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From Governability to Ungovernability: Race, class and authority in South Africa's black cities

Belinda Bozzoli

Soweto, Alexandra and Sharpeville were symbols with great resonance in the global arena of anti-apartheid struggles. Tembisa, Katlehong, Atteridgeville, Wattville - there are too many to mention - all have had considerable local and national significance. These locations, townships, ghettoes, are the places to which black people were consigned during the years of segregation and apartheid; within which the flames of resistance were ignited during the struggles of the post-1976 era, where homes and jobs are scarce and lawlessness is rife; and where, today, new local authorities are attempting to achieve legitimacy and to exact rent and service payments from an unwilling populace.

Much has been written about the better known amongst these townships. There are vivid portrayals of moments of crisis and resistance[1]; there are detailed studies of social cleavage and cultural interplay[2], and there are analytical pieces[3]. In addition there are studies of different aspects of social and cultural life in townships - whether these be focussed upon gangs, liquor brewing, music, sport or other leisure activities[4].

This paper seeks, whether boldly or foolishly, to draw together some of the themes covered in these diverse pieces, and to add new ones - the latter drawn to some extent from a case study of resistance in Alexandra township in the 1980s. It addresses itself to the question: how do we best understand the township rebellions of the nineteen eighties and their aftermath?

At first this may appear to be a question with a straightforward, common sense set of answers: Townships were the places where severe oppression and poverty were experienced on a racial and class basis. This in itself surely seems sufficient to explain the emergence of revolt in the mid 1980s. What a good analysis requires, therefore, is the documenting of the forms of oppression experienced by township residents; from this documentation will arise an understanding of why they rebelled.

However the flaw in this type of explanation - as a vast literature on the explanation of social movements and collective action will confirm - is that it operates by reference to the immutable laws of history (repression must inevitably lead to resistance); or to simple economic determinism (deprivation must lead to resistance). A more sophisticated form of determinism is used by "crisis" theorists, who suggest that the "deep crisis" of the South African economy of the mid-eighties underpinned the revolutionary upsurges of the time. But are such determinisms sufficient? Those who

have studied individual townships, or who have developed a comparative understanding suggest that they may not be. Not all oppressed populations rebel; and not all rebellious populations are notably and consistently oppressed. The link between oppression and resistance, therefore, is something that needs exploring in and of itself; while the causes of rebellion are themselves not reducible to the presence of suffering in the rebellious population. Furthermore, the notion of "crisis" runs the risk of tautology, as do many explanations of social movements, for it is never clear whether rebellion is the cause or the symptom of the crisis.

The style and content of rebellion too cannot be explained simply by reference to the style and form taken by oppression and suffering. While South African townships were at base the places where the black working class was housed cheaply and controlled easily, rebellion therein, during the mid-eighties, certainly did not take an entirely "proletarian" form. The rebels of the 1980s rose up in a revolutionary mode which was nationalistic, intra-generational, mutinous, and insurrectionist and only sporadically directed at capital per se. The rebellions had powerful strands of anti-modernism and anti-liberalism within them, and were directed at government rather than accumulation.

This paper is an examination of the township as a social, cultural, political, economic and spatial environment, with special reference to its capacity to produce the resistant classes who emerged in the 1980s and whose world views continue to shape politics in South Africa today. It locates itself neither within the tradition of social history that has documented township life so richly, although it depends upon the literature emerging from that tradition for much of its material; nor within the tradition of urban and regional studies that has explored the geographical and spatial dimensions of the creation of townships, although this, too, provides a vital basis for the essay. The paper is located within the theories of social movements and collective action that have become increasingly sophisticated in other settings, but have not been used to a great extent in the South African situation.[5]

The paper draws on the classical concepts such as those of class, status (in which a classicist might include race) and power - it has been, in much work on collective action, the rich combination of Marxist and Weberian thinking that has often borne fruit. The paper also refers to more contemporary concerns with culture, discourse and meaning.[6] The phenomenon of the township is not explicable only by reference to the determining power of race, class or suffering; but it is also not simply a repository of an infinite number of discourses - a structural pattern exists, a pattern which replicates itself, with local variations, across the South African social order more broadly.

The first requirement of the analysis is to ask what the nature of the rebellions was - what is it, more precisely, that needs explanation? What were the chief patterns taken by the township revolts of the 1980s?[7] The case of Alexandra township, while unique, embodies some of the characteristics of the resistance of the 80s more broadly, and a closer examination of its main features is instructive.[8]

First, in Alexandra as elsewhere, young people - the "youth" - not only sustained and led the revolt; they projected a transformative moral vision which shaped the discourses of the township in general, and which challenged the moral authority of older residents in particular. This moral vision was almost millenarian in its projection of a future township without crime, decay or alcohol; but it also contained within it the frightening certainties of its own correctness which drove many of the youth into authoritarian acts. The youth also identified themselves as a separate stratum, with clear political and moral differences from their elders. A powerful age cleavage became intensely politicised and shot through with contestations of belief.

Second, those who rebelled heeded the ANC's call for "ungovernability" - and during the revolt the state lost what little legitimacy it had historically held in the township (and it had held at least some) and came to be treated as an occupying force, whose stance was defensive and whose tactics became military. Local authorities were rejected, and an alternative political, social and moral order was posed - reminiscent of the urban revolutionary upsurges in the Spanish Civil War.

Third, the revolt included acts of violence and brutality by the revolutionaries as well as the state. These included arbitrary shooting to the death, and violent vigilantism on the part of local or national government forces; and the mobilisation of youths in gang-like groupings in which maleness and militancy ran together, and who on occasion resorted to extremes such as the burning of people named as spies, or the violent punishment of wrongdoers.

Fourth, the rebellion took a spatial form, with the transformative vision of the youth being mapped onto the streets, parks, schools, yards and blocks of Alexandra. The borders of the township, there to keep black people in, became barricades designed to keep white people out.

What is striking in the Alexandra case is that a class or stratum of people was produced with a revolutionary spirit. Carter, in his perceptive study of the revolt, uses the idea of "counter hegemony" to explain the contestation - but this seems a little bland for a situation in which a semi-permanent legal and moral vacuum came into place, where a sense of moral righteousness slid, at times, into a-morality, and where many aspects of the world of the residents was, to use Christopher Hill's phrase, "turned upside down". (In Cape Town in one school boycott, to give but one of many examples, relationships between older staff and younger students were "consistently and completely overturned").[9]

And in all of these matters Alexandra was not unique. Of course there were immense variations in the pattern taken by revolt in different regions and townships. But there is no doubt that generalisable features drawn from a similar repertoire were present in a range of places in the mid 80s: they included the prominence of militant youth; the use of school and rent boycotts; the rise and consolidation of street committees; the development of peoples' courts; the prominence of new, charismatic leaders; the development of opportunistic criminal sub-cultures; the articulation of a range of semi-

millenarian ideologies; the use of state violence; necklacings; and a rejection of local authorities.

The simultaneous presence of most of these features in a variety of entirely different regions of the country cannot have been simply the product of the political call by the ANC for ungovernability. The paper argues that the roots of the township rebellions of the eighties lie, rather, in the nature of the political, economic and cultural systems, variously called "locations" or "townships", from which the revolts emerged. It is with these "roots", rather than with the political behaviour of organised movements themselves that this paper is concerned.

The crux of the argument is that the explanation for the revolts of the mid-eighties lies in the changing configurations of race, class and authority within townships over time. One major and pivotal change in these relationships is identified, and the paper operates through the use of ideal-typical constructions of the nature of townships in the two crucial eras concerned - namely that which could broadly be described as the era of "welfare paternalism"; and the subsequent, equally broadly characterised era of "racial modernism" which succeeded it. Each era is defined through a description of its main features.

Both eras were racist, both were exploitative, both engendered class and community struggles - but they differed from one another in important ways. The paper suggests that in the move from the one era to the other lies the explanation for the move from "governability" to "ungovernability".

These two eras do not pivot neatly around the change of government from the United Party to the National Party in 1948, as might first appear to be the case. The complete transition from the one era to the other occurs far later, and may be attributed to the consolidation of what some have called "high apartheid" in the late 1960s and the 1970s.

a) The era of "Welfare Paternalism" 1910-1948

Townships were first created by the visionaries of urban racial paternalism, the self-appointed guardians of the "native" in town. By definition a township was a segregated area, designated for residential use by those who were not white. Townships were dormitories. They had little productive base of their own. In a coincidence of racial symbolism and notions of caste-like separatism hinging around purity, it was sometimes said to be necessary to build such townships because of the dire problems of health and disease caused by inner city slum growth - the "sanitation syndrome" as it has been called[10]. But it was not always possible for the paternalists of these decades to perfect a segregationist ideal. People of all colours and backgrounds thrust their way into places where they were not supposed to be, creating communities which lacked the racial and ethnic uniformity of later years. But the tendency over time was for black living areas to become more uniform and more clearly segregated.

What made townships "governable" in this era? Again, abstracting from history and using ideal-typical and synchronic analysis, the following major features may be identified:

The clearly spatial dimension of control and design in the construction of townships is one common feature. A variety of spatial forms characterised the era of welfare paternalism - ranging from the early city slumyards; the first state constructed locations - which were larger, segregated, but not always very distant; and the first squatter-built shantytowns; through to the model modern township[11].

These spatial forms evolved in ways to suit paternalism and eventually to epitomise modernism. The early slumyards were soon cleared - they were spatially too complex, consisting of crowded homes and rooms arranged around a central yard; they developed family forms and subcultures which were unattractive to the middle classes, they presented "health" problems, and they were too near white areas. They were also racially mixed, and presented few possibilities for systematic administration.[12] When the first locations were declared, by contrast, these were spatially more organised, further from town, and well ordered in ways that permitted both administration and control.[13] Whereas the slumyards had been the basis upon which a range of family forms were constructed, for example, the locations were designed to accommodate, and perhaps create, more "ordered" nuclear families housed in separate houses, planned in a more ordered fashion along straight or gently curving streets.[14] The average location was provided with the minimum necessities of a social and cultural life. Brakpan, for example, had a venereal clinic, location hall, police station and cells, ten shops, the American Board, Swedish Mission and AME churches, rough playing fields, a bucket sewerage system and a Panoptikon-like system of control, with:

> a large square in the middle of the location at the meeting point of all roads which cut across the location diagonally. This square commanded a view of the location in all directions from which location officials could survey the entire area.[15]

In addition locations often had watch posts outside to control entry and exit, while later many locations were actually fenced.[16]

As urbanisation increased, location life lost its orderliness. Tenants and sub-tenants crowded into them. Shanties emerged, clustered in squatter settlements; the latter were unruly and ungovernable, with their own distinctive social movements attached, and were not readily tolerated. But most squatters of the first period of mass urbanisation - the 1940s - began to be rehoused in "orderly" fashion soon after the War.[17]. At the same time newer township forms, much further from the cities, much more "scientifically" planned, and much bigger, were built to replace the locations. At the height of "racial modernism" complete and drastic urban segregation was achieved in most areas. Today even the smallest town presents an extraordinary visual shock to the traveller, as first the "town" is observed, with its mixture of building forms, its electric lights, its trees and its loosely ordered street structure; and then the umbilically

attached satellite "township" comes into view, with its smoky pall, its barrenness, and its regulated form. These architectural and spatial decisions attempted to ensure that control could be exerted, and that black life would remain isolated.

Spatial factors on their own are not sufficient to explain or understand the nature of the township, however.[18] If they were, then we would find it difficult to distinguish, for example, the older locations from the newer townships, as both were poor, segregated and regimented.[19] A second major feature of this era was the paternalistic nature of government. This paternalism depended upon three key elements: the presence of a very small but highly significant stratum of township residents who could own land, or who had other means of establishing themselves as an elite;[20] the systems and ideologies which shaped government practice; and the part played by liberals.

A small number of townships were originally built to include an urban landholding elite. Although this philosophy eventually gave way to the idea that no blacks should be permitted so great a stake in the city - so that the later "locations" were all based upon rentals - the presence and persistence of a stratum of landholding urban-dwellers should not be ignored. Famous freehold townships included Alexandra, and Sophiatown. In Alexandra as elsewhere, a standholding elite emerged soon after the township was established in 1912. Many of the standholders came to town with resources accumulated on the land: some through vigorous peasant farming, with which some retained some connection; others through sharecropping, which for many came to an end in the first two decades of the century; and others through small business activities.[21] However not every standholder started off well. Many of those who came to town did so from a position of weakness stemming from the removal of landholding rights in the rural areas as a result of the 1913 Land Act,[22] rather than strength. But stands were cheap and some quite modestly paid urban workers managed to buy them in the first decades of the century.[23] But even standholders with lowlier origins became, by the very fact of their having bought stands, part of a new urban elite, apart from those who flooded into the cities in later years when no more land was available for black purchase.

Locations each boasted a small social and cultural elite as well.[24] These were people who had better jobs and were better educated than most. Some saw themselves as a sort of urban aristocracy - a "civilised", "educated", "respectable"[25] group of people, who lived within a cultural world which included such activities as philharmonic choirs, playing tennis, holding tea parties; and organising charitable activities.[26] They sought home ownership and participation in local government. Some of them were a sort of super-elite - they were "the names",[27] the

> very cream of the elite. As in the case of any old aristocracy, these few did not need to show their status, for people knew their names.[28]

Because the elite had a stake in the city, they provided a moral, economic and political basis for the paternalistic order of the time.[29] Their good mission education, for example, provided them with cultural resources which they used to effect. But the elite

was bound up with the other location dwellers in numerous ways. Standholders, for example, depended upon and nurtured their kin; they cultivated their own capacity as city patrons by offering access to living space and to important networks to their siblings, cousins, children and home folk. In many townships they began before long to become landlords in a more directly commercial sense, subletting tiny portions of their already small plots to newly arrived migrants who were not all kin. The elite provided a social and cultural route deep into the community.

A further feature of this era was the way in which government itself perceived and constructed its role. The system of township administration itself was paternalistic rather than strictly bureaucratic. In Soweto each sub-township had its own Superintendent, as well as one or more assistant Superintendents - all white state or municipal appointees. Administrators were expected to steep themselves in the township, and, according to one memoir, govern by "exception" rather than by strict reference to the rules, a system he calls "English" by contrast to the "Afrikaans" system of hierarchical rule-dependence[30] (although whether he is referring to administrative flexibility or straight corruption[31] is unclear.) In Brakpan, township administration was hands-on:

> The location superintendent's house was constructed within the location grounds, amidst a cluster of location offices in order to facilitate close contact between this official and the location inhabitants.[32]

Such closeness of government, which embraced a consideration of the "arts" of government, was commonplace.[33]

This system was then meshed well with the established standholding and cultural elite - whose systems of patronage lent stability - perhaps sometimes even a weak form of legitimacy - to the townships. Township administrators were wise enough to keep their connections with the elite well oiled - and to this end, to the social and economic and social elite was added a small, but equally significant, political elite. This occurred mainly through the establishment of Advisory Boards, which, according to Sapire, would "divert...petty bourgeois political frustrations into safer channels" and provide for "some development in the art of self-government".[34] Advisory Boards were composed of blacks drawn mainly from the elite, whose overt function was no more than their name suggested. But their latent function was similar to that of the elite more generally - they acted as patrons, held networks together, and dispensed favours.

Alongside the system of administration went, in many places, a whole range of formal and informal arrangements between township residents and institutions on the one hand, and white liberal individuals and institutions on the other.[35] Liberals acted as patrons, intermediaries, dispensers of charity, and facilitators of a whole range of cultural and social institutions. Liberals were active in matters of health,[36] childcare,[37] legal aid, education, sport, music, charity, social work, and many others.[38] Through philanthropy here, as elsewhere in early capitalism, the formation of important social institutions was "policed".[39] Liberals displayed an increasing awareness over time of the

pitfalls of paternalism. Ralph Bunche, in his travels through the South Africa of this period recounts a hilarious interview with a Dr Sachs, who believed that paternalism was reinforced by maternalism - for he held that unregulated breast feeding made "the native" believe that the government should be benevolent.[40]

The effects of liberalism upon the construction of township life were complex. Numerous social and cultural institutions were established which undoubtedly improved the quality of life of many township residents.[41] But it was not just that liberal interventions were born of a paternalistic motive. They actually helped institutionalise paternalism by boosting the patronage networks which both the systems of standholding and those of Advisory Boards had already created - helping to nurture the development of "big men" such as those in the fields of soccer, boxing and music, for example.[42]

Alexandra was an unusual township because of its non-adoption by a local white municipality such as Johannesburg, and therefore its status as "Nobody's Baby".[43] But it, too, experienced a form of paternalism. It was run by a "Health Committee" (the very name a manifestation of the connection between townships and disease in the mind of the time) comprising eminent, and often liberal and left-wing, whites. The township produced a modest elite whose administrative, cultural and even political role was nevertheless significant; and in the networks established in the township between white liberals on the one hand, and township residents on the other, a number of voluntary associations were formed, just as elsewhere in colonial systems. Health, childcare, sport, youth, music, and many other spheres, all generated clubs and societies, each with its own bureaucratic habits and status symbols. Liberal connections through charity operated as well.

In this and other locations, the role of the church was complex and crucial. Not only did mission education create and reproduce the elite; church ideology provided a core around which the syncretic culture of the "respectables" shaped their worlds,[44] and the poor defined their varying degrees of acceptance of, or resentment against, their poverty.

Compared with later times, the bureaucratic imposition by the administrative system upon township residents was not overwhelming - and in many cases the reception of bureaucracy by inhabitants was not hostile, a symptom, perhaps of the presence of patron-client networks which provided a way through it. The leviathan had not yet been born. The pass laws were in place, but they could always be fiddled, and members of the elite made sure they were, whether formally or informally, treated leniently.[45]

But paternalism was not the only feature of governance in this period. It was accompanied by an element of welfarism which ensured that the township poor could survive - if only just. Basically, local government provided the means to finance townships, through the provision of a subsidy from central city councils; through providing beerhalls whose entire profit was channelled into township costs; and later

through the operation of a levy on employers. Rents were thus kept stable and low; and facilities of a basic sort were available.

The importance of this modest welfarism should not be underestimated. Townships were at the heart of one of the major contradictions in the South African social order of the time - the contradiction between the need to keep wages low, and the need to make sure the reproduction costs of the working class were covered, while social stability was maintained. The early literature on this subject suggests that the state sought to resolve this contradiction through the system of keeping the Reserves as places where the old, sick and unemployed remained, reducing the costs of "reproducing" a single worker in the city to a bare minimum.[46] But others soon pointed to the fact that this displacement of reproduction costs only took place for some - every government in South Africa this century has had to accept and confront the reality of an urban working class in its full sense of the term.[47] The question then became - how could this low-paid working class survive in town? The answer of paternalistic welfarism was: through cross-subsidisation. The later answer of the Nationalists was to be entirely different.

In spite of the presence of identifiable social and economic groupings within townships, it should be noted that what stratification did exist was always softened by other social and economic forces - such as age, networks, ethnic contacts, patronage and rapid mobility. Classes were always reconstructed in syncretic ways that embraced rural social identities as well as newer urban ones. Thus township life until the 1940s was not stratified in the rigid sense.[48] The standholding elite's networks of patronage rendered cultural and community bonds quite strong; while the very poor coming into the township were often accommodated. In patterns reminiscent of those characterising the English working class of the late 19th century, modernist and Christian values were uppermost in many situations - families were constructed and sustained in difficult economic circumstances; parents wished their children to be schooled; sought respectability through the kinds of jobs and homes they created; and aspired to social and economic mobility. Independent women held homes together through liquor brewing and washing, but were driven by strong visions of their own capacity to bind communities together.[49] However it should be noted that these "softened" stratifications were still of vital importance to the governance of the system, and that the National Party was later to destroy them at considerable cost.

The politics of this period reflected these features of class, status and governance; politics tended to be associational and bureaucratised, with clearly defined roles for elite leaders, and sometimes an embracing of the paternalistic idea that associations amongst blacks could and would lead to communication with the state. The politics of influence prevailed. Perhaps because of the presence of patronage and networks, the upper strata had little or no capacity to make serious representative connections with those at the lower levels[50] - you do not represent those who are your clients. The political language of the time more often took the form of constructing pleas rather than making demands, for example. One analyst writes of the "accommodationist character of popular culture and consciousness". The strength of the early and relatively

moderate forms of nationalism in this period was a corollary of the strength of the evolving family and community structures in townships.

But the efficiency of townships also depended upon the effective working of the physical connection between white and black areas. One of the more radical forms taken by resistance in this era - the transport boycott - is a direct reflection of the spatial form of control.[51] What is interesting, however, is that although the spatial form did underpin one type of collective action in this period, the resistance reflected the connections between town and township, rather than the inner complexities of the township itself, as was to occur later.

Paternalism constructed its own version of black citizenship. While no blacks were full citizens, the elite saw themselves as potential or actual citizens. For example they associated home ownership with citizenship;[52] they were not "foreigners"; they had some land rights; they were accorded some dignity; and they had an acknowledged political role to play. Because their connections with their own co-residents were based so clearly upon patronage, these attributes of citizenship played an important part in the township as a whole, distinguishing the conception of citizenship in this period from that to be constructed under apartheid.

The townships of the time did breed a variety of sub-cultural forms. To observers of the time youth subcultures - mild by today's standards - stood out as dangerously alternative.[53] Gangsterism, gambling, alcoholism, truancy, crime, were all thought of as threatening to the social fabric. New restrictions on visitors and residents were introduced in locations in the thirties to attempt to curb the moral degeneration of locations.[54] But perceptions of the threat reflected more upon the relatively intact nature of the "social fabric" than upon the capacity of sub-cultures to erode it. A feature of the period was, in fact, the presence of a sense of the role of law - to many a respected and often used system to protect rights and enforce the performance of duties. In Brakpan, the "Location Vigilance Association", for example, was an organisation of the township's elite which "systematically challenged the validity of (location) regulations in the courts".[55] Perhaps this was linked to the relatively strong ideas of morality amongst the population, as well as to the perceived manageability of the bureaucracy.

What did race mean to township dwellers in this era? Because of the complexity of the construction of hegemony, race did not always, it may be suggested, act as the single or even primary source of township identity. The paternalistic order gave rise to a range of types of identity around which relationships of power and authority were built, including that of the elite, the elders, the schoolgoers, the "respectables", the standholders, "law abiding natives",[56] "big" men, and independent women. It may be that, deriving their ideas from rural racial ideologies whites continued to be conceptualised by blacks as a differentiated rather than a single category[57] - there were Afrikaners, Jews, English-speakers and "friends of the native" - and that this complexity could have at times alleviated the harshness of the objectively racial nature of the state (particularly in comparison to the racial monoliths of later years), especially in a context where paternalism anyway played a mediating role.

Given the hegemony of paternalistic notions (or perhaps as evidence of that hegemony - it is difficult to avoid tautology at times) it is not surprising that ideologies of resistance in this period frequently did not reject liberalism, but sought to modify it to remove its more paternalistic elements - to "modernise" it - or redefine it, or soften it if it became too harsh.[58] The kinds of rebellion this paper is trying to explain - uprisings in which the entire moral order was questioned, reversed, destroyed - were not a feature, broadly speaking, of this period. Instead, paternalism provided a way of talking about and coping with poverty that simultaneously addressed the issue and reinforced the position of the elite; and in many cases of protest the elite itself, even when relatively distanced from its poorer co-residents, would eventually respond to popular militancy and channel it in non-destructive directions.

This portrayal of a system which was governable - in which hegemony actually existed - needs some qualification. In the late 1930s and the 1940s, urbanisation increased so rapidly that it called into question the stability of township life - not to mention the careful balancing of the books relating to the costs of reproduction. Huge numbers of "squatters" flooded the towns, and the "amarespectables" - those who prided themselves on their urban sophistication - made sure they distanced themselves from those with less money, less status, fewer contacts and less class. Squatter camps emerged where, much like today, populist and syncretic ideologies prevailed over the more clearly nationalist and urban ideas of the older strata. Gang and criminal subcultures took on a more threatening form, and something akin to class warfare was waged in the townships of the time. It was the presence of the squatters, in part, that

created the conditions for the National Party victory in 1948. Until that happened the paternalists were forced to seek ways of accepting the squatters into the urban order.

b) Paternalism under siege: 1948-1968

The change of government in 1948 ushered in a era of 20 years during which welfare paternalism was modified and made harsher, but not completely eradicated. The beginnings of nationalist "ultramodernisation" were to be found in this period - but true "racial modernism", it is suggested here, only emerged in the 1970s.

The National Party spent the first years of its rule building upon the systems set by paternalism. The governability of townships survived this period - indeed perhaps this is why some older residents of townships such as Soweto hanker after the "calmer" 1960s, as opposed to the turbulent eighties and nineties.[59] Observers of Soweto in the late 1950s noted that the relationship between African township residents and municipal employees was a relatively good one: "In general this relationship appears to be excellent, the superintendents of the location and their assistants having the trust of the residents and being held in high esteem".[60]

Welfarist and paternalist elements remained in the first phase of apartheid. For example the costs of providing housing were financed through levying employers of African labour, and through loans from central and local government. Table A gives an idea

of the scale and proportions involved in this ongoing practice, and of the financial stability of this period.

Table A[61]:

City of Johannesburg: Extracts from Native Revenue Account

(a) **Housing**

Year ended 30 June	*Cumulative Capital Expenditure* (R)	*No. of Houses Built (Cum. Total)*	*No. of Hostel Beds available (Cum. Total)*	*Rents (Net)* (R)	*Deficit of Native Revenue A/c debited to rates* (R)
1920	253,672	77	1,688	—	—
1930	1,050,746	2,625	3,400	108,145	35,153
1940	3,141,686	8,700	6,912	337,560	24,863 Cr.
1950	10,840,814	16,577	10,538	753,613	483,916
1955	15,491,136	18,346	10,538	1,142,952	341,716
1960	40,907,214	51,914	24,310	3,106,213	686,250
1965	53,488,569	62,475	26,871	3,889,028	474,520

(b) **Bantu Beer**

	Sales (R)	*Profit* (R)
1955 -- -- -- -- -- --	1,646,466	854,312
1960 -- -- -- -- -- --	2,691,090	1,299,768
1965 -- -- -- -- -- --	5,204,225	2,223,296
Total since 1938 -- --	40,355,781	18,718,322

(c) **Annual Contributions by Employers to**

	(i) *Bantu Services Levy Fund* (R)	(ii) *Bantu Transport Services Levy* (R)
1955 -- -- -- -- -- --	1,230,280	298,292
1960 -- -- -- -- -- --	1,400,642	647,606
1965 -- -- -- -- -- --	1,711,527	605,877
Total since 1953 -- --	17,533,942	6,161,182

Advisory boards remained for a number of years, in spite of attempts to replace them with new "Urban Bantu Councils". The full closing down of the Advisory Boards only really took place in the 1970s. Local City Councils continued to run townships through, for example, as the case of Soweto, their non-European Affairs Department, which by the mid 1960s had a staff of 700, a budget of R1m per annum and provided and maintained 3 stadia, 86 sportsfields, a sheltered employment workshop, a Vocational training school, youth employment centres, recreational centres, a Technical high school, and assistance to the aged, disabled and destitute. All of this continued to be financed, in part, from the sales of "Bantu beer", and, from 1962 onwards, "European liquor",[62] as well as through employer levies and subsidies from the City Councils themselves (meaning, presumably, that some redistribution was taking place within cities). Rent subsidies were granted to those eligible.[63]

However the seeds of the destruction of paternalism were to be found even in this early period - even the first decade of National Party rule featured a more vigorous and bureaucratised modernism than that which had characterised the earlier period. Where it could, for example in Alexandra and "Diepmeadow", the state took over direct control of township government early on. Alexandra was placed under the infamous Peri-Urban Health Board in 1958, while from their inception the townships of Diepkloof and Meadowlands were state administered. It is no coincidence that these two areas of the Reef were linked - for when Alexandra was "cleaned up" in the early 1960s, and masses of people removed from it, it was in Diepkloof and Meadowlands that they were resettled.

The new government still required and desired separate places where the urban black working class was to be housed; urban dwellers had to be acknowledged and included if capitalism more broadly was to survive. Like those in the governments before them, the "pragmatists" within the National Party made certain that ideas of complete removal of the black urban population (which had in fact been mooted by more purist elements) were never implemented. But gradually the status of townships within the moral, political and cultural order established earlier under paternalism began to change.

The Nationalists attempted to solve the housing crisis which had emerged in the 1940s through the building of more townships or locations.[64] These were to be more clearly segregated and distanced from cities, and more perfectly and "scientifically" planned[65] - "cleaned up", to use the phrase applied to Alexandra. The element of surveillance and spatial control was extended far beyond that which had existed previously. "By the late 1950s, Benoni, Springs and Germiston could boast large, "scientifically" planned townships quarantined within "buffer zones" on the outer fringes of the towns".[66] Indeed many locations were removed to the new outer townships, in state-conducted removals that were harsh and brutal to many, and added to the population of former squatters housed there. By 1962, for example, there had been 44,196 removals from Alexandra alone[67] - although the township was never in fact fully destroyed.

"Efficient" housing provision held sway over the disorderliness that had come to characterise the locations. And in a new twist which added complexity to the

consolidation of the modernist vision, these townships were designed to be internally segregated on ethnic lines.

Then, there was the rise to prominence of a far more bureaucratic form of governance. A proliferation of rules, laws and regulations indicated that government by bureaucratic decree - issued from the central state rather than local government, in an attempt to control at a distance the operation of local government - was to be the order of the day. 96 Acts which affected the administration of urban Africans were passed between 1945 and 1965.[68] Influx control and pass laws were more strictly enforced. Permission to reside in the city became ever more difficult to secure. By the mid sixties, both man and wife had to qualify for urban domicile if they were to remain in town - and wives who didn't qualify in their own right were sent back to the rural areas.

The extraordinary expansion and overburdening imposition of a cruel and Kafkaesque bureaucracy - whose operation we understand very little, and tend to study even less - was a feature of the period. Officials had to

> master the numerous regulations issued by virtue of the enabling clauses contained in these Acts and the directives issued by the Department of Bantu Administration and Development in terms of the regulations, a burden of onerous dimensions to the administrator, and crippling to those administered.[69]

A difference in administrative "tone" also emerged. Ellen Hellman noted in the mid 60s an "increasing stringency and rigidity" in the application of the law:

> Formerly one could also see the harshness of the law being tempered by the exercise of official discretion. Now, with the reins ever more tightly held by Pretoria, the local Department is left with very little discretion of its own to exercise.

Thus even in this early phase, the experience of the citizens was radically altered:

> The human tragedies caused by these regulations can be seen and heard daily at the superintendents' offices in Soweto and at the central office of the Johannesburg Non-European Affairs Department.[70]

The move from "location" to "township" also affected the ways in which the township elite was incorporated into governance. In one case, for example, the Advisory Board changed, upon the move, from "a civic institution of township notables to a political pressure group of township "bosses", and, instead of a channel of communication, it became a barrier between administration and administered".[71] The township administrator in this case - a paragon of paternalism in the years of the "location" - had

"retreated behind an army of European and African officials".[72] And the old elite itself found that its patron-client networks were broken with the move from location to township; and that its sources of income (landlordism in many cases) were gone. A new elite began to take its place:

> one by one, the bearers of the big names were dropping out of business life. They went bankrupt; they had to "sell" their dying shops; they just could not adjust to the change. ...And so the veterans had to watch another wave of newcomers settle down....These were the doctors and lawyers, the public servants, the graduates and the trained....They introduced entirely new social customs and manners, and they now set the tone of the social life of the community.[73]

No political place was offered, however, to this new elite.

c) The era of high "racial modernism": 1968-1986

The second phase of National Party rule - that which began in the late 1960s - saw a more complete overturning of the old system of welfare paternalism.

First, the frustration of the central government with municipal rule ended in 1972-3, when control of African townships was finally removed from local authorities. 22 Bantu Affairs Administration Boards (BAABs) were set up over the next few years. The state could at last directly govern the townships.

At a stroke, the economic basis of welfare paternalism was removed, for these boards were expected to be self-financing. The services and infrastructure previously subsidised by local authorities were now to be fully paid for by township residents themselves - mainly through rents, but also through the continuing sales of beer and "European liquor", and a variety of levies. The contrast between Table A and Table B illustrates the extraordinary shift that had taken place in the fourteen years between 1965 and 1979; whereas in 1965 total income from rents was estimated at R3.8m, by 1978-9 it was projected to reach as much as R30m.

Table B[74]:

West Rand Administration Board budget, 1978-9:

Planned income:

Housing rental:	R30 151 400
Levies	10 777 000
Sale of beer	16 300 000
Sale of liquor	16 800 000
Sport etc	525 000
General income	660 000
TOTAL	75 200 000

Further evidence of this is that whereas in 1970-1 the Native Revenue Account had shown an aggregate R30m surplus, by 1982-3 the deficit in this account was R32.1m.[75] While a variety of factors were at play in this shift, including a decline in the consumption of the profitable "Bantu Beer", it was the removal of two important "welfarist" components of the financing system - the freezing in 1977 of the levy on employers and the removal of the subsidy by the City and Town Councils - that rendered local administration unprofitable. Not unnaturally the first line of attack upon this deficit was the increase in rents, which doubled between 1970 and 1977, but this was insufficient. Bantu Affairs Administration Boards (BAABs) had been placed in an untenable situation by the way in which government had removed the welfare elements in township financing without offering any clear alternative other than the increase in rents. Their pre-Thatcherite Thatcherism was to prove lethal to the stability of black governance.

With the passing of time, the role of the bureaucracy became even more imposing and alienating. It became a huge leviathan, run by people who spoke Afrikaans - less familiar to blacks in many areas - rather than English; who resorted to the rule book when insecure about their inexperience in administering; and whose requirements became increasingly burdensome and unjust over time. The areas they controlled became increasingly personal, extending not only into the family, but into the home, the place of work, transport, the body, and the mind. Of course the over-administration of townships by decree encouraged a disrespect for the law itself - the excessive legalism of apartheid corrupted the law, rather than protected it.

This era also entailed the transformation of township residents from a moderately stratified population (with all the qualifications mentioned above) with varying relationships to land, into a mass of tenants, with uniform relationships to the land and the state[76] (tempered, perhaps, by their different types of housing - "housing classes" appear to have been created in some areas). But overall, using spatial and architectural

means, the new social engineers of modernity devised ways of bludgeoning away incipient or past differences of economic status and blurring previously relatively clearcut class differences - the state could allocate a home to a doctor next door to that of a streetsweeper, with nothing to distinguish them.

A general feature of National Party rule, particularly in the later period, was its attitude towards the black elite, and the patronage structures that were in place. Some might think of the national party as a parody of post-colonialism - with its pseudo "independence" for black homelands, for example. But in one respect they were far from taking even a mockery of the route of many post-colonial governments, which was to actually reinforce the existing elite; they took a completely different path - to destroy and dispossess it. The new order left little avenue for elite incorporation.

Thus all standholders were dispossessed in this period, either in situ or through removal to other areas. The epic removals of landowners from Sophiatown, District Six and many others have found expression in literary and poetic form - and the passion with which this loss is mourned perhaps suggests that more than landholdings were being lost; these removals were bound up with the forced downward mobility of the black location elite, including standholders - whose position, I have argued above, was crucial to the relative stability of the older paternalistic order.

The Nationalists were revolutionaries in this respect. They undermined many other features of the older order. They imposed new restrictions upon African trade, accumulation and mobility. They destroyed the educational and religious channels through which elite status had been sought and obtained. For example, the new system of schooling - Bantu Education - was inimical to the older paternalistic ways, for it expanded the access to low quality schools of the mass of township dwellers while undercutting the process of the production of an elite through the closing down of all the better mission schools.

The capacity of older people to exercise authority over younger had already been weakened by the normal processes of urbanisation and the modernisation of the family. Now it was further undermined through the imposition of grossly humiliating restrictions upon adults. Seared upon the minds of the young were the experiences of seeing parents standing in queues for hours, even days, only to be told to "come back next week", with more unobtainable documents; or observing the fear and panic in the eyes of their elders when they were vulnerable to pass restrictions. High apartheid made new inroads into the selfhood and dignity of the older generation, whose expectations of paternalistic behaviour were no longer to be met. The rise of the new ideology of Black Consciousness, with its very emphasis on selfhood and dignity, was in part a response to this.

The Nationalists also undercut the old elite by removing the Advisory Boards and replacing them with a succession of new systems of local representation. This idea was first promulgated as early as 1961; but it took until 1977 for all 24 new "Urban Bantu Councils" (also known as "Useless Boys Clubs") to be put in place. However the

attitude of the state towards these councils was far less paternalistic than had been the case with the Advisory Boards. In many areas, the weakened black elite could not muster even a basic legitimacy for them. As a result, what modest interest there had been amongst township populations in their own governance declined significantly; by 1974, only 14% of the Soweto (registered) electorate voted in UBC elections, a decline of over 50% in eight years. When a few years later the government attempted to revive black participation in township government through the creation of "Community Councils", they were no more successful,[77] and their final attempt at achieving the legitimacy of black local government - through the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982 - was even more of a failure, leading directly, some would argue, into the revolts of the mid eighties.[78] By 1985 only three Black Town Councils were operating.

Tenants too were transformed - for their landlord now became the highly bureaucratic, modernising and racist state rather than the standholder or the paternalistic City Council, placing them in an entirely different structural position within the social order. If the lines of oppression do at least in part dictate the lines of resistance, then this new situation put township residents into a potentially directly oppositional relationship with the state itself, with no intermediaries to buffer it.

The Nationalists also issued an ideological onslaught upon the idea of "the urban", turning it into an empty, hollow category with negative connotations. This distinguished it from the more positive connotations given to it under paternalism, which contained the idea of some sort of "evolution" away from tribalism and the rural, towards detribalisation and the urban. This removal of an important element of the old discourse added to the emptiness of what the Nationalists were offering.

In the case of areas that were not removed (Alexandra, at first, being one), these transformations occurred in situ. This probably made things worse for the residents, for layers of sedimented memory of a different past, reinforced by the architectural and spatial features of the township, were left in place - ready to be activated by new ideologies and turned into powerful mythical forces when social mobilisation began.

In the case of the many areas that were removed, the operation of memory took a different form: removals to the newly created townships on the peripheries of white cities entailed the removals of memories as well - and the new areas were imbued with ideas about a number of pasts. New suburbs - Diepkloof, Meadowlands, carried with them the bitterness of dispossession. But the censorship and control of ideas forced memories in all of these areas into a forbidden and secret underworld, where again they remained until popular intellectuals sought to mobilise them.

A further transformation that occurred under high apartheid was the re-engineering of the family. All new township houses were designed on the assumption that they would be occupied by something approximating a nuclear family. Furthermore, the way the laws of residence worked meant that family stability depended upon job stability and gender. Far from consolidating the family, these regulations worked to fragment it - to create the conditions for bitter and harmful disputes over the matter of home-occupancy

between kin; to force women into marriages of convenience; and to drive those without the right documentation into fraud or flight.

Even greater manipulation of the family took place through the ways the pass laws were translated by the new rulers of the township - to turn all those who worked in town but who lacked urban rights into a family-less, homeless working population of single men and women. To this end, the new regime embarked upon the mass construction of "hostels". The Nationalists believed, just as Stallard had proclaimed 50 years earlier, the families of workers in the town were :"non-productive", and could live :"just as well, in fact cheaper, in the homelands".[79] Of course they excepted those who had been grudgingly granted "permanent" status. But a new and "ultramodernist" conception of how the "single" urban worker would be handled was conceptualised and implemented in a variety of places. This involved the idea that the whole of Alexandra township, for example, at the time home to the 40,000 people who remained there after the removals of the 60s, would become a "hostel city". No families would remain: "The whole town will consist only of such hostels. There will be no houses and also no families".

The plan was to incarcerate "inmates" in prison-like structures:

> Each hostel would house 2,500 people but be divided into sections of 100 to 150 people separated by electrically operated steel doors to prevent unrest spreading and `for the protection of the inmates themselves'. Rooms would be provided with a bed, mattress and cupboard, but no central heating or electricity outlets. Inhabitants would share 112 washing tubs and 32 electricity points, one bath for every 25 residents, one shower for every 35, one hand basin and toilet for every 20 and, in the kitchen, one gas burner for every five people.[80]

This plan was only partially implemented. Resistance to it was mobilised in the township in the seventies, slowing and eventually stopping the process of "hostellisation". Standholders continued to be bought out and more residents removed. But ten years later only three hostels had been built - one for women and two for men. They were huge thrusting concrete monuments in the midst of the huddled disorder of what remained of the township; monuments to a mad form of modernity, in which iron gates which could be lowered at any moment were indeed built to separate corridors from one another in case riots erupted; in which communal facilities allowed little dignity or privacy; and in which the construction of "singleness" was imposed relentlessly upon all. They epitomise the period of extreme racial modernism, both in their grossness and in the fact that they represent a plan uncompleted.

What happened to the liberals - the paternalists who had played so central a part in both the capacity for the governance of the townships, and the development of certain institutions of social and cultural life? In the new order, these kinds of activities no longer had the stamp of state approval. Charity, church, welfare and cultural activities were curbed and made more difficult to undertake through the introduction of harsh measures; relationships between the shattered black elite and the white liberal elite

were all but destroyed through stricter enforcement of segregation.[81] Missionaries, for example, were no longer permitted to live in townships. Schools were closed, as we have seen. Permits to enter the townships became increasingly difficult to obtain. In 1966 the government decreed that no white organisation could have any rights in Soweto, forcing the City Council to take over (and subsidise) the activities of charities until it, too, was removed from township life.[82]

> The European welfare worker and health inspector, the European minister and teacher, the European sports and music organiser, became rarities in township life where before they had entered personally into the lives and homes of the people.[83]

Many liberals redirected themselves away from activities which entailed playing some part in the networks and relationships within the townships, and towards acting as intermediaries between the new, far harsher regime itself (at the state level) and the black population. The Black Sash Advice Office, for example, assisted people in finding their way through the new bureaucracy and fought for their rights; and Haggie describes how:

> For years, at eight one morning every week, Pam Reid was at the Polly Street pass office to do battle on behalf of women desperate for work who did not have the magic 'section 10(1)(a) of the Urban Areas Act' stamp in their passes or registration books. The stamp was granted only if the women complied with a series of stringent requirements, and Pam, who is a gentle lady, would stand over the clerks, at times coming near to using physical force to prevent them from applying the hated 'endorsed out' stamp - which would have meant no hope for employment every again in Johannesburg for the luckless pass-holder.[84]

This was still an intermediate role for liberals - but a very different one from that which had prevailed under paternalism.

Thus these years consolidated the major shift in the way in which black citizenship was constructed by the state - a shift that had begun in the 1950s. Legal provisions made it clearer than ever before to residents that they were in town as a privilege rather than as a right. Long standing residents of townships had to prove their residency, their places of birth, and a myriad of other things (all difficult for working class people) before they were given the status to remain. They became immigrants within their own country. In addition social and personal life was dislocated, networks were weakened, the law was corrupted, and dignity was eroded. There was an uncoupling of any, even modest, concept of citizenship from the actual township itself.

This state of affairs was to change, at least in theory, with the implementation of the Riekert Commission report of 1979. But although Riekert offered the urban dwellers acknowledgment of their permanence, it offered nothing comprehensive to replace paternalism - and still placed the burden of proof of the new "citizenship" upon the township dweller. Similarly, the rush on the part of reformist Nationalism to recreate a

township elite in the late 70s and early 80s came too late to look anything but cynical - and was accompanied by the segregation and removal of the elite to posh areas on the borders of townships, rather than any serious attempt at the moral, social and cultural reconstruction of the connections between the elites and their co-residents.

The new order had turned townships into something sociologically different: what had been societies shaped by class, kin and status, became more clearly racial or ethnic ones, in which the possibilities for negotiation were minimised by bureaucracy. Their capacity to find a place in, and remain in town had depended in the early regime upon blacks' access networks, resources and culture; now blacks, and only blacks, had the burden of proof of their citizenship placed upon them; and were subjected to humiliating and nightmarish procedures for the proof to be acknowledged by the state.

A key result of these many processes was the reconstruction of identity within township communities along racial lines. As early as the 1960s, white participants in a mixed-race charity were noting that there had been a

> change in race relations during the last two or three years. There appears to be a definite deterioration in black-white relationships...which can only be attributed to an increased state of mistrust, uncertainty and possibly antagonism...[85]

The ideologies which developed upon the basis of these new identities were not only strongly racially-conscious, they were also clearly anti-liberal, in sharp contrast to the earlier tendency towards compatibility between African nationalism and liberalism.

The new order legislated away the moral, economic, cultural and social securities of welfare paternalism and failed at any point to replace them with a viable alternative. The peculiar morality of paternalism was gone, and a substitute was not offered by the Nationalist government itself. The question was, then, what alternative could the forces for liberation offer?

Conclusion

What does the delineation of these two eras, each with its own distinctive type of racist governance, tell us about the reasons for and nature of the resistance of the mid-1980s?.

It assists us to locate the impulses towards resistance in the social and cultural institutions which constituted these communities, as well as in their overall place in the wider system. Simple economism won't do, the paper argues. In each era, the creation and sustaining of townships was surely about accumulation; but it was also about power, space, authority and class (from the dominant group's point of view) as well as about meaning, kinship, social stratum and survival (from the point of view of township inhabitants). The seeds of a culture of resistance may have been planted through the act of domination. But they did not germinate, grow and flourish outside of the fertile soil

provided by human interactions within a variety of institutions, all acting with and against one another over time.

The main argument here has been that the move from welfare paternalism to racial modernism entailed a loss of citizenship (of a "special type" perhaps), class, status, cultural security, authority and power, by a range of township based groups - a removal, in fact, of the resources available to create a certain sort of stability. These things had all existed in particular configurations under the segregationist/paternalistic order, and had underpinned its relative stability - blacks were "governable".

Ironically, it suggests, it was the rulers rather than the ruled, who dislodged this working hegemony. Their reasons for dislodging it may in part have lain in the challenges to paternalism which were inherent in the mass urbanisation of the 1940s; but this is not entirely the case. Afrikaner nationalism acted thus for a variety of reasons of its own as well. The loss of the old order rendered the older generation, as well as the stabilising elite helpless; they lacked the ideological and other resources to pose any alternatives to racial modernism.

Eventually new ideologies provided the younger generation with a means to mobilise, while the crises of rents, schooling and local government provided the opportunities. The rebellions of the eighties took up immediate and urgent issues of survival for the poor; but they reflected a pre-existing and long developing vacuum of authority on the part of their rulers.

The youths' mobilisation did not take the form of a reassertion of paternalism, although this was present to some extent. (for example, is it perhaps the case that current ideas of entitlement are a legacy of welfare paternalism - whether or not breastfeeding has occurred!?) But the revolts of the mid eighties did not generally represent a nostalgic nationalism, seeking to restore a lost past. Something different emerged - a strongly millenarian element to their thought and behaviour. In rejecting both paternalism and liberalism, they also rejected their own parents - upon whom the earlier hierarchy of control had depended. They sought in fact to "turn the world upside down".

The elements of moral renewal and reconstruction contained in their revolts - a reply to the vacuum that existed by the eighties - were powerful. They ran campaigns against crime, drink and litter. They ran peoples' courts in which their own elders were disciplined for moral transgressions such as wife-beating, abandonment of the family and alcoholism. But these were often overlaid with a less clearcut set of moral prescriptions, as well as the unpremeditated acts of violence and destruction that characterised the frequently mobilised crowds and mobs that emerged. Here resistance came to take the form of violence turned in on township life and society, and on the older generation; here, it became revolutionary, anti-modern and often a-moral. The idea of the peoples' court, for example, on the surface an admirably "alternative" institution of justice, and one often set up by idealists with a clear desire to replace the discredited system of law,[86] as well as to restore a moral sense to the township, is at heart dangerously invasive of the moral order, placing responsibility for judging life and

death, right and wrong, outside of the realm of accountable institutions.[87] There are overlaps between this sort of moral certainty and that which appears in cases of the mob necklacing suspected "impimpis".

The destruction of local government through the hounding and persecution of those still prepared to stand for local councils was almost complete in the mid eighties. Alternative attempts at self-government and at youth control of life in townships were made, with varying degrees of success - a clear response to, and acceleration of, the failure of the state to find an alternative to paternalism.

There was also a "turning in" on township life, which took a vigorously spatial and symbolic form.[88] The revolts imprinted themselves upon the environment, both using it and rejecting it. Yards, blocks, streets on the one hand; hostels on the other, became the organising motifs of the revolt in Alexandra, for example. Militant youth groups were identified spatially (the 7th avenue group, the 12th Avenue group) in an exaggerated and politicised version of the kind of gang behaviour found in many working class "slums".[89] Mobilisation was located around core areas (the stadium, the cemetery); events and institutions were remembered and marked by their location.

These features of the mid-eighties revolt were not, thus, a simple response to oppression and exploitation. They were born of the changing modes of governance and non-governance, of cultural and political configurations, of ideological and social meanings, in the townships over this century. It was not the ANC that had rendered the townships ungovernable. It was the NP. The ANC seized upon the situation and used it to the advantage of its own programme for liberation.

But it has now inherited the problem of running the townships itself. It is left with the task of restoring governability to places in which it has been eroded over a period of

forty years - raising the question of whether the townships are in fact permanently ungovernable.

Many townships today are intractable and violence-ridden ghettoes, in which ordinary people make their lives, but in which powerful forces continue to create ungovernability where the political call for ungovernability no longer exists. Here the lethal cultural cocktail of youth militancy, sub- subsistence wages, unemployment, a habit of boycotting, high levels of "acceptable" violence, endemic crime and, now, easily available hard drugs threatens to shape the new order in destructive ways. Yet the everyday discourses of policy makers reveal little of the complexities underlying present-day township life and culture. The ANC, for example, wishes to tackle the "causes of crime";[90] but they usually operate from the basis of economic determinism, assuming, for example, that the causes of crime are mainly to be found in shortages of homes and jobs. Perhaps this paper will go some way towards enriching our, and their, explanations and, therefore assisting us to find solutions.

1.See, to give a small indication of the field, J Kane Berman, Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction, Johannesburg, Ravan Press 1978; B Hirson, Year of Fire, Year of Ash: The Soweto Revolt: Roots of a Revolution, Zed Press, London 1979; I Jeffrey, Cultural Trends and Community Formation in a South African Township: Sharpeville 1943-1985, M A Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand 1985; C E Carter, Comrades and Community: Politics and the Construction of Hegemony in Alexandra Township South Africa 1984-87, D Phil thesis, Oxford University 1991; J Seekings, Quiescence and the Transition to Confrontation: South African Townships 1978-1984, D Phil thesis, Oxford University 1990; K Jochelson, "Reform, repression and resistance in South Africa: a case study of Alexandra Township 1979-1989", Journal of Southern African Studies 16, 1, March 1990; M Swilling, "The United Democratic Front and Township revolt in South Africa" in W Cobbett and R Cohen (eds) Popular Struggles in South Africa, James Currey, Lon don 1988, C Bundy, "Street Sociology and Pavement Politics: Aspects of youth and student resistance in Cape Town 1985", Journal of Southern African Studies, 13, 3, April 1987, M Marks, "Organisation, identity and violence amongst activist Diepkloof youth, 1984-1993", MA Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand 1993.

2. Besides those already cited, such studies include the classics M Wilson and A Mafeje, Langa: A Study of Social Groups in an African Township, Oxford UP, Cape Town 1963; B A Pauw, The Second Generation, Oxford UP, Cape Town 1963; and P Meyer, Townsmen or Tribesmen, OUP Cape Town 1961; as well as H Sapire, African Urbanisation and Struggles against Municipal Controls in Brakpan, 1920-1958, PhD thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1988; T Lodge, "Political Organisation in Pretoria's African Townships" in B Bozzoli (ed) Class, Community and Conflict: South African Perspectives, Ravan Press, Johannesburg 1987;

3.P Tourikis, The political economy of Alexandra Township 1905-1958, BA Honours dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1981; J Seekings, "Why was Soweto different? Urban Development, Township Politics and the Political Economy of Soweto, 1978-84", paper presented to the African Studies Institute Seminar, University of the Witwatersrand, May 1978'; Spatial aspects are examined by, for example, G Maasdorp and A S B Humphreys (eds) From Shantytown to Township: an Economic Study of African Poverty and Rehousing in a South African City, Juta, Cape Town 1975; J Western, Outcast Cape Town, Allen and Unwin, London 1981; S Parnell, "Negotiating Urban Policy: Racial, Social and Spatial differentiation under the native (urban areas) act of 1923", paper presented to the 1994 History Workshop conference on "Democracy: Popular Precedents, Practice, Culture".

4. See, for example, Ian Jeffrey, "Cultural Trends and Community Formation in a South African Township: Sharpeville 1943-1985", MA Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand 1991; C Glaser, (title to follow) P la Hausse, (title to follow); P Bonner, "The Russians on the Reef: Urbanisation, Gang warfare and ethnic mobilisation" in P Bonner et al, Apartheid's Genesis, Ravan Press, Johannesburg 1993

5.See the works of Charles Tilly, including From Mobilisation to Revolution; Class Conflict and collective Action (with Louise Tilly) and The Rebellious Century, as well as numerous other resource mobilisation theorists; the overview in J Cohen,"Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical paradigms and contemporary social movements" Social Research 52, 4, 1985; and the post-modern overview in Rosalind O'Hanlon, "Recovering the subject: Subaltern Studies and Histories of resistance in colonial South Asia", Modern Asian Studies 22, 1, 1988, as well as numerous other works.

6.See, for example Gail Omvedt: "The anticaste movement and the discourse of power" Race and Class, 33, 2, 1991, and Michael Foley, "Organising, Ideology and Moral Suasian: Political discourse and action in a Mexican town", Comparative Studies in Society and History 1990 -two of many more recent examples in which discourse analysis is used to aid the understanding of movements.

7.An emphasis on style and repertoire in collective action is an important part of Tilly's work; it also appears in, for example, George Rude's The Crowd in History, and in E Cannetti, Crowds and Power,

8. A variety of accounts of the rebellion exist; see, for example, C Carter, op cit, K Jochelson, op cit; K Jochelson, "Urban Crisis, State Reform and Popular Reaction: a Case Study of Alexandra", Honours Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand 1988; John Nauright (untitled ms, nd); Mzwanele Mayekiso, unpublished ms.

9.Frank Molteno, "Reflections on Resistance - Aspects of the 1980 students boycott" unpublished paper, nd.

10. Maynard Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony 1900-1909" Journal of African History 18, 3, 1977

11. In this respect, Alexandra was an exception; it was developed upon the "yard" system, in which complex constructions were built around an open yard, and alongside the original homes of standholders.

12.See Eddie Koch, "Doornfontein and its African Working Class, 1914-1935" MA thesis, University of the Witwatersrand 1983; and the earlier classic by Ellen Hellman, herself a liberal concerned about the state of the slumyards, Rooiyard: A Sociological Survey of an Urban Native Slumyard, Rhodes Livingstone Institute papers no 13, OUP Cape Town 1948

13. Ralph Bunche, in his perceptive observations on his trip to South Africa in 1937, describes Orlando vividly; see his An African American in South Africa, Wits UP, Johannesburg 1993 p. 163

14.Original visions for township designs are to be found in T B Floyd, Township Layout, Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg 1951; PH Connell et al Native Housing: a

Collective Thesis, Wits University Press, Johannesburg 1939; and D M Calderwood, Native Housing in South Africa, Cape Times, Cape Town 1953.

15.See Hilary Sapire op cit p 86

16. See Sapire op cit p. 129

17.See, on the squatter politics of the time, Kevin French, "James Mpanza and the Sofasonke Party in the Development of Local Politics in Soweto" MA Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand 1983; P Bonner, "Siyawugubha, Siyawugebhula Umhlaba ka Maspala (We are digging, we are seizing great chunks of the municipality's land): popular struggles in Benoni, 1944-52", Paper presented to the African Studies Institute Seminar, University of the Witwatersrand 1985; A Stadler, "Birds in the Cornfields: Squatter movements in Johannesburg 1944=45" in B Bozzoli (ed) Labour, Townships and Protest, Ravan Press, Johannesburg 1979

18. Blair Babcock, in his book Unfairly Structured Cities, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1984, suggests that "spatial determinism", as a way of explaining cities, must be rejected in favour of explanations which refer to a combination of forces; see, for example, p 52.

19.This may be a flaw in the approach of Jenny Robinson who in her eagerness to demonstrate the Foucauldian elements of "control" and "surveillance" in townships sometimes misses the social and cultural elements of their formation. See, for example, her "A Perfect system of control? State power and Native Locations in South Africa", Environment and Planning 8, 1990

20.A lot of the literature on townships is focussed on the later dispossession of this stratum - for perfectly understandable reasons - but perhaps this at times occurs at the expense of examining its crucial role in this first era.

21. See, for examples of the types of "better off" standholders, Julie Wells, "
' in B Bozzoli, Town and Countryside in the Transvaal; B Bozzoli, Women of Phokeng, Heinemann, New York 1991; D. Mothibedi, (title to follow); and S Lebello,

22.Sapire, op cit p. 8

23. See B Bozzoli, Women of Phokeng, op cit, for examples of this.

24.See, for example, Sapire op cit p 16ff

25. Sapire op cit p. 133

26. See Sapire, op cit p 133; Bunche, op cit, also describes these kinds of cultural forms.

27. See, for a wonderful depiction of these elements of status, Mia Brandel Syrier, Reeftown Elite, Routledge, London 1971 p 19

28. Brandel Syrier op cit p.19

29. This type of argument is developed to its fullest by Craig Charney, in his "A World of Networks: Power, Political culture and collective action in black South African communities 1945-65", paper presented to the 1994 History Workshop conference "Democracy: Popular Precedents, Practice, Culture".

30. David Grinaker, Inside Soweto, Eastern Enterprises, Johannesburg 1986

31.Bunche, for example, suggests that bribery was not uncommon - although he also claims that this lent the system of local rule flexibility and stability. See Bunche op cit p 205

32.Sapirem, op cit p. 86

33.Jenny Robinson, for example, explores the world of the township administrator and his craft in her "Administrative Strategies and Political Power in South Africa's black townships, 129930-1960", unpublished paper nd.

34.Sapire, op cit p. 86

35.Besides the Rand, where the part played by liberals has been relatively well documents, see also J Robinson, "Progressive Port Elizabeth: Liberal politics, local economic development and the territorial basis of racial domination 1923-1935" unpublished paper. Paul Maylam, in "The local evolution of Urban Apartheid: influx control and segregation in Durban 1900-1951" (paper presented to the History Workshop conference "Structure and Experience in the Making of Apartheid", 1990,) does not, however, give the impression that these kinds of connections were central there.

36. The Alexandra Clinic, always run by liberals, is a prime example; but there are many others.

37. See, for example, Dawn Haggie's memoir, Madam Chair and the House at Large: the story of ASHA, the African Self-Help Association, ASHA, Johannesburg 1994

38. See, for example, Jeffrey op cit; C M Badenhorst and C M Rogerson, "Teach the Native to Play: Social control and Organised black sport on the Witwatersrand 1920-1939" Geojournal 12, 2, 1986; T Couzens, "An Introduction to the History of Football in South Africa" in B Bozzoli (ed) Town and Countryside in the Transvaal, Ravan, Johannesburg 1983; J Kramer, "Self Help in Soweto: Mutual Aid societies in A South African City" MA dissertation, University of Bergen, Norway 1976, I Manoim, "The Black Press 1945-63", MA dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand 1983;

39.See, for example, Jacques Donzelot, The policing of families, Pantheon, New York 1979 - p 55, which makes special reference to the role of philanthropy in constructing social and cultural life.

40.Bunche, op cit p 186

41. See, for example, Sapire p 104, who points out that the American Board Mission and Berlin Mission ran the only schools in Brakpan; that the former raised funds for a creche; and ran boys and girls clubs, an adult night school and a debating society. Bunche, op cit p. 186. It was the Bantu Men's Social Centre that was perhaps the most well-known of these institutions.

42. Ian Jeffrey, op cit, discusses this feature of township culture more extensively

43.An interesting insider's view of this may be found in the memoir by SS Modise, Dark City: The Origin and Development of Alexandra Township, unpublished ms.

44. Bunche gives a wonderful portrayal of the wedding of an elite family in these times; Bunche op cit pp 166-7; see also Sapire, op cit p. 104

45. See Bunche on the ways in which the pass laws could be "fiddled" and educated Africans could ensure they were treated "leniently". Bunche op cit pp. 173-4.

46. Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour Power in South Africa; from segregation to apartheid," Economy and Society 1, 1972

47. See, for example, D Hindson, Pass Controls and the Urban African Proletariat, Ravan Press, Johannesburg 1987

48. See Paul Tourikis, "The Political Economy of Alexandra Township, 1905-1958", BA Honours Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand 1981, in which relatively stark class distinctions are made, but connections between the various groupings emphasised.

49.See, for example, the life strategies of the women in B Bozzoli Women of Phokeng, op cit.

50.For this see Sapire op cit pp. 131ff

51. David Harvey makes this point about spatial features underlying resistance patterns; see his Consciousness and the Urban Experience, Blackwells, Oxford 1985; for some of the hundreds of examples of bus boycotts see Sapire op cit p 315; A Stadler, "A long way to walk: Bus boycotts in Alexandra 1940-45" in P Bonner (ed) Working Papers in Southern African Studies Volume 2, Johannesburg 1981; T Lodge, "We are being punished because we are poor: The bus boycotts of Evaton and Alexandra, 1956-57", in P Bonner (ed) Working Papers in Southern African Studies Volume 2, Johannesburg 1981, and many others.

52. See Sapire op cit p 133 in which she describes how a Springs advisory board member said the Government was "morally bound" to give East Rand elite Africans freehold status to "make natives free citizens of the country".

53.See, for example, Ellen Hellman's Problems of Urban Bantu Youth, SAIRR, Johannesburg 1940; and Glaser, op cit.

54.See Sapire op cit p 131

55.See Sapire op cit p 121; and 135

56.See Sapire for an example of this, op cit p. 135

57. This was certainly the case in rural Phokeng. See B Bozzoli, Women of Phokeng, op cit.

58. For example, the popular militancy in Brakpan in 1939-44 represented an upsurge of claims to do with such matters as living conditions and harsh rules. See H Sapire, op cit. p. 182. See also H Sapire, "The Stayaway of the Brakpan Location 1944" in B Bozzoli (ed) Class, Community and Conflict, Ravan Press, Johannesburg 1987, in which she outlines how spatially shaped means of struggle were used to establish demands for homes, water, the reduction of bus fares, the right to home brewing and the relaxation of a harsh administrative system (which had, incidentally, been introduced to cope with a moral panic of earlier times). The rise of the stayaway is an interesting development upon the use of the bus-boycott, as it no longer simply attacks the umbilical cord between town and township; it raises ramparts around the township itself - a presage of the even more closed forms of protest of later years.

59.For an example of this, see the History Workshop video on the History of Soweto; perhaps also this is why Charney, op cit, can use the "patronage" argument to explain social movement activity right up until the sixties and even the seventies.

60.Haggie op cit p 71 - although this was followed by a statement that the municipal police were not tolerated quite as much!

61. This table is extracted from Ellen Hellman, Soweto: Johannesburg's African City, SAIRR, Johannesburg 1967

62. Ellen Hellman, Soweto, op cit . See also Patrick Lewis, Soweto: City within a City

63.Hellman p. 4

64.See Sapire op cit, for extensive references to this, as well as Alan Mabin, "Bureaucracy, Class and Design; the planning of the townships from the forties to the nineties", paper presented to the 1993 History Workshop/Sociology of Work symposium, "Work, Class and Culture".

65.See, for example, Maasdorp and Humphreys, From Shantytown to Township

66. Sapire p 282

67.Jochelson op cit p. 17

68. Hellman, Soweto op cit

69. Hellman, Soweto op cit p 2, citing Lewis

70.Hellman Soweto op cit p. 12

71.Brandel Syrier op cit p 11.

72.Brandel Syrier p 12

73.Brandel Syrier op cit p.20

74. Extract from West Rand Administration Board (WRAB) budget for 1978-9, taken from Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, SAIRR, Johannesburg 1978, p. 337

75.Jochelson p 44

76.With the obvious exception of the hostel-dwellers.

77.See, for example, Robin Bloch, "All little sisters got to try on big sister's clothes: the community council system in South Africa". African Studies Institute seminar paper, 19th April 1982

78. Here I disagree with Jeremy Seekings, who suggests that Community Councils/Black Local Authorities "retained significant support throughout the period" (1978-84) because "residents only identified them as "sell-outs" when it became clear that their functions had changed, ie that they were no longer just residents' representatives to the local administration, but that they were concerned with the divisive implementation of unpopular administrative decisions (especially rent increases and shack demolition)". The fact is that local authorities could not survive without rent increases, and this placed them in structural opposition to their own constituents. See J Seekings, "Summary thematic account of the East Rand 1978-1984" unpublished paper. For an overview see Urban Foundation, "The Black Town Councils: a study of their performance and reception in the Urban Black Communities", unpublished paper nd.

79.Jochelson op cit p. 20

80.Jochelson, op cit p 21

81.See, for example, Haggie, op cit p. 105

82.Haggie op cit p 80

83.Brandel Syrier op cit p 13

84.Haggie, op cit p. 105

85.Haggie, op cit p 70-71

86.See, for example, E T Modibedi, "Justice in the People's court in Mamelodi Township" mimeo, nd

87. See M Marks, op cit, for a discussion of the extremely instrumental justifications given by youth for the violence in which they engaged.

88. Temma Kaplan uses the notion of "symbolic landscape" to describe the underlying motifs that shaped the social movements in Barcelona between 1886 and 1939; see her Red City, Blue Period, California UP, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1992

89.G D Suttles, The Social Order of the Slum, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1979

90.See The Star, 5th March 1996, for a contemporary call of this nature by ANC MP Carl Niehaus