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The Tourists and the Toured: Identity in Greenmarket Square

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THE TOURISTS AND THE TOURED: IDENTITY IN GREENMARKET SQUARE

Sophia Perlman

Haley McEwen, University of Cape Town/School for International Training

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for South Africa: Multiculturalism and Human Rights

School for International Training, Cape Town

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Abstract

This project explores the intersection between vendors and tourists in Greenmarket Square, a popular arts and crafts market in Cape Town. I examine the way in which the identities of the vendors and tourists are co-constructed in this market setting. I focus, in particular, on how vendors articulate and negotiate their identity through the tourist gaze. In addition, I consider the role of the objects in the co-construction of the tourists and toured identities. My findings are based on data gathered through participant observation with vendors, interviews with vendors and tourists, and content analysis of objects and tourist guidebooks. My understanding of these findings rests on anthropological and sociological theories of tourism. Conceptualizations of the tourist gaze, the self-other, authenticity, cultural consumption and commodification, and postcolonialsim serve as guiding principals of my study. I argue that these aspects of tourism shape the identities of tourists and the toured in Greenmarket Square. Ultimately, I demonstrate the significance of spaces of tourism in the construction of cultural identity and global power structures.
Introduction

Identity in South Africa is often considered in terms of its contentious political and social history, marred by apartheid policy. Serious attention has been given to the country’s construction of white, black, coloured, and Indian identities. However, little notice has been paid to the country’s million and a half visitors that come to the country every year on vacation. Although their stay is temporary, their presence is significant. Entire venues and city spaces have been built to accommodate this mobile population. These tourists, as they are called, dominate certain spheres of the nation that are shaped to meet their particular needs and desires.

Greenmarket Square, a popular arts and crafts market in Cape Town, is one such space. Here, tourists come to shop for wooden carvings, jewelry, paintings, batiks, and other goods. The vendors, most of whom are from other African countries, stock their stands with items that they think will make popular souvenirs and gifts for tourists. Each day they sit by their shops, soliciting tourists to stop and buy their goods. If a tourist does happen to stop and look, the vendors must convince him or her to buy through various sales tactics and bargaining.

This study explores this intersection between the vendors and the tourists. I examine how the identities of the vendors – the toured – and the tourists are co-constructed. I analyze the role of cultural commodification and consumption in the market and its affect on the construction of identity. My research focuses on how vendors, in particular, construct their identities through the tourist gaze in the space of the market. In examining these themes, I investigate the way in which identity is
articulated in the market and how those articulations reflect broader global structures.

The paper is divided into several different sections to facilitate a thorough presentation of the study. The background section provides a context for understanding the study, including information about the tourism industry and my personal motivations for exploring this topic. The literature review and conceptual framework presents the relevant theory on which my analysis is based. The methodology section outlines the various methods I employed in the study. I then propose some of the limitations of my study that are important to consider in reading the analysis. Next, I present my findings and analysis, which I have divided thematically into five sections and subsections. Finally, I give a conclusion to my findings and suggestions for further research.

**Background Information**

As the world is becoming more globalized, traveling and tourism have become a vital part of Western society. There are about 698 million international arrivals\(^1\) each year and the market is growing at an alarming 4-5% each year (Urry 2002:5). Tourism is the most significant global industry, accounting for an outstanding 11.7% of the world GDP (Urry 2002:5). In South Africa, the tourism market is exploding. Tourism departments and programs are growing at nearly every major university, contributing to the booming market. In 2009 alone, there were about 1,586,862 international arrivals, 84.4% of which were tourists traveling on holiday (CTT Admin n.d.:6, 30). Tourism brought in 198.4 billion of the national GDP (Department of

\(^1\) International arrivals are visitors to South Africa from other countries
Tourism n.d.). In 2010, South Africa experienced an outstanding 15% increase in tourist arrivals, outperforming the global average by 8%(SAinfo reporter 2011). The tourism industry is regarded as the “new gold” of the post-apartheid nation (McEwen 2009:30), composing 7.9% of the nation’s economy(Seria 2010).

**History of South African Tourism**

Tourism in South Africa reflects broader trends amongst other ‘third-world’ and developing nations, most of which are also post-colonial. Since World War II, tourism has been a significant means by which third-world countries have tried to grow their economies and attract investment (Ahmed, Krohn, and Heller 1994:36). Many of these countries have built tourism industries by marketing their exotic environments and cultures to tourists in developed Western nations (Ahmed et al. 1994:38). International tourism in these countries has proved to be a great source of economic growth and employment(Ahmed et al. 1994:38).

In South Africa, the tourism industry has experienced highs and lows since it began to develop about forty years ago. Although tourism grew in the 1960’s and 1970’s, apartheid policy provoked a decline in international tourism throughout the 1980’s. International sanctions against the South African apartheid regime had serious consequences for its developing tourism market (Ahmed, Heller, and Hughes 1998:4). After apartheid was abolished and Nelson Mandela became president in 1994, the country was “positioned to enjoy a tourism revival.” (Ahmed et al. 1998:1) A slew of government policies supported this revival. Tourism became an integral part of Nelson Mandela and the new ANC governments Reconstruction and Development Program(Ahmed et al. 1998:4). The RDP “called for the “sustainable development of
tourism, stressing the importance of ecotourism and the involvement of black entrepreneurs and communities.” (Ahmed et al. 1998:4). In addition, The South African Tourism Board initiated the “Tourism-Share the Rewards” campaign to encourage disadvantaged communities to help build the tourism industry by preaching the social and economic benefits of the industry(Ahmed et al. 1998:4).

In 1995, the new ‘Rainbow Nation’ was overwhelmed with a 52% increase in international arrivals (Ahmed et al. 1998:3). The 1995 Rugby World Cup helped the country build the tourism market and in 1996 1.172 million overseas visitors flocked to the country (Ahmed et al. 1998:1,4). Despite the government’s efforts and the initial boom, tourism growth slowed as tourists became concerned about crime and violence (Ahmed et al. 1998:4).

Nevertheless, tourism still commanded a significant role in the South African economy. The private development of tourism venues and attractions soared in the 1990’s. Beginning in the mid-1980’s, commercial and private development became a “desirable way of developing state and municipal land,” particularly for tourism (Worden 1994:34). Among these developments, was the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront in Cape Town. The V&A Waterfront was formerly an industrial harbor, cut off from the city of Cape Town. In 1998 a four-stage redevelopment plan was approved by Transport Affairs to build restaurants, a fish market, souvenir shops, a leisure boat marina, hotels, and an exhibition center on the harbor, making it a premier tourist destination (Worden 1994:35). The director of J.H. Isaacs Property Group, which was responsible for developing much of the V&A Waterfront, emphasized its commercial potential stating, “The Victoria and Alfred Company can
give Cape Town the equivalent of three or four gold mines, handled on strictly business lines, using Disneyland syndrome and thinking and acting big.” (Worden 1994:35) Part of its appeal to tourists was to create a space that draws on selective historical images and romanticizes Capetonian history (Worden 1994:38). Attractions, such as ‘coon carnival’ choirs and bands, contribute to the ‘quaint’ atmosphere of the Waterfront (Worden 1994:46). Furthermore, the European architectural style of the Waterfront caters to its primarily Western and European clientele. The ‘quaint’ and Europeanized atmosphere of the Waterfront is representative of many of the romanticized tourist spaces throughout the country.

**The South African World Cup and Tourism Today**

In 2004, FIFA announced that South Africa would host the 2010 World Cup, the biggest soccer tournament in the world. This honor presented a major opportunity for South Africa to develop and grow its tourism industry. Eager to show off the country to the rest of the world, South Africa spent 43 billion rand preparing for the event (Seria 2010). The country expanded its security, spending over 170 million in US dollars (USAToday 2010). Campaigns and initiatives were instigated throughout the country to make it more organized and presentable for the event. In the Western Cape, they pitched a “Beyond the 90 Minutes Campaign” to show off attractions in the area and develop tourist appeal beyond just the World Cup event (USAToday 2010).

Tourist arrivals grew significantly in 2010, jumping from about seven million to over eight million (SAinfo reporter 2011). Despite these astounding numbers, only about 4% of total arrivals in 2010 were for the World Cup (SAinfo reporter
2011), indicating that tourism in general is growing in the nation. Among these arrivals, most are from Western Europe and America. The UK, US, Germany, Netherlands, and France are the top five overseas markets (SAinfo reporter 2011). However, visitors from Brazil, China, and India represent burgeoning markets (SAinfo reporter 2011). Nevertheless, the tourism industry in South Africa is still shaped around its Western customers. Tourism, thus, is a significant means by which the West and developing nations, such as South Africa, intersect.

**Personal Motivations**

For the past three months, I have traveled throughout South Africa as a tourist. At each place I visited, I tried to absorb as much as I could from the local culture. I ate the local food, participated in local activities, and immersed myself in local habits. I was a cultural consumer. My experiences were shaped by what I learned and absorbed from the people I stayed with. I embraced the culture with the knowledge that for me it was only temporary. I was merely a visitor, who soaked up all I could during my stay and then left.

In addition, I also felt compelled to buy something from each of the places I visited. I felt that my visit was not complete without material tokens to remember it by and share with others at home. I watched as friends submitted to the same consumerist urges, buying bottles of wine, wooden spoons, beaded jewelry, bowls, and masks, each as an affirmation of their ‘authentic’ African experience. My position as a temporary visitor and consumer are salient characteristics of the tourist. As I traveled throughout the country, I realized how significant this tourist
phenomena is - directly influencing the economy, social structure, politics, and development of the nation.

**Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**

**The “Tourist Gaze”**

Since Levi-Strauss wrote *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, the distinction between the Self and Other has been a fundamental concept in the field of anthropology. The ‘other’ is the result of binary opposition, the means by which humans structure and understand their world (Lévi-Strauss 1955). Much of the literature about tourism is based on the construction of a ‘gaze-worthy’ ‘other’, while the binary opposition of ‘self’ has only recently come under academic scrutiny. John Urry’s book *The Tourist Gaze*, a principal text in tourism studies, identifies the significance of the ‘other’ in tourism. Tourism, Urry argues, is the result of a “basic binary division between the ordinary/everyday and the extraordinary.” (Urry 2002:12) The tourist seeks the ‘other’ as a means of escaping the mundane realities of everyday life. This phenomenon, which Urry terms the “tourist gaze”, is constructed through difference (Urry 2002:1). The subjects of the tourist’s gaze are chosen because they are perceived to be exotic and fanciful. These ‘exotic’ experiences are “pseudo-events” removed from the reality of local life (Urry 2002:7).

**Authenticity**

Authenticity is a salient feature of the tourist gaze. The concept of authenticity in tourism is borrowed from the original museum-linked definition and
is understood as an embodiment of “traditional culture and origin, a sense of the genuine, the real or the unique.” (Sharpley 1994: 130; Wang 1999: 350) Objects of tourism, thus, are described as ‘authentic’ if they have been made by local people through traditional or customary means (Wang 1999:350). For an object to be traditional, a certain image of the past must be reproduced (Taylor 2001:9). In this sense, authenticity “must pay homage to a conception of origins.” (Taylor 2001:9) The authentic is conceptualized through the inauthentic, which the tourist associates with the modern industrialized world (Taylor 2001:10). Hence, authentic objects and spaces must be “primitive” and “natural.” (Taylor 2001:10)

The scholar Dean MacCannell explores how this image of authenticity is constructed. In so doing, he turns towards the subjects of the tourist gaze. Whereas Urry emphasizes the role of the tourist in constructing native identity through objectification (Little 1994:940), MacCannell explores how the spectacles of the gaze construct their identity. He asserts that the subjects of the tourist gaze are compelled to manipulate their appearance to satisfy the tourist’s expectation for authenticity. Consequently, they ironically end up producing ‘inauthenticity’ to satisfy the tourists appetite for the ‘authentic’ (Urry 2002:7). MacCannell has termed this ‘staged authenticity’ (Little 1994:940) (MacCannell 1973). The tourist, therefore, is “someone who seems content with his obviously inauthentic experiences.” (MacCannell 1973:592)

In order to construct a sense of reality, subjects of the tourist gaze are involved in a process of mystification whereby they “manipulate a social appearance.” (MacCannell 1973:591) Toby Volkman has extended MacCannell’s
theory to the Toraja Indonesian society, arguing that indigenous people are both “tourist objects” and reflective critics who objectify their culture (Volkman 1990:91). In this sense, local peoples are engaged in a sort of theater where they are the performers and the tourists are the audience members.

Daniel Hammett and Neelika Jayawardane have applied this concept in the South African context, looking at the Nyoni’s Kraal restaurant in Cape Town. The local population, they contend, are conscious of how they are manipulating their culture in order to deceive the tourists (Hammett and Jayawardane 2009:217). In South Africa, in particular, these depictions “construct benign multiculturalism as a desirable consumer product.” (Hammett and Jayawardane 2009:220) Places like Longstreet construct a particular image of commercialist multiculturalism (Hammett and Jayawardane 2009: 222). This form of multiculturalism commodifies South Africa’s history and culture for tourist consumption.

**Consumerism and Culture**

Furthermore, the commodification of culture is a crucial aspect of the negotiation of identity in tourism. Ruth B. Phillips’ research addresses this theme, arguing, “Objects created in one culture for consumption in another are both cause and result of complex negotiation between them.” (Lee 2000:421) Moreover, tourism is a burgeoning economic force that directly provokes cultural consumption (Aoyama 2009: 80). Shopping has, in fact, become an incentive for travelling in itself (Urry 2002:4). Furthermore, tourism has contributed to regional cultural industries, even as the world has become more globalized (Aoyama 2009: 80). Tourism represents an emerging “global-local nexus” whereby regional culture
becomes a globally desirable commodity (Aoyama 2009:81-2). As much as the tourist seeks the local, the locals are reliant on the tourist to sustain the tourism industry. Thus, the tourists and the locals are engaged in a codependent relationship. This relationship, facilitated by cultural consumption, also explains the tourists’ desire for local ‘authenticity’ and the locals need to fulfill that desire.

**Postcolonialism, Tourism, and Identity**

The concept of cultural consumption has provoked a substantial body of literature addressing postcolonialism and power dynamics in tourism. Anne-Marie d’Hautessere succinctly addresses the relationship between postcolonial theories and tourism as “largely centered on the ‘exoticism’ that many tourists seek in former colonies.” (d’Hauteserre 2004:237) Through cultural consumption, tourists are in a sense colonizing peoples by objectifying their histories and cultures. In order to consume the ‘other’, “tourists reorder the world through the manipulation of images, words, and practices, in the same way that colonialism codified colonial people to better impose its institutions and policies.” (d’Hauteserre 2004:242)

Furthermore, the search for the ‘exotic’ and ‘authentic’ is often times a search for something “pre-modern.” (Hammett and Jayawardane 2009:218) Locals in the tourist industry “must mask the undesirable marks of modernity in order to create the picturesque image.” (Hammett and Jayawardane 2009: 220) The concept of ‘exoticism’ itself echoes colonialist images of a land and people uninterrupted by the violence of their historical contact.” (Hammett and Jayawardane 2009:220) In this sense, postcolonial tourism has created a division between the West and the ‘other’, where the West colonizes the ‘other’ through consumption.
Clearly, this has certain implications for the power dynamic between the two. As the local produces a staged and sanitized image of their culture for consumption, they reaffirm their position as the less powerful colonized peoples. They construct their culture around the tourist’s expectations and are thus beholden to the expectations and desires of the tourist. The Western tourist still holds the power. In situations of cultural commodification and consumerism, the tourist-local relationship affirms the positions of the powerful (Hammett and Jayawardane 2009:216). Furthermore, the toured becomes dependent on the tourist economically. The toured needs the tourist to purchase their culturally commodified product in order to live. Hence, ‘third-world’ and developing nations with growing tourism industries are dependent on Western consumers – a power dynamic reminiscent of colonialism.

**Methodology**

In order to examine the relationship between the tourists and vendors at Greenmarket Square, it was important that I employ several different methodologies. Triangulation was essential in creating a thorough study. Through participant observation, interviews, and content analysis, I was able to gain a well-rounded perspective on the construction of identity in the market setting. I analyzed all of the data using descriptive and analytic coding.

**Participant Observation**

Participant observation was the foundation of my research. Initially, I set out to gain a rapport with some of the vendors in the market. I established a solid
relationship with one of the vendors in the market, who agreed to let me sit with her at her shop while she sold. The close nature of the market, with vendors sitting together by their shops, allowed me to meet other vendors and do participant observation with several vendors in the market. Thus, the vendors I worked with were selected through non-probability sampling (Bernard 2005:125) based on the network I established through my primary informant. This method of sampling gave me an immediate connection with a substantial number of vendors that I would not necessarily been able to make without the help of my primary informant. In doing participant observation with just one vendor, I was able to observe about seven other vendors that were either in the area or connected to my primary informant. However, most of my time was spent with my primary informant so that I could gain an in-depth view of a vendor's experience. I recorded observations and experiences I had through jottings (Bernard 2005:389), which I used to write more expansive field notes.

By participating and observing vendors as they sold, I was able to experience and observe the intersection between tourists and vendors. I gained an understanding for how vendors’ identities function in the market environment. In addition, I was able to examine the way in which vendors sell their art and the tourists’ responses to these efforts. I had walked around Greenmarket Square as a tourist many times, but doing participant observation with the vendors offered me a new perspective on the market environment. This experienced allowed me to reflect on my own position as a tourist. Most importantly, I was able to develop an understanding of the vendors that would have been impossible from approaching
them as a stranger requesting a formal interview. Simply approaching the vendors for a formal interview would not have given me the same depth of knowledge that comes with observation and experience.

**Interviews**

Vendors are constantly trying to solicit customers and sell products. Therefore, they are not necessarily available to dedicate their attention exclusively to interviews. Hence, doing participant observation and sitting with the vendors while they sold allowed me to conduct informal interviews in a way that was conducive to the particular character of the market. As I sat with the vendors, I would ask questions about their products, feelings, perceptions, and experiences. As these interviews were informal, I did not abide by a strict set of interview questions. However, I did have a basic set of questions to help guide the interchange [Appendix 1]. Again, I used non-probability sampling for these interviews. Making my connections through my primary informant, I interviewed five vendors in-depth and about two other vendors more superficially. The data collected in these interviews, as well as all other interviews, was recorded through diligent note taking.

I also interviewed tourists. These interviews were informal as well. The particular nature of the market, in which tourists are coming and going, prohibited me from conducting lengthy in-depth interviews with tourists. Furthermore, the interviews I did conduct were often in groups because tourists often travel in groups. I interviewed about sixteen tourists in five different groups. The tourists were selected through non-probability sampling based on who was around the
market, yet not so preoccupied that they could not stop for an interview. Tourists, generally, are not as willing to stop for an interview. Therefore, I chose this method because it was more conducive to this particular population. Through these interviews I was able to gain an understanding of tourists’ perceptions, feelings, and experiences. These interviews were semi-structured with a basic set of questions that I followed [Appendix 2].

I also interviewed an employee in the marketing department at the Cape Town Tourism Department. I chose this informant through non-probability sampling based on whom I was able to gain access to in the office. The interview was a formal interview conducted in the office. I had a list of questions prepared for the tourism employee [Appendix 3], however the interview was cut short because of the employee was under time constraints. Furthermore, she talked for most of the interview, preventing me from asking most of my questions. Nevertheless, I was still able to develop a cursory understanding of how Cape Town Tourism perceives and promotes Greenmarket Square.

Lastly, I interviewed a tour guide who includes Greenmarket Square on her tours. I selected this tour guide through non-probability sampling based on a suggestion the tourism employee gave me. This interview was a last-minute addition to my research, however it proved to be helpful in understanding the history of the market. Although I went in with a list of questions [Appendix 4], the tour guide took the interview in a different direction than I anticipated. While the data from this interview did not contribute to my primary analysis, it did provide useful information about the history and transformation of the market.
Content Analysis

After doing participant observation and interviews, I did content analysis on some of the most popular items in the market. These objects were chosen through non-probability sampling based on what vendors told me were widely sold and purchased objects. Using this method of selection, allowed me to draw out more significant themes because of the popularity of the objects. In analyzing the objects, I focused on the particular way in which they presented certain images. I also paid attention to resounding themes illustrated in the objects. This analysis, coupled with data from interviews with vendors and tourists, revealed the role of objects in the construction of identity in the market.

I also did content analysis with several tourist books and online guides. I chose books that were widely sold in local bookstores and abroad as well as an online guide produced by the South African Tourism Department. I chose popular books and guides to give my analysis greater significance. I looked at how tourist books described Greenmarket Square, paying particular attention to the language they used. I looked for commonly used phrases and words in the books in order to understand how the tourism industry portrays the market. This data added yet another perspective to my research and helped me make sense of how the tourism industry contributes to the construction of identity.

Ethical Considerations

Working with vendors in the market, required that I consider certain ethical issues. As a white American researcher studying an often-marginalized population of black African nationals, I had to make sure that I did not exploit my informants.
In doing participant observation, I established a solid relationship with my informants based on mutual exchange and respect. As much as I asked them questions about their lives, they asked me questions about mine. Thus, interviews were not just about me asking questions and the vendors answering, but they were more of a conversation. I still maintained my role as a researcher and interviewer, however I made sure not to put myself in a position of power. Furthermore, all of the participants in my study were made aware of my study and that I would be recording what they shared with me. The vendors that I worked with most extensively signed an informed consent form, notifying them that the information I collected would be used in my final paper. The tourism department employee and the tour guide also signed informed consent forms. Tourists gave verbal consent to take part in my study after I informed them of my research. In order to maintain the confidentiality of all my informants, I have used pseudo-names in place of informants’ real names.

Limitations of the Study

There are several biases and limitations of my study that are important to consider when reading my conclusions. Firstly, my identity as a young white American woman may have affected the information I gathered. Although I gained trust amongst the vendors in the market, being a white American may have still influenced what they did or did not tell me. Furthermore, I was also limited in what I could hear and observe in the market because I was an American and did not speak Swahili, Zulu, or any of the other African languages that are spoken by the vendors in the market. Language also posed a limitation when interviewing tourists. Several
groups of tourists that I approached did not speak English well enough to be interviewed, thus limiting a significant population of non-English speaking tourists from my study. The tourists that I did approach in the market were often people who seemed like they were approachable and friendly enough to participate in an interview. Hence, my own biases in selecting tourist informants may have also affected my data.

Perhaps the biggest limitation of this study was time. With only about two and a half weeks for field research, I was significantly limited in the number of people I could interview and do participant observation with. I only talked to an extremely small fraction of the tourists and the vendors at Greenmarket. Therefore, my findings do not reflect the thoughts, feelings, and actions of all vendors and tourists; rather, they reveal a glimpse into the world of Greenmarket Square. It is important to consider that the data collected is only representative of a select population.

Findings and Analysis

Change and Transformation of Greenmarket Square

Although my primary research objective was not to learn about the history and evolution of Greenmarket Square, it was a theme that emerged often throughout my research. The historical narrative of change and transformation provides an important background and context for understanding the current circumstances at the market. Tour guides and tour books emphasize the historical significance of the Square and its surroundings. The Square was built in 1696 when the Burgher Watch House was erected. This building, which housed the city guards,
was later replaced by the Civic Centre building and then the Cape Town City Hall. Today, the structure houses the Michaelis collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings. It is just one of many historic buildings on the square, including the Methodist Church built in 1871 and the Shell House which used to house the offices of Shell Oil Company. The historic significance of the Square is part of the appeal for tourists. Karen, the tour guide I spoke to, said that she includes Greenmarket Square on her city tour because of its large role in the civic past of the city. It has always been the “heart of Cape Town”, Karen said. In its early days, Karen stated, the Square was a slave market and later it became a vegetable market. In 1967, the Square was named a national monument and two decades later it was transformed into a marketplace once again (Greenmarket 2011).

Since it was reestablished as a marketplace, Greenmarket has undergone a great deal of change. According to a couple from Durban who have visited the Square over the years, the tenor of the Square has changed dramatically in the past 7-10 years. “It used to be a kind of hippy place to go with lots of surfers and Rastas,” they said. “It had more of the atmosphere of a carnival with jugglers and music,” the couple exclaimed. “You would come to the market and see guys working on the things they are selling.” According to the couple, the market was more attractive to locals and many of the vendors were South African. Adam, a vendor from Kenya who has worked at the market for seven years, also noticed this change. He said that there used to be more white South Africans and Europeans selling in the market until a couple years ago. He mentioned one vendor from the UK who used to sell cds and t-shirts, but was forced to close his shop because it was not profitable. Locals
are looking for cheap things, Adam explained, and the old shops just were not able to sustain themselves. Curios and souvenirs are a more profitable venture, Adam and other vendors told me.

Moreover, structural and governmental changes have also had an effect on the market. Until 2008, the market was privately owned by a Lebanese businessman who leased the space from the city, informants told me. In 2008, the city council took the space over, a change that a vendor in the market said was prompted by money disputes. According to an employee in the tourism office, however, the change in ownership was most certainly related to the World Cup. The city was trying to get things in order for the World Cup, the tourism employee said, and taking over Greenmarket was part of that effort. Many vendors indicated that the 2008 switch to the City Council changed the market. Sara, a vendor from Kenya who sells jewelry, remarked that under private ownership “two people selling the same thing couldn’t be next to each other.” Vendors selling the same products had to be spread out throughout the market, so that there was diversity. There was more variety in the market, Sara said.

Since the City Council took over, there are more rules and regulations on the market. For instance, everybody working in the market must register with the city council. Each shop must have a permit that identifies the particular product being sold. Adam explained that there are still certain loopholes that people use, such as registering your shop as selling “necklaces” or “curios”. These broad terms allow vendors to sell a variety of goods and counter the City Council’s effort to curb competition. Vendors even use these new rules to hurt competitors. One woman in
the market told on another vendor who was selling things she was not supposed to, forcing City Council members to take her goods away.

The government also made several physical changes to make the market more appealing. They banned cars from Longmarket Street, which is next to the market, so that cafes could have outdoor seating. The outdoor cafes surrounding the market are now one of the chief features of the market, advertised in tour books and by the tourism office. In 2009, the cobblestones were also upgraded in the market. Several vendors that I spoke to in the market remarked on how much the security in the market has improved since the City Council took over. Despite these improvements, Sara indicated that the switch in ownership has had negative economic effects. She said that the City Council has no financial interest in the market and “doesn't care if we are making money.” They do not advertise as they did under private ownership, Sara stated.

This narrative helps one understand how Greenmarket Square functions as a tourist space. Underlying much of the data I collected was this sense of change and transformation that the market has undergone. Hence, although this information may not be explicitly related to my research topic, it is important in order to make sense of the construction of identity at Greenmarket Square.

**National and Racial Identity**

**The Vendors and Their Goods**

As salespeople working in the markets all day everyday Monday through Friday, the vendors of Greenmarket Square are integrally tied to the products they are selling. These goods not only represent their livelihood, but also are the subject
of their existence when they are in the market. From the beginning to the end of the workday, they are consumed by their product. Between 8 and 8:30 in the morning, the vendors unload their product from storage and begin setting up shop. If they are selling jewelry, each product must be organized and untangled. Entire shelves of necklaces have to be individually untangled from one another so that they are presentable to the tourist. This can be a long and tedious process. I spent 45 minutes one morning helping Sara untangle just one row of necklaces. If they are selling wooden carvings, each piece has to be unwrapped from its protective newspaper and polished if necessary. After set-up, they begin the long day of selling in which they constantly market their product to any person who passes by. At the end of the day, they must pack up and organize all of their goods before they begin the whole process over in the morning.

The vendor’s connection to their product is thus integral to understanding how identity is constructed in the market. A rough sketch of a portion of the market shows that most of the vendors in the market are not actually from South Africa [Appendix 5]. Many vendors reaffirmed this observation, stating that the majority of vendors are from Malawi, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Congo, and other countries in southern Africa. The products they are selling usually originate in these countries as well. There is often a direct link between the nationality of the vendor and the origin of the product. One of the most common products in the market, wooden carvings and masks, are almost always sold by vendors from Malawi, an informant told me. Mark, a Malawian vendor who sells wooden carvings, explained, “you have to know how to maintain the wood...Malawians know how to maintain the wood.”
The wood is unique to Malawi and must be polished once a week and checked for cracks and abrasions, Mark expounded.

Sara, the vendor from Kenya who sells jewelry, also expressed a similar connection to her product. Kenyan jewelry, made with horn and bone, is always sold by people from Kenya, Sara asserted. She explained, “The people from Kenya know the people that bring the goods here.” Batiks, similarly, are often from Kenya and sold by Kenyans, I was told. Hence, for many of the vendors their identity is situated in the context of what they are selling.

However, even the vendors that sell products from their home country are distanced from their product through the process of production. Mary, a vendor who sells wooden carvings, explained that the vendors do not make the goods. The wooden carvings are made by locals in rural villages and then bought by a middleman who sells them out of a warehouse in Cape Town. All of the vendors buy their wooden products from the warehouse, Mary said. Adam, a Kenyan who sells Zulu beads, similarly acknowledged his distance from the Zulu jewelry. The beads, he said, are made in KwaZulu – Natal. A woman commissions others to make the jewelry and then brings it to a market in Durban called the Indian Market. Adam and other traders then purchase the jewelry at the Indian Market. Thus, Adam must also go through a market process in order to obtain his product.

Even amongst traders there is some confusion as to where their product comes from. When I asked Sara where the bangles she sells are from she said that the materials are from Kenya, but they are treated and constructed in a factory in Johannesburg. I later posed the same question to Adam and he told me that the
bangles are made in a factory in India. Hence, the origin of the products is sometimes as ambiguous to vendors as it is to tourists.

When I asked tourists about the origin of the products sold in Greenmarket, almost all answered with the same uncertainty. They said that the products were probably made in China, but the vendors were most likely from somewhere in Africa. Like the vendors themselves, they talked about identity in terms of the vendor's connection to the product. For many tourists uncertainty about the connection between the vendors and their goods made them question the authenticity of the market. One tourist boldly exclaimed, “Greenmarket is not a real market because the sellers are not actually making the things they are selling.”

The connection between the vendors and their goods reflects the complexity of identity in the market. While some vendors relate to the origin of their product, others are as distant as their customers and still others are altogether unsure. Nevertheless, the product is still an integral part of how both vendors and tourists make sense of vendor’s identity in the market. No matter what a person’s connection is to the product, the product is a significant context for understanding and discussing identity.

**The Tourist – Vendor Exchange**

The interaction between tourist and vendor is a significant means by which national and racial identity is constructed in Greenmarket Square. Vendors try to relate to tourists through nationality. They often will guess the nationality of a tourist browsing their shop, simply exclaiming “Russian!” or “German!” to greet customers. Once, Sara tried to guess the nationality of a couple by greeting them in
their mother tongue. First, she guessed Japanese and greeted them in Japanese, but did not get a response. Then, she tried Chinese before settling on Korean. “Tourists get excited when you greet them in their language,” she told me. Relating to nationality is a tactic for drawing in customers. A group of British teenagers visiting Greenmarket Square also noticed this phenomenon. They said that one vendor even tried to relate to their nationality by talking about British marijuana.

In addition, vendors also talk about tourists in terms of nationality. Germans, for instance, according to most vendors are good customers because they buy a lot. “If one of them buys something, then you suddenly have eight customers because they will all copy each other,” Mary explained. South Americans, particularly Mexicans, Argentineans, and Brazilians, are also frequently referred to as great customers. Adam told me that the Spanish are the best customers, so much so that he is now learning Spanish. Vendors almost always said that the Chinese and Indians are horrible customers because they bargain too hard. Americans are highly disliked by vendors as well. “Americans are too proud of themselves,” Adam said. Adam explained that if Americans cannot get something for the price they want they will drop what they are looking at and leave. “Americans just look, they never buy,” I heard repeatedly from vendors. One frustrated vendor told me to go back to America and tell my people to come to South Africa and buy things. Thus, vendors often conceptualize tourists in terms of their nationality and construct tourist identity through national identity.

Race is integrally tied to national identity in the market. Almost all the tourists at the market are white, while almost all of the vendors are black. This clear
distinction, although never explicitly articulated by anybody I talked to, is obviously present at the market. I experienced the significance of race first hand as a white person in the market. It took a while for the vendors in the market to see me as a researcher and not a potential customer. This was an initial challenge that I had to make an effort to overcome. One vendor in the market continually insisted that I must be a tourist when I first met him. Although he never said it was because I was white, it seemed as if it was implied. Furthermore, I drew a lot of attention sitting with the vendors in the market. Many of the vendors came up to introduce themselves and talk to me, curious what I was doing there. Again, my race was never explicitly addressed, but I suspect that it was the reason I was received in this manner. By sitting with the vendors, I disrupted the unspoken racial order of the market, where whites are mobile consumers and blacks are sedentary merchants.

African Americans are one of the only exceptions to the racial order in the market. Surprisingly, they are not well received by the vendors. Adam exclaimed, “African Americans are the most difficult customers, they are even more proud than other Americans.” He then relayed a traumatic experience he had with an African American family in which he felt he was severely disrespected. Another vendor conveyed the same feelings, saying, “African American have to try to show they are not African.” As consumers and tourists, powerful African Americans disorder the racialized dynamic of the market and thus foster animosity amongst the vendors. African Americans alleged attitude and vendors’ hostility towards them are reflective of the same feelings that cultivate Xenophobia in South Africa. For wealthy black Americans, less advantaged vendors are perhaps reminders of “where
[they] could end up and where [they] come from.” (Mngxitama 2010:20) There supposed snobbery may be an internalization of their oppression (Mngxitama 2010). For vendors, wealthy black Americans complicate not just the racialized power dynamic of the market, but the global racialized power structure. Hence, racial identity in the market is reflective of the broader racial global order, where whites hold the majority of the power. Accordingly, instances where this order is disrupted cultivate conflict.

**Cultural Consumption**

*Culture as Product*

The product itself carries certain meanings in the market, meanings that are created and reaffirmed through consumption, which occurs through the vendor-tourist exchange. African culture is commodified and translated into certain symbols that are represented in the product. Among the most explicit symbols is the African continent, illustrated in the African plaque popular with tourists [Image 1]. Mary, a vendor who sells the plaque, said “it is particularly popular with tourists who are visiting Africa for the first time and want to bring back a symbol of Africa.”
The plaque prominently features animals, another supposed symbol of Africa. Almost all of the tourists I spoke to mentioned animals as one of the key features they were looking for in an object. A Swiss couple shopping at the market expressed the importance of buying something with “wild animals” because they are “naturally African.” Giraffes and ostrich’s seemed to be particularly popular with my informants. The symbolic significance of animals is most clearly reflected in the proliferation of the “Big 5” in the market. The “Big 5” is a commonly used tourism term that refers to the lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard, and rhino. One of the British teenagers emphasized that it was important that he have something with the “Big 5” because it was a “symbol” of Africa. Animals, thus, carry particular symbolic meaning in the market as representations of African culture.

Tourists also consume culture through distinctive symbols of “tribal” Africa. The image of the African woman carrying a bowl or package on her head is popular with tourists [Image 2]. The image is illustrated in many different forms throughout the market – in wooden carvings, paintings, and batiks. “This is real African culture,” one vendor told me referring to the carving of the woman. The thinking man is another popular image in the market [Image 3]. A vendor explained that the thinker is meant to symbolize the male figure...
thinking about all his responsibilities to the family.

African tribal culture is most prominently manipulated through the image of the African warrior. Sculptures and paintings of the Maasai warriors proliferate the market. The warrior is presented in full regalia as if to emphasize the traditionalism of African culture [Image 4]. Beads and African animal prints drape his body. In paintings, the Maasai warrior is portrayed as a spirited figure, holding his spear prominently [Image 5]. The spear is manipulated into an African symbol; that one tourist told me he purchased a spear because it is a part of African culture.

Tourist books and reference guides refer to culture as a commodifiable product as well in their description of Greenmarket Square. The South African Tourism guide, for instance, stresses the cultural traditions that are on sale in the market listing the Maasai, Xhosa, Zulu, and Bade tribe of Senegal (South African Tourism 2011). Frommers online guide to Cape Town, similarly, lists Greenmarket as a place to go for “tribal paintings.” (Frommers 2011) Reference to the tribe and tribal traditions is yet another means by which African culture is transformed into a symbolic product.
In selling the symbols, vendors are constructed, from the tourists’ perspective, as extensions of these symbols. They become spectacles to be viewed and consumed. Sara complained to me that tourists are always taking pictures of her and the other vendors without asking. “It’s not like we are animals, like we are in a national park,” she said. Vendors become a product themselves, captured through the lens of a tourists camera. Similarly, when European colonists colonized Africa and the Americas, Africans and Native Americans were seen as subjects to be studied and photographed. Thus, this dynamic between tourists and vendors exemplifies post-colonial colonialism, reminiscent of the colonial era.

Hence, vendors, tourists, and the tourism industry at large are all involved in manipulating culture into particular symbols for consumption. African identity in the market is constructed as a series of commodifiable symbols, facilitated by the vendors and then acquired by the tourists. Through purchasing the products, tourists reaffirm the significance of the symbols and take ownership of them. In buying a carving of an African woman, for instance, tourists are buying and essentializing African culture. In this sense, tourists are like post-colonial colonizers, acquiring a piece of Africa through consumerism. The identity of the touring and the toured are thus constructed through this act.

**The Souvenir**

“Bringing something back” is an essential aspect of the tourist experience. Greenmarket Square is a space that satisfies that tourist’s urge. Tourist books commonly describe Greenmarket as the place to buy souvenirs (Richmond and Ranger 2009:112; South African Tourism 2011; Pinchuck and McCrea 2010:58).
The South African Tourism guide, for instance, exclaims that visitors can pick up “souvenirs of their African adventure.” (South African Tourism 2011) Many tourists also mentioned that their hotel or tour guide had recommended it as a place to go for souvenirs.

For tourists, the souvenir is an important affirmation and reminder of their trip. The British teenagers I interviewed emphasized that they went to Greenmarket Square to buy something to remind them of Africa. One American tourist, for instance, said that she bought an ostrich egg because she saw ostrich eggs on a safari and wanted one to remind her of that experience. Ben, a vendor who sells paintings, similarly told me that tourists want things reminiscent of their experiences. Paintings of the townships, he said, are popular because “tourists go to the townships and they want something that represents their experience.” Hence, products are not only endowed with cultural symbols, but personal symbols that are meant to reflect and verify a tourist’s trip. In this sense, tourists are both consuming African culture and a sort of tourism culture centered on material possession. Greenmarket Square is consequently a space of tourism culture, filled with reminders of the tourists Africa.

“Africanness”

Beyond the symbolic meaning that the products carry, there is a deep-seated meaning in the African provenance of the products. There is an acute importance in the African origin of the goods sold in Greenmarket Square. “People really just want something from Africa,” I heard from many vendors. “[The products] just being African, sells,” Mary asserted. “People don’t care where things are from, as long as
it’s from Africa,” I was told repeatedly. Tourists, likewise, expressed the significance of getting something from Africa. A Swiss couple said that they were looking for “typically African goods.” A couple from Durban visiting the market said that they were glad to see that there was an “African flavor” in the market and that the curios and the people selling them were African. Almost all the tourists I spoke with said that they “hope the products are from Africa and not from China.” Thus, it is not only important that the products symbolize Africa, but that they are from Africa.

Africa, therefore, becomes a significant concept in the market. It is not just a continent, but also an idea that is embodied in the objects, an idea that can best be described as “Africanness.” “Africanness” is yet another product that is sold by the vendors and purchased by the tourist. The touring and the toured are constructed through the concept of “Africanness” by distinguishing who is from Africa from those that are not.

The Tourist Gaze

Objects of Tourism

Each object at Greenmarket Square is designed with the tourist in mind. Nearly all the vendors said that locals and the people producing the products never actually buy or own them; they are exclusively for tourists. Mark, a vendor of wooden carvings from Malawi, exclaimed, “Malawians don’t actually have these things.” Vendors and wholesalers, he told me,
develop the designs for the wooden carvings. They create the designs based on ideas tourists give them or what they think the tourist might like. The person commissioning the products then gives the carvers a picture of what they should make and the carvers blindly follow. Adam used the “Big 5” as an example, explaining that the idea to include it in many of the designs was developed because it was something that tourists wanted. The “Big 5” now dominates many of the wooden carvings, appearing on the African plaque, coasters, and masks [Image 1, 6, 7]. On the Coaster set, for instance, the “Big 5” is portrayed around the case and then again on the coasters – each coaster illustrates a different animal of the “Big 5” [Image 6]. The “Big 5” itself is a tourism term. Originally, the “Big 5” was a phrase used by colonists to refer to the five most difficult game to kill (Answers.com n.d.). Eventually, however, it was adopted by the tourism industry to allude to the five biggest and quintessentially African animals to see on a safari. The “Big 5” today is used to advertise game parks and safari tours. Thus, the image of the “Big 5” is not only associated with tourism, but also with colonialism. In both instances, the image was conjured by a touring population and then adopted by the toured.

The popular Zulu beads sold in the market maintain a similar character. Glass beads were introduced by Portuguese traders in the 16th century and became a popular art form amongst many African groups (Smith College Museum of Art 2011). Initially, beading was an art that the Zulu, Xhosa, and others did just for themselves.
Eventually, however, tourist appeal compelled people to make jewelry for retail. “The beads used to have meanings for Zulus, but they don’t have meanings to them anymore,” Adam told me. “They don’t even wear them anymore,” he continued. Zulus still make jewelry in traditional Zulu colors because that is what tourists want, Adam said. The design of the necklace in Image 8, for instance, is a direct product of the tourist gaze [Image 8]. Beaders have also begun to develop new designs based on tourists’ desires, such as the one at right [Image 9].

The popular wooden chess set truly exemplifies how tourists shape the products [Image 10]. This Western board game is given an African twist by manipulating the traditional chess pieces. Instead of having a king, queen, and knight, the set includes a chief and other pieces meant to represent an African tribe. The chess set appeals to Western tourists by fusing Western custom with “Africanness”, a key feature that tourists look for in a product.
The paintings sold in the market are similarly products of the tourist gaze. One of the most popular images illustrated in the paintings is that of the African township [Image 11]. Ben, a vendor of paintings in the market, also paints some of the paintings. Although he is from Malawi, he has chosen to paint the South African township. He told me that although he is not from the townships, he draws them because “that’s what tourists want to see.” The images depicted in such paintings are of quintessential characteristics of the township, to appeal to the tourist. The typical shacks with tin roofs, a mini-bus taxi, and dancing characters are featured prominently in the painting. Tourists’ expectations and desires therefore command a significant amount of control over production, even when the vendor himself is producing.

Visitors at Greenmarket Square are surprisingly aware of the power of their gaze. One British woman I interviewed admitted the place is a “tourist trap.” Two South African tourists from Pretoria referred to the objects in the market as “gimmicky.” They said that the viewpoint presented through the market is solely aimed at tourists. “A lot of the things here are fads, they are just the flavor of the moment,” one woman told me. Even one of the tourist guidebooks recognizes the effect of the tourist on the market, stating, “Greenmarket has dissolved into a tourist
trap (most of the stalls are owned by the same wholesaler, and goods here seldom inspire excitement).” (Bruyn 2009:65) Thus, everything in the market is centered around the tourist, even the discourse amongst tourist’s focuses on their own power.

**The Art of the Sale**

The Vendors at the market are foremost salespeople and like any salesperson they develop certain tactics to lure tourists to make a purchase. “It’s all about what you say,” Mary asserted as she pointed to her tongue. “You always have to be nice,” she continued. “Just being nice to customers helps to sell,” another vendor told me.

Friendliness is probably the principal tenant in any retail environment and Greenmarket Square is no exception. However, in Greenmarket there is a particular sales language. Vendors have token phrases they employ in order to make the tourist feel comfortable. The greeting is one of the most important means of creating a welcoming atmosphere. Saying “hello there friends” is a common way to welcome tourists. Once I observed a vendor greet a couple by saying, “hey guys,” and watched as the couple walked on without paying him any mind. “I should have said ‘hello there friends,‘” he exclaimed with frustration to the other vendors at the shop. Using the word “friends” instead of “guys” establishes an amicable relationship with the tourist that implies a certain level of respect.

Vendors also create a comfortable atmosphere for the tourist by inviting them to touch their products. “You don’t have to pay to touch,” vendors often jokingly tell tourists as they walk by. “Pick them up and have a look,” they also say. Through this language, vendors instill freedom in the tourist. The tourist can pick
up, handle, and try on any of their goods. Displays are arranged every morning, so that it is easy for the tourist to handle the objects. Vendors tediously untangle rows-and-rows of necklaces in order to make them accessible to the tourist. A tourist browsing their shop can then destroy these organized displays in a matter of minutes. “People just pick things up and then put them down upside down,” Sara complained to me. Yet, Sara still invites tourists to pick up and try on her jewelry, giving the tourist a sense of liberty. Tourists, hence, are constructed as free individuals in the market, while vendors are captive characters.

Vendors are captive to the tourist gaze, creating a desirable market atmosphere for the tourist. Many tourists I talked to mentioned that they enjoy the particular tone of the market. The group of British teenagers said that the “market atmosphere makes it more friendly.” Another group of Austrian tourists told me that they liked to “meet nice people” and enjoyed the “atmosphere.” Tourist books similarly refer to Greenmarket as a “colorful” environment (Brett, Barker, and Renssen 2007:68; Globetrotter and Joyce 2008:31). In creating a certain tone in the market, vendors are heeding tourist’s idea of what a market atmosphere should be.

Once tourists are lured to their shop, vendors use certain strategies to sell their products. These tactics are also shaped by the desires of the tourist. Some vendors target tourist’s interest in practical items. Mary emphasizes the practicality of her objects because as she told me “practical things are selling fast.” Once, for instance, she saw a shopper who had just purchased a wooden bowl and exclaimed “how about some salad spoons for your bowl...” Other vendors emphasize the particular South African character of their goods. Adam emphasizes that his jewelry
is distinctively Zulu. I heard him tell a customer “these are Zulu beads made by Zulu women.” Adam and others explained that stressing the handcrafted nature of the product puts a face to the product and helps to sell. “People like to hear that the jewelry is made by Zulu women because they feel like they are supporting them,” Adam exclaimed. Adam also sells woven placemats, which he tells customers are made in South African even though they are made in Tanzania and Zanzibar. He said that people often lie about where things are from to sell. Again, these sales strategies are completely shaped by what the tourist wants to hear. In the process, vendors’ identities as salespeople are constructed through the tourist gaze.

Once the vendors sell the tourist on the product, the bargaining begins. The bargaining environment of the market is one of the most attractive qualities to tourists. Several groups of tourists told me they came to the market because they can buy things cheaply. Mary also confirmed that many tourists prefer the market as opposed to the formal shops because they can bargain. The tourism industry highlights this quality of the market calling it a place filled with “informal traders” where you can “pick up great bargains.” (South African Tourism 2011) Several vendors blamed the tourism industry for the intense bargaining atmosphere. Adam and Mary both told me that the tour guides tell the tourists to bargain. Adam explained that tour guides tell tourists that they should ask for half the price that the vendor initially offer. Adam told me that he feels as if he does not have control in the bargaining process. Sometimes he wants to say to tourists, “Its me and you talking, don’t tell me ‘I was told.’” Mary also suggested that she feels that she does not have much control over the pricing. The competition, she said, is so high now
because of the bargaining that many times she only makes 10 rand in a sale. With all the other maintenance costs she probably only makes 2 rand in the end, she told me. Tourists, thus, maintain power over the vendors. Vendors are constructed as malleable objects of the tourist, while tourists are constructed as powerful conductors. The identities of the tourists and the toured are created in this exchange.

**Authenticity vs. Inauthenticity**

Although vendors, such as Adam, try to appeal to the tourist gaze by emphasizing the handcrafted and authentic quality of their products, tourists are skeptical of the authenticity of the products. Tourists want handcrafted items that are “authentic.” An American tourist, for example, told me she came to the market because her tour guide told her she would find “natural artisans.” However, tourists recognize that these sales strategies are meant to convince them to buy and question how genuine the vendors’ claims are. Almost all the tourist groups I spoke with expressed a sincere hope that the products were from South Africa or elsewhere in Africa, but suspected that they were made in a factory in China. “These things are fake…there are so many of them and they are so cheap they can’t be real,” one of the British teens said. Another British teen in the group told me that he thought that the items at the waterfront were more real because they were in a proper shop. Ironically, the very market atmosphere that is shaped by the tourist gaze is what makes tourists believe that the products are inauthentic. The images and objects in the market are all the same because that is what vendors think
tourists want, yet tourists are critical of the sameness. In this sense, they are questioning their own gaze.

For some tourists, ignorance is the only way to maintain a sense of authenticity. Several tourists asserted that they did not want to know where the products were from out of fear that they were “fake.” Hence, these tourists are also active in the performance of authenticity. Sometimes, authenticity is a theatrical production in which both vendors and tourists are actors.

Paradoxically, tourists’ suspicions of inauthenticity are generally unfounded. If being made in China is what makes a product inauthentic, then very few of the products in the market are actually “fake.” Most of the goods in the market are handcrafted in Africa. Tourists create this narrative of inauthenticity to reaffirm what is authentic. Hence, the concepts of authenticity and inauthenticity function as a means by which tourists reaffirm their desired experience.

**Mobility and the Power of Browsing**

Travelers have a level of freedom and mobility that locals do not. Their stay is temporary. They are merely passing through. This dynamic is reflected in the market environment where tourists are mobile beings free to walk around the market as they please. There is a constant desire among tourists to keep moving. One tourist, for instance, responded to Mary’s sales pitch by saying “I’m trying to get through everything.” Tourists often tell vendors, “I want to look around and see everything.” When I asked tourists if I could interview them, many of them declined because they “had to go somewhere.” Some agreed to stop for only a couple minutes because they “had to keep going.” The need to see and experience everything is the
essence of tourism. If people wanted to just be in one place, they would not travel. Tourists are thus guided by this fundamental element of tourism – mobility.

Although I have traveled as a tourist for the past three months, I never noticed this salient quality of tourism until I was immobile. When I began doing participant observation with the vendors, I suddenly saw a different perspective of the market. Vendors sit by their shops for hours each day watching tourists stroll by. If they leave their shop, they risk losing business, so vendors rarely leave the perimeter of their stand. Hence, their existence contrasts sharply with the mobility of the tourists.

Sitting in one place with the vendors was strange and disorienting for me at first. I watched as tourists strolled by, feeling as if I was looking at myself in a mirror. Despite the vendors’ efforts, most of the time tourists would not stop at the stall. They would merely glance at the items as they kept walking. I often wanted to scream “Stop and buy something! At least stop and pay us some mind!” Sitting in one place was frustrating sometimes. Even as others kept moving, you were still stuck in one place. Tourists can stop whenever they want, buy what they want, and keep moving all while you remain stationary. In this sense, tourists are colonial consumers – stopping for a while, taking what they want, and then leaving. The African vendors are still in the role of the “natives” – there to serve the needs of the colonizers. The tourists and the toured, thus, become the colonizers and the colonized.

As a researcher, I am not very different from the tourists. Although I experienced the position of the vendor, it was nothing more than just an experience.
For the vendors, however, it is their daily life. I could still come and go as I pleased. I could leave when I was tired or hungry. When I left, I knew that when I came back they would still be there in the same place. Furthermore, I could take the information I needed and leave when I felt I was through in the same way as the tourists. While I could momentarily step into the shoes of the vendors, I ultimately retained my position as a temporary visitor in the market and in Cape Town.

Being a visitor or tourist implies a level of privilege that is not associated with other mobile populations, such as refugees and immigrants. Most of the vendors in the market are immigrants to South Africa. Generally, African nationals immigrate to South Africa because of the economic and safety benefits it has to offer. Whereas tourists’ mobility is justified by leisure, immigrants’ mobility is justified by necessity. The mobility of African nationals is usually restricted to instances of practical need. Thus, while many of the vendors are mobile, their mobility does not imply the same privilege and advantage that is associated with tourism. Their mobility actually has become a disadvantage as it has spawned an outbreak of Xenophobia. Xenophobia, moreover, is only directed at African nationals, not white immigrants and visitors. Hence, there is a significant racial discrepancy between privileged mobile populations and disadvantaged mobile populations. Mobility in Greenmarket Square is a microcosm for this broader global power structure.

**Conclusion**

Identity in Greenmarket Square is articulated in many different ways. Opinions, thoughts, preferences, interactions, sales tactics, and the objects themselves all play a role in the negotiation of identity. The identities of the vendors
and the tourists are co-constructed through these different means. The vendors become a toured population, shaped by cultural commodification, cultural consumption, and the tourist gaze.

The construction of identity in Greenmarket Square reaffirms the ways in which the self-other binary is co-constructed, while testing the relevancy of newer tourism theories. These findings are a valuable contribution to the anthropological and sociological understanding of tourism. In exploring how authenticity, cultural commodification, postcolonialism, and the tourist gaze operate in Greenmarket Square, this study provides broader insight into how these phenomena operate in the post-apartheid city of Cape Town. In addition, it offers a glimpse into how spaces of tourism reaffirm the broader global racial and political order.

The proliferation of tourism in South Africa, in particular, makes these findings significant in understanding how identity is understood in the nation more generally. These finding fill a major gap in the study of multiculturalism in South Africa. Greenmarket Square is a case study of South Africa's growing tourism culture. This study shows that multiculturalism cannot just be considered in terms of a nation's resident population, but must also be examined through its visitors and the particular spaces they occupy. In this increasingly global and mobile world, identity is not circumscribed by national and geographical boundaries. The case of Greenmarket Square demonstrates that no group of people can be studied in isolation, but can only be understood through their relationship with others.
Recommendations for Further Study

There are several avenues of research that could provide a deeper understanding of identity in Greenmarket Square. In order to make the study more comprehensive, I would recommend that further research be conducted to include more of the vendors in Greenmarket Square. A greater variety of opinions, perspectives, and viewpoints would provide a more textured analysis. Additional interviews with tourists would also help to strengthen the study. By expanding the population of the study, it would expand our understanding of the construction of identity in tourist spaces.

Furthermore, it would be valuable to conduct a study of the life of the objects sold in Greenmarket Square. I would suggest doing participant observation and interviews with carvers in the rural areas to try and grasp what the objects mean to them. I would, then, interview the wholesaler who commissions and sells the product to the vendors. Tracing the life of the object would help to understand how the meaning of an object changes. Thus, it would illustrate the effects of the tourism industry on a broader scale and offer the field a fuller representation of this burgeoning industry.
Appendix

Appendix 1

Interview Guide for Vendors

- How long have you been working in the market?
- Where are you from?
- Have you always sold this product?
- How did you decide what to sell?
- Where are your products from?
- Who makes your products?
- Who designs the products?
- Where do you get the products?
- (If vendor makes own product) How do you decide what to make/what images to depict?
- What is your most popular item?
- Why do you think this item is popular?
- How do you sell your product?
- Do people ever ask where the objects are from?
- Do customers ever ask where you are from?
- Do you think tourists want something that is from South Africa?
Appendix 2

Interview Guide for Tourists

➢ Where are you from?
➢ Where did you hear about Greenmarket Square?
➢ Why did you come to Greenmarket Square?
➢ Did you buy anything?
➢ If so, what did you buy?
➢ Why did you buy it?
➢ Where do you think your purchase/the things in the market come from?
➢ Do you think the objects are from South Africa?
➢ Do you think the vendors are from South Africa?
➢ Did you talk to the vendors at all?
➢ If so, what did you talk about?
➢ What do you think of the atmosphere of Greenmarket Square?
Appendix 3

*Interview Guide for Tourism Employee*

- What is the role of the tourism office in relation to Greenmarket Square?
- Do you help advertise Greenmarket Square?
- Do you recommend Greenmarket Square to tourists who come into the office?
- What do you tell tourists about Greenmarket Square?
- I’ve heard that Greenmarket has become more touristy; do you think this is true?
- Do you think the World Cup had anything to do with the changes at Greenmarket?

Appendix 4

*Interview Guide for Tour Guide*

- Why do you include Greenmarket on your tour?
- What do you tell tourists about Greenmarket?
- How has Greenmarket become more of a tourist attraction?
- What do you think tourists are looking for when they come here?
- What do you think about Greenmarket Square and the things being sold there?
Appendix 5

Map of a Section of Greenmarket Square

The map below illustrates a portion of Greenmarket Square. Each square represents a box. Each box indicates the nationality of the vendor and the type of product they sell. The map was developed with the assistance of one of the vendors.
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