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Campbell, Brian

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Of Chicks, Lice and Mackerel: Carnival and Transgression in a Cosmopolitan Spanish Enclave in Morocco

Brian Campbell

University of Kent, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT *In 2006, a group of Ceutan Carnival performers were sued for their anti-Muslim lyrics, resulting in a convoluted trial that took six years to resolve. Ceuta is a small, cosmopolitan Spanish enclave on the Mediterranean coast of Morocco. Its Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Jewish communities are tenuously held together by the City-led ideology of convivencia, that challenges mono-cultural models of Spanishness in favour of the idea that that Ceuta's ethno-religious groups live in harmony, all being validly Spanish. This paper contends that the Ceutan Carnival does not fit functionalist theories describing it as a stress-tap that reproduces power-relations by temporarily allowing their transgression. The long-drawn-out trial, which incurred vicious feuds, spiked tensions between Christians and Muslims, collapsed 'convivencia', and challenged the authority of State institutions, suggests that the Ceutan Carnival is an uncomfortable space, better understood if treated as a Foucaultian 'mirror', a space where society appears to itself as dangerously anarchistic, making individuals long for, not resist, State control.*

KEYWORDS *Foucault, Mediterranean, scapegoat, multiculturalism, Islam*

Ceuta and its Convivencia

‘I found out soon that to be a buffoon,’ Hawkins, the trickster-protagonist of the 1955 movie ‘The Court Jester’, darkly observes in one of his monologues, ‘was a serious thing as a rule. For a jester’s chief employment is to kill himself for your enjoyment, and a jester unemployed is nobody’s fool’. Hawkins’ bitter remarks would have strongly resonated with the trickster-protagonists of this article, a group of Ceutan Carnival participants (*carnavalis-*

tas) known as *Los Polluelos* (*The Chicks*) whose winning performance in 2006 was sued for its anti-Muslim message, resulting in a long, convoluted trial that would take six years to resolve.

This paper looks at the Carnival of Ceuta, a small cosmopolitan Spanish Enclave on the Mediterranean coast of Morocco. In particular, it argues that the *Polluelos'* long-drawn-out court case, and the feuds they would incur with some of the City's leading politicians, give us special insight into the dynamics, pit-falls and opportunities of Ceuta's politics of multiculturalism. An account of the trial, moreover, places us in an excellent position from which to revise some of the major functionalist models of Carnival that simplistically describe it as a stress-tap that reproduces oppressive power-relations by temporarily allowing their transgression, suspension and inversion.

Gazing over the glittering Straits of Gibraltar, Ceuta – along with Melilla to the east and a few other islets along the Mediterranean coast of Morocco – belongs to Spain. Much to the fury and frustration of the neighbouring Kingdom of Morocco, which claims Ceuta as its own, the City was granted Autonomous Status in 1995. The move promoted Ceuta from being a marginal (and potentially negotiable) territory to being an administrative unit on par with other autonomous regions in mainland Spain.¹ Ceuta, thus, now boasts extensive legislative, executive and judicial self-governing powers, although matters pertaining to national interest – such as education, migration, trade and foreign affairs – are managed by a special Governmental Delegate sent by the Central Government of Madrid. In this article, I will refer to the Madrid government as 'the State' and to the local Ceutan government as 'the City', a distinction made and used by Ceutans themselves.

Ceuta's 2011 census established the city's population to be 82,000. This figure is unhelpful because it does nothing to represent its increasingly diverse, heterogeneous 'cosmopolitan' demography. Originally conquered by Portuguese Christian forces in 1415, Ceuta spent most of its modern history as a poor prison-fort, chronically under-supplied and often under attack by Moorish forces (Abulaifa 2011: 391–410). In the late nineteenth century, after losing its empire in Latin America, Spain would turn its attention to Africa. The establishment of the Protectorate over northern Morocco transformed Ceuta from a struggling military fort into Spain's busiest freeport, attracting capital and labour from all over the Mediterranean and further afield (Rezette 1976: 70–81).

Consequently, only 50% of Ceuta's population is Christian. Many of these are 'outsiders' (*de fuera*) who came in from the Peninsula to work. Mostly wealthy *funcionarios* – medics, doctors, teachers, soldiers, policemen, administrators and

accountants – they also dominate Ceutan politics. Around 0.3% are Jewish, engaged in artisanal trades² or as wealthy lawyers and architects. Another 1–2% is Hindu. They came to Ceuta as successful traders, largely moving into real estate when Ceuta's Freeport status had to be given up in 1995. Around 48% are Muslim. Some trace their descent back to military ancestors who settled in the city in the 1920s. Most, however, moved in when mass Moroccan migration started in the 1980s. The Muslim population, with its high-birth rates and unceasing migration from Morocco, is rapidly growing, and is expected to eclipse the Christian one in just a few years. They constitute Ceuta's clear underclass: labourers, petty shopkeepers, low-level white-collar workers and petty traders, although an ever-increasing number are finding their way to bureaucratic, professional and even political roles. Ceuta is also home to a small Roma minority, a hard-working community of Chinese traders and, more recently, to an increasing number of sub-Saharan migrants who entered the city (and, therefore, the European Union) irregularly following long, arduous and traumatic journeys from their native west or central African countries.³

Ceuta's cultural-religious communities are held together by a concept known as *convivencia* (*co-habitation*). At its simplest, most basic level, *convivencia* is a rhetoric developed by Ceuta's local government that represents the City as being composed of diverse groups (*culturas*) integrated through mutual respect and understanding. On a much more complex level, *convivencia* tries to deal with Ceuta's complex cosmopolitan demography by prying apart the old, rigid and simplistic models of national Spanish identity that assume that only Christian Castillian speakers are Spaniards (Menocal 2002; Kottman 2011). The City insists that Ceuta's ethno-religious groups live in harmony, all being equally Spanish with an interest to make the city they call home a better place. *Convivencia*, thus, recasts 'difference' as 'diversity'.

Those born and raised in Ceuta, regardless of their ethno-religious affiliation, consider themselves to be 'Ceuties' or 'Caballas' (lit. mackerel), a nickname that goes back to the turn of the twentieth century, when Andalusian markets overflowed with the bountiful mackerel catches of the city's skilled fishermen⁴. A 'Caballa' is assumed to have a deep emotional connection to the Ceuta, which manifests itself in claims of exclusive understanding of Ceuta's multicultural reality (*la realidad ceutí*) as well as fierce loyalty to Ceuta's *españolidad* (Spanish identity) against threats both external and internal.⁵ This where the problem starts however, for as Driessen notes in relation to Melilla (Driessen 1992b), *convivencia* as a way of (re)imagining Ceuta's social landscape, demography and Spanish identity has always been riddled with inherent contradictions

and is vulnerable to all sorts of political hijackings, lingering notions of mono-cultural Spanishness, and haunting doubts about Ceuta's future.

Most of my Muslim informants often complained that *convivencia* is a sham, for despite the flowery discourse of cultural richness and harmony, the harsh reality is that Muslims still constitute Ceuta's poor underdog. The Muslim leaders of Ceuta's main, yet hopelessly small⁶ coalition of opposition parties 'Caballas', similarly lament that *convivencia* simply seeks to distract Ceutans from the fact that Muslims live in a violent administrative structure (*racista*) that suspects their Spanishness, denies their heritage (e.g. language) and thus always has them at a disadvantage when competing against other Ceutans. The result, they insist, is a vicious cycle that hinders them from breaking from their current economic situation (El Faro 2011c). Worse still, *convivencia*, with its numerous festivals and spectacles celebrating the city's cultural richness, is accused of diverting precious financial resources into high-paying jobs that Muslims are not qualified to occupy, and into useless events that reproduce, not close, economic gaps and animosities (Ceuta al Dia 2012a; El Faro 2012e).

Christians usually downplay such claims as petty strategies by which *Caballas'* politicians try to present themselves as defenders of Ceuta's Muslims and mobilise support against the *Partido Popular's* current parliamentary hegemony. This does not mean they do not, too, suspect *convivencia*. Rather, *convivencia* was often described to me as a kind of Trojan Horse. Disguised as a 'Spanish Muslim', the potentially hostile 'Moro' (Moroccan-Muslim) is allowed by weak politicians, tempted by the pool of votes they offer, to settle on Spanish land and consume Spanish resources.

And what will happen, the argument goes, when the ever-growing Muslim community actually starts wielding the reins of power? Would Spanish Muslims live up to the expectations of *convivencia*? Or would they make life inhospitable for the Christians, driving them out? Are these unfounded paranoid and lingering colonial mentalities? Or are they legitimate fears? Many Ceutan Christians are therefore always on the lookout for hints of future trouble, and my 18 months in Ceuta were characterised by repeated cases where the activities of Muslim individuals, politicians or religious institutions were perceived as threats to be stamped out. Perhaps Muslim army officers had clambered too high up the chain of military command (El Faro 2011f); or Muslim politicians were pushing to make their mother dialect (*dariya*) an official language along with Spanish (El Faro 2011b; 2014a; 2014b); or protests have been raised regarding the exorbitant amount of money being spent to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the Christian conquest (and therefore a

'massacre' and expulsion of Muslims) of 1415 (El Pueblo 2012; Ceuta al Dia 2012b). When faced with such insecurity, Christians revert back to the older, safer and cleaner dichotomies of Spanish/Christian and Muslim/Moroccan, a dichotomy that denies Muslims their Spanishness, and casts them as guests trying to drive their hosts out of their home (El Faro 2012d). As hostile strangers, access to important state resources (namely welfare and jobs) is denied, often until National State institutions point out severe breaches of human rights (La Razón 2007; El Mundo 2012).

A Disaster in the Making

It is in this delicate context that we find the Ceutan Carnival. Based on the Cadiz model, it centres on an official, state-sanctioned *murga* competition, with local folklorists, renowned *carnavalistas*, and high-ranking bureaucrats making up the judging panel. A *murga* is a 20-minute musical performance by a group of 7–15 singers and musicians known as an *agrupación*. All members of an *agrupación* wear a fancy costume that reflects the *tipo*, the extended metaphorical platform through which the issues the *agrupación* sing and argue about are explored and articulated. A *murga* is therefore a musical, lyrical, and visual package, and the way these elements are intertwined generally determine the quality of the performance.

Carnival aficionados claim that a good *murga* is one that has *gracia*: the general ability to amuse and entertain both casual and aficionado audiences. Different types of *murga* seek to evoke different senses of *gracia*. The *gracia* of a *comparsa* – a serious *murga* that often sings about nostalgia, love and family – is largely one of awe. *Comparsas*, I was told, must 'move the heart'. This they do through the beautiful poetry of their lyric, the rich music, the emotion of their message and the elaborateness of their fancy costume.

Chirigotas, on the other hand, are satirical performances that ridicule public figures, critically comment on national political and economic affairs, incisively explore scandals and prod political order. Their *gracia* is that of caricature, of delivering relentless assaults, but through wit and cleverness. Aficionados insist that a good *chirigota* ought to be, above all, subtle: its jibes and attacks should not be explicit, but delivered through puns, evocations, the choice of costume and the *tipo*. They employ what is called *medio camino*,⁷ the ability of *carnavalistas* to provide basic clues and let the audience piece the message together. *Medio camino* shows *carnavalistas*' ability to predict how their audience will think. The *Chirigota* is, to a cultured audience, undoubtedly an art form requiring the seamless interaction of many different talents, such as lyrical

poetry, political insight, subtlety, music, metaphor, word-crafting and the judgment of audiences' political attitudes and awareness.

The stage, then, is set. It is within the context of this fragile and delicate conception of social order, that one encounters an annual, official and public event – ironically funded by *convivencia* itself as a 'Christian tradition' – that encourages, indeed *rewards*, participants on their skill at not only challenging, ridiculing and transgressing social order, but also in doing it with style and aplomb. The Ceutan Carnival was a disaster waiting to happen.

Los Polluelos

And disaster *did* happen, in February of 2006. A few months before Carnival, the Perez Brothers, two siblings renowned for their skill as *carnavalistas*, assembled an *agrupación* (mainly consisting of young police members) and announced they were going to compete in the City's *murga* competition with a *chirigota* entitled 'Polluelos con los pelos en los huevos' (*Chicks with hair on their eggs/testicles*).

On the night of the competition, Carnival enthusiasts, friends and family of members of the *agrupación* poured into the Revellin, the City's main theatre, laughing and chatting loudly. The City's main officials, by contrast, sat in silence, smiling nervously, uncomfortable despite, or perhaps because of, their privileged position in the front rows of the theatre, bracing themselves for the yearly barrage of ridicule and caricature. *Murga* competitions start at 9.30 pm and last until well past midnight, with the crowd becoming increasingly rowdy and exited as the hours roll by. By the time Perez's *murga*, the last of the evening, was up the crowd was already restless and unruly. The siblings could not have asked for a better audience.

The theatre's heavy curtain slowly lifted to an explosion of cheering and whistling and a soft, red light exposed the *agrupación* formed up on the stage. Dressed in checked pullovers and brown shorts, with white socks pulled up to their knees, the members huddled together, their backs arched forward, knees bent inwards. A stupid, innocent look hung on their faces, and their eyes were hidden behind round thick-lensed reading spectacles. Stuck to their chins were two, red plastic balloons, slightly inflated in a clever imitation of a rooster's wattle. The crowd screamed impatient encouragement, a drum rolled and, singing to melancholic music, the *agrupación* introduced themselves as young teenagers, hard-working pupils, unpopular at school, totally subdued to their mothers:

Mummy, I will study hard,
 I will never smoke,
 Nor will I drink,
 I won't even milk it⁸
 Nor ever answer you back.
 I'm the ideal son.

Then, suddenly, the mood changed:

But, my dear, mummy,
 Don't stay up waiting for me tonight.
 Because I have deceived you.
 Tonight, I am going out . . .

The stage brightened up. The drums changed their rhythm, speeding up. The members of the *agrupación*, straightening up, stripped away their nerdy clothes to reveal bright T-shirts, military pants, torn jeans, tattoos and piercings. The crowd whistled approval as the *agrupación* strutted on the stage, puffing out their chests, and punching the air. Their *tipo* was now clear: they were *pavos* (literally: turkeys) young, inquisitive teenagers in full puberty. They were thus of that phase in life where they are driven to question, defy, challenge and play tricks on authority. It is beyond their control: it is their biology that makes them daring, reckless transgressors and provocateurs, delivering relentless attacks against those in power.

Their introduction was followed by an array of songs throwing jibes at public figures: a well-known journalist who thinks that his blurred photographs are works of art is picked on with sarcasm; lighting up a large joint, they imagine Mustapha Mizziam, a successful Muslim Politician, having tea with the UIR.⁹ Some politicians' sexual orientation is explored, and Prime Minister Zapatero is accused of placing in jeopardy the Spanish sovereignty over Ceuta during negotiations following the 'tragedy of the valley' of 2006, where tens of Sub-Saharan immigrants died horribly while attempting to cross over Ceuta's walls. Ceuta is a strong supporter of *Partido Popular*, and the *Polluelos'* jibes were approved by loud outbreaks of applause and cheering.

The *Polluelos* finally moved on to the *popurri*, a string of short songs sung to the themes of famous tunes, concluding and providing the climax of a *murga* performance. To Beethoven's famous 'Ode to Joy' (which also doubles up as the EU's anthem):

Listen, brother, the song I hear every day
 This melody wakes me up early in the morning.
 Furnitureeeeeeeeeee! (*Muebleeeeeeeeeee!*)

The *agrupación*, initially startled by the cry, collapsed to the ground, in an exaggerated imitation of Muslim prayer, and the crowd burst into laughter as it grasped the *gracia* of the rhyme. The cry, ‘*Mueble*’ is an unavoidable part of the Ceutan soundscape. From very early in the morning, Moroccan tradesmen slowly wander around the streets of the city, shouting out their shrill, iconic cry, announcing they will buy furniture from anyone willing to sell. Yet, the *Polluelos* gave the traders’ high-pitched cry a subtle twist, distorting it into the deep, long chant of the Muslim call to prayer, another, highly contentious element of the Ceutan soundscape. Standing up again, they continued, stressing their claim to injustice:

You wouldn’t believe the hassle
 All the noise made by this sweet guy
 And to me? They put the *botellón* in the marina!

The mosques, then, are allowed to make all the noise they want. The *botellón*, however, considered to be a Christian ‘tradition’ whereby youths gather in open spaces on weekend evenings with drink to chat, dance and get drunk cheaply, has been expelled from the city’s quarters to the empty, isolated and cold marina.

As the crowd applauded, the stage turned into a menacing red. Playing coarse, deep ‘jungle-like’ rhythms, the *agrupación*, beating on their chests, harped out:

I was born in the jungle
 I’m Mizziám, Mizziám
 I’m the defender of all the Moroccans
 I’m Mizziám, Mizziám
 When a Muslim is caught by the UIR
 I’m Mizziám, Mizziám
 Let’s see what’s going on here!
 I’m Mizziám, Mizziám!
 Mizziám,
 the Tarzan of the Moor/monkey (*moro/mono*)

The crowd again roars with laughter as half of the *agrupación* shout out ‘Moro’ (Moor) and the rest ‘mono’ (monkey), bringing to a close their metaphoric

comparison between the Muslim politician and Tarzan, both claiming to be defenders of their 'people'. Monkey sounds play in the background (in case some failed to grasp the pun) and the group prepared for its next song, this time a jibe at the Muslim Eid al-Fitr, when hundreds of lambs are slaughtered in sacrifice:¹⁰

The puppies say, 'Guau guau guau'
 The kittens say, 'miao miao miao'
 The chicks go, 'pio pio pio'
 The lambs say: 'You wouldn't believe what happened to me!'

The music became faster still: President Juan Vivas is branded a coward for not showing up at manifestations. His short stature provided an irresistible temptation, and the *agrupación* fell down to their knees 'pa cantar a su altura' (to sing to your highness/to sing at your own level). Stopping for a second to catch their breath, they launched themselves into their final tirade:

When I grow up I want to be a veterinary,
 Here we have enough idiots/calves (*becerras*)
 What a mess/herd (*rebaño*)
 Let's stop putting condoms on, already!
 As the two populations are already equal
 Out with condoms!

The crowd, on its feet, was already clapping and whistling. The singers were sweating, their faces contorted with effort:

I went directly to a book about nature
 To see if the Muslims (*turcos*) are rational animals
 And I saw that these people and cattle (*bovinas*) are the same
 And I cleared all my doubts: they're all animals!

My mother called me
 And told me I should shut up
 But before I go: 'How badly Hitler did it.' (*que mal lo hizo Hitler*)

Here I am showing my face
 I'd rather die standing
 Than live on my knees

The deafening applause lasted for minutes as the *agrupación* paraded victoriously on the stage. The City's officials, including the charismatic President Juan Vivas was photographed by the media giving a standing ovation, clapping loudly. By the end of the night, the *Polluelos* were unanimously declared the winners of the Carnival 2006.

How Badly Hitler Did It!

The very next day, the editor of Ceuta's leading newspaper condemned Carnival's board of judges for awarding the prize to a *murga* whose main claim to *gracia* was its anti-Muslim message. The imam of Ceuta's main mosque, similarly, diffused declarations denouncing the *Polluelos*, urging the Muslims to stay calm and asking for extra police presence at the day's Carnival parades. A few days later, Mohamed Ali, the leader of the *Caballas* coalition prosecuted the *Polluelos*, dragging them to court. At the trial, the *Polluelos* defended themselves as best as they could, claiming that they had never intended their lyrics to be interpreted in such ways (El Faro 2011d). Thanks to *medio camino* – the art of delivering hints and pieces and allowing the audience to piece together the message – the bulk of the charges were successfully diffused.

The main thrust of the accusation focused, therefore, on the *murga's* final section. Against the claim that 'the Muslims are animals' (*los turcos son animales*), the Perez brothers argued that theirs was a critique of the events of the Danish Cartoons crisis of 2005, which had provoked massive riots across the Muslim world. Mounting a decent defence against their exclamations of 'how badly Hitler did it', however, proved to be considerably more difficult. A well-known localism, the phrase was often sprayed on walls in Muslim neighbourhoods in the 1980s and 1990s, when Ceuta's Muslim population was expanding at a fast rate: it suggested that Hitler had made a huge mistake, and that the world would have been better off if the Nazi regime had tried to eliminate the Arabs, instead of the Jews. The *Polluelos* could not slip out of this one easily: as a purely Ceutan phrase, it had no other possible meaning. Lamely, they insisted that they were simply commenting on how evil Hitler was, and that the last thing the world currently needs is another dictator.

The judge, unsurprisingly, was quite unimpressed. The *Polluelos* were condemned for 'transgressing public rights and liberties', of 'crimes against religious sentiments' and of 'offences against individual figures' (El Faro 2011d). The judge went on to comment that the *chirigota*:

clearly meant to slander a particular part of our population solely for identifying themselves as Muslim. (El Faro 2011d; 2)

More revealingly, he implied that such jibes, made during such a time of permissiveness, could break through the spatial–temporal boundaries of carnival:

people will start disliking people adhering to this particular religion, installing hatred between our citizens. (El Faro 2011d 2)

The jury went on to recommend a sentence of 18 months of prison, as well as a fine of €7000 for each member of the *agrupación*. The final sentence, however, was never actually passed.

Suspending Convivencia

The trial of the *Polluelos* was widely followed, accompanied by furious debates on all sorts of media – TV shows, radio debates, and newspaper forums. The digital versions of *El Faro* and *Ceutaldia*, whose regular articles rarely muster more than a few comments, were now overflowing with vicious exchanges, with each article or update accumulating hundreds of posts.

‘This shames and disgusts me,’ one post remarked,

These guys have big balls, putting the Moro in disarray like that. This *chirigota* had the courage to deliver truths in the form of punches. Truths that people believe but are afraid to express. But they hurt no one. Remember that they [Muslims] burnt our church of San Jose, and the Medinaceli¹¹ has to be escorted by hundreds of police officers.

Another entry echoed these preoccupations:

With the Jews, no problem ... with Hindus, no problem ... with Christians, no problem ... with the Muslim community, yes problem. 90% of them do not want to integrate ... they only want state-help and do us harm if we don't give it to them. You can't accuse them or you're a racist (*racista*) or a fascist (*fachas*).

Indeed, the cues set out by *Caballa's* accusation against the *chirigota* turned the issue into one of Christians against Muslim. The special boundary of Carnival was effectively destroyed, with Carnival seen as another case where ‘convivencia’ simply reproduces the inequalities between the city’s Muslim and Christian communities. By extension, the Muslims’ (or their self-declared leaders) attempt to

defend themselves against such structural violence by challenging these 'Christian rituals' was read by the Christian community as a threat. The response was to revert back to old dichotomies of Spanish/Christian vs. Muslim/Moroccan, that casts Muslims as bad guests, denying them their Spanishness.

One Muslim blogger thus replied:

What a pity that we still have in Ceuta loads of people who, after all this talk of *convivencia*, go out saying we are beasts and animals. It is very easy to pick on the weak with four lines of fanaticism and hate.

Another followed:

Well, they [the Christians] don't learn, first we're all *convivencia*, then we slide back to the monotone . . . the *moros*, the *moros* and the *moros* . . . this *chirigota* does not have a point and they sing badly. It is called 'village barbarism' (*incultura pueblerina*)

The Jester's Honour

After a few weeks, the fuss and chaos surrounding the whole issue slowly died down and the matter was gradually forgotten. But in 2007, the *agrupación* revived the whole incident by competing in Carnival once again. Under the name of *Siempre así* (*It's always the same*), the *agrupación* dressed itself as it did in the previous year, simply exchanging the fancy teenage clothes for the orange garb of a prison inmate. In their concluding *popurrí*, they stated that they would submit to their sentence. Nonetheless, they also pointed out that Carnival also turns them from prisoners into judges, and proceeded to systematically condemn their enemies: the editor of the *El Faro*; Mohamed Ali, the leader of the *Caballas* party; the judicial system (for failing to exert justice); fellow *carnavalistas* (for failing to support them, hoping that their disqualification would leave them with a better shot at victory); the President (for first applauding them, then refusing to defend them during the trial); and the Ceutan in general for preferring to live in fear, appeasing the *moro* and watching the danger grow (Digital Sur 2007).

The *agrupación* failed to win the first prize, but the following year they tried again with another *murga* entitled 'Los hachicha' (The marijuana trafficker). In gangster clothing – baggy pants, bright shirts, caps turned sideways, large silver and golden necklaces – the *agrupación* turned themselves into Muslim traffickers, talking about how easy it is to make a living in a Ceuta populated by a cowardly population and an impotent government. Again, they failed to win the first prize (Ceuta al Día 2008).

Despite the great resonance the Perez brothers' *murgas* had with the audience, they were the least ones in tune with the spirit of Carnival. That the case of the *Polluelos* developed the way it did is not particularly surprising. *Carnivalistas* are, after all, provocateurs that challenge order in attractive and catchy ways, then lying low as chaos reigns (Al-Jende & Guerrero 2008). The fragility of *convivencia* made its transgression simply more tempting and likely to succeed. What *does* surprise is that after the Perez Brothers pushed Ceutans back into thinking in terms of exclusive religious categories, they were caught up by the chaotic context they themselves created. In their performances, the *agrupación* often stressed their need to repeatedly return to the stage to remind everyone of the personal injustices they claimed to have suffered at the hands of their foes, particularly, *Caballas'* Mohamed Ali. Their *tipos*, my aficionado informants sharply pointed out, were metaphorical designed to place them in a position where, as victims, they could hit out against their enemies. The *murga*, in simple words, became about the *agrupación*, and Carnival became about itself. I believe that this crisis, where the *agrupación* ends up repeatedly singing about itself, is a good example of how phenomena such as carnival can expose such deeper structural insecurities.

Anthropological theory has suggested that honour is a game played by conceptual equals (Pitt-Rivers 1966). That *Caballas* had decided to engage the *agrupación* implies such conceptual equality. In their performances, the *agrupación* often pointed out that when *Caballas* had decided to take them on, they had, in fact, brought themselves down to the level of a *murga*: they were as much jesters and clowns as the *agrupación* was. But one cannot also exclude the opposite: that rather than being *provocateurs* – jesters whose job is to upset order and trivialise power – their feuds had elevated them to the position of *knights*. In Internet forums and on newspapers, the *agrupación* was hailed as popular defenders of Ceuta's Christian identity and traditions, the sword and shield of Christian insecurity. It was a role they eagerly accepted.

Carnival had either sucked everybody in, turning *Caballas*, the judges and anyone involved into a clown, or it literally spilled out by converting the jester into a shining paladin, mobilising the language and techniques of Carnival to deliver 'truths' rather than jibes, making them part of the political battle they themselves had initiated. One could also argue that within the context of the trial they had encountered an endless fountain of inspiration and creativity: a winning recipe combining social and personal issues with vengeance as a narrative.

The *Polluelos* Return

Unable to win the first prize for the second year running, the Perez Brothers withdrew, frustrated, from Carnival. Three years later, however, in May 2011, they announced their intention to return to the stage.

The press heralded their comeback with a mixture of fear and delight (El Faro 2011a). Mohamed Ali, *Caballas'* leader, responded by pressing the City into re-opening the 2006 case and to conclude it before the festival started (El Faro 2011e). The aim, of course, was to officially brand the *Polluelos* as criminals and racists, sweeping them off their moral high ground.

In December 2011, the trial of the *Polluelos* recommenced. After several hearings, the *agrupación* was found guilty, and a sentence was hastily passed. It was not, however, the same as that of 2006. Each member of the *Polluelos* was fined €20, a considerably lesser sum than the one suggested six years earlier (El Faro 2011 g). With President Juan Vivas's permission, their title as the winners of the 2006 competition was revoked (El Faro 2011 h). Finally, following intense pressure from *Caballas*, the organisers of the official *murga* competition announced that, in order to safeguard public liberties and fundamental rights, they would duly disqualify any *agrupación* which in any way attacked the City, the Judiciary, the media, any political organisation or any other section of the population. Such injuries, the announcement went, would include any literal or poetic reference to terrorism and religious or sexual identities (Europa Press 2012; El Faro 2012a).

On online forums, and on radio and television programmes, old debates were revived, and old wounds re-opened. On one blogger, identifying himself as a Christian functionary and a carnival aficionado, claimed:

Hurrah for the *Polluelos*! Not the politicians! No one has ever defended Ceuta as well as they did. If only we were all like them! True Ceutans/Mackerels (*Caballas de verdad!*)

Many interpreted the new limitations imposed on Carnival as yet another attempt by the Muslim/Moroccan community and its leaders to extinguish Christian/Spanish traditions. *Convivencia* was seen as a sham, submitting to the enemy for the sake of petty political gain. Thus comments another Christian blogger:

We already know that Ceutan historical traditions will end up being 'haram' very soon. This talk of *convivencia* is a euphemism used to shy away from alarming realities. To win votes he [Vivas] is allying himself with the Devil. Free speech is a fundamental right. Vivas has achieved what Franco couldn't. This is censorship.

Another Christian teacher took the above logic to its perceived inevitable conclusion:

... this is going from bad to worse ... soon we will end up having to pack our luggage (i.e. to leave Ceuta)

Intimate Foes

Riding on a wave of popular support, in full feud with several political figures, and considering themselves as both victims of Ceutan politics and as the true champions of Christian traditions identity against both Muslims and the local Government, the Perez brothers carried on with their preparations to return to the stage. On a cold, rainy February night, the audience (and one anthropologist) huddled back into the Revellin, eager to see how the Perez Brothers would clash with their enemies.

Light flooded the stage, revealing a group of six-legged insects in brightly coloured trousers, scarves and jackets. Huge, tooth-filled grins were beautifully painted on their faces. The *agrupación* of lice bowed to the audience, presenting themselves as the 'Enemigas Intimas' (*Intimate Foes*). On the canvas behind them was an incredibly detailed painting of naked, giant male buttocks, lovingly tattooed with the Osborne Bull, making it clear for the slower amongst us what *kind* of lice they were. Such a *tipo*, my smiling informants remarked, placed them in a very *intimate* place from which to strike at their foes.

The *murga* did not fail to draw blood. Starting with a discussion of the cabinet's sexual prowess, they then moved on to the Gordillo sexual scandal, which, despite inconclusive judiciary evidence, the *Enemigas* swear really happened: as pubic lice, they saw the incriminating acts first hand! This was followed by a tirade of cheap laughs against Morocco, and then, finally, turned their guns on their opponents.

The *chirigota's* main victim was, again, Mohamed Ali, *Caballas'* leader. As usual, the techniques of *medio camino* were employed in order to deliver their attacks without placing themselves in danger. At one point, the music died out, and the *Enemigas*, with their hands on their hips, complained:

They take away my prize when they feel like it!
Listen up, Ali!

A drum roll started. One member of the *agrupación* brandishing a red linen cloth, pretended to be a matador. Another, hunching down, made a horn

gesture on his head. The matador waved the red cloth invitingly. The bull stamped the ground, shaking with tension, preparing to charge. The drum roll intensified. The crowd cheered with excitement, the bull charged, then, suddenly backed away, leaving the matador to look like a fool. As the crowd, instructed by the *agrupación's* backstage helpers, cried 'Cabron! (Idiot/Cuckold!)', the *agrupación* delivered their final punch line:

"I wasn't the one who said it!

As the crowd cheered, the stage darkened and a weak red light illuminated the *Enemigas*. A deep drum marked out a slow beat, the musicians played an exotic, middle-eastern sounding scale, and then the *agrupación* sang, to the instantly recognisable melody of 'Prince Ali' from Disney's Aladdin:

"The Great Ali has arrived!
Glory to the Great Ali!

He wants to fix the entire city.
You should first fix your crooked nose
He will help you in any way he can,
But only on the condition that you're part of his clan!

As the song drew to its end, two members of the *agrupación* wheeled in a large, covered painting. The rest continued:

Ali!
The Great Ali!
The one who could beat you up!
No law courts, like men, just you against me!
I would put you in a ring,
And I would look scary, like this!
To show the world how you shake with fear and piss yourself.
The great Ali!

With the final line, the *agrupación* stripped away the linen cover shrouding the painting, revealing a huge portrait of the famous boxer Mohamed Ali, gloved fist ready for the fight. Again, the *agrupación* had cleverly succeeded in delivering their attack, while placing themselves out of trouble. Struggling to be heard over the cheering crowd, the *murga* then launched its climatic finale:

I came to sing to you, eagerly as always,
 Although I know that I could be treated badly again this year in Carnival.
 And I have more than enough rebel in me to deliver four truths to this City.
 Ridiculous: those who thought they could shut me up with just 20 Euros
 Ridiculous: Ali, his Sultans,
 And those who question what comes out of my pen.

The poor man is not to blame.
 The guilty is the one who applauds then, like Judas, hides and runs.
 Juanito, stop bowing down to the Moor (*bajarse al moro*)
 Leave that for when you're only winning four votes.

Somebody tell me why I feel like an insect/stranger/weird person (*bicho raro*) in my country!
 Don Juan Vivas will survive in my memory as being the only one who has ever taken away the first prize off a *chirigota*!

I don't have his money in my pockets
 What I do have is an inscription burnt into my skin with live fire
 The voice of the devotees: 'a stolen prize'
 And here I am standing my ground!

So the trial of the *Polluelos* is over.
 Is that what you think?!
 It hasn't even started!

Enemigas Intimas were declared the winners of the 2012 *murga* competition (El Faro 2012b).

'If Not Convivencia, Then What?'

The following morning, I headed out into the busy Ceutan streets with a grin, expecting all sorts of interesting and fiery comments. This is, after all, what the *Enemigas Intimas* had promised me with their concluding rhyme.

I was left sorely disappointed. Ceutan newspapers, including the sharp editor of the *El Faro*, who had been so often attacked by the Perez brothers, gave the *agrupación* very little attention. Some journalist informants of mine explained that 'we've had enough of the story' and would not entertain these 'spoiled brats' (niñatos) and their mockery of the City's judicial and executive institutions. Likewise, *Caballas'* leadership expressed their distaste at the evening's outcome, but held back from pressing further charges, particu-

larly after the City made it clear that though it was aware of infringements to the new Carnival regulations, it was not prepared to pursue them (El Faro 2012c). Sipping coffee with some of their political colleagues a few days later, I was told that 'because the City cannot afford to have people like these', they had urged Mohamed Ali to continue the fight. He, however, decided 'not to make a big fuss', preferring instead to let things die out as quickly and as silently as possible.

Similarly, when reading the papers one chilly February morning with an acquaintance of mine, I commented on the anti-climactic reaction to Perez's victory, he replied, angrily:

They went too far! People like these are the last thing Ceuta needs at the moment. These things incite hatred, accumulating and spiralling into anarchy. I have kids and want to live in peace. Am I going to deal with this every year? If we do not have *convivencia*, then what?

Many of my Christian informants offered comparable statements, some recalling how these types of confrontations had degenerated into violent episodes in the past. Particularly disturbing, however, was the fact that the local government, the ultimate guarantor of social order, seemed unable to control the situation. As Luis, another Christian *funcionario* remarked:

It is shameful. Most of the *agrupación* was made up of policemen, agents of order! How can you keep *convivencia* if the City first supports one side, then abandons it, then cannot decide which position to take? How can you trust a confused government? Well, I am glad it is over.

Some of my Muslim informants also shared this attitude. One young low-ranking *funcionario* suggested that:

In Ceuta we've never experienced so much distance between Christians and Muslims. We do not need further tensions amongst neighbours. Yes, they are *racistas*, but it is also stupid to fight over *these* things. There are more important matters at hand.

Scapegoats, Sacrifices and Protagonismo

The general fear, associated with the perceived threat to *convivencia*, was soon accompanied by the identification of culprits at all levels of society. The City, finally finding its voice, through one high government official in a press conference a few days later, declared that:

... as always, some people [*Caballas and the Perez brothers*] use any advantage to create polemics and barriers between us distinct communities that form this city (*formamos*) ... how annoying, always the same tricks ...

She continued, lamenting that:

They certified that the only thing [they] and those who support them clearly seek is to divide the Ceutans in a fight between Christians and Muslims ... some are very apt at shamelessly using the sentimentality of *convivencia* for their own political gain, even if it means turning the City into a battlefield.

On the ground, the prevailing attitudes were not too different. One Christian teacher suggested that:

I know them both. One [Ali] turns everything into a personal project. The others [Perez], they think they're something special, that they know it all. They love the spotlight!

The comments above give us some indication as to how *convivencia* reproduces itself despite its weaknesses and vulnerabilities. This commentary pushes the idea(l) that while *convivencia* – the view that the City is composed of distinct cultures living in peace and harmony, all being equally Spanish – might indeed be a delicate and fragile concept, it is also the natural, basic and obvious way in which Ceutan society is constituted. When *convivencia* collapses, with Christians and Muslims reverting to the more familiar dichotomy of Spanish/Christian vs. Muslim/Moroccan, it is not because it fails to superimpose itself upon strongly entrenched national categories and identities, or because the City has not yet found a way to effectively manage trust between (what were until recently) potentially hostile 'others', nor even because Ceuta's *culturas* are essentially, culturally incompatible. Rather, the declarations above insist that this is because certain *individuals* hijacked the latent suspicions and fragile trust on which *convivencia* is based. There is nothing wrong with *convivencia*: the cause of its breakdown lies with individuals, not the ideology itself.

Most importantly, however, this discourse allows entire group conflicts to be blamed on recognisable individuals, who are accused of singlehandedly corrupting the ideals of *convivencia*. Their punishment, expulsion or public shaming restores order. In order to turn *convivencia* into the 'natural' way in which Ceutan affairs are conducted, its collapse needs to be located not in its *internal*

contradictions, abstract and difficult to fix, but in the bad character of a particular persons, a source *external* to *convivencia* which, indeed, *can* be removed.

Why would Ali and the Perez Brothers corrupt *convivencia*, though?

'Protagonismo,' is the answer I often got. One elderly Christian *funcionario* teacher explained:

If you manage to convince the Muslims that they are under attack, that they need a leader, then you can see why Ali is doing it. The only way he can compete with Vivas is if he mobilises the Muslims. Ambition!

And the Perez Brothers?

'Ceuta is a very racist city,' one informant, an ex-politician argued,

'Many liked the fact that 'Mohamed' came to sell us eggs every day. But many of us cannot accept that Mohamed the egg-seller is now *Mister (Don)* Mohamed, and as Spanish as I am. Now there are some people who like being in the limelight. It's a personal thing, they like being *protagonistas*, the centre of attention. And they know that if they pull at the strings of *racismo* they're going to get an audience.

Through *protagonismo*, the source and culprits of social tensions is identified. Their character flaws, which compels them to use the notion of the public good to satisfy darker personal desires, transforms them into objects of hate, and therefore targets for sacrifice on the altar of reconciliation. Of course, anthropologically speaking, whether Mohamed Ali is really so politically ambitious as to be ready to turn Ceuta into a battlefield, or whether the Perez Brothers are really self-centred racists, is irrelevant. What is important is that the reproduction of *convivencia* requires Ceutans to imagine it as constituting the natural, original state of Ceutan social order. This, in turn, requires sacrifices and scapegoats.

From Lice to Mackerel: Carnival in a Multicultural Society

The case of the *Polluelos* places us in a position to contribute towards anthropological theories of Carnival. Anthropological and Sociological literature generally agrees that Carnival constitutes a (1) State sanctioned, (2) clearly defined 'period of time' and 'space' that (3) allows the loosening of social normative laws and obligations and the symbolic inversion of hierarchies of power. At the risk of simplification, further investigation has fallen along two distinct yet constantly overlapping lines.

A good deal of effort has been dedicated to the examination of the 'structure' of the liberties afforded by Carnival, focusing particularly on the symbolical and

performative techniques through which established political and social order is inverted. Chief here, of course, is Bakhtin. His main work argues that academics have, through neglect or revulsion, overlooked the importance of the carnivalesque, of folk, earthly, vulgar laughter. He describes laughter as the process – present wherever power is – that allows the subjects of hierarchy to subjectify it. Rituals, symbols and practices of power are parodied, transgressed, distorted and (mis)handled. Laughter resists hierarchy by diffusing any pretence to absolute, untouchable authority, exposing it as neither obvious, nor natural, nor primordial, nor external to society, but constructed out of human relationships and interaction. But Bakhtin's laughter also regenerates and renews: it does not destroy hierarchy, but through (de)construction reminds that power is constituted by those subjected to it (1984).

By overlooking the carnivalesque, Bakhtin warns, academics are reproducing power by taking its discourses too seriously and ignoring those other phenomena that expose its true nature. Worse still, scholars are reproducing a form of power that fails to understand itself. Western society, Bakhtin insists, has sought to expel laughter from all official life, attempting to contain it in neatly defined 'times and spaces' (1984: 1–24). Rather than strength, this is a move that exposes the weakness and insecurity of sacred and secular institutional power, as well as discomfort with the notion that its reproduction requires it to embrace these challenges and transgressions from 'below'. The point here is not only that carnival is the symbolic motor of power, but that Carnival itself is simply the containment of a much greater phenomenon occurring at all levels of social life. It is the carnivalesque that generates carnival, not the other way round.

Most anthropologists looking at the transgressions of Carnival tend to build on Bakhtin's work. Handleman thus starts from the similar premise that in Western society, social and sacred power has sought to set itself apart from the realm of the trivial and frivolous. Such distinctions are difficult to maintain however, Handleman insists, and most public rituals in both western (e.g. palio of Siena, Carnival, mumming in Newfoundland, etc.) and non-western societies (e.g. Pakistani weddings, Hopi initiation ceremonies, Kalela dances, etc.) involve 'play', the collective act of handling, parodying, resisting, deconstructing and reproducing social models and hierarchies (Handelman 1998: 63–76, 116–160, 238–263). Because 'play' is simultaneously destructive and regenerative, the events in which it features often end up becoming deeply ambivalent spaces that are at once enticing and dangerous, anarchic yet ordered, hilarious but grave. 'Play' is, Handleman concludes, often guided by the figure of the Clown, who typically embodies such ambivalences in his own ritual behaviour

(Handelman 1998: 263–266). Stallybrass and White have similarly identified Carnival as the encounter and switch of what they call ‘base’ (proletariat) and ‘exalted’ (bourgeois) symbols (2002). Echoing Lefebvre’s work on the construction of space, Sonoda’s description of the Japanese Matsuri observes how such festive times invert public and private spaces. Carnival enters and occupies private homes, often without the permission of its owners (1988). DaMatta examines how the Brazilian carnivalesque has become central to the construction of Brazil’s national image (2006). In Malta, Cremona’s and Boissevain’s preoccupation with carnival has largely centred on its link with folklore (Cremona 2004), and its recent revitalisation (Boissevain 1992). Similarly, students of the Spanish Carnival have been largely concerned with the ‘reinvention’ of Carnival, following the collapse of the oppressive Franco regime (Driessen 1992a; Gilmore 1993; Harris 1988; Schrauf 1998; Al-Jende and Guerrero 2008). These are works that draw greatly upon Hobsbawm’s ‘invention of tradition’ to make sense of the pastiche of seemingly random symbols and behaviours appearing in the reconstruction and revival of such festive times (1992).

The functional aspects of Carnival have also received much attention. In contrast to symbolical inquiries, this strand of work is considerably less varied, and reiterates similar arguments. Society, it is generally claimed, can only operate by fiercely regulating the behaviour of its members. This both assumes and requires social and political inequalities, with dedicated groups enforcing (forcibly, if need be) the behaviour of the rest of society’s members. The tension this coercion creates is unsustainable, and needs to be temporally and regularly released. Carnival is a state *sanctioned, temporal* period of time and space that relaxes norms in a controlled, safe (for established power) and predictable environment. Carnival has thus been often described as a stress-tap releasing social tension (Honigmann 1942; Charles 1945; Crumrine 1969; Sales 1983), though, to extend the metaphor, the hands of the established order are never far from the controls that regulate pressure. DaMatta similarly calls Carnival ‘Janus-faced’, being both a rite of resistance and a tool reproducing oppressive structures of power (DaMatta & Green 1983). Gluckman argues that rites of reversal in African tribal society often include a critique of social order, but one which is mainly intended to preserve and strengthen it (1965). Eagleton quotes Shakespeare, concluding that ‘there is no slander in an allowed fool’ (1981: 148), Welsford tells us that the wine-barrel that is society would explode if not periodically opened (1968), and the French anthropologist Balandier claims that ‘The supreme ruse of power is to allow itself to be contested ritually in order to consolidate itself more effectively’ (1970: 41).

A closer look at the trial of the *Polluelos* and their feud with the City, however, indicates that Ceutans' experience of Carnival is very different from that suggested by structural-functionalist models. First, anthropologists often give descriptions of the transgressions, pranks and insults of Carnival in playful and joyful terms (e.g. Sonoda 1988). Indeed, they are trying to capture what my informants would have identified as *gracia*: the cunning creativity through which transgression, no matter how rough, is made. Anthropologists, however, often forget that such jibes are deeply uncomfortable for its victim. Never being quite sure whether the attacks are intended as a jester's joke or a knight's challenge to honour, the victim is placed in a lose-lose situation: the jibes could be ignored (potentially running the risk of looking like a coward unable to respond), or actually take offence and hit back (bringing the offended down to the level of a clown). In the case of the *Polluelos*, their victims *did* take offence. The ensuing feud saw the collapse of *gracia*, being used not to impress the audience, but to injure and maim.

Secondly, anthropologists often define carnival as a well-defined period of time and space in which such transgressions could be performed. In Ceuta, however the way the feud engaged the honour of both *agrupación* and its victims also meant that Carnival infused and invaded the judicial system, Ceuta's highest State institution. The result was a pervasive, disturbing confusion: had Caballas, the President and the judiciary actually gone down to the level of Carnival? Had they, in their efforts to end the transgression of the *agrupación*, turned the court hearing into a Carnavalesque performance, extending Carnival way beyond the time it was scheduled to end? Were the judges nothing but protagonists in this extended *murga*? Wouldn't a judge prosecuting a group of chickens provide the basis for a solid *chirigota*? Or, perhaps, by contrast, the seriousness of the case and the authority of the judiciary had turned the *agrupación* into an important, political force. In the absence of trust in the City to manage the risks of *convivencia* and ensure balance and protection, Ceuta had generated its own, popular heroes and defenders. Carnival stopped being a defined, separate space, delegitimizing any strong political institutions that came into contact with it. Whatever a clown touches becomes Carnival.

Finally, anthropologists often describe the State as all-powerful, carefully monitoring transgression, being able to disperse Carnival at a moment's notice and revert back to established order. The case of the *Polluelos*, however, shows the City's inability to put a stop to the feud or prevent the *agrupación* from breaking the rules clearly stipulated a few weeks before the competition. More importantly, this article has seen a government trying but failing to

hand down justice and punishment. The result was a pathetic set of U-turns, first giving the *agrupación* its prize and applauding its performance, then taking away its titles and supporting *Caballas*, then delivering an ineffectual punishment that only helped to embolden the *Polluelos* and infuriate their enemies. The City ended up stranded between two communities feeling betrayed and abandoned. Far from being the silent, powerful eye in the sky, the State was an active player in the events: a weak, indecisive player.

I suggest that the Ceutan Carnival could be better understood if we instead see it as a Foucaultian *mirror*, a phenomenon that shares elements of both utopias and heterotopias. In 'Of Other Spaces', Foucault starts from the basic premise that space cannot be conceptualised as a sort of vacuum or nothingness within which people can be placed (1986: 23). Rather, following Bachelard and Lefebvre, space and the way we describe and use it is socially constructed, and therefore the product of social relationships that change historically (Lefebvre 1991; Bachelard 1992). Thus, what makes, say, a school a school, or a prison a prison, is not any inherent property of the place itself, but the social relationships that constitute and are reproduced by it (e.g. 'Student–teacher–family' and 'prison–state–society', respectively, hopefully). Because they reflect specific social relations, it becomes clear that specific spaces, while existing in relation to each other (e.g. A school on its own makes no sense, it exists in relation to other spaces, such as the home, or the church) cannot be superimposed on each other (e.g. Schooling cannot occur at home, and if it does, it requires a special modification of a family's relation with the state).

Foucault moves on to focus on those spaces that are peculiar in that the relations they reproduce question other sites and relationships. He divides these spaces into two. On the one hand, 'Utopias' are sites that depict 'society' (the totality of relations and their spaces) either in its perfect, ideal form or as inverted, chaotic and anarchic. Despite offering powerful narratives, symbols or messages, *utopias* are ultimately 'unreal spaces'. Existing in literature, art, film or simply in someone's imagination, they have no physical presence (Foucault 1986: 24).

On the other hand are 'Heterotopias'. Like *utopias*, these are 'counter-sites' whose very existence at once represents, reflects, distorts and critiques 'society'. Unlike *utopias*, however, these are 'real sites'. They occupy physical space, and entry to or exist from them is typically highly controlled and regulated. Again unlike *utopias*, Foucault argues that *heterotopias* occur in every culture, and are fundamental to its continued renewal and existence. This

they do in two distinct ways: *crisis heterotopias* represent sacred or tabooed spaces exclusively reserved for those in crisis, that is, moving from one social status to another. The boarding school, Foucault describes, is a *heterotopia* because it confines adolescents in crisis, turning from boys to men. *Heterotopias of deviation*, by contrast, reproduce society by whisking away those considered to diverge from the norm, and thus potentially a threat or hindrance to the rest (e.g. Prisons and hospitals) (Foucault 1986: 24–26). Although Foucault does not explicitly state it, both *heterotopias of crisis* and *deviation* are ultimately sites of renewal, where individuals are reformed and re-introduced into society as individuals who conform to the norm. Those that do/cannot are confined there indefinitely (e.g. in cemeteries).

It is important to note that Foucault makes allowance for a *third* type of ‘counter-site’. Conceptually located between *utopias* and *heterotopias*, these spaces produce experiences that draw upon elements of both. Foucault does not name them, but identifies the ‘mirror’ as a good metaphor for describing these unique sites (Foucault 1986: 24). Like *utopias*, *mirrors* generate unreal images that represent the Self in its ideal or inverted form. *Mirrors*, however, are also *heterotopias* in that the images they create are manifested in real permanent or temporary places. Being so, the images they create also end up feeling absolutely real. Again like *heterotopias*, the self-reflections of mirrors are central to the reproduction of both self and society through the processes of reassessment, self-reflection and recreation these spaces demand.

Foucault does not give us any examples of these ‘mirrors’. I propose, however, that the Ceutan experience of Carnival lends itself neatly to Foucault’s framework. Much like a *utopia*, the trial of the *Polluelos* represented Ceutan society at its most inverse and chaotic, an image where the ideals of *convivencia* have been corrupted, sabotaged by personal ambition to produce long feuds that undermined the legitimacy of the City and its ability to keep in check the animosities and suspicions between Ceuta’s religious communities. Like *mirrors*, we have furthermore seen this image colonising into existing real spaces – theatres, law courts, media stations – dissolving them and turning them into Carnival. In doing so, the dystopian image of Carnival ended up feeling incredibly real: not simply a horrible nightmare, but the real feeling that Ceuta was breaking down to reveal a population by nature fearful, wrathful and vengeful. The City’s inability to stop this ‘mirror’ from expanding simply lent strength to this uncomfortable illusion-turned-reality. Lice and Chicks had turned Mackerels against each other.

Carnival as a 'mirror' also ultimately reproduces *convivencia* and social order, but not in the way suggested by functionalist theories of Carnival. Rather than only producing a happy space where the socially oppressed can let off some steam, the Ceutan case implies that Carnival can also appear as a law-less space the State might be unable to control. Looking through the *mirror* of Carnival, society horrifies itself, appearing as the anarchistic, dangerous and tense place it would be if established order and law were to be absent. In Ceuta, where this notion of social order is synonymous with 'convivencia', Carnival represents a space of unregulated jibes and insults, rather than cultivated respect; instinctive dislike and distrust, instead of tolerance and cohabitation; difference instead of diversity; negative reciprocity and feud instead of collaboration; Spaniards and *Moros* making Ceuta inhospitable and exclusive of each other, instead of the peaceful fairness and balance amongst Spaniards *convivencia* implies.

In conclusion, Carnival conjures terrible spectacles urging audiences to revert to a sense of order and peace guaranteed by the State. It makes citizens realise that, really, there is no tangible replacement for *convivencia*. It might be riddled with contradictions, but then again it is better than the exclusions and hostility on which its alternatives are based. Carnival reproduces *convivencia*, recasting, the 'intimate enemy', the 'lice' that parasitically tears into the vulnerable intimacies of the 'other' into a Spaniard with a stake in the peace of the City, a Ceutan, a *Caballa*, a Mackerel.

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Notes

1. Ideologically, if not in practice. Being a border-region, Ceuta has less self-governing power in relation to the Peninsular regions of Spain. Opposition parties, in fact, claim that the 'Autonomy' given by the 1995 Statute was a joke, and still lobby for greater administrative powers.
2. Famously, gold-smithing.
3. The Roma, Chinese and Sub-Saharan groups are collectively known as the 'Little Cultures' (*las culturas pequeñas*), so named because of their small size and lack of formal, political organization. The Roma community was until recently considered to be a sub-branch of the Christian group and the Chinese community middle little in Ceutan politics. The Sub-Saharan community, populated mainly by irregular migrants, broadly divides itself into two: the Francophones and the Anglophones. These organized groups are engaged in what has been dubbed 'the War of the Little Euro (*la guerra del eurito*)' with both factions struggling to control parking lots and supermarkets to offer petty services in return of a small tip called the 'dale' (*Lit: Give him*). In contrast to reports from other Mediterranean societies, notably

Malta and Greece, I have no evidence of Ceutans considering Sub-Saharanans a threat to Ceuta's 'Spanishness' or its multicultural order between August 2011 and December 2012, when I conducted fieldwork in the City. The Moroccan-Muslim other (*Moro*) remains the primary antagonist to both Christian and Muslim Ceutans. The presence of Sub-Saharanans, their plight and occasional unruliness (e.g. July 2012, when tensions escalated into a pitched battle between Anglophones and francophones in Ceuta's main market) are rather seen/used as proof that Ceuta is not getting the necessary resources, and is therefore being neglected by the Peninsula. Ceutans are also unhappy about media sources describing them as colonial, xenophobic watchdogs of Fortress Europe. They feel (rightly so) that such accusations do not grasp the complexity of legal regulations in Ceuta or the efforts they make with *convivencia* as a multicultural project.

4. The giving of nicknames entire towns is common in the Straits of Gibraltar. Thus, the people of Malaga are known as the 'boquerones' (anchovies). Those from Algeciras are known as the 'especiales' (the special ones). The inhabitants of La Linea go by the unflattering name of 'piojosos' (louses, vagrants), probably owing to their dependence on Gibraltar. Similarly, the Spanish-speaking population of Gibraltar are called the 'llanitos' (those of the plain/those who lie down), partially because as poor migrants they settled on the flat isthmus at the edges of the town rather than on the slopes of the Rock itself, but mainly because they are thought to have renounced their origin in favour of servitude to the British masters.
5. Of course, one need not be necessarily born in Ceuta to be recognised as a defender of Ceuta's Spanishness and having a grasp of the way its *convivencia* works (or not!). These individuals are often awarded the informal, affectionate title of 'honorary Ceutan' (*caballa honorario*) by their friends. By contrast, one could also be born Ceutan, but fail to live up to these expectations. Muslims, often seen as threats, are particularly vulnerable to having their Ceutan identity (and thus their Spanish one) denied, often with horrific consequences (i.e. discharged from work, spied upon, denied movement, denied welfare, etc.). This article deals with this latter dynamic.
6. The Ceutan Parliament has 25 seats. At the time of research from August 2011 to December 2012, the *Partido Popular*, under the leadership of Juan Vivas, occupied 18 seats. The opposition was composed of the Socialist PSOE with 3 seats, and a coalition of parties known as 'Caballas', led by Mohamed Ali and Juan Luis Arostegui, with 4.
7. Literally meaning 'coming half way'.
8. That is to masturbate.
9. Rapid Intervention Unit: an elite police unit. It has been reported that its suspects, mostly Muslim, are secured using excessive violence.
10. The ritual slaughter of animals, and especially the children's participation in such rituals, is seen as barbaric and disgusting by most Christian Ceutans.
11. A famous statue of Christ 'Ecce Homo'.

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