkets, there is still a lot of currency flowing around the premises every Saturday. The organisation of the Boeremark itself collects around R 34 000<sup>22</sup> from the vendors' stall rent fees alone. Then there are the amounts of goods being sold mainly, as the de Souzas mentioned, for cash. Although recently there has been an increase in the number of vendors adopting cashless payment solutions like "SnapScan" or card readers that connect to smart phones.

The reluctance of vendors to disclose actual cash amounts, as alluded to above, makes an accurate assessment of the money being spent difficult, although it certainly a considerable amount. As an example, one vendor told me that he had worked out that between the various coffee stands, approximately 6 000 cups of coffee were being sold per weekend. At an average price of R 10 per cup, that amounts to R 60 000 being spent on coffee alone. The amounts spent by customers in total varied considerably, however, with some spending as little as R 400, while others spent up to R 2 500. Accounting for these variations lies in the different reasons people do shopping at the Boeremark.

#### **2.4 An Overview of Boeremark Buyers**

Tendai Mpofu is the manager of a coffee shop in the east of Pretoria. He visits the Boeremark to buy ingredients for the food that they make and sell at the coffee shop and he believes that the produce is better quality than what you get in supermarkets, although for him price is the main consideration. As a result, he spends between one and two thousand Rand every Saturday, mainly on bacon, eggs, mushrooms, and fruits and vegetables. By doing so he gets more produce for less money, leading to the business he manages being more viable. Mpofu also buys some of his personal groceries, like vegetables, fruits, meat and so on at the market (Mpofu, 2017). Someone like Lizzy van der Merwe, on the other hand, goes to the market because of the speciality products you can find there. One of products she buys every time she goes is raw, that is unpasteurised, goat's milk, since then it's "as close to organic as possible" and it is the only dairy product she can eat because she is lactose

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<sup>22</sup> 243 stalls at R 140 per stall adds up to R 34 020

intolerant (van der Merwe, 2017). She also buys goat's milk yogurt and cheese, and occasionally she buys plants, offal, and jams and marmalades. Regardless of her other purchases, she always starts her visit with a cup of coffee and pancakes. van der Merwe spends around R 400 on every visit (van der Merwe, 2017).

Reflecting another type of customer, Roland and Bettie Judge go to the market every second Saturday, and buy all of their groceries: their "raw produce", vegetables, dairy and meat, as well as bread, birdseed, nuts and coffee beans. They spend around R 2 500 every time they visit, but emphasise that they do not spend money at shops on groceries, they only go to shops to buy things they cannot get from the Boeremark, like Sunlight liquid and refuse bags. Their reasons are partly economic, partly personal preference and partly ideological. Roland and Bettie "hate malls", "hate shops" and "cannot stand shopkeepers". They prefer the personal nature of the market where they "deal one-on-one with the people who either make it, produce it, or sell it" and who are "far more adaptable", meaning that they can get "items customised to their tastes" (Judge and Judge, 2017). They also emphasised the "natural" aspect using the example of buying jam at the market saying that "you know that the lady that makes it is not putting preservatives and colourants into it", as well as the "freshness", since it was "picked the previous day" (Judge and Judge, 2017). They also remarked that buying from a vendor "helps put a kid through ballet school", whereas buying from Spar, "makes the Spar people rich". Thus, at the market one is "supporting individuals, rather than conglomerates." This is reminiscent of a young shopper at Porta Palazzo, who told Black that "I'm a little bit of a Marxist, and I think that it is important to cut out middlemen", and thus, he shops at the '*mercato dei contadini*', since he wants to "support farmers directly and capitalists as little as possible"; he ended off saying that he refuses "to shop at Auchan" (Black, 2012), an Italian supermarket, similar to Spar in South Africa. Economically, the Judges also have the perception that buying at the market is cheaper since the prices are "much better than in the shops" and you "get much better value for money" (Judge and Judge, 2017).

Yet another type of customer is Thabo Zungu, his brother, Khaya Zungu, and Khaya's partner, Norah Moleko, who come from Mamelodi every Saturday to buy their weekly groceries. They subscribe to a vegan and alkaline diet, which means that they cut out all meats, dairy, eggs and other animal-related products, as well as any "processed food". They also see food as medication and hence, the Boeremark is like their "hospital" (Zungu et al., 2017). They visited a number of places to buy fruits and vegetables before settling on the Boeremark, where they can get "organic produce at a good price." They buy food, spices, mielie meal and even soap at the Boeremark, and only go to

shops or supermarkets for dish-washing liquid and refuse bags. They spend approximately R 1000 per week, a number that they attribute to the fact that meat is much more expensive than vegetables and fruits, so since they do not buy meat they spend much less on nourishment than most other people (Zungu et al., 2017).

This is by no means an exhaustive overview of the types of clients that the Boeremark attracts, but it gives a good idea of some of the reasons that motivate the roughly 6 000 people who attend the market every Saturday. There is another aspect of the market that attracts clients, as the Zungus explained. They also do not regard the Boeremark as a business, or a “profit driven organisation”; they think that the “business side of it, is just so that it can be sustained” and that “more than anything, it is a community” (Zungu et al., 2017).

## **2.5 Internal Exchanges**

The Boeremark does make a profit however. Johan van Wyk says that all the money made by the Boeremark, after subtracting his salary, the salary of the other members of the management team, taxes and various other expenses, all goes to the TLU, the organisation which owns the Boeremark, who “plough it back into agriculture” (van Wyk, 2017). However, the idea that it sustains itself is an interesting notion. Many of the vendors not only sell products at the Boeremark, but are also active customers. As Carla von Berg put it, “the different stalls support each other” in such a way that the market “almost keeps itself going” (von Berg, 2017). She told me that “you would not believe how many vendors come and buy melkkos from me early in the morning”, while at the same time she buys all her “weekly groceries from the market”, only going to shops to buy things she cannot find at the market, like cleaning products (von Berg, 2017). Hans and Lien Sever also buy fruit, vegetables, milk, dairy and meat at the market, and especially “old people’s biltong”, which is finely ground. These days the biltong vendor even walks over to them to give the “oom” his week’s supply (Sever and Sever, 2017). Noah Mbiti does some shopping at the Boeremark, “mainly veggies but also eggs and things like that” because, like the customers, he believes that it is fresher produce at a cheaper price.

Aubrey Hobson and Meryl Hadley not only buy a lot of their weekly groceries (fruits and vegetables, and organic meat) at the market, they also buy ingredients for their healthy sweet treat products at the market, saying “whatever we can find here, we buy it here”. They also mentioned that customers love to hear them say that “this contains Peter’s honey” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017) - Peter being a well-known honey vendor at the Boeremark.

As mentioned earlier, Hermes supplies many of the prepared food vendors, including Carla von Berg, with the serviettes, that they hand out along with their food. Hermes also buys most of his groceries at the market. He finds it convenient, since he is at the market anyway: he can just take a walk around with his shopping list, and then he does not need to go to the shops again, except for what is not available at the market. There are occasions when he gets to a stall to buy something, and is ready to hand over his money and the vendor will say “that’s not necessary”, although he then returns the favour when those vendors visit his stall.

Miguel and Jane, who grow and sell vegetables and fruit, not only buy some groceries at the market, they likewise engage in bartering, but in a more formalised manner. They have a standing agreement with some vendors, “like the dairy people”, who deliver cream to them, which they then swap for tomatoes. Occasionally they will “get some pancakes” which they swap for lemons, tomatoes or some other type of their produce. Since “everybody’s friends, so that’s a nice way of doing things” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). So, if they need carrots, they will swap with Richard, and he will get some tomatoes that he needs from them.

## **2.6 Ties that Bind**

This “extra-economic” exchange extends to the interactions between vendors and customers also. Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007) write that the “the simple exchange between actual producer and final consumer” creates a “kind of mutual obligation rarely found in the deferred purchases of today’s highly commodified culture”. Thus, the exchange of money for products (and even more so the exchanges of plant growing advice, recipes and friendly banter) come to have “additional significance for both parties far beyond what can be had at the local shopping mall” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). As Aubrey and Meryl, the healthy sweet treat vendors, put it: “the summary is connection, we connect here with other people” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017). The vendors build up personal relationships with each other and with their regular clients. The vendors have other vendors as well as loyal customers who have “become friends” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). The de Souzas and Noah Mbiti both commented on the fact that if they are not at the market on a Saturday, they will get phone calls asking whether they are all right, and “are you coming back next week?” (Mbiti, 2017).

Hermes, on the other hand, has regular customers who occasionally invite him to a braai at which he is “the only black face amongst the white ones” (Everett, 2017). On other occasions, a client will arrive at the stand and say “let’s go have coffee” at which point he goes to grab a coffee and then goes back and continues with his work, leaving his stall in the care of the lady next to him, trusting her to “take care of my stand and make sales”, knowing that she will “put the money where it needs to be” (Everett, 2017).

The clients also form strong bonds with their preferred vendors and often vendors become preferred not because their products are so much better than another vendor’s, but because of the ‘gift’. As Black (2012) writes: “frequently, market vendors will give shoppers a gift”, which might be “a few extra strawberries, a handful of herbs, or a lemon” or it might take a different less tangible form, like “advice, a recipe, or extra time taken to explain the products”. The aim of this is to “create a bond of obligation that ties the two actors together”, which in a large market like Porta Palazzo with “so many stalls selling nearly the same items” is an important way of guaranteeing sales (Black, 2012).

The notion of the “gift” comes from the work of Marcel Mauss whose short book of the same name has proved to be a “basic requirement for modern fieldwork” (Douglas, 2002)<sup>23</sup>. Indeed, as Mary Douglas writes in her foreword to a new translation, before anthropologists had *The Gift’s* message revealed to them, they tended to treat economy as “a separate aspect” of society and the same again with kinship and religion (Douglas, 2002). Now the focus is on, to use Mauss’ own term, “total social facts”, meaning that an analysis must focus on the “whole of society and all its institutions – legal, economic, religious and aesthetic”, which according to Mauss is best done through “concrete description, in the manner of the humanities” (Hart, 2007).

The tool used for this analysis is that of the exchange and specifically the exchange of gifts, which he regarded as a “common denominator” in a wide range of human activities (Sigaud, 2002). For Mauss, the archetypal exchanges consisted not of the basic exchange of commodities or wealth between individuals that is so familiar to us, rather it was between collectives of people, or entire social groups, and consisted of “whole range of things people can do for each other”, including but

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<sup>23</sup> Fieldwork, Mauss and exchange were new to me because I did not have a background in anthropology. Exchange refers to the transfer of things between people. These things can be either animals (including humans), tangible or intangible, speech, actions or any other type of object. When the definition is this expansive, it is no wonder that many see exchange as being central to social life. It has been a primary interest of anthropology since the discipline started. This means that it has also been the subject of much theoretical debate. This series of arguments, definitions and counter-definitions are beyond the scope of this mini-dissertation. I, therefore, merely give a cursory overview of the notion of exchange, and specifically that of gift exchanges as they function at the Pretoria Boeremark. For more, see J. Davis, (1992) *Exchange*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

not limited to, the exchange of “ceremonies, rites, women, children, gestures of respect, etc.” (Sigaud, 2002), which he termed “a total system of giving” (Douglas, 2002). Mauss focussed, however, on a form of gift exchange that most probably evolved from this archetype, according to Hart (2007), which he named after the example from the north west of America: the “potlatch”. In this primary example, there is a process of both the giving of gifts and that of “making a return” (Hart, 2007). In other words, every gift is part of a “system of reciprocity”, wherein the “honour of giver and recipient are engaged” (Douglas, 2002). Building on this example, Mauss then presented various examples of gift exchange systems, including in Oceania, that of “Eskimo and Australian hunters” as well as finding similar cases in the records of Roman, Germanic and other Indo-European laws, which all showed “signs of the basic principles” of compulsory gifts (Douglas, 2002). It would seem, that as Douglas puts it, there is a “universal custom of compulsory gifts”, meaning that “right across the globe and as far back as we can go in the history of human civilization, the major transfer of goods has been by cycles of obligatory returns of gifts” (Douglas, 2002). Thus, universally it would seem that there are no such things as “free gifts”, but rather that “gift cycles” tie persons into “in permanent commitments that articulate the dominant institutions” (Douglas, 2002).

Mauss then formulates the system of gift exchange, where the main rule is that “every gift has to be returned in some specified way”, depending on the specific system in question. In some, the return has to be of equal value, whereas in others, the return must be of greater value than the gift that was given initially. This system of giving and returning then functions to create a “perpetual cycle of exchanges within and between generations” (Douglas, 2002). The reason for why the giving of a gift creates the obligation of return is that, in a broad sense, “human beings everywhere find the personal character of the gift compelling and are especially susceptible to its evocation of the most diffuse social and spiritual ties” (Hart, 2007).

So, if it is universal that there is no such thing as a free gift, this then means that a gift which “does nothing to enhance solidarity” is in fact a contradiction. This was Mauss’ reply to Malinowski’s surprise at finding evidence of “precisely calculated return gifts” in Melanesia (Douglas, 2002). The reason for his surprise is that he went into his fieldwork with the notion born from his own society, that of the market economy, that commercial exchange and the gift are two wholly disconnected fields of activity, where the former is based on “exact recompense, while the latter is “pure of ulterior motive” (Douglas, 2002). Mauss conceived of the pure and altruistic gift as the opposite of the market, which is envisioned as “a sphere of pure self-interest”, whereas the archaic gift was a

combination of these two disparate spheres (Hart, 2007). It is more useful to think of the cycle of gift giving and returning as being like the market, in the sense of providing “each individual with personal incentives for collaborating in the pattern of exchanges” (Douglas, 2002).

This brings us back to Black’s formulation above, that the gift functions to create bonds of obligation which ties actors together. I have experienced it first-hand, now always buying coffee from the same vendor because of a free cup of coffee and a gift of an enamel mug I once received. Douglas (2002) writes that because “we persist in thinking that gifts ought to be free and pure”, we fail to “recognize our own grand cycles of exchanges”. So, although giving in our modern market societies forms the premise for large industries (weddings, birthdays, Christmas, etc.), we have no way of knowing whether it is the “foundation of a circulating fund of stable esteem and trust, or of individualist competition”, since “information is not collected in such a way as to relate to the issues”. It is my contention, however, that the cycles of gift exchanges at the Boeremark seem to function in such a way as to promote the former, as will be shown in the following chapter, and returned to in the conclusion.

It is also not “unusual for vendors to ‘spot’ customers a dollar or two when they are short of cash or to throw in an extra ear of corn or hand a free flower to a child” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007), again building up personal bonds that over time form into strong relationships. Thabo and Khaya Zungu are regular clients of Aubrey and Meryl’s stall, because they can buy vegan and healthy cakes and treats from them. I used to always see them hanging around the stall and I would go and strike up a conversation with all of them. A couple of weeks later, Meryl told me that the reason the Zungus were always at their stall was because Thabo and Aubrey were in a romantic relationship - an intense illustration of the connections that the market is able to create.

It is also commonplace for customers to “share news of their cooking successes and innovations” or to bring the vendors who made their new dish possible a sample of it. As the de Souzas told me: “we’re always getting little presents from people, like the lady who had made a relish out of our tomatoes, so we got a bottle of that, and we’ve had some jam, people have brought us cookies” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017) and towards the end of the year, they also have people bringing them Christmas cake. As Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007) make explicit, these concrete gifts, in both directions, as well as those which are intangible, “weave unexpected and unlooked-for networks of gift giving and receiving into the market”. In turn, these networks lead to vendors and customers

feeling “trusted, being remembered”, all of which add up to “a powerful acknowledgement of an individual’s place within a community” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007).

This chapter has focused on various aspects of the Boeremark as an economic institution and how these aspects do not always serve exclusively economic purposes. It started by looking at the growth in the number of vendors in the Boeremark and how it seems to keep increasing despite (or maybe because of) the fact that the local economy is struggling and that visitors are not buying as much as they used to. The causes for this expansion, which seems to keep gathering pace, were then investigated with regard to the “free market” doctrine at the Boeremark since 2005, in combination with the low entry barrier to becoming a vendor at the Boeremark.

This ease of entering the market was then contrasted and compared with the complex regulations at the Porta Palazzo and Tsukiji markets and the similar arrangements at the Bloomington farmers’ market, in order to generate some comparative insights. It then moved on to investigate the different categories of vendors at the Boeremark. These comprised of vendors who used the market to help them make ends meet, or achieve economic stability, others who depend on it for their livelihoods, and finally those who vend as a “side-line” and the reasons they do it.

These reasons were for a large part to do with money and as a result, I then investigated the circulation of cash at the market, while noting that vendors are especially wary of talking in precise amounts, possibly for reasons of decorum or because of the lack of tax being paid on it. This was then looked at as a possible reason why prices are better at the market, although another idea, that it is just a matter of perception, seems more likely. Clients have a diverse range of reasons for buying at the market and their reasons influence the amount of money they spend and what they buy. Although all agree that the atmosphere is a bonus, some buy because of the perception of better prices, others because they want to support individuals rather than corporates, some just because of the social aspect and some buy for a business. It was qualified that this is not meant to be an exhaustive overview of the types of clients that the Boeremark attracts, but that it gives a broad outline of what motivates almost 6 000 people to attend the market every Saturday.

It then looked at the way in which many vendors also perform another role as active customers; how the different stalls support each other, whether by buying ingredients, weekly groceries or just coffee; and how this creates an internal economy, whereby the market keeps itself going. Some of these internal exchanges, however, are non-economic in the sense of not being goods exchanged for

money, but rather for other goods - vendors who engage in bartering with one another. It was then explored how economic exchanges and even more significantly, the non-economic exchanges between vendors and clients (whether this be advice, recipes or friendly banter) imbue the market with additional significance beyond what is experienced at a mall.

It was then shown how non-economic gift exchanges function within the Boeremark in such a way that as Bestor (2004) writes, it reflects and generates “cultural and social life”. This then led into an exploration of “the gift”, both in the concrete form of an extra tomato or free cup of coffee and the intangible gifts like advice, work to create gift exchange cycles within the market, as well as how these cycles create ties that bind, or networks of obligation, which help to forge a sense of community by creating forms of relatedness that are, at least perceived as being, different to what one can find in malls. The next chapter, therefore, examines the varying levels of significance which these generated practices of “relatedness” have for different vendors and customers.

### **3. ASSEMBLING FRIENDS AND FAMILY**

I pick up my phone on Saturday afternoon. It's my friend John calling, conveying greetings from Lisa. She is the proprietor of the "boeretrees" traditional coffee stand. The one I visit every Saturday morning to get my cup of coffee, with added condensed milk, in my re-usable enamel cup. The salutations, good mornings and how-are-you-today's that punctuate the rhythms of my Saturday morning perambulations around the 5 hectares of the Boeremark's new grounds now follow me home. I had missed the market that morning because of a family commitment but John had gone, and as we had done on a number of previous occasions, bought coffee from Lisa. Instead of the general greetings and chit-chat he was used to, he was queried as to my whereabouts, and exhorted to "stuur groete" to me. An extremely common, almost normative, Afrikaans request to send greetings to a specific person. Lisa is my Boeremark busybody, that friend or family member everyone has who always knows everything that's going on. If there's any news, happenings, plans or gossip, regarding the Boeremark, you can bet Lisa will know about it. When the inevitability of the "Great Trek" became clear, Lisa was the one who relayed the vendors and customers hopes and fears to me. Similarly, when Carla von Berg's husband passed away, Lisa was the one who told me, so that I could go and offer condolences. She epitomises the relations that criss-cross the market like an invisible circuit.

- Research Diary Entry: 3 June 2017

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter starts by offering a brief history of kinship or what I have chosen to call "practices of relatedness", since it is one of the oldest fields of anthropological enquiry and as a result, has a whole load of baggage it carries with it everywhere. This historical sketch is then employed in the construction of a "continuum of relatedness" to explain the ways in which "relatedness" functions at the Pretoria Boeremark. It then examines the differing degrees to which people at the market experience "relatedness", as well as the reasons why this may be so.

#### **3.2 A Short Summation of the History of Kinship**

Kinship is one of the oldest fields, or primary interests, of anthropology. In fact, since the late nineteenth century, anthropologists claimed kinship as an area of expertise central to the discipline (Fox, 1983). So much so that "the study of kinship was the very heart of anthropology for nearly a century" with all the luminaries "from Morgan to Schneider, Durkheim to Lévi-Strauss, Rivers and Malinowski to Radcliffe-Brown and Fortes" becoming major theorists of anthropology often because of their studies of kinship (Carsten, 2000). Thus, as Carsten (2000) writes, it "seemed more or less impossible to imagine what anthropology would look like without kinship", although by the 1970s, the position of kinship in anthropological enquiry had become increasingly marginal (Carsten, 2004). Carsten (2004) argues that is because "mid-twentieth century debates about kinship in anthropology"

tended to be detached from the “most obvious facets of actual lived experiences of kinship”. In other words, anthropological accounts of the time frequently failed to “capture what made kinship such a vivid and important aspect of the experiences of those whose lives were being described” (Carsten, 2004), which in combination with the disregarding of “pressing political concerns” like the post-colonial world and the emergence of feminism in society outside of academia led to kinship being replaced by studies focusing on power, hegemony, gender and notions of “the person” (Howell and Melhuus, 1993). The history of kinship studies and thus, the events leading to its marginalisation in the 1970s, are beyond the scope of this chapter<sup>24</sup>. It is necessary, however, to provide a brief sketch of its developments in order to be able to apply the concept to the way in which kinship, (or “relatedness”) functions as part of the social organization of the Pretoria Boeremark.

As mentioned above, for the notables of early social anthropology, “kinship was central to the discipline” because they were trying to understand how small-scale societies ensured “orderly functioning”, despite a lack of “governmental institutions and states” and they viewed kinship as “constituting the political structure and providing the basis for social continuity” in stateless societies (Fox, 1983). This then became the defining paradigm in the development of the field. Another crucial aspect in this paradigm was the distinction made by Fortes between the “domestic” domain of kinship, that of the “intimate world of individual nuclear families – mothers, fathers, and their children”, and the “politico-jural” domain, which related to the “public roles or offices ordered by wider kinship relations” (Carsten, 2004). In the types of “lineage-based society” that were the objects of study, where the “kin group held property”, it was “descent from a common ancestor” which determined membership, and “decision-making powers over the group were vested in the elders by virtue of the position they held in the lineage”; thus political and religious (“ancestor worship”) dimensions could not be separated from kinship (Carsten, 2004). The “political and religious aspects of kinship” were the foundations for “cohesiveness” in the societies being studied and thus, “rendered kinship interesting for anthropology” (Carsten, 2004).

In contrast to the “central” role in social organization attributed to kinship in non-Western societies, in a Western context kinship was considered to be “a relatively minor aspect of social organization”, seen as “divorced from political, economic, and religious life” (Harris, 1981) and restricted to the “domestic” domain of the nuclear family. Thus, kinship in a Western context was reduced to the

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<sup>24</sup> Or indeed, this entire mini-dissertation. As Fox (1983) writes, kinship in anthropology is almost like logic in philosophy. In other words, it is the foundational field of the whole subject. My limited training as an anthropologist means that I do not necessarily have the thorough understanding of kinship that most graduates of anthropology do. Nevertheless, this chapter attempts to give a brief overview of the broad historical trends in the study of kinship.

realm of the domestic, the private and the female (Harris, 1981). In its stages of defining itself as a discipline, anthropology “reinforced the boundaries between the West and the rest”, stating that “kinship was something ‘they’ have; ‘we’ have families” which was “a quite different matter” (Carsten, 2004).

In the late 1980s, the focus of anthropological studies started moving away from the “institutional functioning of society” and towards a more “symbolic anthropology” focusing on “processes of symbolic construction of persons and relations” (Carsten, 2004). At the same time, feminist scholarship turned attention towards the lives of women and domestic processes, thereby emphasising more “processual understandings” of domestic labour, child-rearing and household economic (Harris, 1981). The new focuses on gender and personhood, however, could not be fully understood without reference to the type of social institutions that had formerly been associated with kinship like “marriage, family structures, procreation beliefs, inheritance, and so on” (Carsten, 2004). Subsequently the study of kinship, now combined with insights from studies of gender and personhood became reinvigorated and reformulated. Still, there exists a split between what Carsten (2004) terms the “traditionalists” and the “revisionists.” The traditionalist strand of kinship studies tends to reiterate “a view of kinship as it was perceived in the 1970s” going over the same points like “descent, lineage theory, alliance,” and relationship terminology, all while being mostly located in “non-Western cultures, and often in rural communities” (Carsten, 2004). The revisionist strand is exemplified by scholarship that focuses on Western societies, recent technological developments, especially with regard to procreative technologies, and new forms of kinship. To try and get around this century-old bind and to make sure that their work is not subsumed into the traditionalist mode of kinship studies, many anthropologists have used creative re-phrasings to make clear that what they are looking at is not the “lineage theory” of early and mid-twentieth century kinship studies.

### **3.3 A Newer Conception of Kinship (or Practices of Relatedness)**

Some do this in the manner of the authors in *Cultures of Relatedness* who, instead of “beginning with a domain of kinship already marked out”, rather portray “relatedness in terms of indigenous statements and practices, some of which may seem to fall quite outside what anthropologists have conventionally understood as kinship” (Carsten, 2000). The reason for this is that, as Carsten (2000) writes in the introduction, it can be taken as axiomatic that “people are always conscious of connections to other people” and that “some of these connections carry particular weight - socially, materially, affectively”. Furthermore, these connections can and often are described in genealogical terms despite not necessarily being genealogical in nature (Carsten, 2000). The term “relatedness” is

used to “suspend one set of assumptions and to bracket off a particular nexus of problems”, which here refers to the “pre-given analytic opposition between the biological and the social on which much anthropological study of kinship has rested” (Carsten, 2000) - a point returned to later. Carsten concedes that it is a term with an “obvious problem”. Since either it is used in a confined definition to “convey relations in some way founded on genealogical connection”, thereby rendering itself susceptible to “similar problems as kinship” or it is used in a more ordinary way to “encompass other kinds of social relations”, and in so doing leaving it open to charges of being so broad as to be essentially “analytically vacuous” (Carsten, 2000). I now turn to a definition of what I take “relatedness” to mean.

In its simplest and most general formulation, relatedness is concerned with the ways in which “people create similarity or difference between themselves and others” (Carsten, 2004). This creation of similarities and differences is constructed around various markers like gender, class, race, religion and so on. Specific historical contexts and cultural settings are then the catalysts regarding which of these various markers of difference or similarity are “made salient” (Carsten, 2004). The notion of creating sameness, of creating relations is a fundamentally human impulse, since these types of ties are “intrinsic to the social constitution of persons” (Carsten, 2004). This is a seemingly self-evident proposition which has, as Carsten (2004) notes, “long been central to anthropological analyses of how the person is constituted in many non-Western contexts”, but which has, in Western societies, been “obscured by the assumption that kinship”, or relatedness, “is of much more marginal significance”. This assumption is based on the “prominent expression in many legal, medical, philosophical, and religious discourses” of the value and importance of “individualism in the West” (Carsten, 2004).

A focus on these types of discourses concealed the fact that there are Western notions of the person that “express other values too”, which are present in everyday contexts and which “evoke qualities similar to those that anthropologists have been accustomed to attribute to persons in non-Western cultures” (Carsten, 2004). Carsten (2004) uses the example of how her then 4-year-old daughter tired of a game in which her father was acting like a crocodile, pleaded with him to stop “being a crocodile”, to be instead “a person”, himself, to “be a daddy”. This example makes clear how for this child and, Carsten (2004) adds, “no doubt, most others” the fact of “personhood, being ‘oneself’, and being a father – in other words, being a relation – are quite intertwined”.

Having thus covered the fact that relatedness is “intertwined” with what most people (in non-Western and Western contexts) conceive of what it means to be a person, it still begs the question of how these ties of relatedness are formed. In “Euro-American” conceptions of kinship, “procreation and birth have...a special significance” (Carsten, 2013). A significance which extends through to anthropological accounts of kinship, a point made by David Schneider in his influential 1984 work, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*, in which he suggested that the entire analysis of kinship from “Henry Maine and Lewis Henry Morgan to Meyer Fortes and Claude Levi-Strauss” was based on an unspoken and foundational assumption that “blood is thicker than water” (Schneider, 1984). Thus, there was a distinction between the “true” or “real” kinship bonds derived from the natural and biological process of sexual procreation, and “fictive” kinship ties - those which “do not derive from ties of sexual procreation” (Schneider, 1984). This conception has been challenged, but most scholars still frame their discussions of kinship around the “dichotomy between culture and biology, social ties and birth ones” (Carsten, 2013).

Although recently there seems to be, as Sahlins (2013) writes, a change. So much so that the “current anthropological orthodoxy in kinship studies can be summed up in the proposition that any relationship constituted in terms of procreation, filiation, or descent can also be made postnatally or performatively by culturally appropriate action”. That is, whatever manner of relatedness is “construed genealogically” can also be “constructed socially” (Sahlins, 2013). Sahlins (2013) then goes on to note that in many societies there are often cases where “constructed forms of so-called ‘biological’ relationships” are preferable, citing the example of how “brothers by compact may be ‘closer’ and more solidary than brothers by birth”.

The “symbolic opposition” between culture and biology, between social and birth ties also furnishes members of “Euro-American” cultures with a “rich repertoire of idioms” to lessen, or make more dense, their “own potentially infinite universe” of ties of relatedness (Carsten, 2013). In this respect, Carsten (2013) writes that “idioms of social ties may be mobilized to reduce, replace, or reinforce biological ones - sisters or mothers and daughters may be so close that they are ‘best friends’”. Conversely then, idioms of biological ties may be mobilized to reduce, replace, or reinforce social ties, as explained by the statement that “friends, in the absence of kinship ties - or sometimes in contrast to them - can also be ‘like sisters’” (Carsten, 2013). The power of these idioms derives from their description of the “domestic and familial relations of coexistence... in quotidian social practice” from where their “appropriateness to performative and classificatory relations of the same intersubjective quality” stem (Sahlins, 2013).

This brief discussion of the “special significance” of procreation and birth in the Western or Euro-American context and in the context of anthropological accounts of kinship brings to mind the assertion that there is “no truly authentic anthropological modelling of local cultures of relatedness” (Carsten, 2000). Rather, it is necessary to privilege local accounts of relatedness in order to try and appreciate how “relatedness may be composed of various components”, including but not limited to things like “substance, feeding, living together, procreation, emotion” and more (Carsten, 2000). It is also important to keep in mind the fact that “none of these necessarily has priority or a predefined content beyond that given to it by particular people” (Carsten, 2000). Thus, the “only necessary quality” in “particular cultures of relatedness” (Carsten, 2000) is the ways in which these components combine with the “creative energy that ordinary people apply to their lived relationships” (Carsten, 2004), in order to create “new meanings and new experiences of being related” (Carsten, 2000).

### **3.4 Constructing Relatedness**

Many of the components that comprise relatedness, like feeding, living together (at least on Saturday mornings), and emotion, are present at the Boeremark, but there is another element to the culture of relatedness at the market that is not mentioned by Carsten, but which to Sahlins is the fundamental definition of what relatedness (or kinship) is. This is the conception of “participation in one another's existence”, or as Sahlins’ puts it “mutual relations of being” (Sahlins, 2013). Thus, kinsmen are “persons who belong to one another, who are part of one another, who are co-present in each other, whose lives are joined and interdependent” (Sahlins, 2013). In this conception, kinship does not have to do with shared biology, the same blood, or familial ties, but rather it includes people “who live each other's lives and die each other's deaths”; people who “lead common lives” and in so doing “partake of each other's sufferings and joys”; in other words, they are “sharing one another's experiences” (Sahlins, 2013). Sahlins (2013) then, following St. Augustine, writes that the “human world would have begun in kinship”, since we are all descended from Adam, “only to have the pertinent relations filtered out in the social-symbolic process”. Thus, it is the work of “language and culture” to “delimit and differentiate” the infinite possibilities for relatedness into “determinate kinship relations by specific criteria of mutual being”. These criteria may range from “having the same name”, to “eating from the same land”, to being “born from the same woman”, and many more examples. Thus, although kinship may be “a universal possibility in nature”, it is “always a cultural particularity” through the “the same symbolic token as codified in language and custom” (Sahlins, 2013).

Carsten (2004) provides an example of this notion of kinship as people who lead common lives, who have “participation in one another's existence” when she discusses “formal kinship ideology among gays and lesbians in San Francisco in the 1980s”. Here, many bonds of “traditional” kinship were ruptured when “parents or other close kin” refused to acknowledge those who had “revealed their sexuality” as being their kin any longer (Carsten, 2004). These people then embarked on constructing “chosen families”, which took diverse forms but had certain characteristics including “duration in time”, “endurance” and “sustained nurturance”. What made kinship real in this context was not “biogenetic connection but duration in time” (Carsten, 2004), or, to use Sahlins’ terminology, the sense shared by these “chosen families” of leading “common lives”, of partaking “of each other's sufferings and joys” (Sahlins, 2013). These practices of relatedness were to these informants “‘just as real’ as other forms of kinship” (Carsten, 2004). Looking at this in terms of Sahlins’ conception of kinship, the “chosen families” *were* modes of kinship, rather than being “*like*” kinship.

Similarly, in a discussion of North Indian forms of relatedness, Carsten (2000) explains that “sentiment”, “substance” (in terms of shared bodily substance by birth/ancestry) “nurturance” and “affection” form the grounds for all forms of relatedness whether they are “genealogically based or not”. The “varying presence of these different elements” work to construct “a continuum” of “different forms of relatedness”, which may be contrasted with one another “in terms of their affective content” (Carsten, 2000). This continuum can also be adapted to contrast different forms of relatedness in terms of their “mutual relations of being” (Sahlins, 2013). From, on one end, as Sahlins (2013) puts it, “the way I am related to my students as a teacher and to the Chicago Cubs as a fan” to “kin” or “persons who belong to one another, who are parts of one another, who are co-present in each other, whose lives are joined and interdependent”, on the other end. This type of analysis will be profitable in the subsequent analysis of the kinds of relatedness found at the Pretoria Boeremark.

### **3.5 From “Community” to “Family”**

The continuum of relatedness at the Boeremark ranges from, at the far end, those who see the market as their “family”, as being part of them, to, at the more casual level, those who relate to it primarily through the commercial exchange of the market. Yet, even those who see the market as a primarily commercial enterprise still evidence a sense of relatedness to it that they do not ascribe to other commercial experiences. This might be because of the existence of bonds of obligation, which are created through the processes of gifting described in the previous chapter.

So, for example, Gertruida van Wiel - a young woman who lives in Lynwood and visits the market around twice a month - feels that, in contrast to retail stores where there is “no face to the product”, at the Boeremark everything you buy has a “face”, so you can ask the vendors questions about their products. Moreover, you are “thanking them and paying them personally” which leads to a “lot more interaction” which makes the shopping experience “more social” than “going through a supermarket” (van Wiel, 2017).

This is a sentiment echoed by other customers, and by Black (2012), who writes of Porto Palazzo that the “commercial exchanges that happen at the market may seem at first to preclude personal relations”, although in fact the “opposite is true”. This is because the “intensity and the frequency of transactions make the market experience particularly personal for those who work and shop there” (Black, 2012). The Zungus told me that “if you take the people at the Boeremark and you put them in Menlyn, in a mall, the whole thing changes”. In a mall, people “won’t treat each other the same way”, because “the market is more personal” (Zungu et al., 2017), than other types of commercial exchange. The Zungus, however, represent those customers and some vendors who are further along the continuum of Boeremark relatedness as they view the Boeremark as a “community”. That is, in “Maussian” terms, they are more enmeshed in cycles of gifting, as well as, in Sahlin’s terms, having their lives more joined up with others at the market.

Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007) describe the Bloomington farmers’ market as “collective enterprise” which does not “depend on any single person to make it happen”. So even if a particular vendor or customer is not there on a specific day, the “market experience carries on with its own rhythm and regularity” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). This market experience, with its “site-specific sounds and smells” and “many small, routine conversations”, which culminate in “formalized, even repetitious, exchanges”, then combines with the regularity of weekly walks, to give market-going “some of the significance of ritual” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). This idea of a regular weekly walk, of an oft repeated path, and of “formalized” or “repetitious exchanges” is evident in clients at the Boeremark. Take Lizzy van der Merwe for example. van der Merwe, who I introduced in an earlier chapter, is a middle-aged housewife studying for a Masters in psychology. She moved to Pretoria in 2000 and first visited the Boeremark when it was still at the Persequor Park location. She has been going ever since. Every Saturday, she and her husband arrive at the market between six and seven, whatever the weather: “when it rains, I put on boots and go” (van der Merwe, 2017). Sometimes they are alone, sometimes they take their children and/or their grandchildren along. Occasionally they arrange to meet friends there. Regardless of how large their group is, when they

get to the market the first thing they do is buy coffee. They then buy either 8 or 20 or 30 pancakes, depending on the configuration of friends and family (van der Merwe, 2017). After this, van der Merwe makes her rounds buying goat's milk dairy products (since she is lactose intolerant) directly from the producers, with whom she has by now built up personal relationships. She then always has a look to see if there is any second-hand lace at the one stall and if there is she buys it. She walks around to some other stalls, maybe buys a plant or some jams and marmalades, and then goes home.

These “weekly patterns” and “secular rituals” which occur with “the extra-ordinary appearance of the market each Saturday morning, like a circus tent rising on an empty lot”, function to create an “enchanted space” which facilitates the “comfort of a community” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). This applies equally well to the Pretoria Boeremark as it does to the Bloomington farmers’ market. Every single Saturday (except if it falls on a Christian holiday), come rain or shine, the market goes on. This regularity, according to Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007), “like a ritual” has the “power to transform”, changing each customer’s “individual, slightly alienated experience of where she or he lives into a sense of being a member of a community”. Indeed, many of the Boeremark’s customers endorse this view; the Judges say that the Boeremark has a “general sense of community”. They enjoy the friendliness and the “social aspect” of the market. They make friends with other customers and vendors, share stories with “their” vendors (like the “the chicken man’s losing his dog”) and have fun “shopping in the dark with a torch”. They describe with fondness how sometimes, when “you’re pulling a trolley”, things fall out and that “invariably, people will say ‘hey, you’ve dropped something’”, or “tannie, tannie, oom, julle arbeie” (aunty, aunty, uncle, your strawberries)<sup>25</sup> (Judge and Judge, 2017). They also enjoy the fact that “everybody is greeting everybody”, and that “the stallholders are happy to see you”. They feel that “it’s a different kind of person”, “a special kind of person” who goes to the Boeremark (Judge and Judge, 2017). This echoes a customer at the Bloomington market, who thinks that it creates a locale for a “new gathering of the tribes” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007).

For vendors, this sense of community is what makes the Boeremark special. Despite the earlier assertion that the market is a collective enterprise, which carries on regardless of whether individual vendors are there on the Saturday, the sense of community that exists means that, as Noah Mbiti (2017), told me, “if I don’t pitch up” other vendors will “call me and ask why I wasn’t there, and whether I’m okay”. The de Souza’s also brought this up. They related that at the Boeremark they

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<sup>25</sup> This is an aspect of Afrikaans culture. Aunt/uncle are both terms for a male or female relative as well as a term of respect for an older person who is unrelated to you.

know “hundreds of people, personally”, meaning that on the days they do not go, they are “in trouble”, and get flooded with phone calls and messages, asking “are you guys all right? You haven’t been attacked on the farm? We missed you, are you coming back next week?” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). As Miguel put it colourfully, they go through an “uitkak parade”.<sup>26</sup>

The de Souzas represent another point on the continuum of relatedness. They also identify the Boeremark as having a “sense of community”, as well as “camaraderie and friendship”, which all adds up to a “nice vibe” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). They have been vending at the Boeremark since 2003, which has means that they “have a loyal bunch of regular customers”, many of whom have “become friends”. Some of them are “older, single people”, so they hear all about when they’re going to visit their grandchildren overseas and “who’s had the latest batch of grandchildren and so on” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). Another customer/friend comes from Dainfern in Midrand every second Saturday, this customer gets there so early that they are still busy unpacking at which point he just jumps into Miguel’s bakkie and helps him to unload.

In the previous chapter, it was also mentioned how the de Souzas often get presents from customers, which is something they enjoy very much. As they put it, “we have a lot of fun at the market”. Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007) write that “farmers work much alone, so the weekly trip to market can figure largely in their lives”, which is exactly the sentiment the de Souzas have, saying of the market that it is their “weekly social thing” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). When I quizzed them about the possibility of the Boeremark having to move during our interview, they told me that they thought that they had “a very loyal base of customers” who would follow them to a new location and had said to Miguel and Jane, “just tell us where you are”. They also mentioned that if the Boeremark was to be taken over by someone else, they had the impression that most of the stallholders would leave anyway, since the market is “like a family” which “Johan holds together” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). The de Souzas exhibit some characteristics of shared existence at the market. It is, and has been, an important part of their lives and it is obvious that their sense of their place at the market is shot through with affective content. It is a source of pleasure to them to be known as “die ou Engelse mense” (the old English people) at the market. Their “customers are very fond of them though” and the feeling is reciprocal (de Souza and de Souza, 2017).

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<sup>26</sup> An Afrikaans expression for a dressing-down.

Further along the continuum are Hans and Lien Sever who go the Boeremark more for the “joy and happiness of going” rather than to make money. They kept emphasising the social aspect of the Boeremark saying that many people visit the market just to “drink coffee, or eat vetkoeke”, but that these visitors did this, usually “as a family” (Sever and Sever, 2017). For them the market is “not just selling and buying”, rather it is “a social occasion”, a “coming together” (Sever and Sever, 2017). At Porta Palazzo, there are elderly people for whom “talking to friends at the market” is the “height of their social week” (Black, 2012). This is similar to how it is for a number of people at the Boeremark, like Hans and Lien Sever, the de Souzas, and the de Souzas’ clients who are “older, single people” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017).

The Severs are full of stories about the market. Since they have been selling at the market for 10 years, some of the other vendors’ small children at that time are now all young adults, as Lien put it, “ten years is a long time in a child’s life”. Yet, when these young adults, visit the market these days, they make a point of going to see and greet Hans and Lien. They have to share stories with them, to, in one example related to me, tell them about their new girlfriends, to, in short, share their lives. Hans and Lien have such a sense of relatedness to these people, that they feel like the “ouma and oupa van die Boeremark” (the granddad and grandma of the Boeremark) (Sever and Sever, 2017). Hans sits and drinks coffee, ribbing the young men in particular, while Lien hands out “ouma drukkies” (granny hugs). Hans related a story of how the dominee at their church one day gave a sermon about the different types of families a person has, saying: “you have your blood family; you have your church family, you have your work family”. To which Hans added, “and we have a Boeremark family” (Sever and Sever, 2017). During their interview, they kept emphasising the importance of family, and in particular that of their three families: “blood, church and market”. Here, the idiom of biological kinship or relatedness is being used to underscore the strength of, and affection for, the social ties they have built up at the market over the past decade. The Severs are not alone in being on the “family” end of the Boeremark’s ‘continuum of relatedness’.

Hermes Everett told me that when he leaves home at 4 in the morning to go to the market, he knows that “he is going to his other family” and when he makes his way back home he goes back to his “other family”, his wife and kids. To Hermes, everyone at the market “are like family”, but there are some who are more closely related than others. There are a couple of older women at the market who he referred to as being “like a mother” to him (Everett, 2017). One of them was “Auntie Lien” (Sever), who made all the pillowcases for his house. Another is a lady, Dana, who he has known for over 20 years, since he started selling at the Boeremark in 1994 by which time she was already there.

He said that “all the years” that he has been at the Boeremark, “she’s always been the one I look up to”, she “is a mother to me” (Everett, 2017). This lady is by now quite advanced in years and every Saturday morning Hermes makes sure to help her unpack and set up her stall of hand-sewn canvas products and home-made jams and then when the market is over, he helps her to pack everything up again. Hermes treats her with the kind of care one would expect someone to show their “mother” (Everett, 2017).

Hermes’ account of his “Boeremark family” bears all the hallmarks of the “chosen families” Carsten (2004) describes among gays and lesbians in San Francisco in the 1980s, specifically, the “duration in time”, “endurance” and “sustained nurturance”. This “sustained nurturance” or caring for one another and having a concern for other members of the Boeremark family’s “welfare” can be seen on the WhatsApp group for vendors. Whenever someone is in hospital, it gets mentioned on the group and various vendors make plans to go and visit whoever is in the hospital. This type of caring for one another, of what might be termed “mutual aid”, is also mentioned by both Johan van Wyk and Carla von Berg, in relation to culture (although they each do so in slightly different contexts), which links the notion of relatedness at the Boeremark to the concept of the Boeremark as a cultural phenomenon.

Johan, as the person who “holds” the Boeremark family “together” according to the de Souza’s, is of the view that there is a “very strong” community at the market and that they are “a close-knit family”. He was also at pains to emphasise that it “transcended cultures”. He gave an example of one of the vendors, Hashim, who 6 months before had had a terrible accident with a corrosive substance which had left him blind for an extended period and in need of corneal transplants. Johan told me about “all the people who visited him” in the hospital, which was similar to the making of plans to go and visit vendors in hospital on the Boeremark’s WhatsApp group. There were also many vendors “who sent him gifts, necessities and other things” even “people who did not know him personally, but just knew of what had happened to him” (van Wyk, 2017). Hashim recovered from his operation and is now back at the Boeremark every Saturday. These, according to Johan, are the type of things that make the Boeremark “exceptional” (van Wyk, 2017). Johan also mentioned other cases of “mutual aid”, where vendors would “pay for the stand of the person opposite them”, because it, for example, belongs to “a black woman who is struggling, who doesn’t have food for her children” (van Wyk, 2017). In further illustration, a vendor has been paying another vendor’s stall fees, a disabled man who primarily makes a living from selling his handiwork at the market, for years and that man, to this day, does not know who settles his account every month (van Wyk, 2017).

Carla von Berg believes that these examples of caring for one another are a product of Afrikaans culture, saying that “it’s our culture to help to take care of one another” (von Berg, 2017). She also said that “we” at the Boeremark are “like a big family”, where “you support each other in the good times and the bad, with what goes right and what goes wrong”. A phrase that closely echoes Sahlins’ (2013) comment that kin “lead common lives” in which “they partake of each other's sufferings and joys, sharing one another's experiences”.

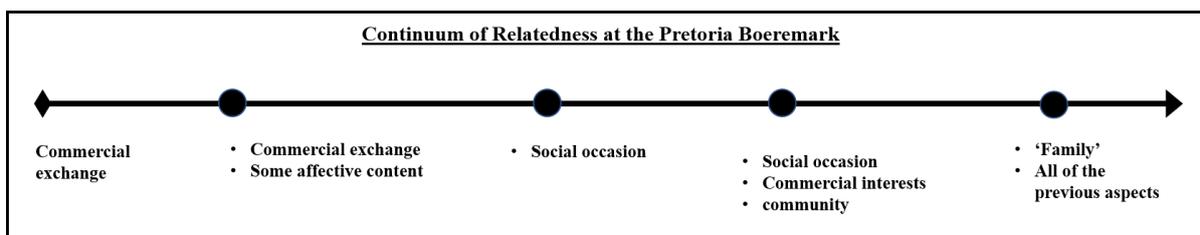


Figure 3.

The continuum of relatedness at the Boeremark starts with those who see it primarily as an arena for economic exchange, although even these (primarily) customers still see it as being a more intimate and personal realm of relations than those that exist in “impersonal” supermarkets. From there it goes to those who feel that by being at the Boeremark in various capacities, they are part of a community. Finally, there are those for whom the sense of relatedness is so strong, that they invariably invoke idioms of biological ties to “replace, or reinforce” the social ties that are fashioned at the Boeremark. These are primarily traders for whom, similar to traders at Tsukiji, the market pervades their “lives and their own sense of social existence” (Bestor, 2004).

With respect to the influence of culture on these notions of ties, it is striking that an individual’s position on the continuum of relatedness correlates to the person’s identification with “Afrikaansness”. Thus, the Kenyan Noah Mbiti, while agreeing that there is a sense of community at the Boeremark, does not feel that strongly about it, having “made some friendships”. He has less affective content for the Boeremark than the phenotypically similar-looking Hermes Everett, in the sense that they are both men with black bodies. Hermes, however, is on the far end of the continuum, having “another family” at the market. But then he was, as he put it “born in Afrikaans” (Everett, 2017). A similar comparison can be made between the de Souza and the Severs, where the Afrikaans couple has a much stronger sense of the Boeremark being family than the Portuguese South African de Souza. Although the de Souza do have lots of affective content for the market.

Thus, it is possible to deduce that culture has a strong influence on the sense of belonging at the market for any given individual.

This chapter first examined the long and contested history of kinship studies within anthropology. It then continued and created a continuum of the different practices of relatedness at the Boeremark. It then investigated how various components and elements contribute to creating these practices of relatedness at the market. The first element is the repetitiveness or cyclical nature of the market, in terms of it occurring (almost) every Saturday, as it has been doing for the past 25 years, as well as the way in which every person who visits the market, as well as the vendors, have their pattern of doing things. They move in “grooved channels” (Geertz, 1978), walking down an oft-repeated path, seeing and engaging with the same people, week after week, in formalized or repetitious exchanges, again and again. Thus, both the space of the market and the people who populate it become known to visitors, and they, in turn, also become known. This secular ritual is one ingredient in creating relatedness at the market, since it allows for the repetitive actions, over time, and the space which enables the creation of a community.

A second element is the history and memory that this cycle of market-going becomes imprinted with. An extended period of engaging with others at the market is prevalent, whether it is the seven years that Noah Mbiti has been selling caps and bangles, the ten years the Severs have been selling place mats and pillows, the 14 years that the de Souzas have been selling home-grown produce or the 17 years that Lizzy van der Merwe has been visiting the market. In the case of vendors like Hermes Everett, a significant part of his life history is now entangled with his experience of being at the market almost every weekend for the past 20 years. The duration in time that Carsten (2004) attributes to chosen families is very evident in Everett’s description of his Boeremark family. For Hermes and others who have a similar experience of having “family” at the market, duration plays a big part.

Even for those who do not feel that the Boeremark is necessarily a “family”, they still identify that they are a part of a community, they have a sense of relatedness to the people they engage with on a weekly basis, they still have “kinship” ties because of the existence, to a greater and lesser extent depending on who you ask, of being participants in one another’s existence (Sahlins, 2013). Yet it is not only that sense of being co-present in one another’s lives. The community at the Boeremark also contains what may be termed a “feel-good factor”, which the de Souzas describe as a sense of camaraderie and friendship which creates a “nice vibe” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017). While the

Severs describe the same idea in terms of the way in which many people visit the market for the social nature of it, whether that is to meet friends for a coffee and a pancake, as is the case with Lizzy van der Merwe, or just the early morning chats with other vendors, when the market is still quiet, that Carla von Berg enjoys so much.

The other element that is integral to the notion of relatedness at the Boeremark is the personal attachment that everyone, regardless of where they are positioned on the continuum of relatedness, feels toward certain aspects of the market. Gertruida van Wiel, for example, despite being on a point on the continuum where she is mainly captivated by the commercial nature of the market, still has her favourite vendors, the ones she always buys from.

These various elements, when combined with the networks of obligation created by the gifting processes that take place (as described in the previous chapter), all work to create a sense of togetherness, or that of “a close-knit family” (van Wyk, 2017), which extends to the other key characteristic that Carsten (2004) includes in the notion of “chosen families”: that of mutual aid, or “sustained nurturance”.

Yet despite the fact that this family is claimed to transcend cultures, it appears to be that an affinity to Afrikaans culture may act as a determinant of where any particular person will fall on the continuum of relatedness. The economic and extra-economic exchanges at the market influence not only the practices of relatedness experienced, but are also informed by and inform the cultural content of the market. The cultural aspect is, in turn, informed by and informs both the exchange aspect as well as the practices of relatedness and thus, it is important to examine this feature in more depth, which is done in the following chapter.

## 4. SAYING GRACE<sup>27</sup>

I stand off to one end of the market, at the bottom of the Pioniersmuseum grounds, next to the duck pond, having my regular cup of coffee, and observing. I alternate my hands between holding the warm enamel cup and sticking them in a coat pocket. It's not quite winter anymore, but it's still chilly in the pre-dawn twilight. I hear a squeal behind me and turn around: it's a young boy chasing ducks about. Suddenly, almost as if it was synchronised, the sun starts appearing over the horizon as "Ons vir jou Suid Afrika"<sup>28</sup> starts playing over the PA system. All this as I'm surrounded by mostly white people, speaking mostly Afrikaans, and with many wearing Springbok jerseys to boot (there was a rugby test-match later in the day). I start getting goose bumps, involuntarily. On the grounds of a museum celebrating those settlers who came to be embodied as Archetypal Afrikaners, all the key components of Afrikaner culture were suddenly in the limelight. The language, rugby, "boeretros" (coffee) and other "traditional" foods, like vetkoek, melkkos, braaied meat, and pap and "kaiings" (crackling). All this wrapped up in a song that cynically aims at evoking nostalgia, specifically for the "noble" past of a small nation fighting against an imperial power. The combination of these elements stirred my inner Afrikaner, in a surprising and emotional way. After a moment or two of reflecting on this, I drained my coffee, waved to the Kenyan vendor selling hats and bangles, and walked off to get a pancake.

- Research Diary entry: 30 September 2016

### 4.1 Introduction

As reflected in the ethnographic sketch above, the prevailing culture of the Boeremark is very Afrikaans. Although there are occasions where the bonnet slips and you realise that the market's Afrikaans culture is not quite as hegemonic as it appears to be at first glance.<sup>29</sup> It was something I experienced on one of my very first visits to the market when an elderly Afrikaans couple was trying to interest visitors to buy their "beskuit" (rusks, another food that Afrikaners consider to be traditional) while at a stall diagonally opposite this, a mother and her daughters, all wearing hijabs, were sampling pine-needle juice proffered to them by the middle-aged Asian woman whose stall it was. This chapter examines the Afrikaans-ness of the market in three main cultural facets that are very visible at the market: namely, the aspects of food, the place, and the kinds of people who frequent the market. It also describes the dissonance that is created within these areas when the bonnet slips. It concludes by demonstrating how the culture that predominates at the market is an

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<sup>27</sup> Christianity, specifically Calvinism, has and in many cases continues to be an important part of what Afrikaners consider to be their culture. The Severs' invocation of a "church family" in the previous chapter is exemplary.

<sup>28</sup> The song by two Afrikaans artists, Bok van Blerk and Robbie Wessels, is ostensibly about rugby, and was released before the 2007 Rugby World Cup. However, it contains a central refrain from the Apartheid national anthem, "Ons vir jou Suid Afrika" (We for you South Africa) repeated over and over again, accompanied by suitably rousing, national anthem-type music.

<sup>29</sup> I struggled to find an image that could appropriately convey this feeling. What happens is that sometimes one is at the market and the Afrikaans-ness of it feels almost overwhelming, as portrayed in the vignette above, and then something happens which makes it disappear for a fleeting moment. Whether it is seeing a Kenyan vendor, observing an Indian couple buying pancakes, or overhearing Mandarin. The bonnet refers to traditional Afrikaner clothing, where women would cover their heads with a bonnet, but it would sometimes slip in such a way that you see something that you are not supposed to see, or that you were not expecting to see.

expression of a more general post-Apartheid Afrikaans whiteness. It further shows how it is precisely the dominant position of this kind of whiteness which, in its unique inflections, allow for the myriad ways in which dissonance is created when its bonnet slips. Furthermore, the economics and relatedness explored in the preceding chapters are profoundly influenced by this specific cultural framework

Johan van Wyk told me, “we often thought that a Boeremark referred to a bunch of ‘boere’ being here, but make no mistake about it, our people at the market are from thoroughly diverse cultures” (van Wyk, 2017). The confusion may occur from the fact that the word “boere” in Afrikaans means farmers, but is also often used as a collective term for Afrikaners more generally. This is why Johan is keen to stress that the culture of the market “stretches across cultures” and that “if you think that a ‘Boeremark’ is still a bit more on the conservative side, then you’re getting the wrong end of the stick” (van Wyk, 2017).

Johan’s dismissal of this stereotypical “boer” image is accurate and, in fact, I only once saw a person who looked like the “boer” of most people’s imaginations. Early one morning by the duck pond at the old Pioniersmuseum site, there stood a man who can only be described as a caricature. He was wearing a khaki shirt, olive green shorts, long socks and traditional “vellies”, topped off with a brown wide brimmed hat and a goatee beard, all the while smoking a pipe. This cartoon was memorable because of the contrast with everyone else at the market, most of whom would not look out of place if they decided to go to Brooklyn Mall on a Saturday morning instead of the Boeremark. Of course, dress can be, and often is, part of cultural expression. Dress is, however, one of the lesser markers of cultural identity at the market. Food at the Boeremark, on the other hand, is (like cuisine in Japan and probably everywhere else) “central to cultural identity” (Bestor, 2004).

#### **4.2 Food and Culture at the Boeremark**

The importance of food to cultural identity can be put down to the fact that, as Carla von Berg told me, “people grew up with this”, which makes it part of who they believe themselves to be and, in turn, makes it a meaningful experience to eat these “traditional” Afrikaans foods. As Black (2012) writes of Porta Palazzo, “food has an incredible power to evoke and stimulate the senses and, in turn, memory and imagination”.

Carla strongly identifies with Afrikaans culture, calling herself a “stoere Boer” (a staunch Boer/Afrikaans person), and she grew up eating melkkos and other traditional “Boerekos”. She

believes that, in general, “Boere make ‘lekker’ food”, but that melkkos is the “lekkerste” (the most delicious, or the nicest) (von Berg, 2017). A statement that some people at the Boeremark would disagree with. Johan told me that on days when the “pap and kaiings” (maize porridge and pork crackling) vendors are not there, that “the market is just quieter”, because “people come from far just to eat it, also because its traditionally Afrikaans”.

Of Tsukiji, Bestor (2004) writes that the “identification of a distinctive Japanese cuisine, of course, implicitly alleges historical continuity and stability”, although “food culture”, like “all other aspects of ‘tradition’”, is continually evolving. In Japan, this has happened to such an extent that “many dishes and delicacies”, which are these days considered to be “hallmarks of Japanese cuisine - by foreigners and by Japanese”, are in fact of “relatively recent introduction or invention” (Bestor, 2004). Similarly, at the Boeremark, products like “kerrie en rys” (curry and rice) or “bobotie” (another variation of curried meat and rice) are recipes that were adapted from Cape Malay culture, but are now seen as intrinsically Afrikaans. As Norah Moleko told me “the braai thing, and pap and so on...they [Afrikaners] got it from us”, in many ways “we do the same things” (Zungu et al., 2017). The product list of the Pretoria Boeremark reads like an inventory of what is considered to be traditional Afrikaans food: biltong, braaivleis (braaiied meat), beskuit, boerewors, koeksisters, melkkos, melktert (milk tart), moerkoffie, pap and kaiings, pannekoek (pancakes), vetkoek, and more. At the same time however, you also get things that are not necessarily Afrikaans, but still recognisably South African, like jams, chutneys, samoosas, biriyanis, avocados, olives, cheese spreads and so on. There are also foods which are not necessarily South African or Afrikaans, but which are not unusual to the middle classes who frequent the market: products like lasagne, muffins, donuts, pretzels, and paninis. Then you have a category of foods which are unusual like macaroons, croquettes, corndogs, spring rolls, pine-needle juice, and traditional Polish smoked meats.<sup>30</sup> Unusual products are an attraction for some customers, like Gertruida van Wiel, who visits the market specifically to buy “weird unusual products”, things like “turmeric root, wheatgrass, and other medicinal herbs”(van Wiel, 2017).

As the Judges (2017) put it, “the traditional Afrikaans things that you get at the market in terms of food” create an awareness of “the Afrikaans cultural background” of the market. Although the fact that there are “a lot of things being sold that are not even South African”, means that they, as (self-

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<sup>30</sup> See Appendix C for a list of products available at the Pretoria Boeremark.

identified) “culturally South African English”, do not feel “out of it”, that is, they do not feel like they do not belong or are not wanted.

Shopping at the Boeremark, as at Porta Palazzo or other markets, is “one of the most public forms of food provisioning”, requiring “multiple social interactions and exchanges”, as well as “many opportunities to be observed”, making it a “social performance” (Black, 2012). As described in previous chapters, this social performance also comprises of talking. On average “people have ten times as many conversations at farmers’ markets as they do at supermarkets” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). A lot of this talking is, inevitably, about food. Black (2012) writes that “food discourses at the farmers’ market” do not only help to “define personal and group identities”, they also “determine the value of food” from both a gustatory and cultural aspect. Therefore, the fact that Johan and his management team allow for products that are unusual, like pine needle juice, gives value to these products. He described this process using the analogy of making “potjiekos”, a stew made in a round, three-legged cast iron pot on a fire. “When you make a potjie”, Johan told me, “you put in vegetables and you put in meat and herbs and so on”, but then “occasionally you throw in some whiskey”, just to make it a bit more “lekker”, to make it more “special” (van Wyk, 2017). This then is what happens when Johan and the management team allow unique and unusual food products at the market and it is something that customers seem to appreciate. Lizzy van der Merwe, for example, enjoys buying “Shu-shus” (a squash like fruit from the Chayoye or *Sechium edule* plant) from “the Chinese” (van der Merwe, 2017). Numerous other customers that I have interacted with also express enjoyment from buying products that are not necessarily Afrikaans: samoosas are extremely popular. Thus, the food discourses frame not only Afrikaans or “traditional” food as having gustatory and cultural value. In terms of food then, while there is an overarching Afrikaans cultural dimension to the market, it is marked by dissonance, a composition that extends to the spatial arrangements of the Boeremark.

### **4.3 A Farm in the City**

As described in the first chapter, in July 2017, the Boeremark moved from the Pioniersmuseum, where it had been for 13 years on the grounds of a museum celebrating the lifestyle of 19th century Afrikaner settlers. This was a particularly evocative setting for a market of “Boere” in the cultural sense. Nuttal (2001) writes that in post-colonial African contexts, it is “most often in the terms of the ‘settler’ that white identity” has been “been given content and meaning”. She continues that the “notion of the settler” also “implies a native” and is premised on a “master-slave dialectic based on land” in which the settler comes to occupy a “position of power” because of his “conquest” and

“ownership of the land through violent means”, which leads to the “dispossession and subjugation of the native owners of that land” (Nuttall, 2001). This process of thinking did not seem to manifest in the minds of vendors and customers at the Boeremark, most of whom (both white and black, Afrikaans and not), all expressed positive sentiments regarding the venue. Themes that emerged clearly were that the trees, the shade, the “ducks, the little stream, and the dogs” (van der Merwe, 2017), all contributed to making it a “nice environment”, which “calms you down” (Zungu et al., 2017). Johan maintained that this atmosphere was a part of the “culture” of the market, if one “used culture in a slightly different definition”. He described it as “a live and let live culture”, as a culture of “tranquillity” or “calm” (van Wyk, 2017), where you “don’t get angry at someone if you’re having to stand around and wait and that sort of thing”. As Miguel put it, the “Pioneer museum gives you that farming feel”, before telling me that he believes that the atmosphere at the market is created by “the people, so even if the venue changes the people will be same and they’ll manage to recreate and maintain the atmosphere” (de Souza and de Souza, 2017).

Upon “trekking” to the new property at 670 Krige Street in July, this seemed to be the case. The fact that the 5-hectare piece of open land had until 2012 been an active agricultural field growing lucerne and that it is still zoned as an agricultural property surely helped. As one vendor put it, it “was a nice atmosphere here on the farm” and another expressed that the customers “enjoy the farm feeling”. Gertruida van Wiel told me that the whole market had and still has a “nice, humble feel to it” (van Wiel, 2017).

The reason that a “farm atmosphere” has such an attraction is alluded to by Black (2012), who writes of Porta Palazzo that “Italian farmers have a privileged place in the popular Italian imagination”. Farmers (or “boere”) hold a similarly privileged place in Afrikaner imaginations. The reason for this is that, like in Italy, for Afrikaners the “agrarian past is recent history”. Just over a hundred years ago, in 1904, “just over 6 percent of South Africa's Afrikaners” lived in “urban” areas. By 1936 this had increased to 44 percent, and by 1960, 76 percent of Afrikaners lived in urban areas (Welsh, 2008). By 2002, close to 90 percent of South Africa’s white population (which includes Afrikaners) lived in urban areas (Kok and Collinson, 2006).

Thus, it could be argued that many Afrikaners still have access to living histories and memories of an agrarian past. My grandfather, for example, grew up on a farm in the far north of what is now the Limpopo province, before moving to Johannesburg to find work when he was 16. Going to a space that has a “farm feeling” allows customers like Aurene Spoor, who grew up in a small farming town

in the Eastern Cape, to feel like she has enjoyed “a bit” of her “origin and heritage”. To Aurene, visiting the Boeremark feels like being back in the “platteland”. The term “platteland” means countryside or rural area, but it has a much stronger emotional connotation in Afrikaans. Referring, for those who use it, to their roots, origin and heritage. As a rock band eloquently phrased it, for many Afrikaners: “dis hemel op die platteland”, heaven is in the countryside (Fokofpolisiekar, 2004). This is possibly because, as Steyn (2004) writes “the Afrikaans language...is seen to have a privileged relationship with the land arising from the deep bond of a farming people to the soil”.

Yet the Boeremark is not on the “platteland”, it is in the middle of the working-class suburb of Silverton, and very much in the urban centre of the city of Pretoria. Silverton, as a “former white working-class suburb”, has like those in Pretoria West that Sharp (2015) describes, “become far more desegregated since the end of Apartheid than middle-class residential areas elsewhere in the city”. The mass retrenchment of many white blue-collar workers in the 1990s caused them enormous financial difficulty, which often led to them being forced to sell their houses. In Silverton, these were often sold to “upwardly-mobile residents” of the nearby townships, people from Mamelodi and Eersterust. As Sharp (2015) writes, “half of the homes in Danville and West Park are now owned or rented by black people who moved out of townships such as Atteridgeville when they became beneficiaries of the state’s employment equity programmes in the civil service”. From casual observation on my way to and from the Boeremark, it seems that this statement applies equally to Silverton. The entrance to the new Boeremark location in Moreleta Street, for example, is home to a combination of black, coloured and white residents. Thus, you have a market that evokes memories of the countryside, but located in an urban setting that is becoming more and more diverse.

This shift in the demographics of the neighbourhood has also led to a change in the demographics of the clients at the market with the result that it has become more “international” and more diverse in the past ten years. The Judges told me that these days there are both more “non-Afrikaners”, as well as more “non-South Africans”, both categories that apply to the hijabed ladies mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. So, in the past ten years, the Afrikaans cultural bonnet that has covered the market has become smaller and smaller. As the Judges told me, these days there are more black vendors and more black clients, so that when you visit the market now you see “black couples, a couple of Indian couples, some with kids”. This sentiment was echoed by Tendai Mpfungu, who despite only having visited the market since November 2015, feels that that “there are more black people attending the market, as clients”. Thus, the market these days is “not as white as it used to be” and according to the Judge’s “that’s good actually”. This positive sentiment regarding increased

diversity is, however, not shared by all the clients and visitors to the Boeremark. For some, how Afrikaans the market is or still seems to be is an important and attractive aspect.

#### **4.4 A Market for All People?**

As mentioned above, Johan van Wyk is always ardently emphasising that the Boeremark “stretches across cultures” and that “our people at the market are from thoroughly diverse cultures” (van Wyk, 2017). He pointed out that at the Boeremark there is “a small, established Chinese culture”, and that there is an “indescribably large German culture at the market”. Since there are “at least five or six Germans” who are vendors and then “their friends who come and visit on a Saturday morning”. These examples illustrate the fact that the market serves as a space where you find “a handful of people who can chat about their own culture”, and “kuier [socialise] together” (van Wyk, 2017). It just so happens that the majority of these “handfuls” are Afrikaans people.

For a visitor like Lizzy van der Merwe, the attraction to visit the market is the “culture” of it, since “there are few such spaces left” (van der Merwe, 2017). What she means by this is that it is a place where the “Afrikaner is in the majority”. She went on to explain that when she was growing up, “since there were separate schools for whites and non-whites, you grew up with the idea that you were surrounded by your peers who came from the same background”. These days “there aren’t any places like that anywhere”, which means that “everywhere you go these days, and it has nothing to do with racism, you are in the minority”, you thus “see what you really are, a minority” (van der Merwe, 2017). Yet the Boeremark, although “there are many foreigners” is a place where she can be in the majority, and as Johan put it, “find a handful of people” with whom she can “chat about their own culture” and “kuier”. She experiences her culture and her foodways, in a space in which she feels safe and where she does not “feel like someone’s going to grab my handbag”. She goes on to say that it is great to spend time with “people that you don’t know, but its people who have the same ideas about life that you do”. She does not want to go to the Irene market, because it is “commercial” and “open to everybody”, in contrast to the Boeremark, which is “exclusive” in the sense of it being one of the “few places where you can go and just be with white people”. She does admit that “there are black people”, but fortunately “they’re in the minority”, and that is “lekker” for her. Although she also enlightened me about the fact that the toilets at the Boeremark are disgusting and that she hates the car guards because they are “poor people who blackmail you for money” (van der Merwe, 2017). Lizzy stopped me on my way out of her house after concluding our interview to explain to me that she “feels” that she is speaking for a number of people when she mentions the “the race question”.

She has this desire to be with her own people and the market provides it for her (van der Merwe, 2017).

Carla von Berg also thinks that people, in her mind Afrikaner people specifically, visit the market because they are “once again” “searching for their own”, their “own support, own people, own products”. She was very quick, however, to mention that by saying this she “meant no racial discrimination or anything like that”, just that she thinks “we” grew up with these products (von Berg, 2017). Being able to visit the market and find these types of products, as well as being able to “say hello in Afrikaans” are important to people who visit the Boeremark. She also feels that the “extremely enjoyable” atmosphere at the market is crucial, because people are “looking for relaxation” (von Berg, 2017). The market provides a place to drink coffee, socialise with friends and meet new people. As a result, it meets an important need, since “our people are looking for a place where they can chat and relax”, which is a “big part of the social and leisure cultures of South Africans”. She also mentioned that despite the market getting bigger, other cultures becoming part of the market and many more foreign tourists visiting the market, that this character of the Boeremark has only become deeper and more entrenched since she started vending ten years ago.

Both of these accounts describe the market as being predominantly run by and for Afrikaners or people who identify with Afrikaans culture. This is exactly how Aubrey Hobson and Meryl Hadley have experienced it. They feel that the market is an “Afrikaans environment, and if you didn’t understand it, you couldn’t have a stall here”. This Afrikaans ambience they experience as being “in your face”, since all the communication is in Afrikaans, the WhatsApp group is only Afrikaans messages and all the advertising is Afrikaans,<sup>31</sup> which “attracts a certain kind of person” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017).

They started to feel uncomfortable with the character of the market when all the drama about the market having to move started, which is “when people became quite extreme”, since the possibility of having to move “evoked a lot of assumptions about why, and that it was race-based, culturally-based discrimination” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017). This was when they encountered vendors who “made it very clear” that they had no desire “to become inclusive or to budge on the cultural aspect of this market”. This did not sit well with either of them, since they feel that to be “South African” you “should do your part to be inclusive”, which they do not take to mean that “you give up on your

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<sup>31</sup> See Appendix D for an example

cultural heritage”, just that “if you can do something for race relationships, you should” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017). Nevertheless, they believe that this represents a small group of people at the Boeremark who “are quite extreme” and “very verbal”, and that this minority “overpower” the general “undertone” of the Boeremark, which “isn’t exclusive”, but “welcoming and friendly and accommodative and tolerant” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017). They have “experienced acceptance and tolerance from most people”, but they still feel that the Boeremark “doesn’t encourage diversity”. They sum up the culture at the Boeremark as being “it’s real, it’s raw”, and since that is what they are, “that’s why we fit in” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017). Since they are raw and authentic, they can still connect “to a guy that’s a boer on a farm somewhere”, despite being in some senses “culturally different”. As Meryl, who is from an Afrikaans background, put it, she has “different viewpoints from farmers”, she has “progressed and/or evolved beyond that”(Hadley and Hobson, 2017).

The “real and raw” aspect of the market’s culture was also alluded to by Aurene Spoor who contrasted it with the Hazelfood Market.<sup>32</sup> Of the Hazelfood Market, she said that “it’s more of a connoisseur’s market” with “very expensive products”, which attracts “yuppies” and “more discerning people”. Hazelfood, in other words, is a place “where mojitos will sell”. The Boeremark, on the other hand, attracts a different kind of person; it has “less pretentiousness”; it is “friendly, and everybody talks to everybody”. So, at the Boeremark “a mojito won’t sell, but Old Brown Sherry will” (Spoor, 2017).

The friendliness of the market is also something that is remarked upon by the customers and vendors I interviewed who were not Afrikaans or white. The Kenyan vendor, Noah Mbiti, for example, does not identify as Afrikaans, but he feels that at the Boeremark “everyone is welcome” (Mbiti, 2017) and sees the market as an inclusive space. Similarly, the Zungus feel “at home at the market”, so much so that they force themselves to go “even when it is cold”. They also said that if the Boeremark “took place every day we would go every day”. They also feel that the atmosphere of the market is “relaxing”, that “no one is in a hurry” and that “people don’t judge other people” ( however, Lizzy van der Merwe would probably not agree) and as a result, they feel that the market is “food for the soul” (Zungu et al., 2017). Similarly, Tendai Mpofo, despite not seeing “any similarities between his culture and Afrikaans culture”, has “never had any problems” at the Boeremark. On the contrary, he feels that the Boeremark is a welcoming space filled with “very kind people” who are “friendlier” and more “welcoming” than the “service you get in shops”. He powerfully describes the Boeremark

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<sup>32</sup> Another weekly market situated in the Pretoria suburb of Hazelwood.

as “a place where you can actually feel like you are a human” (Mpofu, 2017) - a statement which needs some unpacking.

This is a black Zimbabwean man saying that this market, which is primarily constructed by and for Afrikaners, the Apartheid oppressor, gives him a sense of humanity. A market which is frequented by some because of it is “more exclusive” than other markets, because there are a “minority” of “black people”. I take it to mean that he feels here that, in contrast to his day job in a coffee shop, or the experience of purchasing at a supermarket, the market offers a chance to relate to others in a way that is not necessarily defined by consumption. At the market, you do not have to be *Homo economicus*, you can just be *Homo sapiens*. You can relate to others on “the scale of the individuals”, and tap into “ancient patterns of human interaction” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). However, it may just be that the reason that even those visitors who are black, foreign, or not Afrikaans, feel welcome at the market is that the notion of hospitality is a key part of Afrikaans culture. Is this just another way in which the market is white?

#### **4.5 An Exemplar of Post-Apartheid Afrikaner Whiteness**

In the literature on farmers’ markets in the USA, two opposite points of view emerge strongly. The first is exemplified by Robinson and Hartenfeld (2007) who delight in the notion of the market as an almost utopian space, where “different classes, races, neighbourhoods, religions, and backgrounds meet” to exchange not only “food”, but also “language, music, recipes, news, information, and ideas”. This happens in such a way that a market creates “intersecting trading zones where histories, social groups, and cultures reinforce, share, and challenge” through “the purposeful, life-sustaining, and often surprisingly engaging exchanges of the market”, which finally leads to people coming to know one another “eye to eye, out from behind the screens” and “as more than assumptions and stereotypes” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). In this conception, markets like the Boeremark “can play a civic role in bringing people” of all different types “together in familiar ways that become special” and which help to make “a locality into a home” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007). On the other hand, you have authors like Alkon and McCullen (2011) who feel that in general farmers’ markets “contain whitened discourses and practices”, which refer to both the “clustering of pale bodies in farmers’ markets” and the ways in which these spaces are “shaped by a set of white cultural practices”, leading to a “whiteness” which inhibits “the participation of people of colour”.

The Boeremark, as has been explored above, lies somewhere between these two poles and is in fact a combination of elements from each conception of what a farmers’ market is or could be. As this

chapter and in particular chapter 2 show, there is scope for different cultures to engage with one another and get to know each other as more than stereotypes, although the reason is more cynical than Robinson and Hartenfeld would be happy with, since I consider to be an effect of neo-liberalism, which is explored below.

With regard to Alkon and McCullen's conception of farmers' markets, the Boeremark most certainly contains "whitened discourses and practices" or more specifically (white) Afrikaans discourses and practices in terms of the food, the place and the kinds of people who frequent the market. Yet Afrikaans whiteness is different from whiteness in the USA or in Europe, since it contains "nuances and transformations" that have not been investigated in other contexts" (Nuttall, 2001). As Verwey and Quale (2012) note, Afrikaans identity was for many years entwined with Afrikaner nationalism and Apartheid. Whiteness more generally is "historically linked to privilege" and in Apartheid South Africa, the privilege of Afrikaans whiteness was "manifested...in terms of both political power and economic advantage" (Verwey and Quayle, 2012). The fall of Apartheid, and thus, the failure of Afrikaner Nationalism, worked together to create a "'disgraced' Afrikaner manifestation" of whiteness (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012), which also "represented an intense crisis for Afrikaner identity" (Verwey and Quayle, 2012). Yet despite the loss of political power, Afrikaners managed to hold on to "significant social and economic power" in the post-Apartheid period (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). This maintenance of certain forms of power contributed to two related strategies to rehabilitate an "ethnic whiteness in distress" - namely, deploying a defensive ethnicity and embracing neo-liberalism - what Blaser and van der Westhuizen (2012), refer to as the "globalisation of the Afrikaner". I briefly examine these two strategies to understand and explain how they function at the Pretoria Boeremark.

The first strategy emerges in the face of the demise of the Apartheid state, a "white nation state, an outpost of Europe at the southern tip of the African continent" (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012), which has now disappeared and taken Afrikaner nationalism and the supposed unity of an Afrikaner identity with it. In its place emerges a "return to the local" (Hall, 1991) wherein a defensive and exclusivist ethnicity is now employed as a barrier against the destabilisations of postmodernity or in this case as the grounding for trying to solve the "sense of identity embattlement" facing Afrikaners today (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). Hall (1991) describes this tactic as being embraced by marginalised communities who had been previously excluded from "significant cultural representation", although with reference to Afrikaners this is not precisely the case. Rather there is, amongst Afrikaners who "feel 'disillusioned' and 'traumatised' by the

transition to democracy” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012), a detectable discourse in the post-Apartheid era in which the “Afrikaner community” is cast as “as embattled and systematically oppressed”, as well as being “under threat” (Verwey and Quayle, 2012).

This then leads to “perceptions of marginalisation and alienation” (Davies, 2009) and consequently, a withdrawal from public life and into self-contained comfort zones. One example of this is increased “active involvement in cultural organisations and activities that involve mostly in-group members” (Davies, 2009), while another can be seen in an increase in semigration - “a hybrid of emigration and segregation” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012), - which in some cases consists of Afrikaans-speaking whites withdrawing to the gated communities that are spread across the country these days (Davies, 2009). Blaser and van der Westhuizen (2012) feel that this “white strategy” of retreating into self-contained comfort zones accurately captures the “South African Afrikaner version of Hall’s ‘return to the local’ of an exclusivist ethnicity”.

These self-contained and exclusive zones into which Afrikaners can retreat allows them to resist “ethnic enclosure” and points to the other, complementary, strategy for rehabilitating Afrikaner whiteness, that of the embrace of neo-liberalism or “the globalisation of the Afrikaner”. As was pointed out in chapter 1, most Afrikaners “benefited handsomely from the incorporation of South Africa into neo-liberal global circuits after the fall of Apartheid”. As a result, it led to an “an increasingly globalised Afrikaans middle class” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012) who prospered amid the political dislocations of the post-Apartheid era, as well as in the “new global division of labour and power” (Davies, 2009). Blaser and van der Westhuizen (2012) argue that this success led to an embrace of neo-liberalism more generally and in particular its edict of the depoliticisation of social and economic powers. The idea behind this is to create model neo-liberal citizens who negotiate for themselves various “social, political and economic options” rather than striving with others to “alter or organise these options” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012), which would ideally lead to a “fully realised neo-liberal citizenry” consisting of “individual entrepreneurs and consumers” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). Rather, as Jean Comaroff (2004) puts it, the neo-liberal growing hegemony of the market comes with the idea that “personhood is constructed through consumption” and that “culture and history are intellectual property to be possessed... and exchanged-for-profit”.

#### **4.6 Consuming Culture**

The success of these twin strategies can be seen in the rise of what Davies (2009) terms the “festivalisation of Afrikanerdom”, which is part of the rise of consumerism in Afrikaner culture. The festivalisation refers to the multitude of Afrikaans art festivals that have sprung up in the past seventeen years. The most successful of these is the *Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees* (Little Karoo National Arts Festival), which started in 1995 and now attracts more than 130 000 visitors annually. Davies (2009) describes these festivals as “overwhelmingly middle class”, but where the initial “creativity and originality” with regard to visual arts, dance, theatre and discussion panels are “increasingly being side-lined for popular music”. This is because creativity is increasingly being seen in “market terms” or as “a form of interior decoration” through which the “cultural sense of loss” that abounds in, especially the older generation, can be comforted through the “heavy influence of corporate sponsorship” (Davies, 2009). In the same period, there has also been a surge of Afrikaans language films released as well as “rocketing music and book sales”. These are marketed through the “exploitation of sentiment” and the idea that Afrikaans is an endangered language (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012), thereby tapping into the feelings of marginalisation and persecution that some in the community feel, as explored above.

These examples reflect an increased consumerism, which has been part of the strategy of certain companies, like Naspers. Formerly known as Nasionale Pers (National Press), this company was at one time the “Afrikaner nationalist media partner of the National Party (NP)”, the party in control of the Apartheid government (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). Today it is a massive multi-national company, the second largest in the Southern hemisphere, as well as the “monopoly owner of post-Apartheid Afrikaans media” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). Naspers’s media monopoly is typical of the ways in which Afrikaans culture is being commodified and privatised, and therefore “within reach of those that are able to pay for it” (Davies, 2009). As the writer Tom Dreyer (in Davies, 2009) says, there is a sense of a strong “economic dimension” to the “whole Afrikaans thing”.

Thus, Blaser and van der Westhuizen (2012) conclude that the “logics of neo-liberalism and defensive ethnicity merge in the inscription of a ‘chosen’ identity of an Afrikaner group of consumer-citizens consuming their cultural products”.

#### **4.7 (Boere-) Marketing Culture**

The Boeremark shows evidence of both strategies, although they manifest in ways that seem to be different from what Blaser and van der Westhuizen conclude. As explored above, there are aspects of

the market that appear to conform to the notion of a defensive and exclusivist identity. The idea propounded by Lizzy van der Merwe, who feels that she is speaking on behalf of a number of people when she mentions “the race question” and who visits the market mainly because it satisfies her desire to be with her own people, is a prime example of how the market creates a comfort zone for Afrikaner South Africans.

In fact, Lizzy explicitly cited the Boeremark’s “exclusive” nature as a reason why she prefers it to the Irene Market, which is open to everybody. Although there are black people at the Boeremark, van der Merwe can accept it because they are in the minority; in other words, she can visit the Boeremark without having to worry about ethnic enclosure. At the market, she can revel in spending time in a place where the Afrikaner is in the majority, where she can speak her language, consume food that she believes to be intrinsic to her culture and at the same time not have to worry about “someone grabbing her handbag”. This is not merely a coincidence: Johan told me that he strives to create a market at which you do not have to worry about the things that irritate you in the week, where people can just have a “lekker” experience. The detail that all the advertising is in Afrikaans, which Aubrey Hobson and Meryl Hadley mentioned, is designed to appeal to sentiment, evoking the idea of a “platteland” experience and the ability to enjoy traditional Afrikaans delicacies, which means that the Boeremark tends to attract a “certain kind of person” (Hadley and Hobson, 2017).

Carla von Berg also touched on this when she mentioned that she believes that Afrikaner people enjoy visiting the market because they can converse and say hello in Afrikaans and they are able to find products they grew up with. In short, that this is a place where they can find “their own” people, support and products. At the market, the announcements are in Afrikaans, the music played over the speakers is traditionally Afrikaans music and the products very much caters to Afrikaans tastes. All of this in a space which seeks to create a “farm feeling”, an idea of being in the “platteland” (countryside). As a result, there is a case to be made that the Boeremark confirms to Davies’ idea of the “festivalisation of Afrikanerdom”, where mostly middle class Afrikaans people can come and consume what they believe to be their culture. Yet to explain the illustrations in the preceding sections, where the bonnet slips and there are instances that do not fit into the idea of an exclusive Afrikaner comfort zone, it is necessary to turn to the second defensive strategy described by Blaser and van der Westhuizen: the embrace of neo-liberalism.

In chapter 1, it was shown that Johan van Wyk has for a long time been an ardent proponent of the “free-market” system and that he worked hard to convince the Boeremark’s board to embrace this

shift soon after it moved to the Pioniersmuseum grounds in 2004. This change in policy has proved to be enormously successful, as evidenced in the growth of the number of both vendors and customers. The Boeremark today then does not so much accept the primacy of “the market”, as much as it illustrates Comaroff’s claim regarding neo-liberal market hegemony and the accompanying mindsets of both a personhood constructed through consumption and the for-profit-exchange of culture and history (Comaroff, 2004). This certainly applies to Afrikaners, as shown above, but the time since 2005 has also seen an increase in other cultures becoming part of the market with the result that the market these days is not as white as it used to be.

Some of the explanation for this change is attributable to the Boeremark’s move into the heart of a rapidly desegregating suburb (Sharp, 2015), which meant that non-Afrikaans and, especially, black people started to realise that there were, as Noah Mbiti put it, “people making money just behind my backyard” (Mbiti, 2017), leading to an increase in black vendors. The market was now also much closer to areas like Mamelodi, where the Zungus live, which meant that there was also an increasing number of black clients who found that they could “get organic produce at a good price at the market” (Zungu et al., 2017). This geographical explanation partly explains the increase in black vendors and clients that has taken place since then, but a question remains. Why do these people feel welcome in a space which exemplifies qualities that seem to make it an example of an Afrikaner self-contained comfort zone?

It is my contention that the neo-liberal edict regarding the “depoliticisation of social and economic powers” has led to the situation where there is a fairly well realised neo-liberal citizenry at the Boeremark, with the consequence that vendors and visitors to the market are seen primarily as “individual entrepreneurs and consumers” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). In other words, race or cultural affiliation becomes an insignificant aspect, as long as an individual is a consumer or an entrepreneur. Thus, the bonnet slips when a person who is not Afrikaans engages in neo-liberal economic activity; when they perform as model neo-liberal citizens and so constitute their personhood through consumption in the case of customers at the market. In the case of vendors, their personhood is constituted by possessing and exchanging their culture for profit. An example of this can be seen in the case of Hashim, the Indian spice vendor referred to in chapter 3 who was injured and received mutual aid from his fellow vendors. Hashim’s stand contains lavish piles of spices, more reminiscent of something one might see in India or Morocco than in Pretoria. When customers ask for “braai mix”, he engages in an elaborate performance of grabbing varying amounts from the assorted hills in front of him with a flourish before mixing them together in a new packet. In this

way, he is performing his culture in the pursuit of profit and in so doing, he is acting as a model neo-liberal citizen, who is embraced and welcomed at the Boeremark.

This chapter has examined the ways in which the Boeremark is extremely Afrikaans in terms of certain key cultural aspects, as well as the ways in which dissonance is experienced when the bonnet slips. The first section examined the ways in which discourses surrounding food worked to render Afrikaans “traditional” food as having gustatory and cultural value, and how these same discourses functioned to give food that did not fit into that category similar values. Thus, the dissonance is already apparent in one of the key areas of the market.

Next, the privileged place that farmers hold in Afrikaner imaginations, because of the proximity of most Afrikaners to the recent agrarian past, was explored to explain why the “farm feeling” of the Boeremark’s location holds such an attraction for most of the visitors to the market. These visitors tend to be white and/or Afrikaans and yet the market is not in the countryside, it is rather in an urban setting. Specifically, it is set in the middle of the formerly white working-class suburb of Silverton, which is rapidly diversifying, thereby leading to the market becoming more diverse - another example of the bonnet slipping. It then probed the ways in which different visitors (white, Afrikaans, English, black, Zimbabwean) experienced the market, and found that they all felt welcome and enjoyed visiting the market, although for varying reasons.

This unanticipated outcome then led to a theoretical investigation to describe this phenomenon. A possible reason is that while the market seems at first glance to be and in many cases, is a “white space” that is conditioned by white discourses and practices, it represents a very specific manifestation of whiteness. A manifestation incorporating two related strategies that are designed to rehabilitate an Afrikaner “ethnic whiteness in distress”. These strategies consist, on the one hand, of a defensive ethnicity, which constructs the Boeremark as an exclusive comfort zone for Afrikaners, where they can partake of their own culture with respect to food and socialising especially within a “festivalised” (and sentimentally appropriate) “platteland” atmosphere. On the other hand, there is the strategy of embracing neo-liberalism and it is this specific strategy which allows for the dissonances that occur, like seeing hijabed ladies trying an Asian vendor’s pine-needle juice within the overarching Afrikaans cultural framework, where you are welcomed and to an extent, embraced as long as you perform as model neo-liberal citizen. It is this second strategy that also allows for the market to appear to have a performance of South African multi-culturalism, to be viewed as an expression of the “rainbow-nation”, an aspect examined in more detail in the final chapter.



## **5. CONCLUSION: TUCKING IN**

This concluding chapter aims to place the economic aspect of the Boeremark, the practices of relatedness found at the market, and the cultural phenomenon of it into a "wider ethnographic context". One which takes the entanglement of the economic, the social and the cultural aspects of the market and shows how certain aspects of the Pretoria Boeremark seem to have symbolic resonance with contemporary South African economic and cultural practices. Specifically, it shows how the Boeremark exemplifies post-Apartheid economic practices of the South African state more broadly. Furthermore, it shows how the market is paradigmatic of Afrikaans whiteness in the post-Apartheid era and how this specific manifestation of whiteness is open to a certain level of dissonance (or "bonnet slippage") both at the market and in the broader arena of a neo-liberal South African society.

### **5.1 Introduction**

As described in the opening section, in July 2017, at short notice, the Pretoria Boeremark had to move for the second time since its establishment in 1992. This occurrence threw a stable market into absolute chaos. The Boeremark's move was less than 2 kilometres away, but it was still called the "Great Trek". The original Great Trek was the move of the Afrikaner Voortrekkers, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, away from the Cape and the hegemony of British rule into the interior where they would be able to establish their own republics. This was also the foundation myth of Afrikaner nationalism, which along with Apartheid, provided both material benefits and symbolic stability to Afrikaners. The collapse of Apartheid and Afrikaner nationalism with it, I argue, led to the underlying logic that governs the Boeremark today. Similarly, the market was moving away from the public space of the Pioniersmuseum and the "tyranny" of the ANC government onto a piece of land that the TLU (the organisation which owns the Boeremark) bought. This allowed them to establish their own territory, where they could run things the way they wanted to.

The market, however, had not wanted to move. The management had tried everything it could to win the tender to rent the Pioniersmuseum grounds, including making a presentation that demonstrated the "stunning example of multiculturalism" presented by visitors to the market. Multiculturalism is another foundation myth, but this time for post-Apartheid South Africa: the optimistically titled "rainbow nation". This refers to the diversity in this country and how everyone was supposed to live

together happily after the first free and fair democratic elections in 1994. It is a myth that retains much power more than two decades down the line. Everyone tries to demonstrate their commitment to this ideal. The Boeremark does exhibit some expression of this ideal, but it is, I argue, because of the neo-liberal logic that underlies the operation of the market.

Markets are one of the most ancient forms of provisioning that humanity has. So much so, that marketplaces like the Boeremark or Porta Palazzo, busy outdoor spaces filled with vendors, customers and products, and all the accompanying sights, sounds and smells, already existed by the start of the Common Era. After markets seemed destined to disappear in the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to industrial food production and supermarkets and the growth of malls and shopping districts, they bounced back. In South Africa, this seems to have taken off around 2006 with a new breed of markets, which exist as weekend social institutions for globalised middle and upper-middle class South Africans. At these types of markets, it is expected that one has the cultural capital to know the difference between artisanal and mass-produced bread, or to be aware of the latest international food trends, like kale or quinoa. The Pretoria Boeremark, I have argued, fits in between these two differing conceptions of what a market is. This is because it has the "artisanal" and "trendy foods", but it is mostly concerned with goods for general household provisioning. Yet the Pretoria Boeremark is more than just a hybrid of ancient and new markets.

## **5.2 Objectives and Achievements**

The main objective of this research was to set the Boeremark within a larger social and cultural frame to make more visible how this specific marketplace is affected by other areas of life.

Thus, the first chapter situated the Boeremark within the history of the suburb of Silverton which it has called home since its establishment in 1992. This illuminated how the market has been shaped by material particularities of place. The fact that the Boeremark was for a long time held on the grounds of the Pioniersmuseum, from where H.H Mundt sold produce to the main Pretoria market towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, gave the site a special emotional connotation. Mundt would surely have been up at 3 or 4 in the morning to tend to his animals or to change the horses for the stagecoach to the east. Similarly, even when the site became a museum in the 1970s, there were events celebrating Afrikaner (or Boer) heritage, selling products that you could easily get hold of at the market today. Similarly, the van Wyks grew fresh vegetables for the inhabitants of Silverton at 670 Krige Street until the 1960s, and today many of the suburb's inhabitants come to the very same spot to buy their weekly supply of fruit and vegetables.

The fact that a fair number of these inhabitants are not white and that the number of vendors has increased since the market moved to the Pioniersmuseum in 2004 is also explained by the location. This is because Silverton, which was initially a white working-class suburb, became far more desegregated much quicker than middle-class suburbs after the end of Apartheid. This was because many blue-collar workers were retrenched and the accompanying financial difficulty led them to sell their houses to upwardly-mobile residents of Mamelodi and Eersterust. These financial difficulties were then exacerbated by the restructuring of the economy after 1994, and even more so with the adoption of GEAR in 1996. One of my informants, Hans Sever, although not from Silverton, is an example of this. He worked for the South African railways for almost his entire career. Then in 1995, he decided to retire. Just more than a decade later, because of inflation and other economic factors, his pension was no longer sufficient for him and his wife, Lien, to live comfortably. That is when they decided that they needed to make a plan and started vending at the Boeremark in 2007.

The section after this examined the history of the Boeremark as an institution more specifically. How it was started by the TLU, who remain the sole owners, in 1992 to allow small farmers to sell their produce directly to consumers, partly because of the way these farmers had borne the brunt of economic reforms initiated by the Apartheid government in the late 1980s. This was followed by an explanation of the Boeremark's first move from the Persequor Park location because of development to the Pioniersmuseum grounds in 2004. It then analysed the critical role played by the market manager for the last 20 years - Johan van Wyk. How his experiences in helping to dismantle the Agricultural control boards in the period after 1994 convinced him of the merits of the free-market economy and how he struggled to convince the members of the board that it was a good idea.

The implementation of this process took a while because of Johan's insistence on honouring the historical agreements with the various vendors who held the monopolies on certain categories of products. Once these vendors left around 2005 or 2006, the market moved completely onto a free-market footing. This shift led to an explosion in the number and types of vendors, meaning that where there was one coffee stand originally, there were now twelve, all filling different market-niches. This decision improved not only the selection of products but also the quality and the price, adding up to a much better deal for clients visiting the market.

The next section briefly explored the South African economy's transformation, starting with the adoption of limited reforms aimed at economic liberalisation during the dying days of Apartheid. It

looked at the adoption of RDP by the ANC after the 1994 election and how this was subsequently watered down. RDP was eventually replaced by GEAR, a policy decision that was aligned with neo-liberalism. Yet this expression was uniquely inflected in the South African case, since the state was actively engaged in entrenching these ideas. Similarly, the RDP welfare provisions were retained and expanded in the period after GEAR was adopted, which marks another deviation from the usual neo-liberal agenda.

The objective of the second chapter was to examine the Boeremark with reference to its role as an economic institution. This consisted of firstly looking at the growth in the number of vendors, despite (or possibly because of) a wider economic downturn in the local economy, as was mentioned above with regard to the example of Hans Sever. It then moved on to how the free-market policies of the market when combined with relatively low barriers to entry (in contrast to Tsukiji in Japan or Porta Palazzo in Turin, but similar to the farmers' market in Bloomington) might be a possible explanation for the ongoing expansion in the number of vendors.

This was followed by a study of the different types of vendors at the Boeremark: specifically, those who vended to make ends meet; those whose sole livelihood depended on the market; and lastly, those who engaged in it as a hobby or simply to make a little extra money. The money floating around, as well as vendors' reluctance to discuss it and my own speculations as to how much it might be, then followed before moving on to an examination of how customers' perceptions of products might influence their ideas about how cheap the market is. This was followed by a description of the various types of customers who frequent the market, as well as the diverse reasons why they visit and shop there. Some explanations included shopping for their business; because the prices were better; wanting to support individuals rather than corporations; or simply enjoying the social aspect of it. It was also qualified that this was by no means an exhaustive overview, but rather a small window into the motivations of the approximately 6 000 people who visit the Boeremark every Saturday.

The vendors' role as clients of the market themselves was then explored in order to explain how the market creates an internal economy and thus, seems to be an almost self-sufficient entity. The fact that some of these transactions were in the form of goods exchanges, as well as the ways in which vendors and customers engaged in non- or extra-economic exchanges in the form of advice, recipes, banter or gifts then formed the basis for an exploration of the Maussian notion of the gift.

This concept was utilised to explain how cycles of gift exchanges are created within the market to create ties that bind or networks of obligation, which help to imbue the market with additional significance to that of quotidian shopping experiences. This added significance then works to explain the ways in which the market creates forms of relatedness that are, at least perceived, as being different to what one can find in malls.

Thus, the second chapter satisfied the objective of showing how economic activity at the Boeremark is embedded in ongoing networks of personal relationships rather than being carried out by “atomized actors” (Bestor, 2004). In other words, meaning that the economic aspects of markets are “inseparable from the social organization of the marketplace” (Bestor, 2004).

This then led into the third chapter, which began with a brief discussion of the history of kinship studies and the construction of a continuum of relatedness at the Boeremark. This continuum was then used to clarify the different ways in which relatedness is experienced at the market. On the one end of the continuum were those (primarily customers) who see the market mainly as an arena for economic exchange, although even they felt the market to be a more intimate and personal realm of relations than what could be experienced in other shopping venues. The next point on the continuum was marked by vendors and customers who felt that being at the Boeremark made them part of a community. At the other end of the continuum were those (primarily vendors) for whom the market pervades their “lives and their own sense of social existence” (Bestor, 2004). These people felt such a strong sense of relatedness that they invariably invoked idioms of biological ties to replace or reinforce the social ties that they had of the market. They often referred to having a “Boeremark family” or having a mother or children at the market.

This chapter also investigated the components and elements that contribute to creating these practices of relatedness at the market. These ranged from the repetitive or cyclical nature of the market and the history and memory that this cycle of market-going becomes imprinted with, to the presence of a “feel-good factor”, and a sense of personal attachment, regardless of where on the continuum they fell, as well as, to a greater and lesser extent depending on who you ask, of being participants in one another’s existence (Sahlins, 2013). The combination of these qualities and the different extent to which they were present are what determined where on the continuum any individual would be located.

These various components, when they are combined with the cycles of gift exchanges, described in chapter 2 that function to create ties that bind and networks of obligation, then facilitate a sense of togetherness or that of a close-knit family. Yet, although Johan van Wyk claimed that this family transcends cultures, another determinant of where any individual would lie on the continuum of relatedness seemed to be their level of affinity with Afrikaans culture. Thus, it was important that the fourth chapter investigated the ways in which the social organization of the market, as well as the forms of exchange that facilitated it, were impacted by and in turn impacted the cultural aspects of the market.

The other reason for writing a chapter about the culture of the Boeremark is that culture is an animating force for markets in general. Since a market is "rooted" not merely in the landscapes and seasons but also in the social orders, the foodways and the ethnic groups of its location, it can "provide particularly rich insights into how those elements intersect for a particular community" (Robinson & Hartenfeld, 2007).

The fourth chapter, therefore, examined the ways in which the Boeremark can be considered to be an intense manifestation of Afrikaner culture in certain aspects. It also examined how there are instances where the "bonnet slips" and how this then leads to an experience of dissonance. This was first illustrated with regard to the types of food found at the Boeremark, with a specific emphasis on how discourses surrounding food at the market work to give cultural and gustatory value to both foods that are considered to be traditionally Afrikaans, as well as to food that is not. This was the first instance of the bonnet slipping in a cultural dimension on which people place great emphasis, since "food has an incredible power to evoke and stimulate the senses and, in turn, memory and imagination" (Black, 2012).

The second aspect of cultural expression at the Boeremark that was investigated was the value of the "farm-like" atmosphere that the Boeremark has. This atmosphere was especially important to Afrikaans visitors to the market and it was argued that this was because of the privileged place which farmers or "boere" hold in Afrikaner imaginations, due to the relative recentness of an agrarian past. Yet the Boeremark is not in the "platteland" (countryside), it is in fact firmly in the city. More specifically, it is located in the urban setting of Silverton which, as explored in the paragraphs regarding chapter one above, is a rapidly diversifying, formerly white, working-class suburb. This has led to the market becoming more diverse, in terms of both customers and vendors, yet another example of the bonnet slipping.

This chapter then proceeded to investigate the ways in which the diverse members of the Boeremark community (vendors and customers, white, Afrikaans, English, black, and even Zimbabwean) experienced the market. The unanticipated outcome was that all these various people both felt welcome at and enjoyed visiting the Boeremark. They felt this way for different reasons, but there was no one who felt that they did not belong at the market or that they were not wanted there. This was the basis for a theoretical investigation into why this might be the case.

The outcome of this investigation section showed that the Boeremark initially seems to be a white space and in many cases is one. That is, it is a space which is constructed by white discourses and practices, and governed by white norms. Yet, this whiteness is of a very specific kind, namely that of an Afrikaner ethnic whiteness in distress. It is this manifestation and the two accompanying related strategies of rehabilitation, which give the Boeremark a distinctive character. These two strategies are, firstly, that of a defensive ethnicity, which paints the Pretoria Boeremark as an exclusive “comfort” zone for Afrikaners where they can partake of their own culture with respect to food and socialising especially within a “festivalised” (and sentimentally appropriate) “platteland” atmosphere. Secondly, there is the strategy of embracing neo-liberalism.

This embrace, particularly the neo-liberal dictate of depoliticising social and economic powers, is what allows for the instances where the “bonnet slips” and dissonance occurs. The social organization of the market is, thus, not so much culturally specific, as it is an example of a neo-liberal citizenry wherein vendors and visitors are viewed as “individual entrepreneurs and consumers” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). It is this particular aspect of post-Apartheid Afrikaner whiteness that allows for occurrences like seeing hijabed women trying an Asian vendor’s pine-needle juice take place within the overarching Afrikaans cultural structure of the market. At the Boeremark, no matter who you are, you will be welcomed and embraced if you, to a certain extent, perform as a model neo-liberal citizen.

### **5.3 My Argument**

The Pretoria Boeremark has, as Bestor (2004) in reference to Tsukiji writes, a meshing together of “institutional structures, and cultural meanings”, in such a way that much of it symbolically resonates with aspects of the economic and cultural practices of South African society.

The economic transition of the Pretoria Boeremark, explored in the first chapter, from a tightly-controlled economic system, where a small number of vendors held monopolies in certain categories of products to a completely free-market footing where it does not matter that there are 12 coffee vendors, mirrors that of the South African economy. Specifically, the change from a state-sheltered system as exemplified by the agricultural control boards to a free-market system as embodied in GEAR - the Growth Employment and Redistribution macro-economic strategy. The Boeremark only underwent this transition about ten years after the country did, since GEAR was unveiled in June 1996 and implemented soon thereafter. However, at the market, Johan van Wyk unveiled the plan in 2005/6, but it took slightly longer to implement, since he was insistent on honouring the old agreements until the vendors in question left the market.

The unique (or paradoxical) inflections that South Africa's version of neo-liberalism has, namely the fact that the state actively helps to entrench the "political economy of neo-liberalism" (Mathebula, 2015) while overseeing an expansive welfare system of grants, are also visible at the market. Specifically in the way in which Johan and his management team, while praising a completely free-market system, still have a waiting list of over 60 vendors and from it choose who will get a chance to vend at the market. Similarly, there is a system of welfare that exists at the market where people take care of one another, as evidenced by the examples of aid offered to Hashim, the spice dealer, and the cases where vendors pay for the stand of the person opposite them (van Wyk, 2017). So, you find, in the midst of a "free-market" economic system at the market, a case of what may be termed a mini "welfare state", reflecting the very same paradox as the larger South African neo-liberal "welfare" state. The reasons for the existence of this paradox are, however, markedly different.

At the national level, it is because of what Davies (2009) calls "acting like Janus", whereby the government tries to satisfy its constituents and the broader electorate with "promises of betterment" and generous social welfare, while also seeking to "appease" international bankers and political leaders from the G7 countries. At the market the paradox is reflective of the practices of relatedness which exist: the sense of being "like a big family" where "you support each other in the good times and the bad, with what goes right and what goes wrong" (von Berg, 2017), while at the same time being an economic institution that has embraced neo-liberalism.

The existence of the practices of relatedness are a result of the specific nature of the economic exchanges that take place at the market, especially in relation to the ways in which the exchange of gifts engages vendors and to a lesser extent, customers in webs of reciprocity and obligation. This

when taken in combination with the internal economy of the market leads to many vendors feeling that they are, at least, part of a community, if not part of a “family”. So while there is a “whole competition thing” that is necessary to “make it” at the market (de Souza and de Souza, 2017), the practices of relatedness and the nature of the exchanges mean that there is not as much competition as one would expect under a truly free market system. Instead, there is a sense of camaraderie, fun, and even solidarity.

The embrace of neo-liberalism is, however, responsible for the ways in which the Boeremark deals with the changing demographics of its home suburb of Silverton. This is because the neo-liberal dictate of depoliticising social and economic powers is one part of the two-part strategy for rehabilitating Afrikaner whiteness that I believe to be at work in the functioning of the market. The neo-liberal prong of the strategy allows for cultural difference, as long as those who are culturally different perform their roles as members of a neo-liberal citizenry. In other words, as long as they conduct themselves as “individual entrepreneurs and consumers” (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). This is similar to Black’s (2012) assertion that at Porta Palazzo, the “commercial activities of the square mediate some of the social tension that is born out of cultural differences”. This is because, in the neo-liberal conception, as long as you are either an entrepreneur or a consumer, your ethnicity becomes irrelevant. This can also be seen in a broader way in South African society where social institutions, which were formerly the preserve of whites, now allow black, but still middle class, people to take part. For example, at golf clubs, fly-fishing retreats, former model C schools and so on. So, while the Boeremark brings people “into a direct trade”, which functions “on a scale apart from the global branding and commodification found elsewhere” (Robinson and Hartenfeld, 2007), it is still a product of the neo-liberal environment of the South African society in which it is situated.

This prong of the strategy also allows the Boeremark to claim that it is adhering to the “rainbow nation” ideal of a multi-cultural society. This is precisely what Johan did when he made a presentation for the tender to rent the Pioniersmuseum ground, where a key part of his sales pitch was that the visitors to the market present a “stunning example of multiculturalism”. Being perceived as committed to this ideal of post-Apartheid South African society means that the market does not have to worry about sanctions or criticism from the authorities and thus, allows the other prong of the rehabilitation strategy to function. Namely, the deployment of a defensive ethnicity that serves to portray the Pretoria Boeremark as an exclusive “comfort” zone for Afrikaners where they can partake of their own culture, especially with regard to food and socialising within a “festivalised” (and sentimentally appropriate) “platteland” atmosphere.

This means that the Boeremark can be a space in which the food, the announcements, the music, the layout of the space, and the modes of interaction are all structured according to an Afrikaans cultural conception. Yet it is my assertion that this is mostly a case of smart business sense, whereby the Boeremark panders to Afrikaans people's concerns about their identity and their culture in order to make more money for the vendors and the market itself. The market is, in fact, like the *Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees* (the Little Karoo National Arts Festival) described in chapter 4: an overwhelmingly middle class phenomenon which serves to comfort those Afrikaners who experience a "cultural sense of loss" (Davies, 2009). It serves up Afrikaans culture as something to be consumed, "within reach of those that are able to pay for it" (Davies, 2009). It perfectly exemplifies post-Apartheid Afrikaner whiteness where the "logics of neo-liberalism and defensive ethnicity merge in the inscription of a 'chosen' identity of an Afrikaner group of consumer-citizens consuming their cultural products" (Blaser and van der Westhuizen, 2012). While at the same time, allowing for the dissonance and bonnet slippage that is essential to survive politically while remaining economically viable within its current location.

#### 5.4 Limitations

This analysis is, however, not a complete explanation of the myriad ways in which the Boeremark functions. Below I outline some of the possible limitations of my argument.

Bestor (2004) writes that "observers of Japanese economic structure and behaviour fall into various interpretive camps", where some emphasise economic calculation, while others look at "special institutional arrangements of contemporary Japanese political economy" in order to claim that there are "social differences in which economic behaviour is embedded".

He describes these observers thusly:

The proponents of these varying interpretations often seem to be playing the children's game of *jan-ken*: rock crushes scissors, paper covers rock, scissors cut paper. In one or two rounds of the game, one factor can triumph. Economy can trump society, or culture can explain institutions, or political institutions can dominate cultural discourse. But over a longer run (or with more players) a different and more realistic picture emerges: culture sustains institutions, institutions shape the economy, the economy recalibrates culture, and on and on.

In other words, a market, its location and its culture are "are indivisibly joined". Thus, the argument that I have set forth above which suggests that the functioning of the Pretoria Boeremark can at least be partially explained through the twin strategies for rehabilitating Afrikaner whiteness in post-

Apartheid South Africa, with special emphasis on the embracing of neo-liberalism prong, is inevitably reductive. That is, it presents a characterisation or explanation of the market in a simplified way, which may not be sufficiently explanatory. An emphasis on neo-liberalism being the engine that propels actors to behave in various ways is something of a trend in much academic scholarship today - a situation that can be explained by the overwhelming hegemonic position that this ideological system has achieved over the last thirty to forty years. This leads to cases where the easiest solution is to point a finger at the reigning economic ideology and attribute causality to it. It is also a handy solution that will be applicable just about anywhere. In Bestor's (2004) analogy of rock-paper-scissors, neo-liberalism is the grenade that always wins.

Furthermore, this focus on the idea that "personhood is constructed through consumption" (Comaroff, 2004), that human beings act only in terms of what the market values, as *Homo economicus*, is problematic. It ignores the ways in which people are often motivated by factors other than rational choice maximisation: whether it is feelings of altruism, love or some other concern that cannot be captured in market conceptions of value. Thus, the Pretoria Boeremark cannot be completely or adequately explained merely through the impact that the "free market" ideology of neo-liberalism has on it, however prevalent it may be.

Rather, the Pretoria Boeremark is thoroughly embedded within its social, political, cultural and historical context. As discussed in the preceding chapters, Tsukiji, Porta Palazzo and the Bloomington farmers' market are also constrained by their varying and particular contexts. The Boeremark exhibits limited overlap with some contexts of the other markets, for example the identification of traditional food with Tsukij, the pricing and vendor access of Bloomington and some historical trends and role of commercial exchange with Porta Palazzo.

In general, however, the context of the Boeremark is vastly different from these other markets. This mini-dissertation has attempted to show how the various aspects link to each other. The location of the Boeremark in South Africa and in the Pretoria suburb of Silverton not only influences the cultural expression of it, but also the demographics of visitors and clients, and the economic organisation. In turn, the economic organisation is shaped by the economic history of the country and also influences the ways in which people relate to each other at the market. These practices of relatedness are influenced by the economics and the culture of the market, but they also influence the cultural expression of the market and the ways in which exchanges, particularly those of a non-economic or gifting kind, take place at the market.

The peculiar history of South Africa and the ways in which the country is attempting to work through it is what motivated my decision to focus on the way in which Afrikaner whiteness works to structure the Pretoria Boeremark. I am only playing a couple of rounds of rock-paper-scissors, which means that in this case the factor consisting of rehabilitating Afrikaner whiteness wins out. Particularly the one strategic prong of embracing neo-liberalism. More rounds will be needed if we are to accurately capture the precise ways in which each aspect impacts the other ones.

### 5.5 Epilogue

The market and the parking lot were almost deserted when I drove in through the Moreleta Street entrance just before 9. Regardless, the young man in his high visibility vest diligently directed me to one of the countless open spots. I had not visited the Boeremark for more than a month, an attempt to get some distance from my research site as I was finishing the writing of this mini-dissertation. I had come back only to get clarity on an ethical puzzle, to ask Johan van Wyk whether he would allow me to use his real name in my research. I'd bargained on him not being busy at this late an hour and I found him sitting in the wooden hut which does double duty as a management office and a studio for the broadcasting of music and announcements, eating a portion of pap and kaiings.

He gave me his blessing, and asked that I should give him a copy once it was finished. I promised to do so, shook his hand and walked outside, where I bumped into Hans and Lien Sever. Hans and I had a chat about all sorts, and as I was bidding farewell, Lien wished me a Merry Christmas and insisted on giving me an "ouma drukkier", which I gladly accepted. I set off around the grounds, surrounded by vendors packing up amongst the newly-planted trees and the clusters of wooden structures, which had started to transform this bare piece of land into a local interpretation of a village's market square.

After a while I came across the de Souza's, busily trying to sell the last of their produce for the weekend. They didn't have to convince me to buy a pack of three of the most gorgeous bell peppers I had seen in a long time, for the bargain price of R 15. Clutching my purchase, I waved goodbye, and continued my walk, sound tracked by Kurt Darren. His popular Afrikaans hits permeating the property now that the chatter of thousands of customers was absent.

This once strange space had, in the six months since the "Great Trek", become familiar, not only to me, but also to the vendors and the many visitors that had trekked along. On my way out, I got to Hermes' stand, now splendidly shady underneath a reed-roofed lean-to, where I soon realised that he had not lost the gift of the gab. Still smiling after being told a rapid succession of jokes, I made my way back to my car. I repaid the young man for his service with a R 5 coin, to which he responded "dankie, oom".

As I waited in a queue to drive out, along with all the vacating vendors, I reflected that I would no longer be visiting the market for research. I would instead visit to buy good quality products, in a friendly atmosphere, from vendors I knew and trusted. In other words, I too would from now on be on the continuum of relatedness somewhere between social occasion, commercial interest and community. Just like everyone else at the market, most of whom had finished their weekly visit and left before I got there.

- Research diary entry: 2 December 2017

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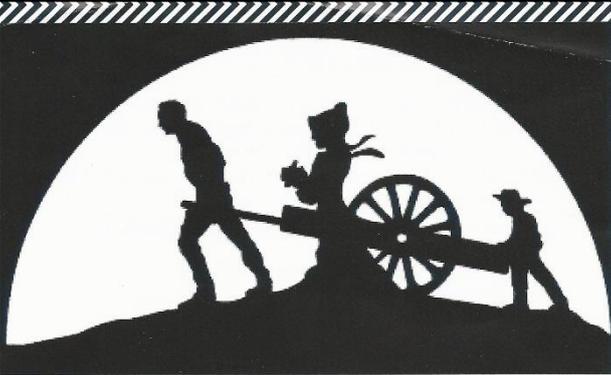
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## 7. APPENDICES

### 7.1 APPENDIX A: THE BOEREMARK'S GREAT TREK

Front



IS JULLE REG VIR DIE  
BOEREMARK SE GROOT  
TREK?

— — — — —

ARE YOU READY FOR  
THE GREAT TREK OF  
THE BOEREMARK?

Back

**DIE BOEREMARK HET 'N NUWE TUISTE**

Vanaf Saterdag 8 Julie 2017 gaan die Boeremark voort van 5.30 tot 9.30 maar by 'n nuwe adres.  
**670 Krige straat, Silverton.**  
Kom ondersteun ons uitstallers daar asb. en help ons om ons nuwe tuiste die beste ooit te maak!  
*Volg ons Facebook blad vir die vordering van ons nuwe tuiste.*



**THE BOEREMARK HAS A NEW HOME**

As from Saturday 8 July 2017 the Boeremark will continue from 5.30 to 9.30 but at a new address.  
**670 Krige street, Silverton.**  
Please come and support our vendors and help us make our new home our best home ever!  
*Follow our Facebook page for updates on the progress of our new home.*

## 7.2 APPENDIX B: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

- The manager of the Pretoria Boeremark: Johan van Wyk

### Vendors:

- Miguel and Jane de Souza
- Hermes Everett
- Meryl Hadley and Aubrey Hobson
- Noah Mbiti
- Hans and Lien Sever
- Carla von Berg

### Clients:

- Roland and Bettie Judge
- Tendai Mpofu
- Aurene Spoor
- Lizzy van der Merwe
- Gertruida van Wiel
- Thabo and Khaya Zungu, and Norah Moleko

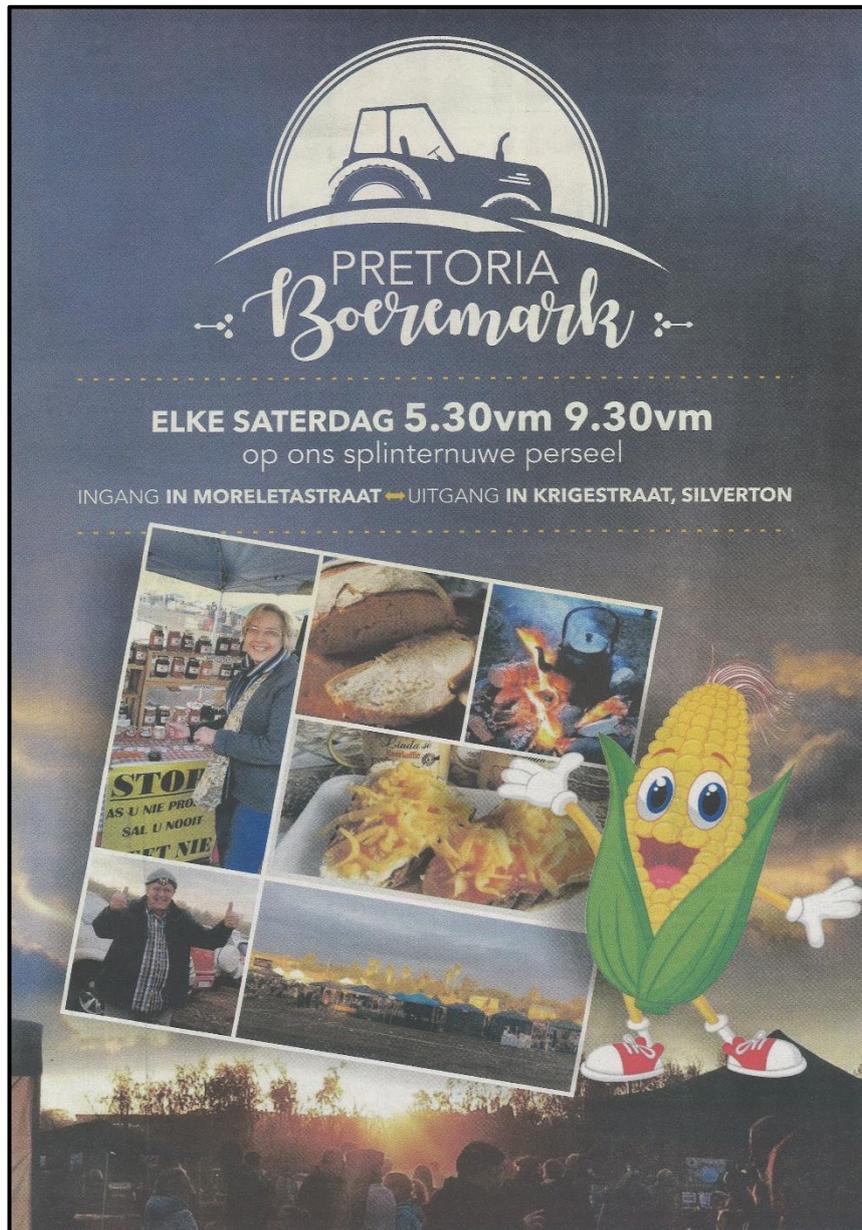
### 7.3 APPENDIX C: LIST OF PRETORIA BOEREMARK PRODUCTS

accessories	African potato balm and soap	Africana
Afrikaans children's audiobooks	aloe products	animal food
antiques	art	arts and crafts
arum lilies	avocados	bacon
bacon rolls	baked goods	Barbie clothes
Barbie furniture	bead art	beads
beadwork	beanies	bed linen
beef	beef tongue	beeswax
belts	berries	biltong
bio-friendly cleaning products	biscuits	baobab shampoo
board-games	body art	boere soap
boerewors	boerewors rolls	books
braai pap	braais	bread
breakfast rolls	brewery kits	brownies
burgers	butter	cacti
cakes	camping kit	candy floss
canvas bags and products	caps	charcoal
cheese	cheese grillers	cheese products
chicken	chicken liver patés	chicken schnitzel
chilli sauces	chillies	chipsticks
chutney	cinnabons	citrus
cleaning products	clothes	coconut oil
coffee	coffee bags	cold-brew coffee
collector's items	comics	compost
cold-drinks	corn dogs	cottage cheese
crafts	cream	croquettes
cucumbers	cupcakes	cups
curried fish	curried salads	curried vegetables
curries	curry and rice	dairy products
decorative lamps	decorative steel items	dog food
dog products	donuts	dried fruit
dried mangoes	Dutch baked goods	duvets
eggs	electronics	engraving
Epsom salts	face painting	fake flowers
farm fresh chickens	filter coffee	flasks
flowers	food	fresh fruit
fresh vegetables	frozen vegetables	fruit plants
fruitcakes	fudge	game biltong

garden décor	garlic bread	gerbera plants
ginger beer	ginger cookies	goat's milk products
granadilla jam	ground coffee	hair accessories
handbags	handmade candles	handmade knives
handmade pies	handmade wooden gifts	handmade wooden pens
handmade wooden pepper and salt mills	hand-painted bags	hand-painted pillow covers
hand-painted table cloths	hand-woven carpets	hats
health bread	health products	health rusks
herb plants	herbs	homemade baked goods
homemade cheese spread	honey	hot apple cider
hot chocolate	hydrangeas	Indian pashminas, throws and clothing
Indian pickles	indigenous plants	ironing board covers
jaffles	jam	jewellery
juice	kebabs	key rings
knife sharpeners	knives	koeksisters
ladies' wear	lamb	lard
lasagna	laser cutting	leather hand bags
leather products	leather sandals	lettuce
macaroons	magazines	make-up
marinades	marmalade	meat pies
melkkos	metal art	milk
milk ice lollies	milk tart	miscellaneous items
muesli	muffins	mushroom-growing kits
mushrooms	musical toys	natural skincare products
nuts	oats	olive oil
olives	omelettes	orchids
organic compost	oxtail	pancakes
paninis	pap and kaiings	pap and meat
pastries	pebble art	pepper spray
peppers	perfumes	pesto
pet products	photographs	pickles
pies	pillows	pizza
pizza cones	place mats	plant pots
plants	pocket knives	pork
pots	poultry products	prepared foods
preserved vegetables	preserves	pretzels
processed vegetables	propolis (bee glue)	proteas
pumpkin	recycled glass products	rib burgers
ribs	roosterkoek	roses
rotis	rusk pans	rusks

Russian sausages	salad dressing	salami
samosas	sauces	sausages
scarves	science lab items	second-hand items
seedlings	seeds	serviettes
sheep tripe	shoes	skincare products
slippers	smoothies	soap
socks	soup	soup with bread
spaghetti bolognese	spices	spiral slicers
spring rolls	steam presses	stone art
strawberries	stuffed crepes	succulents
sweet mustard	Swiss breads	table cloths
tapenade	Tasers	tea
terracotta pots	tin art	tin cars
toilet paper	toys	toys from tyres
traditional Polish smoked meats	trinkets	Turkish delight
tyre dog beds	vegetable slicers	vegetables
vetkoeks	videos	vinyl records
waffles	wallets	wheatgrass
wire art	wire garden décor	wood
wooden art	wooden chests	wooden furniture
wooden pens	wooden sculptures	wooden toys
wooden trays	wooden walking sticks	wood-fired artisan bread
woodwork	woodworking tools	yoghurt

## 7.4 APPENDIX D: BOEREMARK ADVERT



An advertisement that appeared in the *Metro-Beeld-North* newspaper supplement on 30 August 2017.

The text reads: Pretoria Boeremark. Every Saturday 5.30 AM to 9.30 AM on our brand-new premises. Entrance in Moreleta Street. Exit in Krige Street, Silverton.