PEOPLE’S PLACE IN THE WORLD CLASS CITY: THE CASE OF BRAAMFONTEIN'S INNER CITY REGENERATION PROJECT

Laura Burocco

A Research report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Masters of Built Environment in Housing.

Johannesburg, 2013.
DECLARATION

I, Laura Burocco, declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters of Built Environment in Housing to the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Signed by:_____________________

_______ day of _________________________
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like express gratitude and thanks to everyone from different parts of the World, who have in many ways contributed and supported my effort to complete my master degree and put together this research.

Thanks to Amir Geiger and Edmilson Rodrigues Martins, for their bizarre and stimulating lectures in my Urban Sociology post graduate course at the University of Rio de Janeiro. I probably would not be here without their cerebral storm! Thanks to Itamar Silva for his encouragement and support; and to all the people from the communities and movements I worked together with in Rio, for the time they dedicated to me helping to understand the first southern society where I went to live in 2004. Thanks to Dick Forslund, Dale McKinley, and Patrick Bond for having done the same when I arrived the first time in South Africa in 2011. Thanks to Aly Karam and Sarah Charleston for introducing me to the School of Architecture and Planning at Wits University and to Marie Huchzermeyer for her dedication and passion for her topic. Thanks to my supervisor Alan Mabin for his efforts in translating not only linguistic but especially cultural differences, and for following my thinking, though it was not always linear!

Thanks to Aline and Eduardo for help me with Johannesburg at the beginning! To Carina, for receiving me in her house when I arrived. Thanks to Simon, for our discussions, tensions, hugs, parties and evenings working at home. To Anzio for the extreme relaxed atmosphere he made in our home. To “the mappers” for lending me their eyes. To Marshall Berman for having wrote “All that is Solid Melts into Air”. Thanks to Margot and Muyiwa, for all! To Zoe for understand me and to Sofia for the never ending supportive Skype calls! And an especial grazie to my sister, my parents and all my family for accepting my absence.

Thank you all!
ABSTRACT

If it is undeniable that the Braamfontein Regeneration Project has been able to bring back people to a previously semi-abandoned area. It is important to analyse who and which kind of changes are attracted and dismissed as a result of this project. The study examines neighbourhood regeneration in Braamfontein in order to test the extent to which it is an example of similar regeneration developments across global cities, and especially in emerging economies. One part of current global literature suggests that such neighbourhood regeneration has been dominated in recent decades by an inversion of interests from public to private. In the Braamfontein case – situated here through detailed documentary, mapping and image research – the study finds that the border between private and public is very ambiguous. Public agencies, private businesses and developers pursue similar and different goals with varying methods. A ‘profitable vision of the city’ which is clear for public authorities and private developers is not necessarily perceived or shared by most of the users (residents, business owners, consumers from other zones). The overall conclusion is that Braamfontein is a contradictory example of urban neighbourhood change which partly fits with and partly contradicts the global model, but which seems to reinforce the creation of a segregated consumption space in Johannesburg.
I. Introduction
1.1 Where this idea comes from 1
1.2 The research’s back-ground 2
1.3 Objectives 4
1.4 Research Questions 4
1.5 Contents 4
1.6 Methodology 5
1.7 Ethical Issues and Conclusion 9

II. The impacts of regeneration programs in the use and imaginary of aspiring southern world class cities
2.1 Introduction 11
2.2 Urban Renewal 13
2.3 Creative Cities and Global Cities in the South 20
2.4 Public Spaces 24
2.5 Right to the city 27
2.6 Conclusion 29

III. The physical territory of Braamfontein
3.1 Introduction 33
3.2 Background/History of the place 36
3.3 Institutional placement and maps of Braamfontein 39
3.4 Walking Mapping groups 45
3.5 Conclusion 53

IV. The Actors of the Braamfontein Regeneration Project