ABSTRACT

This thesis constitutes a social history of Krugersdorp that examines how the town was made during a formative period of profound and rapid change from 1887 to 1923. This thesis will argue that the making of Krugersdorp was a complex process where society shaped the built environment and where changes in the built environment, in turn, influenced society. Ideological, political and economic rivalries caused changes in Krugersdorp's urban society and these changes were, in turn, reflected in the built environment. The consequent changes in the town's architecture, the layout and the distribution of buildings, influenced, in turn, how social groups interacted with one another. Thus, the residents and the built environment, the 'flesh' and the 'stone', were mutually influential.

In the course of competing and co-operating with one another, certain interest groups, during specific periods, obtained the upper hand over the town and used this domination to shape Krugersdorp in their own interests. During the late 1880s and early 1890s, the town was made largely by white, English-speaking 'pioneer' miners who hailed from places as diverse as Cornwall and Australia as well as various South African mining towns such as Kimberley and Pilgrim's Rest. These men formed part of a 'crew culture' of itinerant workers moving between mining centres across the British Empire, Southern Africa and United States. They were transient roughnecks who made Krugersdorp a fragile, temporary structure one-step ahead of a ghost town as well as a 'Devil's *Dorp*' which was one of the most violent places in the Transvaal.

The late 1890s were increasingly dominated by a white, English-speaking middle class whose members were determined to impose order and morality on the disorderly and immoral miners. A professional and commercial elite fraction from within this class dominated local political bodies, societies, sports clubs, charity organisations and the business community of Krugersdorp. They used their leadership positions in the local churches to build large stone structures in order to inspire the transient white miners to settle and raise families. They also employed their political and social dominance over the town, as well as their control over the local media, shortly after the turn of the century, to shape Krugersdorp, slowly but surely, into a stable town that was safe and pleasant to live in.

During the 1890s, this same group became increasingly patriotic as expatriate Britons who openly clashed with the local Dutch-speaking white elite, that, in turn, became national chauvinist Transvaal Republicans. As ideological tensions increased after the Jameson Raid of 1896 and in the months leading up to the South African War of 1899-1902, this ideological tension between the white political elites was reflected semiotically in the built environment. These changes, in turn, influenced its residents by increasing the levels of hostility among them. After the War, the expatriate 'British' elite turned Krugersdorp into a 'British Imperial' town where Union Jacks, bunting and evergreens decorated the town on patriotic holidays and 'jingo' structures like the 'Coronation Park' were established. Within a few years, however, the town settled into a state of relative social harmony and co-operation that was reflected in the built environment in the form of new buildings that 'spoke' of co-operation such as the Wanderers Sports Grounds. These Sports Grounds - where people from both cultural groups would join the same sports teams - were laid out between the 'jingoistic' Coronation Park and the 'Transvaal Republican' Paardekraal Monument.

As the white population settled down after the South African War and as ideological tensions lessened, so many miners settled down with their families or married and raised children. Large numbers of children changed the town's demographical profile and began to shape the town in new ways. The presence of children required many changes in the built environment, especially in the form of new schools. Under Milner's Anglicisation policy, Krugersdorp's children were supposed to be indoctrinated into loyal British subjects by the schooling system and associated activities like the Boys' Cadets and the Scouts. Over time, however, this 'imperial project' was challenged by a variety of interest groups, not least by parents and the children themselves. By the period 1905-6, a nascent 'South Africanism' arose instead and was reflected in changes in the school curriculum and the relative failure of the cadet and scouting movements.

Indian residents who had made their way to the town as traders and hawkers since the late 1880s, also began to exercise an influence over the town by the turn of the century. White, English-speaking shopkeepers from the commercial elite attempted to isolate or 'quarantine' Indian shopkeepers and hawkers by associating them with disease. This tactic failed and a scheme to remove Indians to an 'Asiatic Bazaar' was thwarted by the determined resistance of the Indian residents. This was led by Mohandas Gandhi, who defied the Town Council that was dominated by their white commercial rivals. So effective was Indian resistance that by 1914 Indian businesses were entrenched in the central business district of the town.

Krugersdorp during the period 1910 to 1920 was also shaped by African and Coloured residents, particularly women, who resisted attempts by the white Town Council to close down the Old Location and move them to a distant New Location or 'Munsieville', established in 1912. They did so because this would make it difficult for them to earn a living by working for white residents as domestic workers or by taking in laundry. Many of these women also made money by brewing and selling liquor illicitly to black miners and they would have found it difficult to do so in the New Location.

The white elite built a 'Model Location' at Munsieville in order to attract black middle-class allies in their struggle against an increasingly radicalized black working class and lumpenproletariat. This plan was thwarted as most residents refused to move out of the Old Location. Apparently vengeful, the Town Council abandoned these plans and, in 1914, designed a new location at Randfontein that was meant to be a harsh, fenced-in 'ghetto'. Surprisingly, many Old Location residents moved there despite its harsh features and continued to avoid the supposedly more attractive New Location. They apparently did so because the Randfontein Location was close to a railway station that linked the location residents to white residents and the black miners on nearby mines.

The Town Council clashed with black women in the location throughout the year 1917, leading to the appointment of an Inquiry. At this Inquiry, the local black middle class openly sided with black working class women who tried to make a living selling liquor illicitly to black miners. Apparently learning from its mistakes, the Town Council then adopted a new form of location at Lewisham in 1920 that was less harsh than the Randfontein Location 'ghetto' but which also avoided the features of the 'Model Location' at Munsieville. This concession can be interpreted as a victory of African women who resisted the municipality's plans for them and forced these changes.

White female social reformers and activists also shaped Krugersdorp in the period after 1905 and particularly during the First World War. Their reformist activities reached a peak in 1916 where they dominated life in the town to the point where it was fast developing into a 'gynopia' or 'women's town'. These relatively young, mostly English-speaking, white females achieved reforms that promoted 'social purity' and temperance. They transformed the social life of the town in important ways by restricting white male expressions of sexuality and access to liquor. They also fought and won a struggle for the female municipal franchise and the right of women to stand as municipal candidates.

All these reforms had important implications for Krugersdorp and influenced its built environment in certain ways. For example, female activists ensured that no liquor outlets were established in Burghershoop during the First World War. After 1916, however, a conservative backlash inspired by the need for a 'War Effort' had driven most of these women literally back into their homes and female social activism rapidly faded from public view. Their failure to sustain their reforms also had an influence upon Krugersdorp. For example, many new liquor outlets were established throughout Krugersdorp after 1916 and many reforms envisaged by female municipal candidates were not carried out until much later.

White labourite political mobilization followed a remarkably similar trajectory and shaped the town of Krugersdorp in important ways, particularly during the First World War, reaching a peak in the years 1914-1916. Local white trade union and labourite leaders, particularly those from the South African Labour Party which was formed in 1909, began to shape Krugersdorp in terms of a vision of a white, working-class town. These changes included municipal socialist schemes that employed substantial numbers of white workers and policies such as site value taxation, Saturday Half-Holiday and free, secondary education. These policies were, however, never fully realized during the period under study. By 1917-8,

labourite local politicians were on the retreat as the white commercial and professional elite, who organised themselves politically into a pro-business coterie of 'Independents', regained ascendancy. While labourites fought a vigorous rearguard action, their vision of a white, working-class town was never fully realized.

Finally the white commercial and professional elite attempted to impose their vision of a legal town on the residents, particularly over the Indian residents and, in the process, isolate or drive out Indian shopkeepers from the town. A number of court cases were fought vigorously by the white and Indian commercial rivals which the latter won in most instances, including the famous *Dadoo Limited v Krugersdorp Municipal Council, 1920.* The white Town Council, dominated by white commercial and professional interests, nonetheless, regained some degree of control by the late 1920s and, after the 1922 Rand Revolt, had largely achieved their vision of a legal town, leading to a period of political quiescence and economic prosperity.

Each of these struggles were 'inscribed', in turn, into the built environment, shaping its architecture, town planning, the position of its buildings and the nature of its monuments. Thus, this thesis contends that the making of Krugersdorp can be illuminated through an exploration of spatiality, an examination of the meaning of place and an investigation of the local, regional, national and the international influences on urban spaces. Krugersdorp was, in the end, made by all of its residents, through their interaction with one another, and with their built environment.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables and Graphsx.
List of Illustrationsxii.
List of Mapsxiii.
INTRODUCTION:1.
Overview1.
Literature Review11.
Humanist Marxism – the Emergence of a New Social History25.
The 'New Geography'40.
The Challenge to Social History43.
The Current State of Social History56.
Making Regional and International Linkages60.
Inserting Spatiality and the Meaning of Place into Social History64.
Chapter Outline
CHAPTER ONE: 'DEVIL'S DORP': GEOGRAPHY AND THE MAKING OF KRUGERSDORP, 1887-192373.
Introduction73.
Cinderella of the Rand: Krugersdorp's Local Mining Industry74.
Early Krugersdorp's Development as an Unstable and Insecure Environment
The Friction of Distance and a Modified Central Place Theory
Krugersdorp as a Violent Town103.
Cognitive Mapping, Environment Behavioural Systems and Urban Semiotics

The Krugersdorp Gaol114.
The Canteen117.
The Gambling Den121.
Conclusion123.
CHAPTER TWO: 'THE CHURCH ON THE ROCK': THE MAKING OF A STABLE, SETTLED KRUGERSDORP, 1887 TO 1905
Introduction125.
Krugersdorp's White, English-speaking, Middle Class
Ghost Towns136.
'Phantom Towns'139.
The Role Played by the Middle Class and the Church in 'Anchoring' Krugersdorp145.
Laying the Foundation Stone of a Town: Krugersdorp's Middle Class Elite and Municipal Reforms165.
The Town Council167.
An Efficient Water Supply168.
Electric Street Light System169.
'Proper' Streets170.
Conclusion172.
CHAPTER THREE: 'THE STRUGGLE FOR KRUGERSDORP': BOER-BRITISH RIVALRY AND THE INSCRIPTION OF IDEOLOGY INTO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, 1887- 1906
Introduction174.

Krugersdorp as Mosaic: A Boer 'Dorp' and a British Mining Town, 1887-1895	177.
Krugersdorp as a Boer National Chauvinist Town, 1895-1896	194.
The Restoration of Spatial Harmony, 1897-1899	204.
The Rise of the British Imperial Colonial Town, Krugersdorp 1899- 1902	208.
The Decline of the Jingo and the Imperial Town	221.
The Rise of an Embryonic 'South African' Colonial Town, 1903-1906	225.
Conclusion	230.
CHAPTER FOUR: 'THE SEMIOTICS OF SCHOOLING': THE INSCRIPTION OF YOUTH ONTO KRUGERSDORP'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND IDEOLOGICAL PLANE, 1902-1910.	232.
Introduction	232.
The Coming of the Children	235.
The Inculcation of Patriotism in Children Through Literature	248.
Working-class Resistance to the Imperial Project	253.
Resistance by Middle-class White Children	257.
Resistance Offered by the 'Colonial Girl'	259.
Resistance Inspired by Youthful Hedonism	263.
The Middle-class Campaign to Improve the Quality of Schools in Krugersdorp	265.
Anti-imperial Ideology	267.
Conclusion	279.
CHAPTER FIVE: 'QUARANTINES AND CONTESTED COMMERCIAL SPACES': THE STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL	

OVER KRUGERSDORP'S RETAIL TRADE, 1903 TO 1910......281.

Introduction281.
Indian Immigration to Krugersdorp in the Late 1800s283.
The Indian Location and Burghershoop, 1897
Indian Traders Penetrate Krugersdorp's CBD288.
The Krugersdorp Asiatic Bazaar290.
The 'Sanitation Syndrome'295
Reactions to Indian Commercial Penetration in Select Transvaal Towns
Bubonic Plague, 1904
The Boycott of Indian Shops in Krugersdorp
Indian Economic Interests in Krugersdorp314
[Ab]using the Law to Isolate Indian Traders, 1904-1906
White Storekeepers and the White Commercial Elite
Gandhi's 1907 Satyagraha Campaign325.
The White Hawkers' Association327
Conclusion
CHAPTER SIX: 'MODEL LOCATIONS AND GHETTOS': THE CONSTRUCTION OF RACIALISED SPACE IN
KRUGERSDORP, 1887-1923
Introduction
Liberal and Repressive Strands of 'Segregationism'
White Anxiety over the Black 'Threat'347
Krugersdorp's Municipal and Mine Locations351.
The 'Model Location'353.

'Liberal segregationism'	356.
Environmentalism and the Garden City Movement	361.
Rejection of the New Location	365.
The Rise of 'Repressive Segregationism' and the 'ghetto complex'	371.
The Influx of Black Residents into the Randfontein Location, 1914- 1917	374.
A Milder Form of 'Repressive Segregationism', 1917-1922	375.
Accounting for a 'Milder' Version of 'Repressive Segregationism'	384.
Conclusion	385.
CHAPTER SEVEN: 'GENDERED SPACES': WHITE, FEMALE, SOCIAL REFORMISM AND THE MAKING OF KRUGERSDORP, 1903-1918	389.
Introduction	389.
The Feminising of Krugersdorp's Population: 1902-1905	392.
The Advent of White Female Activism in Krugersdorp, 1903-1907	
Women's Suffrage 1906-1907	400.
The Krugersdorp WCTU's Politicisation, 1908-1909	403.
Moral Crusades	411.
The Campaign for Women's Suffrage, 1909-1913	418.
The Campaign for Social Purity, 1913-1914	427.
White Women Municipal Candidates in Krugersdorp, 1914-1915	430.
Temperance Campaigns, 1914-1916	440.
'White Peril' – the Campaign Against the Sexual Immorality of White Men.	448.
The Decline of Women's Social Reform Movements in Krugersdorp, 1917-1918	453.

Conclusion457.
CHAPTER EIGHT: THE RISE AND DECLINE OF KRUGERSDORP AS A WHITE WORKING-CLASS TOWN, 1910-1918460.
Introduction460.
Municipal Politics and the Rise of the Labour Party in South Africa up to 1910461.
Working Class Municipal Politics465.
White Workers as Candidates in Municipal Elections
The SALP Contests Parliamentary and Provincial Elections in 1910471.
Labourites Contest Krugersdorp's Municipal Election472.
The Vision of Krugersdorp as a White Working-class Town474.
Site Value Taxation478.
White Municipal Labour Policy481.
Improving Working Conditions for Shop Assistants
The 1913 White Miners' Strike484.
The General Strike of 1914486.
An Analysis of the 1914 Transvaal Provincial Elections
The Saturday Half-Holiday and the Krugersdorp Town Council
Free Compulsory Secondary Schooling for White School Children492.
The 1914 Provincial Council Deadlock and Constitutional Crisis493.
Labour's Fluctuating Fortunes: 1915 to 1917495.
Municipal Elections in 1917 and 1918507.
Conclusion518.

CHAPTER NINE: 'THE LAWFUL TOWN': WHITE SHOPKEEPERS, INDIAN TRADERS AND THE	
CONSTRUCTION OF A LEGALISTIC URBAN SPACE	
IN KRUGERSDORP, 1910-1923	520.
Introduction	520.
Attempts to Create a Legal Town, 1909-1918	522.
'The Gloves Come Off': Commercial Rivalry and Legal Space, 1918- 1923	544.
Conclusion	567.
CONCLUSION	570.
APPENDIX ONE	579.
APPENDIX TWO	582.
BIBLIOGRAPHY	593.

LIST OF TABLES AND GRAPHS

Graph One: Comparative Annual Output of Witwatersrand Mines (in Thousands of Tons of Gold) – West Rand vs. Rest of the Rand
Graph Two: Comparison of the Number of Mines Paying Dividends, West Rand and Rest of the Rand, 1887-1894
Table One: A Comparison of Market Prices for a Select Range ofProducts Offered at the Krugersdorp and Johannesburg Markets, 189599.
Table Two: Birth Rates and Mortality Rates by Race, in Krugersdorp,Town Population Only, 1905-6 to 1910-11: White Population
Table Three: Birth Rates and Mortality Rates by Race, in Krugersdorp,Town Population Only, 1905-6 to 1910-11: Black (African, Coloured andIndian) Population
Table Four: Percentage of Dutch-speaking Children to Total Roll,Government Town School, 1908, in Various Standards andGrades
Table Five: Indian Shopkeepers, Krugersdorp Municipality, 1905
Table Six: The Total Number of Indians, Divided into Males, Femalesand Children and their Distribution Across Krugersdorp, 1906316.
Table Seven: Categorisation of Indians in Krugersdorp According to Occupation, 1906
Table Eight: Indexes of Retail Prices of Food, Fuel and Light, 1914-1918
Table Nine: Total Number of Private Companies in the TransvaalWhere All the Shareholders Were Indians by 1920
Table Ten: Total Number of Indian Shops with Licences inKrugersdorp and its Suburbs in 1920
Table Eleven: Schedule of Licensable Occupations of theIndian population of Krugersdorp in 1920

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 2.1: Photographs of Select Members of Krugersdorp's White Middle Class133.
Figure 2.2: The Derelict Kocksoord Court House, A Post and Telegraph Office and Police Station138.
Figure 2.3: The General Manager's Residence, Homestead Avenue, Randfontein Estates and G.M. Co. Ltd., c. mid-1890s
Figure 2.4: St. Mark's Church, Krugersdorp in Monument Street, 1888155.
Figure 2.5: Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church, Corner of Human and Rissik Streets, Krugersdorp, 1891157.
Figure 2.6: The Dutch Reformed Church Building in Ockerse Street, Krugersdorp, 1891159.
Figure 3.1: The Original Cairn That Marked the Site of the Covenant Made by the Transvaal Boers in 1910188.
Figure 3.2: The Paardekraal Monument Erected in 1891189.
Figure 3.3: The Krugersdorp <i>Landdrost</i> Court Built in 1888191.
Figure 3.4: The Krugersdorp Rugby Club, 1893193.
Figure 3.5: The Krugersdorp Railway Station, 1896196.
Figure 3.6: Krugersdorp's Police Station, 1897197.
Figure 3.7: War Graves in Krugersdorp's Cemetery after the South African War215.
Figure 3.8: Coronation Park c. 1905217.
Figure 3.9: Krugersdorp's New Town Hall and the Market Hall in 1908225.
Figure 3.10: The Krugersdorp Wanderers Sports Grounds in 1906227.
Figure 3.11: Krugersdorp's Abattoir, 1907227.
Figure 3.12: Cover of a Krugersdorp Promotional Booklet

Figure 4.1: Advertisements Using Children to Promote Products in a Local Newspaper in Krugersdorp c. Early 1900s	239.
Figure 4.2: A Selection of Covers of Boy's Literature at the Turn of the Century	253.
Figure 4.3: Advertisement Depicting a 'Colonial Girl'	262.
Figure 7.1: Women in Krugersdorp as Consumers of Fashion, c. 1908	393.
Figure 7.2: A Cocoa Advertisement in a Krugersdorp Newspaper, 1918	456.

LIST OF MAPS

Map One: Krugersdorp and Randfontein in the Context of the Witwatersrand and Surrounding Farms as it Appears Today	140.
Map Two: Map Two: Distances, in Miles, Between Krugersdorp, Randfontein and Kocksoord, c. 1924	144.
Map Three: Map of Krugersdorp Depicting the Position of Major Business Establishments and Krugersdorp's Churches c. 1908	148.
Map Four: Map of Krugersdorp and its Rural Hinterland of the Magaliesburg and Hekpoort	178.
Map Five: The Krugersdorp District Township in Relation to the Paardekraal Monument	181.
Map Six: Map of Krugersdorp and Surrounding Farms, 1910	183.
Map Seven: The Position of Krugersdorp's Police Station in West Krugersdorp	198.
Map Eight: A Topographical Map of Krugersdorp Depicting Burghershoop	200.
Map Nine: Coronation Park c. 1905	216.
Map Ten: Abner Cohen's 'Homelands' in District Township	229.
Map Eleven: The Indian Location and Burghershoop	287.

Map Twelve: The Market Square in Krugersdorp	.288.
Map Thirteen: Burghershoop and the Asiatic Bazaar	.293.
Map Fourteen: Position of the 1897 'Kaffer Locatie', Later Referred to as the 'Old Location'	.343.
Map Fifteen: Map of West Krugersdorp and Lewisham (White Suburbs), c. 1905-	
6347.	
Map Sixteen: A Topographical Map of the New Location (Later Called 'Munsieville')	.354.