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# South African cities: perspectives from the ivory tower of urban studies

## Introduction

The assertion that the South African city provides a fascinating laboratory for the study of urban culture and form is not new.[1] As a caricature of the social divisions that now plague cities across the "Western" and "non-Western" worlds, the apartheid city experience served as a worst-case scenario of persistent social and economic inequality, perversely making it one of the most interesting and illuminating places to be an urban scholar[2]. One aspect of this fascination is that the schizophrenic "northern" street realities of Mike Davies' *City of Quartz*, of Deyan Sudjic's *100 Mile City* or Elizabeth Wilson's *Sphinx in the City* resonate as readily with the pace of pavement life in South Africa as do "southern" descriptions from Tony O'Conner's *African City* or Alan Gilbert's *Latin American City*[3]. In Cape Town or Durban, for example, you find chic "cafe society", up-market waterfront redevelopment, gracious colonial living, gentrified Victorian housing and, of course, miles of suburban development alongside street hawkers, overcrowded run-down tenements, brash new public housing and the abject poverty of informal settlements.

While clearly fashioned by local histories and geographies, not least of which was (and is) apartheid, South African urban realities reflect the characteristics of cities elsewhere in the "First" and Third" worlds. Short of understanding the apartheid city as a unique urban form with enforced racial segregation as not only the dominant, but the sole force shaping the built environment and the urban experience, more general frameworks of interpretation must be sought by South African urbanists. Which are the most appropriate concepts for

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1 c.f. Western, J. 1984: Autonomous and directed cultural change: south African urbanisation, in J. Agnew, J. Mercer and D. Soper (eds.) *The City in Cultural Context*, Allen Unwin, Winchester, pp. 205-236; Lemon, A., 1995 Introduction in A. Lemon (ed)*The Geography of Change in South Africa*, Wiley, Chichester, pp. xi-xxviii.

2 Recent reviews of urban studies in South Africa may be found in volume 21 (1995) of the *Journal of Southern African Studies* which is a special urban issue and in McCarthy, J., 1992: Urban geography and socio-political change: retrospect and prospect, in C. Rogerson and J. McCarthy (eds.) *Geography in a Changing South Africa*, Oxford University Press, Cape Town, p. 138-157.

3 Davies, M 1990: *City of Quartz*, Vintage, London; Sudjic, D., 1992: *100 Mile City*, Andre Deutch, London; Wilson, E., 1991: *The Sphinx in the City*, Virago, London; O'Connor, A., 1983: *The African City*, Hutchinson, London; Gilbert, A., *The Latin American City*, London.

understanding South African cities? Ideas about the urban process in advanced capitalist societies or those pertaining to urban areas of the developing world? This dilemma, which could as readily be posed in relation to Brazilian or Malaysian cities, draws attention to the dualist structure of urban studies. Quiet separate literatures exist on Third World Cities, a category I argue can and should be abandoned. Without wishing to fetishise "the urban", or to negate the important gains made by those exposing specific problems of providing basic urban services in the world's poorest regions, it seems uncontentious to suggest that all urban areas are subjected to a similar range of forces. All cities construct and are constructed by historical and social processes. Uncovering the nature and impact of the forces shaping cities must be the core task of urban studies, regardless of location. I will use the South African case to demonstrate that a range of theoretical perspectives usually reserved for consideration of the cities of advanced capitalist societies can productively be deployed in exploring those aspects of cities usually depicted as "Third World". Specifically I will outline core themes that provide alternative explanations or perspectives on the position of African people in South African towns.

South African urban studies are parochial: a consequence of years of international boycott, plus some northern arrogance in failing to take seriously and keep up with the literature from peripheral regions. A stumbling block for outsiders in relating the literature detailing the multi-faced experiences in South African cities to those of the developed or developing worlds is that, for decades, the local experience was understood to be so profoundly distorted by racist policies that the apartheid city was generally depicted as unique[4]. To some extent this perception spills over to the present, where the task presented by the post apartheid Reconstruction and Development Programme is described as a challenge without precedent[5]. The perceived specificity of racial segregation under apartheid has limited the way the urban experience has been theorised. Thus, those writing about the making of the South African city tended to invoke domestic versions of wider political economy debates, debates that Alan Mabin and I have recently argued are either inadequate or inappropriate for the purpose[6]. Mindful of the dangers of importing Anglo-American ideas that bear little relation to the specificities of locale[7], this paper represents an effort to move beyond the critique of existing South African urban literature by exploring theoretical ideas drawn from urban studies elsewhere in the world. The impact of posing general questions about the nature of the city and of the urban experience will hopefully also enliven debate about the development of the South African city at a moment when most practitioners, and many academic consultants, are absorbed in the harsh realities of reconstruction and development with little time for reflection.

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4 Core examples of this include Davies, R. J. 1981: The spatial form of the South African City, *GeoJournal (Supplement)*, 2, 59-72; Beavon, K. S. O., 1982: Black townships in South Africa, *terra incognita* for urban geographers, *South African Geographical Journal*, 64, 3-20; Lemon, A. (ed), 1991: *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities*, David Philip, Cape Town.

5 Turok, I., 1995: Reconstruction or reconcilliation? South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, in press.

6 Parnell, S. and Mabin A., 1995: Rethinking urban South Africa, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21, 39-61.

7 Calls for the indigenisation of geography generaly, and urban geography specifically abound. c.f. chapters by Soni and McCarthy in C. Rogerson and J. McCarthy (eds.) *Geography in a Changing South Africa*, Oxford, Cape Town.

**Urban studies in the 1990s: relevance for South Africa?**

Urban studies are experiencing something of a renaissance in the 1990s[8]. The profound anti-urban bias that gripped development studies in the wake of modernisation theory has given way to a growing literature which stresses that cities are the vanguard of economic growth[9]. This view has found its way into the popular press, thus *The Economist's*, special supplement on cities suggests "Getting cities right is of more than academic interest. It seems reasonable to assume that the cities that work best will generate the most wealth".[10] Perceived economic opportunity plus demographic reality, where most of the world's population will live in towns, cities and metropolises by the turn of the century, has prompted a mushrooming interest, especially in the hitherto little studied urban centres of the "Third World"[11]. But it is not just an intellectual and ideological shift incorporating cities of the developing world into the preserve of urban studies that is revitalising debate. In the old metropolitan centres new forces: immigration, the changing nature of work and technology, different lifestyle and consumption patterns, the decline of the nuclear family and rising crime are engendering a fresh political and academic interest in cities. Given the resurgence of interest in urban studies it is perhaps unsurprising that there is something of a theoretical flux within the broadly constituted group of scholars drawn from disciplines as disparate as fine art, geography, history, planning and architecture who share the city as the object of study. Without providing a detailed overview of the current approaches I wish to highlight some of the major theoretical trends within urban studies. While my general objective is to demonstrate that cities with predominantly poor and oppressed populations need not be relegated to the subcategory of "Third World" centres, my more specific agenda is to outline divergent vantage points from which to gaze at the pre- and post-apartheid city.

Urban studies today does not offer a monolithic research framework for fashionable South African scholars to lock into and adapt for local purposes. One reason for this is the divergent disciplinary base of urban studies. Architects, historians, sociologists and of course geographers not only publish in different journals, they also ask profoundly different questions. Historians are generally unaware of what the building that housed major rent strikes looked or felt like. Few architects could provide a coherent account of the municipal politics of the officials that sanctioned art deco building plans. Geographers pride

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8 Useful reviews of urban stidies may be found in Flanagan, W. G., 1993: *Contemporary Urban Sociology*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Savage, M. and Warde, A. 1993: *Urban Sociology, Capitalism and Modernity*, MacMillan, Basingstoke.

9 e.g. Devas, N. and Rakodi, C., 1993: *Managing Fast Growing Cities*, Longman, Harlow; Harris, N. 1992: *Cities in the 1990s: The Challenge for Developing Countries*, UCL Press, London.

10 *The Economist*, 29 July 1995, p. 14.

11 Angotti, T., 1993: *Metropolis 2000: Planning Poverty and Politics*, Routledge; Becker, C., Hamer, A., Morrison, A, 1994: *Beyond Urban Bias in Africa*, Heinemann, Portsmouth.

themselves on having a holistic approach, but the most laudable efforts at interdisciplinary dialogue on the city have been initiated by scholars from across the disciplines. By focusing on the nature of the questions that can and should be asked about the urban form and the urban experience, Berman, King, Flanagan, Sasson, Thackara and others have shifted the terms of reference for urban studies[12]. As scholars outside of the dominant Anglo-American block, our timely reflection of the usefulness of current approaches to cities in Africa may prevent ongoing depiction of "Third World Cities" as undifferentiated zones of informal settlement not worthy of serious intellectual integration into the corpus of urban studies[13]. In turn urban scholars would do well to heed the challenges from poorer cities in much the same way as they have accepted the input of feminist and anti-racist writing on the city.[14]

There has never been only one paradigm employed by urban scholars, though many have argued fervently for the dominance of one approach over the other. The present moment is characterised by a more fluid theoretical atmosphere than usual. Nobody is seriously outlining a new model of urban development, instead there is a ready acceptance across the political and intellectual spectrum of the multiplicity of forces which shape cities. Several factors contribute to this ecumenical state of urban studies in the 1990s.

The overriding concern with practical or applied issues of urban poverty is, understandably, evident in the literature on African, Latin American and even many Asian cities. Many of the authors, at least those who write in English, are also consultants for local NGOs or international donor agencies. Alongside the concern to answer the question of how best to improve the conditions of poor residents of rapidly growing cities, there is a very definite theoretical attempt to demonstrate the links between local and international economies. Theoretical and empirical concerns in the old metropolitan regions of Europe and North America are rather different; but in the face of practical considerations of formulating policies for inner-city revitalisation, implementing traffic calming and facing

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12 Berman, M., 1982: *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*, Penguin, New York; King, A., 1990: *Urbanism, Colonialism and the World Economy: Cultural and Spatial Foundations of the World Urban System*, Routledge, London; Sasson, S., 1994: *Cities in a World Economy*, Pine Forge Press, Thousand Oaks; Thackara, J., 1988: *Design After Modernism*, Thames and Hudson, London.

13 Abu Lugard, J., 1984: Culture, "modes of production" and the changing nature of cities in the Arab world, in J. Agnew, J. Mercer, and D. Soper (eds) *The City in Cultural* Context, Allen and Unwin, London, 44-117; Rainbow, P. 1989: Governing Morroco: modernity and difference, *International Journal of Urban and Regional* Research, 13; Simon , D. 1992: *Cities Capital and Development*, are among the few who take on this challenge providing a sustained theorisation of contemporary African cities.

14 Smith, S. 1994: Urban geography in a changing world, in D. Gregory, R. Martin. and G. Smith (eds) *Human Geography: Society, Space and Social* Science, Macmillan, Basingstoke, makes great play of the impact of gender and race sensitive urban writting, but, despite the suggestive title, ignores completly the developing world .

environmental challenges for the twenty-first century, new and old ideas about urban process are flourishing.

As long ago as the early 1980s the dominant structuralist Marxist approach to the city began to fracture. From within the Marxist school, debates around home ownership and gentrification raised the spectre of consumption instead of production patterns as a motor of urban change[15]. More generally, feminist critiques and the call for a more serious recognition of the urban cultural context diverted attention away from discussions over circuits of capital and urban social movements[16]. Confidence that the city could not be fully understood without reference to capitalist development remained solid, but fundamentally divergent positions within the paradigm were increasingly evident[17].

A sustained challenge to materialist interpretations of the city came with the rise of "post-modernism". Far from displacing the now frayed materialist paradigm, post-modernist commitment to embracing different realities, of reading cities themselves as texts, and of deconstructing monolithic explanation of cities is reinforcing the trend towards multiple interpretations of urban questions[18]. At a moment when there is enormous debate about whether or not there is such a thing as a condition of post-modernity, consensus around the defining features of cities, whether post-modern or late modern, are mirages teasing the literally-minded urban scholar brought up on sector models or factoral ecology. What is clear from published journal articles is that there is a *de facto* assumption that postmodernity is a feature of the industrialised world. That this premise needs to be questioned is illustrated by the following discussion of urban realities in South Africa.

**The South African city from different theoretical perspectives**

From the disparate disciplinary and methodological pool that may be labelled urban studies I have selected seven core principles for approaching the study of urban space, regardless of its location in either "the north" or "the south". Needless to say these are not offered as a comprehensive framework or agenda for researching the South African or any

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15 Smith, N., and Williams, P (eds) *Gentrification of the City*, Allen and Unwin, Boston. This remains the best single volume on the issue.

16 Agnew, J. Mercer, J. and Soper, D. (eds) 1984: *The City in Cultural Context*, Allen and Unwin, Boston.

17 see Savage, M. and Warde, 1993: *Urban Sociology*.

18 For an illustration of the range of understanding of the conditions of post-modern approaches to the city compare Cooke, P., *Back to the Future: Modernity, Postmodernity and Locality*, Unwin Hyman, Boston; Watson, S., and Gibson, K., (eds) 1995: *Postmodern Cities and Spaces, Blackwell, Oxford;* Zukin, S. 1988: *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*, Radious, London; Kasinitz, P. (ed) 1995:*Metropolis: Centre and Symbol of Our Times*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.

other city. I wish rather to explore the different ways so called third world/disadvantaged sections of the South African city have been, or could be, depicted by pursuing the following lines of interpretation. First, that urban form is shaped by the changing organisation of production. Second, that the urban form must itself be seen as a product of capitalist production. Third, a city reflects the ideology of the professionals (particularly town planners and architects) who design, build and manage it. Fourth, the fortunes of individual cities cannot be understood outside of their position within the world economy. Fifth, the urban experience is the outcome of struggle. Sixth, that contemporary cities must be understood in the context of the rise of the modern state. Finally, that cities both constitute and are constituted by the identities of their citizens.

Claiming some indulgence for proposing contradictory and, at times, mutually exclusive interpretations, I wish to demonstrate that urban geographers and others in the field should periodically step aside from policy debates and the setting of interventionist agendas, to reflect on the basic questions posed and their political outcomes. With the imperatives of policy work foremost in the minds of most concerned South Africans, it is easy to regard theoretical navel gazing as an irrelevant academic past-time. While self-consciously eclectic, the principles outlined below are drawn broadly from materialist and post-modern positions. I would suggest that these approaches to urban studies offer creative ways of theorising the city at a moment when South African urban society requires careful scrutiny and policy recommendations. Away from the spotlight currently focused on the aftermath of apartheid there are numerous other societies similarly struggling to respond to urbanisation, urban growth and to encourage urban equity.

*The city and the changing organisation of production*

Durkheim spoke of the city as the site of specialist production. Since then the idea has been lost in much of the overt theorising about the city. Urban historians kept Durkheim's assertion alive by showing that where and what work people did within a city was of central importance to the geography of urban expansion and change[19]. More recent emphasis on post-Fordist production is associated with the decentralisation of urban cores and the demise of traditional zoning.[20] The dramatic shifts brought about by the industrial revolution or the computer revolution highlight the ongoing fact that the changing nature of

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19 c.f. Zunz, O., 1982: *The Changing Face of Inequality: Urbanization, Industrial Development and Immigration in Detroit, 19880-1920*, Chicago.

20 Healey, P., Cameron, S., Davoudi, S., Graham, S., and Madani-Pour, A., (eds) 1995: *Managing Cities: The New Urban Context*, John Wiley, Chichester.

work has profound effect on the organisation of urban society[21]. The decline of northern British cities and towns because of the reorganisation of production and the shift away from manufacturing is one way in which geographers have shown how changes in production have impacted on urban areas[22]. The urban impact of the feminisation of the labour force is another[23]. But these sophisticated discussions, whether couched in Marxist or post-modern narratives, tend to emphasise the symbiotic relationship between the structure of formal work and residence in advanced capitalist societies. In South Africa, intra-urban and inter-urban responses to shifts in the nature of both formal and informal work are reflected in the organisation of urban space[24]. By way of illustrating the utility of this approach for exploring conditions of the urban poor I shall sketch the urban impact of the changing role Africans within the urban workforce.

Labour intensive work associated with the extraction of minerals in South Africa saw the establishment of compound housing for single workers. Compounds underpinned the payment of below subsistence wages and also ensured the security of production of diamonds at Kimberly.[25] The evolution of this new form of residential space in response to the specific conditions of mining production in the late nineteenth century is a clear example of the relationship between urban space and colonial society.[26]. But there are other examples. In Natal, the use of *togt labour* (daily migrant workers) for the arduous and unskilled work of cleaning the streets of Durban meant that there was virtually no permanent urban housing for African labourers[27]. The early African location, the hallmark of colonial cities, is another. In this case as long as the land for African settlement was sufficiently far away from the colonial town to be sure of being no health threat, little other consideration was given to the planning and development of the urban environment[28]. Residents were not only viewed as impermanent urbanites, but the hard manual work that they performed necessitated only the

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21 Dennis, R., 1984: *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Hall, P. 1988: *Cities of Tomorrow*, Oxford, Blackwell.

22 Massey, D. 1984: *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structure and the Geography of Production*, Macmillan, London.

23 Rose, D., and Villeneuve, P., 1993: Work, labour markets, and households in transition, in L. Bourne, and D. Ley (eds), *The Changing Social Geography of Canadian Cities*, McGill Queens, Montreal.

24 Rogerson, C.M. 1989: Rethinking national urban policies: lessons for Africa, *South African Geographical Journal*, 71, 134-141; Tomlinson, R., and Adelson, M., 1987: *Regional Restructuring Under Apartheid: Urban and Regional Policies in Contemporary South Africa*, Ravan, Joahnnesburg.

25 Mabin, A. 1986: Labour, capital, class struggle and the origins of residential segregation in Kimberly, 1980-1920, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 12, 4-26.

26 Crush, J. 1991: Power and Surveillance on the South African Gold Mines, IDRC Migrant Labour Project Working Paper no 8, Queens University/University of Cape Town.

27 Swanson, M. W. 1976: The Durban system: roots of urban apartheid in colonail Natal, *African Studies*, 35, 159-176.

28 Several chapters on early locations are found in Saunders, C. (ed) *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, University of Cape Town, Cape Town.

most rudimentary of infrastuctural investment to ensure an efficient service. Ad-hoc towns with no roads, sewers or shops sufficed.

In South Africa, as African peoples' contribution to the urban economy grew, the conditions under which they were expected to survive were adapted. The emergence of indigenous industry and the extension of municipal government investment in roads and services under the newly independent Union government began to transform the typical colonial city. In Johannesburg, existing compound housing was adapted to suit the need of employers who required a more accessible and reliable labour force than the old location system could provide. *Ad hoc* arrangements for workers to sleep on factory premises eventually gave way to formal segregated African townships akin to the housing forms we know today. Although dramatically different from the early zoning of the United States or the increasing intervention of local authorities in the cities of Britain, South Africa in the 1910s and 1920s witnessed the first systematic public regulation of the size, space, ventilation and construction standards of the urban African workforce.[29] Throughout the inter-war period there were dramatic changes made to the urban fabric as some African people were incorporated into the evolving modern South African economy on a systematic basis and basic shelter for them was sought.[30] Factories where Africans worked as both unskilled and semi-skilled labour led the way for the construction of modern family housing. The new African townships, such as Johannesburg's Western Native Location or Springs' Payneville were rigidly controlled spaces. In the Western Native case, controls included a perimeter fence, which assured factory operatives of a decent nights sleep but prevented them from engaging in subversive political activity. The occupational profile of townships was almost as heavily monitored as racial designations. Township residents were defined as commonly as "units of labour" as they were "African".[31]

The stark contrast between the standards of housing provided for the African and white working classes between the World Wars testifies to the racial division of labour that was the Pact Government's explicit policy. While it is important to dwell on the foundations of residential segregation it is also useful to reflect on the growing differences between the accommodation offered to "civilised" African workers whose presence in the city was effectively recognised, and those "uncivilised" rural or migrant workers whose families were excluded from the city and who lived in temporary accommodation where it was not possible

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29 Parnell, S. 1993: Johannesburg slums and racial segregation in South African Cities, 1910-1937, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

30 Freund,, B. 1989: The social character of secondary industry in South Africa, 1915-1945, in A. Mabin (ed) *Organisation and Economic Change: Southern African Studies, vol 5*, Ravan, Johannesburg, pp. 78-119.

31 Parnell, *Op. Cit.*

to make an urban home. So, township housing was only available to certain sections of the formal urban African workforce, namely fully employed married Christians. Those who fell outside of this definition were thus effectively excluded from urban status. Unmarried women, who serviced the urban working classes with cheap food, sex and alcohol were barred from the new urban housing . Along with other "undesirables" they were left to shelter in the urban crevices, in the slum yards hidden from the public eye.[32]

The most significant incorporation of Africans into urban jobs came with the Second World War. Opportunities created by white men away at war rolled over as post-war reconstruction and the booming local economy of the 1950s and 1960s saw the large scale Africanisation of unskilled and semi-skilled work especially in industry and construction[33] Mirroring the growing importance of Fordist employment, housing for Africans expanded dramatically in the 1940s and 1950s as some tens of thousands of houses were constructed in large and small towns across the country. Paralleling the restricted job mobility of Africans and the effective bar on advancement into the skilled trades and professions under Apartheid, African suburbanisation was still-born and townships such as Soweto were characterised by their uniformity, some would suggest monotony. Socially undifferentiated housing more typical of socialist cities, testifying to the period of intense social engineering where leisure, work and residence fell under the complete control of the apartheid state. This phase, during which the might of the apartheid state loomed, might otherwise be understood as a moment of "high modernity", built on mass factory production as much as racial oppression.

What does the relationship between the production process and the urban landscape have to say to more recent urban developments? If we stay with the focus on Africans and turn to the post-Soweto 1976 years, a rather different interpretation from that currently held of the demise of the apartheid cities' rigid race and class structure becomes clear.[34] Crankshaw's recent study of the extent of African occupational advancement shows that, aside from racially disproportionate increases in the levels of unemployment, African workers made extensive inroads into routine clerical and sales positions. There has also been significant movement of Africans into artisanal and semi-professional positions. By contrast, professional and management positions remain virtually all white. By linking these changes

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32 This is one of the themes explored in a recent exhibition July 1994: "Space , Race and Power", Gertude Posel Gallery, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

33 Crankshaw, O., 1990: Apartheid and economic growth: Craft unions, capital and the state in the African building industry, *Journal of Southern African Studies*,, 16, 503-526; Lewis, J. 1984: *Industrialisation and Trade Union Organisation in South Africa, 1924-1955*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Webster, E., 1985: *Cast in a Racial Mould: Labour Process and Trade Unionism in the Foundries*, Ravan, Joahannesburg.

34 Explanations and descriptions of the decline of apartheid urban structures can be found in Lemon, A. 1991: *Homes Apart*, and Smith, D. 1992: *The Apartheid City and Beyond: Urbanisation and Social Change in South Africa*, Routledge, London.

to questions of residence, especially of new forms of urban shelter, the following observations can be made about the decline of old style apartheid cities in the years leading up to the 1994 election. First, in the absence of new state-subsidised housing, the proliferation of back yard shacks and squatter settlements was associated with rising unemployment and the low wages of unskilled manual employment, rather than solely the abolition of influx control and the ending of apartheid. Second, the process of inner-city desegregation and new private sector construction is associated with the growth of African artisans, white collar workers and semi-professionals. Finally, the very small number of African professionals explains the fact that the affluent suburbs experienced nothing like the scale of de-racialisation associated with more affordable inner-city zones[35]. The deracialisation of the world's most rigidly segregated cities cannot be explained without reference to the changing economic climate and the restructuring of employment.

*The production of the urban form.*

The kind of empirical work done on cities in the United States and the United Kingdom to test Harvey's theory[36] that the production of the built environment is a consequence of cycles within capitalist economies and that building occurs when capital is forced to switch to construction, even though this represents a low rate of return or profit, does not really exist for South Africa, and is even less likely to exist for less well resourced countries. The potential of pursuing the relationship between capitalist development and the production of the built environment is evidenced by limited local empirical work drawing explicitly on Harvey's ideas,[37] plus the numerous general illusions to the relationship between construction and business cycles. In the context of South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) there is special interest in the idea that the building of houses might lead to an economic recovery.[38] The logic of Harvey's argument, that there is money to be made from construction, also provides the *raison d'être* of the call for traditionally disadvantaged groups to be guaranteed a significant proportion of the contracts associated with the RDP.

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35 Crankshaw, O., 1995: Race class and the changing division of labour under apartheid, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

36 Harvey, D., 1978: The urban process under capitalism: a framework for analysis, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 2, 101-131.

37 c.f Hendler, P. 1987: Capital accumulation and conurbation: rethinking the social geography of the 'black' townships, *South African Geographical Journal*, 69, 60-68.

38 c.f. Tomlinson, R. (ed) 1994: *Urban Development Planning: Lessons for the Economic Reconstruction of South African Cities*; Wits University Press, Johannesburg.

If the broader fiscal context of construction is weighed in the analysis of the emergence of South African cities, then the provision of low-income housing might be understood less as a product of political will than of economic possibility or even capitalist rationality. Interestingly, in the highly politicised context of South Africa, it is unclear if large scale construction precedes or follows an economic boom. Take the case of the mass public housing initiative of the inter-war years. Although extensive slum re-housing projects, including the construction of the nucleus of Soweto at Orlando, were sanctioned as early as 1931, building did not begin until after the economic recovery following the departure from the gold standard.[39] At the other end of the decade the government's commitment to building segregated state housing evaporated with the economic slump as funds dried up even before the outbreak of World War Two.[40] Unambiguous ideological commitment to racially separate residential areas had to wait until the post-war recovery fuelled a construction boom. A contradictory example of when in the economic cycle a building boom occurred is the huge investment in "homeland" towns in the 1980s, a decade of intense economic recession. Unravelling the web of political versus economic imperatives may prove more complex in South Africa than many other contexts, but it would seem astonishing if all of the usual patterns of capitalist investment in the built environment were flouted by the apartheid state.[41]

One of the most useful points made by those who advocate seeing the city as the physical manifestation of capitalist social organisation is that it places the focus on buildings in general, rather than only on houses. In the South African context there has been virtually no attention given to the non-residential component of the built environment, despite the fact that industrial and commercial zones have long served as racial buffer strips[42]. In the old industrial societies there is considerable interest in the changes wrought by the construction of railways and roads or the expansion of the city centre. In South Africa, the overemphasis on the political objectives of the state's building effort detracts from the impact of the normal transformations of the urban landscape brought about by capitalist growth, the expansion of the CBD being the most important example. One exciting way of pursuing the notion that the city is itself the expression of capitalist activity is to look at patterns of construction

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39 Mabin , A. 1991: Origins of segregatory urban planning in Soweto, 1900-1940, *Planning History*, 13, 8-16; Parnell, S. 1989: Shaping a racially divided city: state housing policy in Africa, *Environment and Planning, Government and Policy*, 7, 261-272.

40 For a general outline of this period see Bonner,, P. 1995: African urbanisation on the Rand between 1930 and 1960: its social character and its political consequences, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21, 115-130.

41 For a discussion of Harvey's theory and its applicarion to African areas see Hendler, P. 1992: Living in apartheid's shadow: residential planning for Africans in the PWV region, 1970-1990, *Urban Forum*, 3.

42 but see Scott, D. 1992: The destruction of Clairwood: A case study on the transformation of commercial living space, in D. M. Smith (ed), *The Apartheid City and Beyond*, 87-98.

investment. When and why are there spurts of urban expansion? Was the massive African township initiative of the 1960s curtailed by a shortage of capital because of white suburbanisation and elite shopping centre decentralisation, or do the cycles of construction for conspicuous consumption and basic infrastructure provision coincide? Similar questions of the relative returns on investment in low-income housing versus luxury retail services apply to the present moment as the ostentatious redevelopment of Cape Town and Johannesburg malls attract apparently unlimited capital while the construction of homes for the poor fail to get off the starting blocks. The conviction that the nature and even location of construction investment in cities relates to the fundamental dynamics of capitalist production as well as to opportunities for reinvestment afforded by the decay of physical structures has, elsewhere, underscored much of the interest in gentrification, a phenomena almost completely ignored in South African urban studies.[43]

While there are several obvious avenues for pursuing the ways in which our cities have been forged by the logic of capitalist profit creation through construction, there are also likely problems. One of the difficulties in applying this approach to the production of urban space in South Africa (just as it would be in Latin America) is that there is no obvious way of accounting for the construction that takes place outside of the formal economy. Incremental housing or site and service schemes may be low budget operations, but the multiplier effects and labour investment cannot be artificially removed from a formulation that stresses construction as a productive, profit-generating ability just because this does not occur in the same way as in the developed world (where in any event spurious tax submissions of construction companies makes assessing the real economic significance of development inaccurate). Despite the fact that Burgess's classic critique of self-housing provision evokes similar fundamental ideas to those of Harvey, he fails to demonstrate how the labour of poor people who build their own homes links to the wider economy, other than through an oppressive double shift of work.[44] The South African case; where so much informal construction depends either on state subsidy or formal sector suppliers, demands the unification of the theoretical discourses used for urban space in "First" and "Third" world contexts to incorporate all construction into the analysis of the production of the urban form. For all of the intrinsic difficulties in achieving this, it would then be possible to avoid a dualist focus on the production of the, never clearly distinguishable, formal and informal sectors of the city.

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[43] Garside, J., 1993: Inner-city gentrification in South Africa: the case of Woodstock, Cape Town, *GeoJournal*, 30, 29-35.

[44] Burgess, R., 1978: Petty commodity housing or dweller control? a critique of John Turner's view on housing policy, *World Development*, 6, 1105-1134; Simon,, D., 1994: *Cities, Capital and Development*, makes a more convincing case for integration.

*Professional town planning and architectural impact on urban form*

The early twentieth century rise of the town planning profession corresponds with the major period of urban development in South Africa[45]. Other processionals, including medics and engineers were also highly influential in dictating the parameters within which cities grew,[46] but the most visible vestige of professional influence is in the layout and architecture of the city. Both planning and architectural history are well established urban sub-disciplines, though neither has ever been properly incorporated into South African urban studies. Other than the recognition that there are a myriad of technical regulations governing the size of pavement blocks and the width of streets, or of becoming more sensitive to the symbolism of columns, pediments or plinths, what is there to be gained by a more serious reading of these sometimes rather technical sources?

The export and local adaptation of ideas about garden cities infuse the plans of urban spaces in South Africa. Low density suburban sprawl that presents today's urban managers with so many logistical and fiscal difficulties is only one spin-off of the anti-urban sentiment of the early twentieth century. Houses that face the wrong direction for maximising the warmth of the sun, the acceptance of domestic architecture that reinforces dominant nuclear family living and the idea of the house as a brick and mortar construction are others. The sentimental celebration of colonial architecture with large verandas and pressed steel ceilings masks the demise of local building techniques and materials and rarely confronts the presence of pitifully inadequate domestic servants quarters in sought after heritage stock. Beyond the nostalgic appreciation of the beauty of Victorian or art deco architecture there is a tendency to focus on the negative impact of colonial urban policies, most notably segregation. But not all of the ideas brought to the African sub-continent were bad or uniformly problematic in their outworking. Many of the basic health and sanitation regulations that still apply to towns in South Africa are based on northern, especially English models. It is the extensive web of these building codes and sanitary by-laws that have sustained the infrastructure and prevented the worst kind of urban decay that characterises many other cities in Africa.[47] The differential application and enforcement of urban planning

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45 Meyers, S. 1993: The contribution made by Garden Cities in the development of residential planning in South Africa, Proceedings: Symposium South African Planning History, Pietermaritzburg.

46 c.f. Parnell, S. 1993: Creating racial privilege: the origins of South African Public Health and Town Planning legislation, *Journal of African Studies*, 19, 471-488; van Heyningen,, E : 1989: Public Health and society in Cape Town, 1880-1910, Unpublished PhD thesis , University of Cape Town.

47 Hart, D. 1989: Mismanaged urbanisation in Africa: the examples of Cairo and Lagos, *South African Geographical Journal*, 71, 182-192.

regulations in black and white spaces was, however, a crucial factor in the apartheid matrix that ensured racially unequal standards of living.[48]

Uncovering the relationship between urban space and state power in both the colonial and apartheid periods has been the subject of attention of the very limited urban post-structural South African scholarship. Several authors emphasise the importance of moving beyond the purely physical sense of order and control suggested by Faucault's' notion of the carceral city when exploring the nature of the apartheid cities design. For example, both Crush and Robinson link notions of spatiality and power to the design of compounds and townships. Deconstructing the architectural and sociological parameters of buildings, street designs and plans, Mabin, Jaffa and Pinnock's writing on apartheid cities differs substantively from that of social historians.[49]

One of the most valuable contributions of the literature on post-modernism has been to throw into perspective the scale of the modernist project. Curiously though, there is a tendency to view the south as untouched by the forces of a post-modern age on the grounds that modernity has never been fully achieved. Yet, placing the emphasis on the modernist planning and architectural milieu provides interesting ways of rethinking urban South Africa. From this perspective African townships are more than simply racial spaces. The rows of uniform square units designated 51/6 and 51/9 houses following the numbers of the plans drawn in 1951, exemplify modernist controls of urban development[50]. At the same time as these were rolling off the architectural production line of the National Building Research Institute[51], the population was organised into defined social groups according to ethnic status.[52] Residential, recreational and industrial land uses were separated from each other, a fact that made it easy to impose buffer strips between different race groups.[53] House design and finish was standardised using mass production of materials and construction. With a force untried anywhere else in the world social engineers in South Africa even managed to

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48 One of the tasks facing the new local government structures is to unify the varied regulations of the old white municipalites and those of the black local authorities.

49 Robinson , J. 1992: Power, space and the city: historical reflections on apartheid and post-apartheid orders, in D. Smith *Apartheid City and* Beyond, and Crush , J., 1992: Power annd surveillance on the South African gold mines, *Journal of Southern African* Studies, 14, 257-278.

50 Mabin, A., 1993: Class community and conflict in the planning of the 'townships' from the forties and fifties, Proceedings: Symposium South African Planning History, Pietermatizburg, 305-338.

51 Calderwood, D. M., 1953: Native Housing in South Africa, Unpublished Phd Thesis, University of hte Witewatersrand, Johannesburg.

52 Pirie, G.H. 1984: Ethno-linguistic zoning in South Africas Black townships, *Area*, 16, 295-296.

53 An excellent discussion of the making of a thoroughly modernist urban town planning scheme is Wilkinson, P., 1993: A discourse of modernity: The Social and Economic Planning Council's Fifth Report on Regional and Town Planning, 1944, Proceedings: Symposium South African Planning History, Pietermatizburg, 239-280.The relationship of the SEPC to the subsequent Group Areas Act is documented in Mabin, A. 1992: Comprehensive segregation: the origins of the Group Areas Act and its planning apparatuses, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18, 406-429.

regulate the number of people urbanising and to tie this to the availability of jobs through rigid influx controls. Once the number of people in the city was determined its management was a simpler, though ultimately untenable task.

Ideas about cities are changing. Renewed concern for sustainability and the escalating cost of urban service provision has agencies such as the World Bank promoting the notion of a compact city[54]. Cost, rising levels of crime and the associated desire for security, plus an attempt to embrace urban lifestyles afforded by accessible services, has seen the promotion of greater densities in new residential developments across all socio-economic groups. In South Africa new housing provision at Khayelitsha, one of the most dense low-cost developments ever laid out in South Africa[55], and the multiplying townhouse or cluster housing developments for the urban elite both suggest that once again the basic patterns of settlement in South Africa are in line with international planning trends towards more compact cities.

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54 World Bank, 1991: South African urban sector reconnaissance mission, *Aides Memoir;* Tomlinson, R. 1994: *Urban Development Planning*..

55 Cook, G.P., 1991: Cape Town, in A. Lemon (ed) *Homes Apart: South Africa's Segregated Cities*, Paul Chapman, London, pp. 26-42.

*The city in the world economy*

Few would take issue with the general statement that cities reflect changes in the world economy. Many urban theorists take this impact to be a primary determinant of urban form. The physical infrastructure of the city is seen as the spatial imprint of a global division of labour.[56] When researching the corporate capitals of the world such as London, New York and Paris, a global perspective has obvious merits. Away from the Multi-National head-quarters, the globalisation of production and consumption makes it impossible not to give some credence to an internationalist view on the future of individual cities. But does this global economic perspective have any value for the peripheral and semi-perihperal urban centres such as those in South Africa?

What makes the idea of understanding cites in the context of the changing fortunes of a world economic order attractive is that it links developments in Sao Paulo to those in Seoul or Birmingham and makes it easier to explain the rise of urban economies such as Singapore or Taipei and the declining fortune of, say, Lusaka. For South African purposes it is useful as it draws attention to the trans-national financial, social and political impact of large centres such as Johannesburg or Durban. It will, no doubt, have increasing bearing as patterns of urban inequality quickly move away from apartheid or racial discrepancies and reflect more "normal" uneven and unfair distributions of power and wealth. In other words it removes the ubiquitous dualist discourse of understanding cities as either rich or poor, "First" or "Third" world. In South Africa this dualism is expressed though the relegation of urban questions related to "disadvantaged communities" to either a legacy of apartheid or worse, an unsolvable residue of the "Third World problems" that have finally invaded our "affluent/first world" urban areas. Empirically, adopting this perspective would facilitate unified urban enquiry. For example new social divisions in the city whether brought about by large scale African immigration or the growth in service sector employees can both be explained by the significance of Johannesburg in the regional context. We could as readily explore circular migration between say Zimbabwe or Mozambique and the Rand as the urban impact of the concentration of international and regional financial services. Already much of the policy work being done by geographers takes on the world city literature as a framework for understanding developments such as local economic development initiatives of specific cities.[57]

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[56] Friedman, J. 1986: The world city hypothesis, *Development and Change*, 17, 69-83; Sasson, S. *Cities in the World Economy*.

[57] Rogerson, C. 1995: Local initiatives for local economic development: the case of Johannesburg, Paper presented to the Urban Studies group of the International Geographical Union, Cape Town. Much of the work that builds on these theoretical ideas is currently in the form of contract reports e.g. Rogerson,, C. 1995: Recreating the inner-city, Paper prepared for the Interim Strategic Development Framework for the inner city of Johannesburg, Greater Johannesburg Administration.

A major weakness of the literature on world cities is that it focuses on periods and places where international links are obvious. There is thus a resurgence of interest in the literature on colonial cities in the period when the relationship between urban expansion in the metrople depended directly on the returns of Empire.[58] There is a similarly active interest in the decades of the new international division of labour, especially in urban centres where post-Fordist production predominates. However, the crucial inter-war years of explosive urban growth, and urban centres that have no international or even regional primacy are widely ignored. In the South African case Johannesburg sometimes attracts a mention as a possible world or regional city, but Durban, Cape Town or the smaller centres are not mentioned.[59]

*The struggle for the city*

The idea that ordinary peoples' struggles for control over their lives in the city is, without question, one of the richest veins of research in South African urban studies. This pattern is already being replicated for less heavily research regions through the post-colonial emphasis on the recovery of lost voices and histories. Past battles for the right to survive in town against the forces of racial and economic oppression have been extensively documented by the very active group of urban historians.[60] More recent urban struggles, especially those tied to anti-apartheid liberation battles, have been equally powerfully recorded. The literature on urban social movements was used, especially by geographers, as a way of coming to term with the rent boycotts, strikes, and the emergence and growth of the civics in the 1980s.[61] But there are other ways of approaching the struggle for the city.

For all of the diverse urban lives uncovered by social historians and the celebration of the power of individual and collective action in shaping the urban process, there are some major gaps created by the emphasis on urban struggles from below, just as there is in urban studies of subaltern urbanites. The tendency to shy away from delving into the structures of urban power is very clearly demonstrated in the South African literature. Aside from Posel and Hindon who focus very specifically on issues of influx control, there are no national

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58 King , A. 1990: *Urbanism, Colonialism and the World Economy;* Simon, D. 1992: *Cities, Capital and Development.*

59 Beavon, K. S. O. 1995: Joannesburg: getting to grips with globalisation from an abnormal base, Paper presented Pre-Habitat Conference on World Cities and the Urban Future, Toyko, Japan.

60 A review of this can be found in Maylam, P., 1995: Explaining the Apartheid City: 20 years of South African Historiography, *Journal of Southern African Studies, 21, 19-38.*

61 Smit, D., 1992: Urban and regional planning in South Africa: the geographical nexus, in C. Rogerson and J. McCarthy (eds) *Geography in a Changing South Africa*, Oxford, Cape Town, 216-228.

accounts of the internal dynamics of the state bureaucracies that managed urban policy (there are accounts of how individual administrators grappled with the meanings of state policy).[62] Duncan's recently published volume on the struggles between central government departments controlling African labour could productively be mimicked for urban areas.[63] While the pre- and immediately post-apartheid record of the battle over the formulation and enforcement of policy for the cities is thin, the more recent urban past is almost *terra incognita*. We know virtually nothing of the internal debates about urban areas during the dark decade of the 1970s[64]. These were the years when African urban areas were removed from the jurisdiction of "White" municipalities and Black Local Authority structures were born[65]. These were the years of escalating house occupancy levels, and the absence of new housing construction, the years that spawned the militant urban youth that took to the streets on June 16, 1976. Now there is a much more active interest in the urban functions of the state, though few have managed to get beyond working out still unsettled structures of power and command (let alone the boundaries of the new local government structures) in the new South Africa. Most commentators are bound up with the question of how international experiences might guide the progress of the RDP.[66] Attention to the internal struggles within and between government departments must of necessity wait, though the import of these sometimes petty battles for the future of cities is great in uncovering the assumptions and objectives of state officials vested with the powers to transform the cities.

*The rise of the modern state and urban studies*

The literature on the state is one addressed both implicitly and explicitly in urban studies, particularly with reference to the local state.[67] I wish to give only the briefest suggestion of how the focus on the modern state might usefully be redeployed in the study of the city in South Africa. This is an area where extensive ground work has been done, with considerable attention having been given to the descriptive role of the local state in

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62 Posel, D. 1991: *The Making of Apartheid, 1948-61*, Oxford; Hindon, D. 1987: *The Making of the Urban Proletariat, Ravan, Johannesburg.*

63 Duncan, D., 1995: *The Mills of God: The State and African Labour in South Africa, 1918-1948*, Wits University Press, Johannesburg. See Robinson, J. 1995: *The Power of Apartheid******

64 A notable and much underused source in this regard is Bekker, S.B., and Humphries, R. 1985:*From Control to Confusion: The Changing Role of Administration Boards In South Africa, 1971-1983, Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg.*

65 Becker , S . and Humphries, R. 1985: *From Controll to Confusion: The Changing Role of Administration Boards in South Africa, 1971-1983 , Shuter and Shooter*, Pietermatizburg.

66 Tomlison, R. 1994: *Urban Development Planning: Lessons for the economic Reconstruction of South African Cities*, Wits University Press, Joahnnesburg.

67 c.f. Gottdiener, M., 1987: *The Decline of Urban Politics: Political Theory and the Crisis of the Local State*, Sage, London; Harloe, M., Picvance, C. and Urry, J, 1990: *Place Policy and Politics: .Do Localities Matter?*, Unwin Hyman, London.

segregating the city. More nuanced interpretations reflect on the interaction of central and local state actors in determing urban spaces. But this fresh attention to national and national/local, rather than just local patterns, does not go far enough. There is much to be gained by adopting a broader framework of enquiry concerned to understand the relationship between urban space and the rise of the modern state.

Local government was infused by modernist notions of the possibility of large scale scientific intervention in the planning, building and management of cities. Execution of these far reaching schemes depended on an efficient bureaucracy. This contradiction was captured with astonishing insight in Maud's classic study of Johannesburg in *City Government*.[68] The dependant relationship between an efficient state and the development of urban government (generally municipalities) who were responsible for overseeing the implementation of sustainable standards and a viable urban financial base is critical to understanding both decolonisation and the nature of the city in the rest of the colonial world, especially Africa. For the same reasons it would be useful to revisit urban African political and administrative representation in South Africa. More generally, exploring the changing discourse by which the state represented itself and its actions towards Africans in urban areas offers great scope. What, for example, did the state mean by the terms location, township, slum, or squatter? What image and value system was being conveyed by the terms? At what moment and why were Africans either included or excluded from urban citizenship and how was this achieved? An interesting contemporary example of the wider political and ideological significance of urban policies is the state's discussions about appropriate/desirable urban infrastructure to be provided for the African population. The present debate about incremental housing, where the Minister of Housing appears to be following the lead of Zimbabwes' housing policy makers in declaring that only formal housing is good enough for African people, can be interpreted in a number of different ways that have enormous bearing on the future of urban policy.[69] The battle for formal housing over incremental housing is possibly a somewhat outdated commitment to a modernist vision of the welfare state, alternatively it is a political defence of the standard of services the post-apartheid state is morally obliged to deliver to urban Africans, or perhaps this ambitious project is a merely a ploy for the forthcoming local government elections.

*The city and the construction of identity*

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[68] Maud, J.P. 1938:City Government: The Johannesburg Experiment, Oxford.

[69] See Zinyama, L. Tevera, D. and Cumming, S., 1993: *Harare: The Growth and Problems of a City*, University Of Zimbabwe Press, Harare.

The South African obsession with racial classification is finally being eroded by a concerted attempt to show that 'race' is socially constructed. Urban studies provide the ideal context for debunking ideas of racial difference for it was in the cities that phenotypical designations were forged. The most vivid example of socially constructed racial categorisation deals most obviously with the "coloured" community, a categorisation unknown outside of South Africa.[70] Demonstrating that not only South African, but all race definitions, emerge and may eventually become codified because they serve wider political purposes offers enormous opportunities for urban studies in South Africa.[71] Given that the racial segregation of South African cities is its dominant structural characteristic, it would be useful to reconsider when, why and how the urban form was racialised. Adopting an approach concerned to identify the material conditions and moments during which racial ideas about specific groups were entrenched demonstrates that the city's evolution can be understood in multiple ways.

The precedent of legally designating people as a racial group was established very early in South Africa's urban history. As Indian people moved out of the cultivation of sugar and into trade on a large scale, their ability to compete with Europeans was quickly curtailed. The enforced establishment of Asiatic Bazaars set limits to trade and residence, thereby defining South Africa's first racial category. But residential and commercial segregation were not always accompanied by legislation. The geographical separation of locations from colonial towns did not see the formal distinction of African and European. The language of race in the early twentieth century was not automatically legislated. Public, even official discussions, of racial differences between English and Afrikaans speakers never made it onto the statute books. Why not? By contrast, not long after the first World War, at a moment when cities in South Africa were diversifying and displaying more complex characteristics of function and form than had been associated with colonial transport, service or administrative functions, the tradition of treating Africans living in town as a distinct group was legally enacted. Moreover, the 1923 passage of the infamous Natives (Urban Areas) Act by preventing Africans from living in "white" space inadvertently defined the racial category "coloured".[72] The focus on race in this instance once again draws our attention to the years following the Great War as a moment of intense urban conflict over resources. Similar moments of competition for jobs and housing occurred after World War Two when the designations of tribalised and detribalised were being invoked. Arguably the present

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70 c.f. Bickford-Smith, V. 1995: *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town: Group Identity and Social Practice, 1875-1902*, Cambridge.

71 For literature on racial classification see Miles, R. 1989: *Racism*, Routledge; For a more specific treatment of "race" in an urban context see Cross, M. and Keith, M. 1993: *Racism, the City and the State*, Routledge.

72 Parnell, S. 1993: Johannesburg slums and racial segregation in South African Cities, 1910-1937, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

obsession with immigrants and foreigners provides a fresh signal of collective ways of defining and then excluding outsider groups from urban opportunities.

The theoretical attention to the construction of racial, gender or ethnic identities does more than provide a politically correct indication of periods of material urban crisis, it helps contectualise the social consequences of urban growth. As so much community resistance takes place by inverting the categorisation and divided space ascribed to the disempowered, the focus on the construction of say, racial, identity provides a platform for understanding the social base of urban social movements. It may also help explain subsequent urban divisions, such as the current ethnic conflict between coloureds and Africans in the Western Cape and emerging tensions between local and foreign born African people.

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This paper represents a preliminary effort to reinitiate discussion over how best to approach the South African city, both historically and for the purposes of informing contemporary debates. I have selected seven core themes drawn from urban studies to demonstrate that South African cities can be viewed from a number of perspectives not normally invoked by local urban scholars. Second I hope to lay the foundations for a more thorough investigation into how we can best understand cities that fall outside of the territories where urban theory is formulated. By beginning that enquiry within the northern dominated field of urban studies much of potential benefit has been identified. In suggesting that urban spaces of the developing world can be more usefully explored with reference to conventional urban theory I am hoping that we will not only examine (and discard) the ghetto of "Third World" urban studies, but that urbanists will confront the dynamics of cities in those regions outside of the affluent north where already most of the worlds urban populations reside.