THE DYNAMICS OF PLACE BRANDING IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG: 1994 – 2019

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signed on the 30th day of November 2023 at Johannesburg.

ABSTRACT

This PhD thesis lays the ground for understanding place branding processes from cities of the Global South. It critically explores place branding as an emerging mechanism for urban governance in Johannesburg. It is critical because place branding and its related processes have increasingly gained momentum in countries, regions and cities jostling for niche status in global economics. This thesis explores the different place brands that Johannesburg coined over time, focussing on the period between 1994 and 2019. It explored the city's place brands under the five mayors that presided over Johannesburg, beginning with Dan Pretorius (1994 – 1995), Isaac Mogase (1995 – 1999), Amos Masondo (2000 – 2011), Parks Tau (2011 – 2016) and Herman Mashaba (2016 – 2019). The thesis employed a qualitative research methodology and case study design. Primary data Archival research and interviews were the primary data collection strategies. The ensuing discussion of place brands in Johannesburg reveals the dynamics and push factors that have contributed to the development of place brands under the time in question. Politics, economics, and activities related to globalisation emerged as leading drivers for the city of Johannesburg to develop its various place brands. The thesis found that Johannesburg followed a template similar to the cities of the Global North in its application of place branding. However, the thesis also found gaps in the city's place branding processes. For example, there was limited engagement with the city residents when developing Johannesburg's place brands. It pointed to a unilateral, top-down application of place branding in the city, which precluded it from using these processes as democracy-building tools. It necessitates the exploration of place branding from the perspective of city governments to begin encompassing issues of inclusivity and public participation. In this light, the thesis calls for a more strategic application of place branding in the Johannesburg.

Dedication

For Andile Mbinza

1995 – 2021

Acknowledgements

I thank Qamatha for giving me the strength to initiate and complete this thesis. This thesis is dedicated to Khehla, Ntombizodwa, Thamsanqa and Andile Mbinza, my partner and friends for their love and unwavering support. I thank Prof. Mfaniseni Fana Sihlongonyane for his support and insights during this journey. I am grateful for the energy and enthusiasm you provided in guiding this thesis. I am also indebted to Dr. Eric Nyembezi Makoni for all the words of encouragement and pick-me-ups throughout the writing this thesis. I thank all the respondents who participated in the study for their valuable time and input, without which this thesis would not have been possible. A massive vote of thanks goes to the staff and management of Pize e Vino and Doppio Zero in Rosebank for the unlimited supply of sustenance and resources.

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List of acronyms organised in alphabetical order

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
APC	All People's Congress
ASA	Advertising Standards Authority
BRICS	Brazil Russia India China and South Africa
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CBD	Central Business District
CDS	City Development Strategy
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
CIAM	Congrés Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CoF	Corridors of Freedom
CoJ	City of Johannesburg
COPE	Congress of the People
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
Cosatu	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CSS	City Safety Strategy
DA	Democratic Alliance
DP	Democratic Party
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FFP	Freedom Front Plus
FMF	Free Market Foundation
GaWC	Globalization and World Cities Research Network
GCRO	Gauteng City Region Observatory
GDS	Growth Development Strategy
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme
GJTMC	Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council
HDS	Human Development Strategy
ICC	International Cricket Council

ICLGTA	Interim Constitution and the Local Government Transition Act
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
Idp	Integrated development planning
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
JCC	Johannesburg City Council
JPA	Johannesburg Publicity Association
JSE	Johannesburg Stock Exchange
MMC	Member of the Mayoral Committee
MOEs	Municipal Owned Entities
NAYO	National Youth Organisation
NDP	National Development Plan
NP	National Party
NPM	New Public Management
PAC	Pan African Congress
RDP	Reconstruction Development Programme
SABC	South African Broadcasting Cooperation
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SASCOC	South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee
SASM	South African Student Movement
SoCA	State of the City Address
TMLCs	Transitional Metropolitan Local Councils
TNCs	Transnational Companies
TOD	Transit-oriented development
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UDF	United Democratic Front
UDM	
UEFA	Union of European Football Associations
UK	United Kingdom
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UN	United Nations
US	United States

WCAC	World-class African City
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
Wits	University of Witwatersrand
WWI/II	World War One/Two

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CHAPTER 1: BRANDING JOHANNESBURG 1994 – 2019

1.1 Introduction

In the Global North, place branding has emerged as a dominant strategy for places, nations, regions, or cities to exert their influence beyond their physical borders (Kavaratzis, 2007). There have been myriad reasons for branding places. For post-industrial economies, these reasons include the diversification of economies (Rausch, 2008), responding to global economic shocks (Manhas & Gupta, 2009) and urban restructuring (Allon, 2013). Recently, emerging economies have also begun to embrace place branding. In the main, place branding in these settings has concentrated on attracting tourists (Henderson, 2007; Manhas & Gupta, 2009; Trimeche *et al*., 2012). Elsewhere, emerging cities employ place branding to stamp their rising (Fan & Shahani, 2014) and, in other instances, to purge long-held negative perceptions (Kaneva & Popescu, 2011). In the main, however, place branding is a tool for positioning cities, whether in the developed or developing world, amongst the world's leading cities, the so-called "world city" club (Bremner, 2000).

The increased popularity of place branding in the Global North and its continued adoption in the Global South has yet to translate into the ease of its understanding and application. Place branding from the international experience has shown a litany of confusing definitions and jargon. While exploring place brands from the perspective of their impact is popular (Flowerdew, 2004; Manzenreiter, 2010; Fan & Shahani, 2014), limited literature focuses on the processes and dynamics that motivate the development of place brands in the developing world. For instance, the myriad place brands of Johannesburg over time, including "a World Class African City", have received little inquiry (Rogerson, 1996, 2004; Sihlongonyane, 2015). Moreover, the reasons why Johannesburg continues to brand itself still need to be studied.

Nevertheless, place branding in Johannesburg is familiar (Rogerson, 2006). The promotion of Johannesburg as a premier destination for business dates to its founding (Sihlongonyane, 2015). However, this study draws attention to the processes of branding Johannesburg to the dawn of democracy in South Africa in 1994 and extends to 2019. As early as the mid-nineties, the economy of Johannesburg displayed a duality that made the city representative of a *Northern* and a *Southern* city (Peyroux,

2008). On the one hand, the economy of Johannesburg reflected Anglo-American traits with formal solid businesses.

On the other hand, the city's economy had an informal face of street trading reminiscent of other emerging economies. This duality meant that Johannesburg had solid North-South connections. Johannesburg piggybacked on these connections to embark on a journey of re-imaging itself in the 1990s in three campaigns. The first of these was "Gateway to Africa", and the second was "The Golden Heartbeat of Africa" (Bremner, 2000). These two campaigns led to development of the "A World-class African city" place brand in 2000 (Rausch, 2003; Sihlongonyane, 2016).

Until 2016, this mantra ("a World-class African city") found its use increase significantly in different spaces and mediums. Hosting major events, such as the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the 2014 Mayors' Summit, and the then-annual Talk Radio 702/Discovery Walk-the-Talk, had given the city a platform to display its "world-class" status. Through hosting events, the play on this mantra focussed substantial attention on the city over time and created a positive image (Gelders and van Zuilen, 2013). In the same breath, however, the constant rhetoric of "a World-class African city" paved the way for its opposition.

For example, the Advertising Standards Authority of South Africa (ASA) ruled that the city ought to withdraw radio adverts ending with this tagline because it was "misleading" in 2013 (Smith, 2013). It was in response to a complaint lodged by Steven Haywood, a Johannesburg resident responding to a radio advert aired by the city ending with the tagline "a World-class African city". The biggest argument by the complainant was that while Johannesburg had been financially stable for three years, one of its utilities, Pikitup, was bankrupt, which affected its ability to provide a decent level of service (Sihlongonyane, 2016). After a protracted legal battle between the parties, the ASA rescinded its decision and concluded that Johannesburg could continue to use its tagline in December 2013 (Allison, 2013).

At this time, allegations of gross mismanagement and corruption marred the image of Johannesburg (Rogerson, 1996). These allegations were levelled squarely at the then Mayor of the city, Parks Tau, and his administration (Booysen, 2016). In addition, there was a rising chorus of dissenting voices amongst the residents and businesses of the

city against what Johannesburg termed the “billing crisis” (Opperman, 2011). Residents and businesses received exorbitant rates and tax statements, which were not commensurate or reflective of their usage of services and amenities (Radebe, 2013).

Figure 1.1 Johannesburg satire

Source: Sunday World, 13 February 2013

By 2014, the “A World-class African city” campaign had the most traction of all its previous brand campaigns. It became trendy that different news outlets argued about the claim’s validity (Smith, 2013). Inadvertently, the contestations about the true nature of the brand helped cement Johannesburg’s image in the minds of its different stakeholders. Despite these occurrences, the dynamics and complexities from which the place brand of the city emerged have received little academic inquiry.

It is surprising given that Johannesburg is an economic powerhouse in South Africa and Africa in general (Callaghan & Venter, 2011). Academic explorations of Johannesburg have ranged from issues of urbanisation (Crankshaw & Parnell, 2002;

Landau, 2007; Turok & McGranahan, 2013), its governance systems (Beall *et al.,* 2000) to its policies (Bollens, 1998). Others have investigated Johannesburg from the perspective of its preparedness towards disasters and poverty alleviation (Menstrum, 2003; Meyer & Odeku, 2012). Studies focussing on the informal settlements of Johannesburg are also widespread (Huchzermeyer, 2003; Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Brown *et al*., 2014). However, studies focusing explicitly on the place branding processes of Johannesburg are scant.

In contrast, literature about the creation of place brands (Pryor & Grossbart, 2007; Kemp et al., 2012) and management of place brands (Hankinson, 2009; Freire, 2011; Hanna & Rowley, 2011) is widespread internationally, particularly in countries such as America, the United Kingdom, Italy, Portugal, and others. While these studies are essential in understanding place brands as products, they need to be more comprehensive in understanding how cities gear themselves for place branding and manoeuvre around issues of inclusion and power in these processes. Moreover, not much academic inquiry has focussed on place branding in developing nations such as South Africa (Abimbola, 2006; Henderson, 2007; Cayla & Eckhardt, 2008; Kimbu, 2011).

While the diversification of economies in cities of the developed world is one of the most prominent reasons for place branding there, the reasons for the branding of Johannesburg remain opaque. Critically, the questions that loom large about Johannesburg's place brand are: (i) what was the original place of the city? (ii) what prompted the city to (re)brand itself? (iii) What role and influence does city management have in conceiving the place brand of the city? (iv) What role and influence do citizens have in shaping the brand of the city and, (v) What dynamics of power exist between citizens and the city in co-creating the brand of the city? A closer analysis of these questions paves the way for understanding the complexities and dynamics that underscore any city's branding but with a particular emphasis on a developing world city.

The evolution of "A World-class African city" coincided with the rise of Johannesburg as a significant player in the global economy (Alegi, 2007). However, more is needed to know about Johannesburg as a brand before this mantra. Johannesburg operates

in a world of hyper-competition in which cities jostle for capital investment (Ashworth, 2009). Cities resort to aggressive place branding campaigns to create a presence which is conversant with the politics (which directs financial power) of the day. As a result, the role of external branding consultants has been overrated (Lau & Leung, 2005; Kalandides, 2011). It makes it necessary to distil how city processes interact, inform place branding, and question in whose favour these activities are.

Framed differently, what is the primary purpose for a city to brand itself? In the case of attracting foreign direct investment, it makes sense for a brand message to have international appeal. In the same vein, though, the local is part of the international. Therefore, the infusion of local endowments, including residents, is an essential part of a brand message. In any event, upholding the interests of placeholders in a place brand message is essential.

Placeholders, including residents, businesses and city managers, produce cities (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019). Ideally, then, the place of a city should also be co-produced. Thus, the role that residents play in informing the creation of the brand of a city and the extent to which they subscribe and relate to its brand is an important consideration. Apart from a few studies (Gertner, 2011; Kavaratzis, 2012; Braun *et al.*, 2013), the role of citizens in place branding campaigns has been marginal. Instead, these studies have focused on how citizens feel about the brand of a place. While this is undoubtedly a critical point of investigation, it is latent and only addresses the after-effects of a place brand. A progression from this popular stance is necessary. This progression needs to address how place branding processes affect participatory democratic discourses.

Related to the issue of involvement is how power dynamics play out branding processes. van Ham (2008) contends that place branding is a form of soft power. By implication, power can be coercive and abused. The illumination of power in place branding processes is crucial in examining how much a city embraces democratic processes. This exploration speaks to how cities, in their place branding processes, react to external pressures. In other words, how do cities position themselves in a globalising world while simultaneously giving effect to broader progressive arguments of social justice and equity, for instance? Given the apartheid history and legacy of

South Africa, the exploration of power is vital, albeit not from a purely political introspection.

As mentioned earlier, place branding is more prevalent in the Global North and needs to be studied and applied in the Global South (Mayes, 2008; Kaneva & Popescu, 2014). Consequently, a coherent understanding of place branding in a developing country has not emerged. With a dearth of knowledge regarding place branding from a developing country perspective, the synthesis of a place branding discourse from the South is essential for African cities. It is crucial to break free from the trend of borrowing ideas from the developed to the developing world and create an understanding of place brands symbolic of events here (the developing world).

1.2 Research Question

Embedded within a context of scant research related to place branding in the Global South, the research question posed in this thesis is: “What were the dynamics and complexities of developing place brands of the city of Johannesburg between 1994 and 2019?” This question speaks to motivating factors fuelling Johannesburg to brand itself in the said time. The philosophical or intellectual underpinnings of this question are essential insofar as surfacing issues that are otherwise covert and indiscoverable by the answering of practical questions of a research study.

The intellectual aspect of the research question speaks to issues such as conflict, tension, prohibitions and the like. The current study explores a subject (branding) traditionally associated with marketing. However, the study is simultaneously interested in investigating issues of urban governance and democracy. Therefore, the (dis)connections and (dis)continuities in cities being sites that can be branded need explication.

Surfacing all the connecting aspects of the main question above, the study poses the following sub-questions:

a) What were the motivating factors leading the city of Johannesburg to brand itself from 1994 to 2019?
b) Who were the stakeholders in the place brand of Johannesburg?

c) What complexities in Johannesburg necessitated its place branding processes from 1994 to 2019?
d) To what extent do residents co-produce and own the place brand of the city?
e) What power relations exist between the city and its placeholders in branding processes?

1.3 Research Purpose

This study aims to undertake empirical and longitudinal research into Johannesburg's place brand/s between 1994 and 2019. To achieve this, the study casts a reflective lens on each mayoral era by exploring the motivating factors for the city to change its place brand. This occupation of the study is interested in unravelling the context of Johannesburg and its influence on the economy of South Africa and its immersion in the global economy more broadly.

In addition, the study identifies the people responsible for initiating and implementing the place branding processes within the city. This line of inquiry addresses several issues. The first is how the city of Johannesburg continuously re-imagines itself as a space for political emancipation (or entrapment) and as a site for space commodification. The second issue is finding out what the criterion for brandable spaces. Simultaneously, this issue raises the question of what happens to spaces within the city that lend themselves less favourably to place branding processes.

Further, the study explores how the city attempted to advance its democratic practices through place branding processes. This line of inquiry is crucial in how Johannesburg's place branding processes foster citizenry in the city. To this end, the role of ambassadorship and endorsement in the branding of Johannesburg springs up. The culmination of these lines of thought leads to an understanding of the processes and motivations of place branding in the context of developing countries. This understanding is essential because it provides a basis for cities to extend an arm to their residents in building inclusive spaces. It also challenges cities to take deeper introspections about what they are and what they mean to their residents, businesses, and the world more generally.

1.4 Emergence of the need for the study

There is growing interest in place branding (Kerr & Balakrishnan, 2012). However, this interest has been articulated in the so-called developed world (Pasquinelli, 2010; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Ulldemolins, 2014; Cleave & Arku, 2015). In the developing world, place branding has attracted less attention. The emergent interest in place branding has resulted in the proliferation of numerous interpretations of its theorisation and application (Kerr, 2009).

A brief scan of the literature focusing on place branding categorises research into five broad areas. Firstly, tourism attraction and foreign direct investment dominate place branding literature (Metaxas, 2010; Clifton, 2011). Developing nation-states such as South Africa, Mauritius, and Tanzania are hard-pressed for economic development and have identified tourism as an economic catalyst (Blichfeldt & Halkier, 2014). An offshoot of this has seen cities increasingly brand as hosts of mega-events, such as the Olympics, FIFA World Cup and World Summits (Knott *et al.*, 2010).

Apart from directly vying to attract tourists, place branding in many developing states centres on promoting positive images, concentrating on convincing investors that they are open for business (Manhas & Gupta, 2009). Other place branding campaigns in the developing world focus on establishing an image for a relatively unknown place (Fan & Shahani, 2016). For instance, Barue in Mozambique is touted as the second-best investment destination in that country after Maputo (Moreira & Silva, 2012).

Since developing states are not immune to the effects of globalisation, place branding in these contexts has been employed to present some of their units (preeminent cities) as cities of the world (Paganoni, 2012). Here, the idea of multiculturalism (Cayla & Eckhardt, 2008) plays a massive role in attracting talent for multinational companies. The general concern with this approach is that it sacrifices local identities, giving way to localised contestations of power related to the branding of their places.

Secondly, the literature reflects on how cities use branding to make themselves more *visible* globally (Jansson, 2012). In the main, cities highlight their economic, spatial, and socio-cultural features to differentiate themselves from surrounding regions and other cities worldwide. This strand of literature talks about the body politic of “global cities”. For example, van der Merwe (2004) states that Johannesburg is the best

candidate for this status in Sub-Saharan Africa, followed by Nairobi and Cape Town, owing to their arbitrary comparisons to cities such as New York and Tokyo. John Friedmann (1986) advanced the “world city hypothesis”, which Saskia Sassen evolved into the “global city hypothesis in 1991 (Sassen, 2016). Cities are considered global when they exhibit elevated levels of interaction in international business and possess sophisticated communication services (Otiso *et al.,* 2011).

Thirdly, there is also considerable attention in the literature on how places (re)branded themselves to escape inauspicious histories. For instance, Keneva and Popescu (2011) note how Romania and Bulgaria, both post-communist nations, embarked on (re)branding processes using a two-pronged approach. In the first instance, the two countries (re)branded to “retell” their stories to a broader international audience. In the second instance, their brand campaigns were a means for propagating patriotism and nationalism from an internal perspective. Viewed in this way, place branding is an extension of propaganda.

Anholt (2008: 4) sees branding campaigns such as those listed above as a strategy imbued with “symbolic actions but no real substance”. These campaigns aim to rally people behind messages in which they do not believe. van Ham (2008: 8) argues that place branding is the “forerunner” of propaganda and is a form of spin doctoring. These campaigns are prevalent in contexts where the government acts as a gatekeeper to the information it creates and disseminates (Dynon, 2011). However, the ubiquitous presence of many information sources, including the internet and social media, mediates the success of such campaigns.

The fourth area concentrated on the emerging role that place branding has assumed in supplementing traditional planning tools to contribute to efficient mechanisms of place-making (Campelo *et al.,* 2013). Coca-Stefaniak (2014) and Ulldemollins (2014) concur with Campelo *et al*., in that place branding is a tool used in city management. In addition, it is widely used in urban regeneration programmes. For instance, Barcelona saw culture as a central theme in its branding message when it was a site of regeneration (Prilenska, 2012; Ulldemollins, 2014). Specifically, personality branding (Gaudi) inspired the case of Barcelona.

Lastly, a large body of literature on place branding (Dynon, 2011; Gelders & Zuilen, 2013; Holtzhausen & Fullerton, 2013) has concentrated on evaluating the success or failure of place brand campaigns. What dominates this strand of literature is the obsession with discovering how people feel about a particular place brand and to what extent they subscribe to that brand after implementation. Recently, this line of inquiry has begun to incorporate how place branding opens avenues for advancing principles of democracy (Aitken & Campelo, 2011; Eshuis *et al.,* 2013). Implicit in this line of inquiry is the illumination of power dynamics between city governments and residents.

The knowledge gaps in place branding present an opportunity to highlight neglected, critical dimensions of these processes. It is significantly more so in the context of developing world cities. These dimensions include, but are not limited to, questions related to: Who should be able to initiate such processes? Who owns the place brand? What are the frameworks within which place branding processes are initiated? What is the treatment of the power dynamics between city governments and residents resulting from place branding processes? These questions, issues or dimensions remain hidden in critical lines of engagement. As with most other critical engagements concerned with urban planning, the developed world is a significant source of information about place branding. Thus, the developed world transports these suppositions, implications, and interpretations of place branding to the developing world, forming pseudo-universal approaches and frameworks.

History has been instrumental in cautioning the developing world against the mere adoption and superimposition of ideas from the developed world. By this study focusing on a city of the Global South (Johannesburg), the opportunity exists to devise a kind of place branding resonant and reflective of the conditions of cities rooted there. For example, Guererro and Wanjiru (2021) explain how Africa has a long history of inauspicious associations with such descriptions of the “Dark Continent*”*, with many outsiders associating it with poverty, underdevelopment, corruption, doom, and pestilence. However, development in Africa followed a blueprint found in the developed world (Ake, 2001; Ayittey, 2016).

This blueprint (un)wittingly duped African countries into thinking about development from a developed world perspective. Also, the networks within which African nations

find themselves are the architecture of the advanced world. South Africa is similar in terms of the theorisation of place branding with other settings in the developing world. Apart from attracting tourists, literature about place branding has insignificant mileage in South Africa (Prayag, 2007).

Therefore, despite its popularity in the developed world, place branding currently needs critical dimensions of investigation. There is scant literature concentrating on the illumination of the forces or influences driving a place brand. Similarly, there needs to be more attention paid to the power dynamics within a city government institution when initiating place branding. In this regard, the internal processes behind branding a city have yet to receive considerable academic scrutiny, particularly in the context of cities in the developing world.

Place branding tends to present places as homogenous sites (Zenker *et al.,* 2017). However, cities are spaces with huge differences (Vuignier, 2016). These differences manifest spatially, socio-politically, and economically (Hatz, 2009). Examining the parts that are subject to place branding campaigns is essential in exposing what is to be done with those parts that have not been incorporated within broader narratives of the place brand of a city.

Moreover, place branding owes its emergence to marketing. Marketing is profit-driven. Therefore, their plight increases as undesirable parts of the city remain outside the purview of place branding. The accompanying profit motive of place branding then complicates the management of these places. The question is, “To what extent are place branding campaigns influenced by profit and residents?” Investigating the driving force(s) of place branding campaigns is vital because it exposes, amongst other issues, power dynamics between city governments and citizens and city government priorities. The mitigation of the divisiveness nature of current place branding approaches is an urgent endeavour if democratising societies are to get any closer to aspects of social integration and cohesion.

Therefore, this study intends to divorce Anglo-American connotations in place branding directed to the cities of the Global South. For cities in the Global South, pronunciations of independence (primarily economic) and self-reliance are a farce. Due to the prevalence of colonialism and institutionally generated social segregation,

these cities lag their developed world counterparts (if development means modernisation and market capitalisation). The study closes this gap by investigating place branding from an African perspective.

1.5 Contribution to Knowledge

The contribution that this study makes to knowledge is through the investigation of the dynamics and complexities that influenced the place brand of Johannesburg between 1994 and 2019. The study contributes to knowledge by exploring a phenomenon that has long existed in the developed world from an African perspective. Apart from this study, literature shows that this type of research is scant in the developing world. For Blaxter *et al.,* (2010), the main objective of conducting research is creating information useful to broader society. This study contributes to an otherwise thin or limited body of knowledge in place branding in South Africa. Through this contribution, it is possible to understand the dynamics, processes, motivations, and complexities for branding cities, particularly those in the context of the developing world.

For cities of the developed world, the commercial aspect of branding is easily discernible. In addition, cities in these contexts anchor themselves in global trade transactions and brand themselves to take their stories elsewhere, beyond their borders. In cities of the developing world, these motivations need to be clarified. Thus, this study aims to contribute to knowledge by illuminating the theoretical assumptions of place branding as has been widely researched in the Global North versus the somewhat limited exploration of the concept in cities of the Global South. Considering the significant research and practice on place branding as found in the Global North, this thesis seeks to address two main issues:

a) To draw lessons from the Global North in understanding the dynamics, processes and agents involved in place branding.
b) To bridge the gap in knowledge related to place branding when applied to settings of the Global South.

While the study concentrates on Johannesburg, there are lessons for similar-sized cities of the Global South. In addition, the temporal scale (1994 – 2019) used in the study is significant for those countries that are either overcoming negative perceptions or simply riding the wave of change as presented by a globalising world or

democratising. Although most of the world has seen the end of colonialism, many countries have not escaped the images and imaginings of their colonial histories. Thus, these countries and their cities are now painting their narratives. In this way, the study is helpful in exploring the changing stories of previously oppressed nations and their cities.

In addition, this study looked at the place brand of Johannesburg through the different mayoral epochs since 1994. Therefore, at a local level, the study contributes to knowledge as it avails a prism from which political legacies in Johannesburg can be explored. It is significant in gauging the ebb and flow of political leaders and ideologies since three political parties reigned in Johannesburg during the study's temporal scale (1994 – 2019). The first of these was the National Party (NP), which was the instigator of apartheid (Maré, 1996). The ANC, a liberation movement and mostly black-led party, took over from the National Party in 1995 (Morris, 2001). In 2016, the Democratic Alliance (DA) took over the running of Johannesburg (Booysen, 2016).

When Johannesburg changed hands between the ANC and DA in 2016, Herman Mashaba and his administration quickly sought to dismantle the image created before. His main argument for this move was that the brand of the city brand was created through the abuse of public coffers and corruption. Therefore, the study examines how political points are scored through place branding. The analysis shows that it is possible to wage political wars using place branding as a medium.

The study also contributes to the expansion of African Urbanism. Whereas this phenomenon has been explored through the lenses of history (Freund, 2007), migration (Kane & Leedy, 2013), and anthropology (Jenkins, 2013), this study presents place branding as yet another device from which the African city can be explored. The increasing lenses through which African cities can be explored diverge from the historical and, one might argue, contemporary occupations of viewing these cities as mere sites of problems that need to be fixed by applying of Global North ideologies. Pieterse's article (2011) titled *Grasping the Unknowable: coming to Grips with African Urbanisms* is one of many that cement the view that African urbanity is problematic.

Therefore, this study is situated in urban planning, branding and politics. This confluence brings a multidisciplinary perspective to the exploration of Johannesburg. As mentioned, the norm has been to look at African cities from one perspective. The interdisciplinary nature of this study allows for the exploration of interrelated yet separate issues about the governance of the city of Johannesburg.

1.6 Research Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative methodology to respond to the main question and sub-questions posed in (1.2) and the purposes in (1.3). Qualitative research clarifies issues and phenomena from a humanistic perspective (Lapan *et al.,* 2012) because it brings to bear the research subjects' worldview/s. It has the effect of freeing up a study from preconceived suppositions. In addition, qualitative research clarifies what is real and what is constructed (Denzin & Lincon, 2011).

The qualitative methods adopted in this study include library research, case study, interviews, photography, and mapping. The table overleaf is an appraisal of each method chosen for the study. The table shows the expected information from each method and what a method did not cover. The third column shows how methods supplemented each other. The merits, usefulness and limitations are discussed in turn.

Table 1.1: Expected and not expected data from the method

Method	Data captured by method	Data not captured by method	Remedial action or method to captured uncaptured data
Library Research	• Primarily existing literature. • Both academic and literature in the public domain. • grey literature (records) archival documents	• People's and the city's sentiments towards its place brand • Change (if any) of mood towards city brand	• Interviews
Case Study Research	• Data situated in Johannesburg (A "lived" experience of the city)	• Spatiality of the place brand • Human orientation	• Mapping • Interviews

	• The opportunities and plights brought by the "A world-class African City" place brand • Narrative-situatedness of the place brand		
Interviews	• Human (institutional, community and business) views and narrative of the city's place brand • Emotion(s)	• Spatiality of the place brand • Visual outlet for data	• Mapping • Photography
Photography	• Visual evidence of the city's place brand	• People's and the city's sentiments towards its place brand • Change (if any) of mood towards city brand • Spatiality of the city's place brand	• Interviews • Mapping

1.6.1 Archival Research

Popular data collection methods, such as surveys, interviews, and experiments, and help to engage with the origins and the journey of development. Archival research suitably filled this gap. Archival research includes the analysis of written documents, institutional memoranda, minutes of meetings, and speeches. Specifically, the study employed literature mainly in the genre(s) of branding, place branding and tourism. Given the genesis of place branding as a separate and distinct field of study, it is logical.

In addition, the archives of the city of Johannesburg were used to trace the evolution of branding in the city from 1994 to 2019. Agendas and minutes relating to branding in the city were the avenues that the study exploited. These were important because they provided a roadmap for how Johannesburg conceived and pursued its place branding agenda. They offered insights into how decisions were considered and made, thereby providing a rich source of interrogating how the city (a) viewed the place brand and (b) operationalised its processes to actualise its vision/s. In addition, a range of books and journal articles were sourced from physical libraries and digital

databases such as Wiley Online Library, SAGE, and EBSCO. The genre of the resources sought varied since place branding spans different disciplines. More of the marketing and branding-type articles were perused. However, urban planning/sociology journals also became the scope of this study because the investigation of “place” had nuances of urban planning.

The combination of these resources and the city’s archives was essential because the former speaks mainly to the theoretical principles and processes of place branding. At the same time, the latter focuses more on the practical processes of actualising place branding in the city. While printed resources provide researchers with a wealth of historical text, digital resources track changes in processes and discourses. The combination of these sources made for more decadent interpretations and judgments. Most importantly, printed resources can be fragile, because they are handled repeatedly over time, making their availability and use cumbersome. The examination of digital resources was vital as it assessed how the city of Johannesburg had maintained its records and migrated printed resources to digital records, which in turn posed a test to the aspiration of a global city to keep up with modernity.

1.6.2 Case Study Research

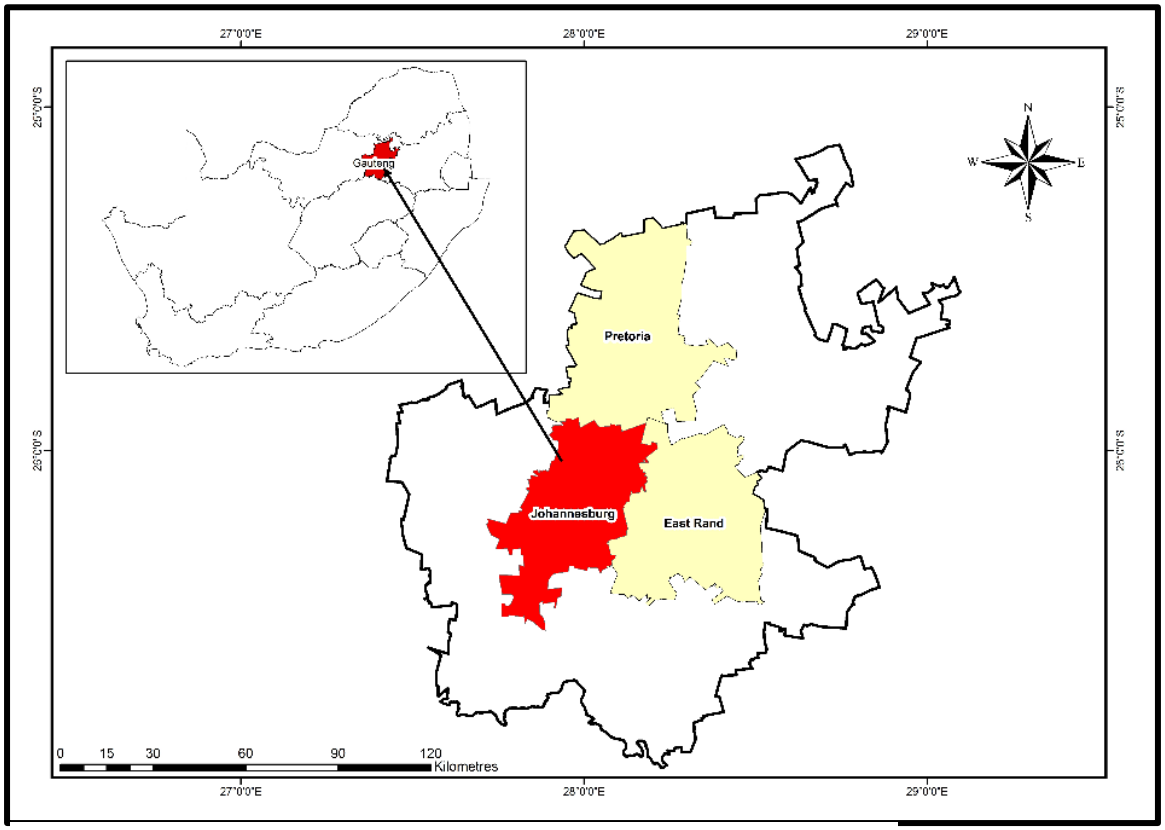
The examination of institutions is complex as institutions vary in their make-up. To avoid overly generalising, the study adopted the case study research design. This design helped construct a case of interwoven ideas so that the “case” would be answered (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). It meant that only those issues related to the case were examined. Thus, this approach was particular to what it aimed to study or explore.

For this study, the case was the city of Johannesburg and the period of 1994 – 2019. Apart from Cape Town and, to a lesser degree, Durban, Johannesburg is the most recognisable city in South Africa (Bremner, 2000). Johannesburg has a large transient population and experiences large-scale immigration from other parts of Southern Africa. The allure of Johannesburg and its status as one of the economic powerhouses in Africa makes exploring place branding in the city worthwhile. In addition, Johannesburg is one of the most vibrant metropolitan cities in Africa. Thus, research

findings on subject matters in Johannesburg are transferable and generalisable to other cities in Africa and other parts of the developing world.

The case study adopted various data sources and, therefore, several different analytical strategies. It allowed for a more in-depth and profound analysis of place branding within the city over the said period. In addition, the case study design was suitable because it studied an unknown phenomenon. Place branding within Johannesburg has yet to be studied exhaustively, if at all. The study traced the place brand of the city, analysed its internal arrangements concerning its branding processes and explored the power dynamics between the city and its stakeholders in its branding processes. In this way, place branding was investigated as opposed to the widespread study of its use(s). In addition, place branding was studied from a Global South perspective, which is timely.

Figure 1.2 Johannesburg in context



Source: Musakwa, University of Johannesburg

However, like other methods or designs, the case study design has its criticism. One of the biggest criticisms against case study research is that its results can often be

anecdotal and, therefore, reliable and replicable in other instances. It is a valid concern. However, as mentioned before, Johannesburg is one of Africa's most vibrant and recognisable metropoles. Thus, the findings relating to Johannesburg can be ascribed to other metropolitan cities on the continent and others in the developing world, more generally.

1.6.3 Interviews

The interview was the medium through which consultation with the city was achieved. An interview is a structured conversation (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Interviews are structured conversations in the sense that a researcher poses a series of questions to get a particular understanding of a subject matter from the respondent's perspective. The study specifically employed the semi-structured interview for the pursuance of its question. This type of interview allowed the study to pose standardised questions but sought the respondents' opinions about the place branding processes in the city. These made for a richer and more descriptive analysis of the data obtained from the respondents.

Overleaf is a table showing the respondents who were interviewed. This table was organised in terms of who was to be interviewed, rank or position, why information from a particular respondent was necessary, the expected information from a respondent, how that information fed back into the overall research and what the purpose of that information was. This sequence of interviews was relevant for the study in that it effectively dealt with the study's purpose, which was the examination of the dynamics of place branding within Johannesburg. Respondents ranged from the city's mayor to departmental employees and a previous city manager. The effect of this was that the examination of the place brand of the city was examined from an executive leadership level to the level of implementation and evaluation. Thus, aspects of how the brand was conceptualised and cascaded down internally and externally were brought forward. Including firsthand accounts of the people directly involved in the city's branding processes is invaluable. They provided insights into how the city's place brand was conceived and included the perceptions and attitudes these individuals formed before, during and after the implementation of various place brands.

Table1.2 Persons and groups to interviewed and outcomes of information obtained

Person	Justification	Information Expected	Purpose
Dan Pretorius	Served as Mayor of the city in 1994 (March – November).	As the first mayor of a democratic Johannesburg, information obtained from this respondent was critical in highlighting how the city intended to avail itself as a home for all its citizens.	Information served the purpose of seeing how the city intended to open itself up to a wider local audience; most of whom who had seen Johannesburg only as a place of employment and not of residence and other means.
Isaac Mogase	Served as Mayor of the city from 1995 – 2000.	A synopsis of how the city intended to deal with changing power and race relations (since this respondent was the first Black mayor of the city) as well as how the city was planned to position itself in the global arena.	The information traced a change of guard in as far as the governance of the city was concerned. Also, the information explored how the city conceptualised itself as a global player since sanctions against it and more broadly, South Africa had been lifted following the democratisation of the country.
Amos Masondo	Served as Mayor of the city from 2000 – 2011.	Elucidations of strategies of not only dealing with issues of being a city of the world but a leading city in the world.	The information highlighted the strategies that the city employed over a 12-year period to becoming a world economic powerhouse.

Person	Justification	Information Expected	Purpose
Mavela Dlamini	City Manager (2007 – 2011)	Wealth of information as he also served in other senior management positions within the city before this appointment	Stitched together the city's branding narrative from the days of iGoli 2002 to the Joburg 2030.
Mayor Parks Tau (present mayor)	The mayor is the face of the city, and his office makes all the executive decisions, even those that relate to branding, marketing, and public relations. The study traced and attempted to understand place branding within the city. Part of this required the examination of the political will and thrusts behind the brand.	Information obtained here related to the city's direction and aspirations from a strategic viewpoint.	Insights were gained from executive management and these insights showed how the brand was conceived of and thereafter championed internally and taken to the rest of the world.
Trevor Fowler	City Manager since 2011	Similar to information from Parks Tau but difference was in the details of the operations put in place to realise the city's aspirations.	Gauged the magnitude of challenges faced by the city in becoming a "world city" in more recent times.
Marketing Department staff member(s)	These participants were directly involved in the crystallization and	Detailed information ranging from memos, mandates	Offered insights into how the directive of place branding in the city was internalised and how it

Person	Justification	Information Expected	Purpose
	delivery of the city's place brand. Information obtained here was effectively resonant with the study's objective of examining the dynamics of the city's place brand.	and expected deliverables.	percolated at a lower management level, the operational level to be specific.
Matshidiso Mlaba: Director of Tourism at the Joburg Tourism Company	She previously worked in the capacity of Puleng Hlatshwayo. Her information was particularly important for purposes of back viewing. This information traced where the brand was coming from. Also, it gave insights into where the brand could be heading.	Retrospective information and what the driving forces behind the city's place brand. In addition, information on tourism, was strongly linked to branding the city	This information fulfilled the retrospective aspect of the study.
Consultant	Most city governments have marketing departments, but they also utilise the services of external consultants when creating a place brand. This information is necessary because it examined the city's	The elucidation of the city's external concerns and interests because an external party would be best suited in gauging the deficiencies of	The information cast a lens through which the city's place brand was evaluated from an external party. Caution was flagged in as far as the impartiality of the external party since they might have been

Person	Justification	Information Expected	Purpose
	outward look of its place brand.	the city's place brand.	remunerated to offer the service.

1.6.4 Photography

Branding is concerned with creating and maintaining an image and ideal in a person's mind. It is difficult for traditional text-based archives (Stanczak, 2007) to capture the essence of branding, let alone place branding. In this light, photography was used to supplement the study's written text and strengthen the study's case. Pink (2006) notes that when used correctly, photographs and words can work together to produce deep meanings.

The study moves away from the familiar way of using photography as an end to itself. It tends to present a photograph(s) through captions, thereby giving the impression that the photograph is a factual record of the event(s) (Phillips and Johns, 2012). Owing to the limited time granted in the city archives, the minutes and agendas were photographed for later assessment and interpretation. Instead, the study adopted the photo essay as its strategy. The photo essay effectively creates a dialogue of competing and complementary meanings of images instead of claiming issues to be what they are or ought to be. In the context of the study, the above was important. It occurred from different perspectives. Firstly, it emerged from internally within the city. Secondly, it explored how the city transferred its place brand to the external world. Finally, it explored how the place brand was received externally. All these perspectives landed themselves to multiple interpretations. In this light, the photo essay was used to capture these differentiated meanings of the city's place brand.

1.7 Research Ethics

Gregory (2003) sees ethics as an extension of morality. How research is conducted must be ethical or moral. The current study investigates the dynamics of place branding from an institutional perspective, that of the city of Johannesburg. As much as this is the case, the city employs people for its branding processes. As such, the

extent of exposure these individuals were subjected was minimal. The study surfaced questions such as (a) whether participants were treated with respect and dignity, (b) whether participants were made aware of their choice to participate in the study or not, and (c) whether participants were promised material benefits for participating in the study.

The study interviews with city officials as part of its data collection strategy. In addition, the study required the perusal of council meeting agendas and minutes. In the case of the interviews, consent was sought to interview the participants. As a way of showing consent, participants were asked to sign a consent form. The form also indicated that the participants' identities would not be used when reporting on their information in the study. Thus, the study guaranteed the anonymity of the participants.

Apart from one participant who gave consent for his real name to be used, real names were not used in the study. Regarding accessing archives, consent was requested from a month in February 2016 and again in May 2018. The photographs taken relate to inanimate objects, such as Council agendas and minutes. Being the city's property, these items were not allowed to leave the site; thus, their photography was used to create a database. Photographs of agendas and minutes are sensitive and stored securely on a password-protected computer. The photographs will be destroyed after the completion of the study.

Together, these data methods/collection strategies present a pragmatic mechanism to coalesce data and information to answer the overall research question and objective. The methods are not seen as competing or undermining each other but complementary in presenting a complete picture of the research at hand. Used in unison, these methods triangulate the information gathered. This means that each sub-question is approached by a different strategy to provide a complete picture. Moreover, the combined use of these methods is aimed at (a) ensuring the quality of responses to the questions posed in the study and (b) integrating different data sets (interviews, photography, and mapping) into a cohesive narrative. A Research Ethics Clearance application informed these processes. The University granted clearance, and the study continued as planned.

1.8 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is made up of nine chapters. The chapters are interconnected by exploring the concept of place branding in a developing world setting, Johannesburg. The first chapter of the thesis provides a landing for exploring the dynamics that influenced the place branding of Johannesburg between 1994 and 2019. The chapter draws attention to the need to understand place branding in the developing world, with Johannesburg as the focus. The chapter highlights the gap in understanding place branding from developing world settings and surfaces the need for their exploration there.

Chapter 2 deals with the definitional issues of place branding and the presentation of the constituent elements of place brands. This chapter draws attention to the interchangeable use of terms and concepts related to place branding and thus aims to clarify these to understand place brands better. In addition, the chapter attempts to show the increasing complexity of urban governance through the infusion of place branding in city processes and activities.

Chapter 3 brings a historical analysis of the evolution of place branding. The chapter traces the evolution of place branding from its marketing heritage through the paradigm shifts in the world political economy from the post-World War Two era to 2019. This analysis highlights pertinent issues during various times and reflects how place branding was conditioned by these, as well as depicts the planning systems that gave rise to them.

Chapter 4 is the first of three chapters exploring the efforts of branding Johannesburg between 1994 and 2019. This chapter presents the processes of place branding under the mayoralties of Dan Pretorius and Isaac Mogase. Dan Pretorius was the Mayor of Johannesburg from 1994 until 1995. Isaac Mogase became mayor at the end of 1995, and his mayoralty lasted until 2000. As such, Chapter 5 looks at the infancy of Johannesburg's branding.

In Chapter 5, the thesis looks at the branding efforts in Johannesburg through the two mayoral terms of Amos Masondo, who took over from Isaac Mogase. Masondo was mayor of Johannesburg between 2000 and 2011. Specifically, in this chapter, the exploration of the origins of the "A world-class African city" place brand takes centre

stage. Thus, the dynamics and motivating factors for coining this place brand are illuminated through interviews, photographs, and other means.

Chapter 6 explores how the “A world-class African City” place brand was cemented under the mayoralty of Parks Tau. In this chapter, the thesis investigates how Tau used the place brand to better position Johannesburg in a globalising economy and make the city more visible in Africa and the world. The chapter draws attention to how Tau employed his programmes to consolidate the “A world-class African City” place brand.

Chapter 7 interrogates the changing sentiments around the branding of Johannesburg under the mayoralty of Herman Mashaba, who was mayor of the city between 2016 and 2019. This chapter is significant because it presents a divergence and dilution of branding efforts in Johannesburg. Specifically, the chapter draws attention to the “a Johannesburg that works, is a South Africa that works” place brand.

Chapter 8 revisits the initial research questions posed in the study and synthesises a framework for understanding place branding from a developing world setting. The chapter endeavours to highlight the complexities of branding places from these settings. Included is an exploration of power relations between the city of Johannesburg and its stakeholders in its branding processes, as well as the extent of the possibilities for the co-production of these processes.

CHAPTER 2: BRAND ELEMENTS

2.1 Introduction

Discussing any topic must begin with definitions of the concept to avoid a multiplicity of meanings. This chapter aims to clarify terms related to place branding. The chapter begins by describing place branding. The chapter presents the elements that make up a place brand. It then presents the intricacies and connections of each element and how they contribute to the place brand. The chapter offers a conceptual methodology for creating a place brand. Finally, the chapter concludes by reflecting on the application of place branding in different settings to open a case for more place branding in cities of the Global South.

2.2 What is place branding?

The extension of branding to countries, regions, cities, and towns has resulted in many definitions for the concept (Boisen *et al.,* 2018). This gives the impression that place branding is in its infancy, complicating its theoretical and practical applications (Anholt, 2010). In particular, the interchangeable use of marketing and branding is at the root of this complication. While some scholars view place branding as a sub-category of place marketing, others see place marketing as a sub-category of place branding (Boisen *et al.,* 2018). Consequently, scholars and practitioners of place branding alike differ in their approaches to branding places. Despite the differences in approach, most scholars and practitioners agree that place branding transcends the creation of slogans and logos (Sevin, 2011). Kavaratzis (2004) sees cities as brands because they are responsible for fulfilling functional roles such as providing liveable spaces and services. However, these are pushed subliminally as value propositions in city marketing exercises.

The study of place brands has evolved to encompass sophisticated lines of theory. For instance, Kaneva (2011) presents three categories for understanding place branding. The first of these relates to a technical-economic basis for place branding. This speaks to practical applications of branding to places to create profit. The second category defines place branding as political. The political realm is concerned with maximising opportunities for participation and representation for all placeholders in place branding exercises. In this study, the term “placeholders” is used instead of

stakeholders, and it refers to the collective of residents, businesses, non-governmental organisations, and civil organisations found in Johannesburg. This is due to the varied interested parties in places. Placeholders is used to encompass residents, local businesses, and religious and civil organisations that find themselves in a particular place. The third category is defined as cultural, wherein the social traits and characteristics of a place are leveraged as capital in exchange for the attraction of the international community with the view of maximising tourism.

Zenker and Braun (2010: 5) see place branding as "a network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of the place's stakeholders and the overall place design." This definition clearly shows that place branding practitioners make a purposeful effort to communicate the qualities of a place. It elevates the values and imageries of a place to people who visited it and even to those who have not (Colomb & Kalandides, 2010).

Medway and Warnaby (2014: 164) aver that "the notion of the place brand name with associated brand values and imagery begins to commodify the place itself. It helps to turn the place into a place product, a thing and artefact, by giving it a coherent brand identity". This elevation of the values and imageries of places relies on producing hyper-realities of places (Medway *et al.,* 2015). Hyper-reality refers to the projection of an all-encompassing and universal place brand. However, this approach must be revised to maintain the sheer diversity of places.

Another influential scholar in place branding, Anholt (2007: 7), defines place branding as "…the management of place image through strategic innovation and coordinated economic, commercial, social, cultural and government policy". That Anholt's definition focuses on "place image" and not necessarily, the "place" is significant. There is a suggestion that the place is secondary to its image in branding processes. Framed this way, the creation of the image is more important than the geography of a place. In addition, including the word "management" raises awareness that place branding is not a once-off endeavour. Instead, it is iterative and continuous. Not only that, including society and government in such processes is an essential consideration

regarding the co-production of place images. Put differently, place brand images are negotiated.

Therefore, an updated definition of place branding is necessary. Thus, for this study, “place branding is the process of creating and negotiating an ideal image and message of a place between place brand managers and other placeholders”. This definition holds on to the prevailing trend of using hyper-reality in creating place brands. However, it counteracts the exclusion of certain pockets of the city by including other placeholders in branding processes. In this way, the creating a place brand is curtailed from being driven unilaterally from the perspective of city governments.

Placeholders such as residents and local businesses are essential as part of a place brand because they promote the image and symbols of their places. Indeed, Anholt (2010: 7) points out that “when most people talk about place branding, they are not usually talking about giving a name or a symbol to a place, because places already have names and many already have symbols: they are talking about doing something to enhance the brand image of the place; place branding is believed to be a way of making places famous”. Anholt’s conception of place branding reaffirms the need for place branding practitioners to conjure positive images of their places to attract businesses, talent, and tourists.

2.3 The beginnings of a brand

Given the earlier definition, place branding is an umbrella term for making places stand out. De Chernatony and Riley (1998) recognise three brand creation aspects. The first relates to the initial use of a brand, which is a signaller of ownership. A product is branded because it originates from a specific producer. To safeguard their product from competitors and imitators, the producer creates trademarks (Maurya & Mishra, 2012).

However, places are not products and cannot be viewed in the same light. It raises the question as to whom a place belongs. It leaves spaces for the contestation of places between city governments and other placeholders and herein surfaces the need for these agents to negotiate a meaningful place brand (Insch & Walters, 2018). The second aspect, which stems directly from ownership, is the creation of a logo. Creating a logo is an attempt by a brand to differentiate it from its competitors. For instance, the

practice of creating logos has a long tradition in the city of Johannesburg (Sihlongonyane, 2015). This tradition led to the formulation of the “A world-class African city” place brand. Johannesburg’s manual claims, “Our logo is our unique mark and differentiates us from other large cities the world over. Correct usage ensures protection. When presented consistently, our logo ensures that we are always recognised” (Johannesburg, 2015: 2).

Thus, the logo’s primary purpose is to serve as a differentiator from competitors and simultaneously as an icon of familiarity within the minds of placeholders (Turner & Shockley, 2014). The third aspect of creating a brand is establishing an identity, i.e., that speaks to what the company or organisation represents. For places, there is little room to manoeuvre in terms of what they offer. Apart from physical endowments, places rely on highlighting their innovations in service delivery and hosting mega-events, for instance, to create their place brands (Metaxas *et al.,* 2011). As such, understanding place brands is complicated and requires examining the elements that make them up.

2.3.1 Brand identity

The ability of a consumer to differentiate one brand from another stems from brand identity (Romaniuk *et al.,* 2007). This ability rests on the capability of the brand to resonate with its consumers. What is meant by this is that a brand or its product(s) must have a distinguishing factor that sets it apart from its competitors. According to Nandan (2005), brand identity is generated by the entity in question. It is a ploy by which the entity identifies itself and highlights its offerings (Roggeveen *et al.,* 2021). In place branding, brand identity refers to how a city advances its case in an ever-globalising world (Florek *et al.,* 2006).

Cities such as New York, Paris, Tokyo, and London have well-established identities that have taken years to develop and entrench (Capone & Lazzerreti, 2016). In South Africa, Johannesburg has used gold as its identifier and highlighted the dynamism of development in the city when compared to other cities in South Africa (Harrison & Zack, 2012). Through catchphrases such as “Egoli, place of gold”, “Jozi, Gauteng, Maboneng”, and “City of Lights”, Johannesburg has pushed the envelope as far as

creating a footprint through place branding in South Africa and in Africa, more generally (Fu & Murray, 2013).

A brand's culture, vision, personality, positioning, presentations, and other meanings are the constructs of its identity (Mindrut *et al.,* 2015). These features indicate an inward orientation in creating brand identity (Ruzzier & De Chernatony, 2013). In other words, the city dictates what its identity will be. Critical to this undertaking is the drive to create consistency in brand identity. For instance, cities, being arms of government, pride themselves in the innovations they bring to service delivery.

In the mid-2000s, Johannesburg launched its e-services portal, which was seen as a way of driving the city towards the aspiration of a smart city (Topo & Backhouse, 2016). As one of the cities to first embark on e-governance in South Africa, Johannesburg effectively made strides towards realising its aspiration of "A world-class African city (Bwalya, 2019). Through this, the city was creating a feeling of prestige and distinctiveness, elements that would set Johannesburg apart from other leading cities not only in South Africa but also in the world. Prestige refers to the status and esteem attributable to the brand. The uniqueness of a brand cements its prestige. Cities with long-standing brand identities have higher perceived prestige (Vanolo, 2017). In addition, cities with coherent and consistent place brands tend to have more prestige (Choplin & Franck, 2010).

This uniqueness is what separates a brand from other cities. It speaks to the distinctiveness of a brand. The constant communication and leveraging of a place brand reinforce the distinctiveness and keep other cities on their toes (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). Put differently, leading cities consistently lay down the marker for their distinctiveness and, as a result, make subtle suggestions that they can resolve the problems that their placeholders may have (Wunderlich, 2008). The significance of brand identity cannot be underestimated. Mindrut *et al.,* (2015: 395) argue that brand identity is "the direction vehicles must follow to reach their destinations". To put it differently, brand identity is the beacon or lighthouse of a city in that it acts as the point of reference for its services (Kapferer, 2008).

From a practical perspective, the logo and slogan capture brand identity (Poljanec-Boric, 2016). The logo and slogan quickly spring up in the minds of a placeholder when

a conversation about the offerings of a city occurs, for example. As Mugobo (2021) suggests, the logo of a city serves the purposes of (a) forming the image of the brand in the mind of a placeholder and (b) communicating the position of the brand to other cities and what they can offer.

In marketing terms, Florek *et al.,* (2006) identify six critical items for realising a successful brand identity. These items are namely (i) the creation of the name and logo of a brand, (ii) the graphic styling of the logo, (iii) sale strategies, (iv) the performance of products and services of a brand, (v) the promotion or merchandising of its products and services and (vi) marketing communication. However, as mentioned earlier, places work differently concerning their branding. Cities, for instance, cannot change their names repeatedly. Referring to one name strengthens a city's brand identity (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2010). As for the creation of logos, the likes of Anholt (2005), Kavaratzis (2010), and Govers and Go (2016) have strongly dismissed them as gimmicks that do not necessarily bolster the branding efforts of a city.

Cities have moved toward commercialising their services (Kishimoto *et al.,* 2017). However, the services that have been commercialised are legislatively enshrined as fundamental rights, and so, there is a limit to how far they can be commodified. In Johannesburg, for instance, there are several municipal-owned entities that are managed independently. However, they are bound constitutionally to provide services to all city areas, rich or poor (Mothamaha & Govender, 2014). The city of Johannesburg possesses a wide array of merchandise that it produces, and its website and social media accounts are used consistently to narrate the city's brand. Through these efforts, the city of Johannesburg used its brand identity to position itself in broader global economics.

2.3.2 Brand positioning

Defined as "the act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market" (Kotler, 2003: 308), brand positioning encompasses the manipulation of the mind of a placeholder and the simultaneous rekindling of old connections to a place. Read this way, brand positioning has little or nothing to do with creating something new. It signifies the strength of long-standing

place brands. Two issues are at play when considering Kotler's definition. Brand positioning is a balance between where a city fits in a competitive global economy and its performance as perceived by local and international placeholders (Ryu *et al.,* 2012; Larsen, 2018). Considering the interplay between these issues enables a city to carve out a niche for itself.

According to Keller (2012), successful brand positioning rests on (a) identifying the target market, (b) identifying the nature of competition, (c) identifying points of parity and (d) identifying the points of difference. From a perspective of place branding, this assertion needs revision. In the first instance, places have residents; by default, they become the city's target market. Secondly, the landscape of service provision and delivery is legislated and therefore, competition between cities is limited to attracting foreign investment (Papadopoulos, 2004). As a result of the limited competition cities can enter, there needs to be more scope for cities to differentiate from others (Mohr & Guerra-Pearson, 2010).

Adomo *et al.,* (2019) point out that competition among cities is limited to their physical assets and intangible resources they create. In South Africa, for instance, cooperative governance is a cornerstone of its municipal governance system. Metropolitan cities such as Johannesburg, Tshwane and Ekurhuleni often collaborate on various projects (Edwards, 2008). Despite this, cities must still position themselves favourably to their audiences, locally and abroad. This positioning relies heavily on projecting a positive image (Klein *et al.,* 2019).

2.3.3 Brand image

The brand image of a place is the immediate reflection held in the mind of a placeholder (Lahap *et al.,* 2016). Ci and Choi (2017) see a brand image as more than a brand's visual reflection. Instead, they argue that brand image also includes the feelings and thoughts about a place. This view is supported by Bobovnicky (2011), who postulates that brand image is established through continued communication on the part of place branding managers and the experience of placeholders as receivers of brand messages. Aranda *et al.,* (2015) note that brand image is made of (a) functional image, (b) affective image and (c) reputation.

Functional image is linked to such attributes as quality of place and related affordability of being in a place. Not all city areas reflect the quality branded in their messaging (hyperreality) (Medway *et al.,* 2015). In this way, pockets of a city are branded differently, while others are ignored altogether (Colomb & Kalandides, 2010). For example, place branding in Johannesburg is mute on places such as Alexandra, Diepsloot and Orange Farm. However, it readily embraces places like Sandton, Melrose and Parktown (Beall *et al.,* 2000).

Affective image links to the personality of the place. Forristal and Lehto (2009) argue that places are imbued with personalities that make them easier to associate with. Critical to this is the presence of charismatic people in places. Vilakazi Street is a world-famous attraction in Soweto because it owes its prominence to having been home to people such as Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela, who were Noble Peace Prize laureates (Hoogendoom *et al.,* 2020).

Reputation is self-explanatory but essential in a city attempting to establish a footprint in the global economy (Janiszweksa, 2013). Reputation rests heavily on how a city performs, especially concerning what it aspires to and delivers (Hazelkorn, 2015). Viewed in this way, brand image is effectively the intangible association, a rapport that a placeholder develops between themselves and the city identity. Crompton (1979: 18) aptly summarises brand image as “the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination”. The use of the words “beliefs”, “ideas”, and “impressions” cements the idea that brand image is an intangible but essential construct when branding places. When constructed properly, brand images give places a persona, to which placeholders can relate.

2.3.4 Brand personality

The attribution of human characteristics to a brand is brand personality. Famous people or celebrities are brands (Pereira *et al.,* 2015). The transference of non-human characteristics to other things, including places, is called anthropomorphism (Rauschnabel & Ahuvia, 2014). Glinska and Kilon (2014) argue that attributing human personal traits to places bridges the gap between place brand managers and placeholders. Certainly, Liao *et al.,* (2017: 3) agree with Gliska and Kilon regarding

their assertion that “brand personality offers consumers a means to construct an identity and provide a mechanism to express the actual self, ideal self and social self.”

The distinction between actual, ideal, and social self is essential for place branding. It speaks to (a) where a person currently is in life, (b) where they aspire to be in future and (c) their cognisance of who they are in relation to broader society. Places are developed to be enablers of life (Francis, 2011). This means that places and cities have different pockets allowing upward mobility. While areas like downtown or the CBD are more suited for young people, the suburbs are the purview of more mature residents (Frey, 2003). This is attributable to the price ranges in these places (Leblanc & Gensler, 2018). The efficacy of strategies that seek to personify brands heavily depends on constructing a consistent relationship between the brand personality and the self-image of a placeholder (Strobl *et al.*, 2016). Thus, there is a strong relationship between brand image and brand personality because people are also considered brands (Hosany *et al.,* 2006; Chen & Phou, 2013).

According to Glisnka and Kilon (2014), two perspectives apply to brand personality: internal and external. Internally, that is from the perspective of place brand managers and externally from the view of placeholders. From an internal point of view, ideas about presenting place within the context of competing cities are an important consideration. Cities must consistently find new ways of projecting positive brand images (Holcomb, 2021).

Occasionally, this involves using celebrities and brand ambassadors (Braun *et al.,* 2013). This brings a human face to that place, creating a sense of familiarity from the viewpoint of placeholders. Externally, placeholders are effectively looking into the doings and processes of the city. Positive perceptions are reinforced by the city’s performance over a long time. These two perspectives reinforce Olson and Allen’s (1995: 392) definition of brand personality: “…a set of meanings constructed by an observer to describe the inner characteristics of a brand.” Phrased differently, brand personality is a representation of the emotional and intangible sides of a brand (Glinska and Kilon, 2014).

According to Maehle and Suphellen (2011), there is a direct and indirect way of creating brand personality. The direct way of creating brand personality relies on

transferring human traits and characteristics to a place. The indirect way relies on a process in which placeholders transfer personality characteristics to other people. The indirect way of creating brand personality cements the assertion that even people can be considered brands. So, brand personality is concerned with making connections and relationships between the city and its placeholders. Thus, it surpasses the traditional thinking of brands being used purely for transactional purposes.

However, brand personality can be complicated when applied to places because of the differentiated nature of physical spaces within one place. Humans are complex beings and bring with them different associations. While it is desirable to associate places with positive, influential people, others are tainted by negative figures. For instance, places rife with gangsters can suffer that association and become neglected (Mair *et al.,* 2012).

Therefore, brand personality is conditioned on place attachment (Zenker & Rutter, 2014). Brown and Raymond (2007) aver that place attachment is the sense of place that a person feels about the environment they find themselves in. It is the positive emotions individuals have about their environments (Moore and Graefe, 1994). Therefore, human characteristics attributed to places must resonate with how people see themselves. This assertion is two-fold. How people see themselves in relation to a place is actual or aspirational.

In the first instance, a place reflects who a person is, and in the second instance, it can reflect who and what a person wants to become in the future. At play is the question of how long a person has been in a place and the employment, residential, and recreational opportunities available there. The brand attachment/brand personality dichotomy is thus interactive, dynamic, and iterative. Places have a conditioning effect on an individual, and individuals condition places over time. The degree to which people feel connected to places is a function of the equity of a particular place. Places developed on the back of progressive ideals such as democracy and equal opportunity are necessary in fostering place brand equity (Herstein *et al.,* 2014).

2.3.5 Brand equity

Place brand equity relates to the assets and liabilities linked to the image of a place, its name, and symbols that add to or subtract from the value a city government provides to its placeholders (Aaker, 1991). To think of a place brand as having assets and liabilities underlines the notion that places can be built up to form formidable presences in the placeholders' minds while being manipulated to create incredible barriers to their accessibility.

First avered by Henri Lefebvre in his book "La Droit a la Ville" in 1986 and built upon later by David Harvey, the Right to the City concept underscores this assertion of the trust deficit between city governments and placeholders. Chow *et al.,* (2017) see place brand equity as the awareness of placeholders about the promises of city governments against what they deliver. This awareness rests on how easily placeholders interact and are familiar with a place brand. Combined, these two aspects foster feelings of equity and place brand loyalty (Bose *et al.,* 2016).

The degree to which placeholders feel they have access to the city and its processes is essential in entrenching feelings of belonging and having agency in matters affecting them (Jawahar & Aslam, 2021). Zanfardini *et al.,* (2011) point out that place brand equity is formulated through the interpersonal constructs that placeholders formulate when interacting with a particular place brand. Owing to the numerous placeholders a city has, gauging place brand equity is complex (Zenker, 2014). As an example, the city of Johannesburg is mandated to provide services to its residents but is simultaneously expected to create its revenue because it is classified as a metropolitan city. Thus, the city is caught in determining what takes precedence. On the one hand, failure to provide decent services to its residents inadvertently tarnishes its image. On the other hand, a tarnished local image compromises the ability of the city to attract investment abroad.

Several models attempt to measure place brand equity. The Citizen Satisfaction Index is the first (Zenker *et al.,* 2013). This index is composed of (i) urbanity and diversity, (ii) nature and recreation, and (iii) job chances and cost-efficiency (Benedek, 2017). The urbanity-diversity dichotomy speaks to, on the one hand, the levels of

development within an urban environment and, on the other, the opportunities for immersion within a broader societal structure different from one's cultural background.

The nature-recreation split refers to the balance between the natural environment and the number of opportunities available for recreational activities. This split seeks to present a discontinuity in the obsession with the built environment and is used as a preserve of the natural environment. In addition, it provides opportunities for people in urban settings to interact with nature in the form of parks and other urban greenery settings. This has both physical and psychological health benefits (Brymer *et al.,* 2021).

The job chances and cost-efficiency set of considerations are purely financial and balance the cost of living within a place with the prosperity of that place. Therefore, this split considers such issues as the distance between residence and workplace, proximity to social service centres, financial institutions, and government services. The second is the Investor-based place-brand equity (Jacobsen, 2012). This model is comprised of brand attributes and symbolic brand benefits. Brand attributes include awareness, heritage, image, personality, reputation, and confidence. Symbolic benefits include social considerations, such as the prestige of address, and psychological considerations, such as the location's identity.

According to Jacobsen (2009), three ex-ante uses exist for investor-based place brand equity. Firstly, it is concerned with building confidence amongst investors about a place. Secondly, it creates symbolism about a place, and lastly, it helps orientate and sensitise investors about the messages a place communicates about itself. For example, Johannesburg advanced a two-pronged approach through its "A world-class African city" place brand. It openly invited foreign investment while simultaneously attracting business on the continent. It does not forgo one for the other, thereby exuding a balance in its place brand equity; all are welcome in Johannesburg.

Herstein *et al.,* (2014) point out that the place brand equity of cities in the Global North is much more discernible than those of their counterparts in the Global South because of the infancy of place branding in the latter's settings. To increase their place brand equity, it thus becomes imperative for cities in the Global South to try hard to ensure

that they maximise the brand experience of their places when visited by international and local placeholders.

2.3.6 Brand experience

According to Beckman *et al.,* (2013), an experience with a place occurs when people interact with its branded spaces and attain pleasure. Therefore, brand experience is an intellectual activity (Shieh & Lai, 2017). Lindstedt (2011) points out that people ascribe emotions to a place when interacting with it. The experience of a place refers to the extent to which a person relates to a place, the identity conferred to them by that place, as well as the extent to how socially attached the person is to a place (Ramkisoon & Mavondo, 2015). The length of time spent in a place directly influences place experience (Zenker & Rutter, 2014). Typically, the longer a person has stayed in a place, the more of it they can experience. Conversely, the shorter the stay of a person in a place, the less of it they will experience.

Therefore, place brand managers must create a suite of as many brandable spaces within their places as possible. This allows people to take in as much of the place as possible. Khan and Rahman (2015) argue that place brand experience is crucial in building positive relationships between placeholders and city governments, especially considering place branding is a long-term endeavour. To this end, these scholars opine that the whole arsenal of place branding should be in place. This includes but is to event marketing and increasing contact with branded spaces. Residents and tourists are always in contact with a place, actively or passively.

However, active engagement is more critical with reference to place brand experience (Roshi & Garg, 2021). The nature and multiplicity of experiences that a place offers influences active engagement with that place. When people visit the same spots, they make place branding less arduous because they reaffirm those spaces as pleasant to be in or visit. However, place branding is complicated by those who seek to explore different pockets of a place because they want to experience a different side of it, putting extra pressure on the city to build a multifaceted place brand (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). According to Rodrigues *et al.,* (2020), this is possible by increasing the quality of services in a place, increasing the attractiveness of the environment, and opening opportunities to spend more time in branded places.

The quality of services can range and have multiple manifestations in places. This could include considering ease of access to spots within a place, their proximity to other amenities and the availability of convenient public transport services such as Uber or Taxify. The latter two aspects are interdependent. Residents and tourists are likely to visit aesthetically pleasing places and, by extension, be more willing to spend more time in those places instead of spending too much time in places that do not evoke positive associations and experiences. The above version of place-brand experience paints a picture of encounters with places at the local and physical level.

However, Keneva (2017) contends that place brands fall under the scrutiny of gazes far from the place itself and that these introspections depend heavily on the presence of international media outlets. So, as within public diplomacy, place branding is an extension of the political project of a place in that they (places) use transnational media to portray their subjectivities that align with dominant, contemporary world messages. This is seen as an attempt by a place to mediate the gap between its aspirations and pressing matters such as service delivery and local economic development.

However, the subjectivities presented by media are not fraught with inconsistencies between the lived experiences of residents and the conditioning nature of messages being broadcast by place branding managers. Viewed this way, the creation of place brand experience forms two ends of one continuum that essentially and significantly reinforce each other. On the one hand, it signals the importance of interacting with a place in its physical manifestations. On the other hand, it highlights the increasing irrelevance of physical territorial borders and instead surfaces the increased significance attached to the globalising effects of transnational media (Govers & Go, 2016). The reinforcing element of this relationship comes in the form of word-of-mouth exchanges between those who have and are physically being in a particular place and those who are envisaging visiting or residing in that place in future (Beckman *et al.,* 2013).

In this context, brand image rather than brand experience is at play. For Hanna and Rowley (2013: 476), brand experience is “more important than brand image because a negative brand image can be countered through a positive brand experience”. In any event, place-brand managers must understand the concept of place brand experience.

Anholt (2007: 75) encourages place brand managers to “mine” their places. Mining means digging “out of the history, the culture, the geography and society of the place…”

Indeed, Baxter *et al.,* (2013), and Kavaratzis *et al.,* (2017), argue that place-branding strategies need to take cognisance of the reality of a place. These scholars understand that a place is not devoid of meaning. The artefacts and the people make up the painting of an otherwise empty canvas. If understood this way, all places can create a place brand experience. However, it is the extent to which they can leverage their offerings that can truly differentiate them from their competitors.

2.3.7 Brand differentiation

A significant component of creating nuanced levels of place brand experience lies in how that place differentiates itself from others. Put differently, what sets one place apart from another? According to Romaniuk *et al.,* (2007), transcendence is required for a place brand to be highly differentiated. This transcendence relates to a place brand surpassing functional differences, especially in terms of price and location. Price and location as elements of differentiation are weak markers for differentiation. A place brand is required to go the proverbial extra mile for it to be entrenched within the memory and psyche of a placeholder. Janiszewska and Insch (2012) argue that sufficient differentiation offers value to placeholders, creating value for the place brand.

For Chan *et al.,* (2016), place brand differentiation relies on familiarity. The degree to which a placeholder is familiar with a place brand is a function of their bonds with it. Viewed this way, consistency in how a place brand communicates with its placeholders is essential. However, places have limited avenues from which to differentiate themselves. In particular, the placeholders to whom place brands appeal differ significantly.

While cities, for instance, can set up initiatives such as development zones or corridors to woo their business placeholders, these serve little incentive for residents. Cities cannot necessarily lower the price that residents pay for services. In South Africa, for instance, the National Energy Regulator prescribes electricity prices, and

subsequently, these are taken up by different municipalities in the country (Amusa *et al.,* 2009). In the same vein, more prominent places such as cities have a better chance of setting up a place brand images that can differentiate them from their competitors (Medway & Warnaby, 2008). Towns typically fall under the umbrella of a more prominent place brand; thus, they have even more limited avenues for imprinting their place brand images (Braun *et al.,* 2014). Given these limitations, place brands must constantly communicate their offerings and value.

2.3.8 Brand communication

Communicating about a place brand is one of the most critical activities in attempting to make it memorable in the minds of placeholders. (Svetlana, 2014). Braun *et al.,* (2014) opine that the most fashionable way to communicate about place brands is to focus on their physical features. There is little surprise in this as places, especially cities, are mostly perceived through their physical infrastructure, be it a bridge or buildings.

In addition, the ubiquity of these elements features even in the minds of people who have never visited a particular place. For instance, The Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, is a prominent feature that is recognisable even if people have not been there. Seen in postcards and even movies as a romantic city, the Eiffel Tower is a popular feature of thinking about Paris (Warnaby & Medway, 2010). In Johannesburg, the Vodacom Building situated in Hillbrow is a prominent feature of the city skyline. It is projected in many forms of media to conjure up images of the city (Parker, 2016).

However, the levelling of an argument is possible against communicating about a place through its physical endowments. That stream of place branding does not incorporate other elements such as the people in that place, its history and friendliness, for example. For this reason, Vallaster *et al.,* (2018) note how many places have begun to broadcast subliminal messages around friendliness, hospitality, and tolerance as critical cornerstones for attracting new people and businesses into their jurisdictions.

The incorporation of intangible elements is essential in an ever-globalising world. The city of Johannesburg's "A world-class African city" place brand is undoubtedly an

excellent example of this. The place brand seeks to make the city attractive to foreign investment while making Johannesburg palatable to its local placeholders. Oliveira (2015) suggests effective place brand communication strategies rely on moving away from painting static, pictorial views of places. Instead, he insists that a brand message must (a) present and preserve a natural demeanour of the place while (b) simultaneously importing other traits that project the place as being in motion. Together, these traits loosely describe what Porter terms “calculated aesthetics” (2013: 231). In short, calculated aesthetics refer to the culmination of place brand communication elements that are respectful to the history and heritage of a place and embrace its future.

The key to this concept is the seamless stitching of the brand message’s historical and futuristic temporal scopes. Calculated aesthetics also involve residents as a critical element of place brand communication. It is essential for two reasons. On the one hand, residents are an integral part of a place brand. They represent the energy and buzz of the place brand (Waitt & Gibson, 2009).

On the other hand, it targets new people in the place. These people can be tourists or businesses. In this way, visitors (movement) sweep the residents (the static), and conversely, the residents (old) ground the visitors (new). In other words, calculated aesthetics is a means of maintaining a delicate balance between the history and future of a place and the people who find themselves there.

Given its significance, Gretry *et al.,* (2017) argue that place brand communication must be informal. The informality of a brand communication strategy mediates and softens the power relations between place brand managers and placeholders. This potentially leads to a situation where trust is established and maintained between these agents. Braun *et al.,* (2014) see word-of-mouth place brand communication as the most essential to establishing trust. For these scholars, traditional branding, i.e., creating logos and slogans, does not necessarily work well for place brands. Instead, they see positive experiences with a place as a basis for creating a buzz about it. In addition, informal place brand communication is an effective way of transferring and letting others know about these experiences through word-of-mouth.

However, word-of-mouth traction is slow and too localised in a globalised world. As such, scholars including, Govers (2015), Huertas and Marine-Roig (2016), as well as Cleave *et al.,* (2017), have explored the exploding and ubiquitous nature of social media and the internet in brand place communication. Through blogs, chats and visual communities, residents, tourists, and businesses can voice their experiences about a place freely and frequently. The use of the word “experiences” is deliberate. From a brand perspective, places are not products but are the sites within which experiences can be attained.

In line with keeping up with social media and the internet, city authority websites and other platforms need constant upkeep and revitalisation (Keegan, 2021). Apart from other forms of advertising and hosting mega-events, a city’s website may be the only platform from which a potential visitor can try and get a feel for it. According to Heurtas *et al.,* (2011), the better-performing websites are are interactive. These include those websites that have a user/administrator interface. A lack of an interactive interface premises a strict hegemony wherein the city is the messenger but has not set up feedback mechanisms.

In this way, a power-setting mechanism is entrenched, rendering other placeholders voiceless (Sevin, 2013). Communication is one-way. Not only that, Ryu and Swinney (2013) opine that most place brand messages are outwardly oriented and focus on something other than residents. Kavaratzis (2005) notes the importance of involving residents when communicating place brands. When these placeholders participate in communicating and are part of the brand, they energise the brand. Lindstedt (2011) states a three-pronged relationship exists involving place, identity, and residents.

Any place brand message that does not include the identity of a place or one containing a forged identity of a place is likely to fail since it will not be conversant with residents. Similarly, a place brand communication strategy lacking its residents is likely to fail. It becomes clear that residents give a place its identity, and reciprocally, the place gives its residents their identity. This place-identity-residents relationship surfaces four prerequisites for constructing an effective place-brand communication strategy.

Firstly, the issue of communication manageability surfaces. Manageability means that there must be mechanisms for place brand managers to initiate and involve residents in creating a place brand message. According to Skinner (2005), issues of (a) power and control, (b) lack of corporate direction, (c) lack of skills and resources and (d) lack of flexibility inhibit the manageability of a place brand communication strategy.

Top-down brand messages create palpable power dichotomies to the extent that residents can outright reject a place brand (Skinner, 2021). While the initiation of place brand communication strategy is usually the purview of place brand managers, ambiguity in the direction and meaning of a place brand message can result in residents feeling alienated and excluded from that place brand. The rigidity and, to an extent, the arrogance of place brand managers in thinking that they are the arbiters of place brand messages is detrimental to the place brand.

Secondly, place brand communication strategies must exude an element of continuity. This speaks to the creation of a congruent brand message. At the core of brand message continuity lies the idea of using not only the physical features of a place but also its people as a drawcard. Simultaneously, continuity speaks to a brand message incorporating a desired state, put differently its aspirations. In this way, the reality and aspirations of a place are kept in balance.

Thirdly, the issue of goal support emerges. Svetlana (2014) suggests two critical factors to consider when communicating about a (place) brand. The first of these is processes that are set up when communicating about a place brand. The type and extent of co-creation is a central determination in weighing the efficacy of collaboration between place brand managers and its residents in creating a place brand. In addition, the relationship between residents and the place brand is an important consideration. This consideration raises the question of how much residents are empowered to create messages about their place. Lastly, distinctiveness is an essential consideration in communicating a place brand message.

The question here is what makes a place unique and different from others. As mentioned earlier, many places incorporate their physical features (buildings, bridges, mountains, oceans, etc.) to communicate their place brand. However, some places

are not well-endowed with such features. In such cases, placeholders must work with alternative features. Whatever alternatives placeholders use, these must differentiate that place from others and offer its residents and tourists memorable experiences. Harrison-Walker (2012) argues that places will always mean something to their residents and visitors, even if a legible or purposeful place brand does not exist. Despite a lack of a visible place brand, place brand managers and other placeholders still need to assess how external placeholders perceive their places.

Regarding place brand assessment, Hankinson (2012) proposes three measures to ensure that a place brand performs well. Firstly, place brand managers and placeholders must establish a brand culture. Brand culture establishes the basis from which a place's brand launches and ensures agreement on what the brand is and what it constitutes. In this regard, Gretry *et al.,* (2017) offer some advice regarding the format of communication a place should take. These scholars suggest that an informal communication strategy may work well for well-known places, while a more formal strategy could be more appropriate for lesser-known places.

Secondly, institutional coordination is essential. The city should be able to set up mechanisms to facilitate the creation of a place brand. Avoiding duplications and redundancies is critical to effective place brand communication strategies within the city. This coordination must also extend outwardly to include residents and other placeholders. A top-down coordination process is undesirable. Brand ambassadors are essential in avoiding a brand communication strategy, talking "at" as opposed "to" its target audience. These individuals are the mouthpieces for the brand communication strategy.

Lastly, brand reality is called for. This balances a place's history, heritage, and future aspirations. A place brand communication strategy that overpromises puts the city at odds with its placeholders. A city cannot, through its place brand claim to be something it is not while it has yet to deal with mundane local issues. In 2013 for example, Johannesburg was ordered not to use its "A world-class African city" place brand by the Advertising Standards Authority (Bianco, 2013). This order came on the back of a resident, Steven Haywood, accusing the city of misleading its residents. He argued that the city coffers were in shambles. The city won its appeal the same year and was

permitted to use the place brand in its communication strategies (Delmont, 2013). An incongruence between the reality and aspirations of the communication strategy results in a brand gap.

2.3.9 Brand gap

It is only sometimes possible for place brand managers to cement their (place) brand with the experiences and expectations of their placeholders. Gonzalez *et al.,* (2016: 112) see the place brand gap as the gap between "what the place brand wants to be and what the placeholder experiences". According to Neumeier (2005), place brand gaps emerge because of (a) a place brand creating a barrier to its communication and (b) a place brand creating a barrier to its competition. Place brands need to create clear, succinct messages and simultaneously occupy a space in the minds of their placeholders. Conflated place brand messages confuse placeholders about its aspirations.

The failure to construct clear brand communication strategies makes competing even more cumbersome because it creates a space for competitors to take advantage of consolidating their offerings. The presence of these two phenomena increases the distance between a place brand and the experiences of placeholders. For example, of the three metropolitan cities in Gauteng, Johannesburg disproportionally capitalises on the O.R. International Airport. While the airport is in Kempton Park, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg receives more people than its counterpart (Rogerson, 2018). In this way, Ekurhuleni under-markets the airport and trips in its image by not constantly claiming it. Place brand gap is not always a result of a place's doing. When a place is under attack, receives bad publicity and consequently, placeholders change their perceptions about it, place brand gaps emerge (Ishmail *et al.,* 2016).

To close these gaps, Zenker and Braun (2010) propose re-aligning the place brand to the perceptions of its placeholders. This considered, it is apparent that closing place brand gaps is a continuous process. Neumeier (2006) suggests five ways of bridging place brand gaps. Firstly, he suggests that it is essential for a place brand to set itself apart from its competitors. For this, a place brand must produce a value proposition that placeholders cannot attain elsewhere.

Secondly, place brands that perform better are a culmination of many people's ideas. A brand can be collaborated upon through outsourcing, working with other agencies and residents as equal partners or in-house, where different departments come together to brainstorm and implement ideas. Kavaratzis and Kalandides (2015) point out that interactions amongst a host of people and organisations are essential in formulating strong place brands because it brings representation and association to a place brand.

Thirdly, Neumeier argues that innovation is essential. Pushing against the grain ensures that uncharted waters can be explored, and in so doing, new value propositions can be explored. Fourthly, place brand managers need to offer placeholders opportunities to give feedback about the place brand. Unilateral communication about the place brand from place brand managers needs to be updated to allow placeholders to express what the place brand is for and to them.

Lastly, place brand managers need to allow the place brand to evolve and either reinterpret or reinforce its standing in the minds of its placeholders over time. In this way, placeholders are part of the journey of forging the place brand from start to finish. Places and, by their extension, place messages portray different meanings to different people (Campelo, 2015). Place brands, like the places they seek to represent, are ever-evolving and, as such, need constant reiteration.

Moreover, the differentiated nature of spaces within places renders different meanings and associations to an overall place brand, so much so that it can become incongruent and not conversant with residents' lived experiences. From this, one can see that constructing a uniform place brand is complex. This complexity necessitates place brand managers to consider extending their place brands to strike a closer balance between the reality of their cities and the images they are trying to portray.

2.3.10 Co-branding

Sometimes, it becomes necessary for place brands to rejuvenate themselves. A place brand aspires to highlight upcoming events and other milestones. Brands rely on the extension concept to rejuvenate themselves or highlight new offerings (Jevons *et al.,* 2005). However, places offer a finite number of services and have limited opportunities

to bring innovation to how these are offered (Anholt, 2005). For this reason, places and preeminent cities, partner with influential placeholders to cement their place brand. This is referred to as co-branding. Place co-branding involves the reciprocal endorsement between a place and another placeholder, in most cases, a company (Bengtsson & Servais, 2005).

According to Aarstad *et al.* (2015), place co-branding has two effects. Firstly, positive attributes of one brand are transferred to the other and vice-versa. Secondly, a spillover effect regarding placeholder attitudes occurs when positive co-branding is initiated. Considering the fixed nature of places, co-branding arrangements are usually of an extended period (Warnaby & Bennison, 2006). A famous example of a long-held co-branding arrangement is that of the Professional Golf Association (PGA) tournament, the Masters. The Masters has been held in the United States (U.S.) in Augusta, Georgia, since 1930 (Robertson, 2005). This arrangement has made Augusta synonymous with the tournament, and the city receives massive publicity as a result.

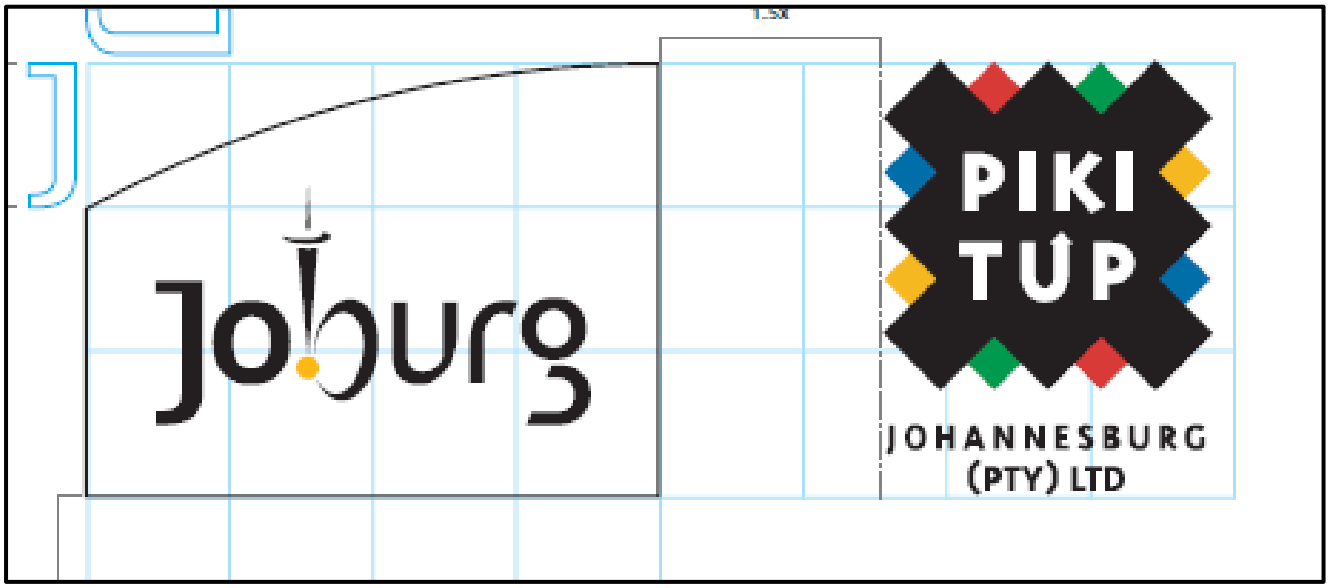
Johannesburg also has several co-branding arrangements with its placeholders. For instance, the city hosts the Sunshine Tour-sanctioned Joburg Open annually at the Randpark Golf Club (Knott & Hemmonsbey, 2017). Founded in 2007, this tournament was first played at the Royal Johannesburg and Kensington Gold Club until 2017 (Swart, 2017). The tournament was cancelled in 2018 and 2019 to be revived again in 2020, where it was played at the Randpark Golf Club for the first time since its founding. Another example of a co-branding arrangement in the city of Johannesburg is that of Talk Radio 702 Walk the Talk. The Walk the Talk is an annual event that sees Johannesburg's residents take a walk of 3 – 10 kilometres along iconic landmarks like the Nelson Mandela Bridge that connects Newtown to Braamfontein (Sihlongonyane, 2021). Through these examples, place co-branding depends on forming long-term relationships between cities and placeholders.

Figure 2.1: Co-branding between the city of Johannesburg and the Sunshine Tour

Source: randpark.co.za

It is also possible for cities to co-brand internally. Across the world, major cities have outsourced the provision of their services. These include cities such as Plymouth in the United Kingdom and Massachusetts in the United States (Ranasinghe *et al.,* 2017). Between 1997 and 2003, Johannesburg concluded the outsourcing of services by establishing Municipal Owned Entities (Mothomaha & Govender, 2014). This gave rise to agencies such as City Power (providing and maintaining electricity infrastructure), Joburg Road Agency (road infrastructure), Pikitup (waste removal) and Joburg City Parks and Zoo (Park and recreational facilities upkeep) (Iroanya & Njingolo, 2017). These agencies work independently but report directly to the city's management structure (van Vuuren, 2012). In their operations, these agencies are mandated to co-brand with the city.

Figure 2.2: Internal co-branding between the city of Johannesburg and Pikitup



Source: Joburg, 2015

In the above example, the place brand of Johannesburg is placed on the left as the prime brand. The logo of Pikitup is placed on the far right and acts as the secondary brand. This trend is repeated in all co-branding arrangements of the city. This ensures that the place brand of the city is always dominant and prominent. By doing this, the city of Johannesburg ensures that its place brand is always recalled in the minds of its placeholders.

2.4 Conceptualising place branding

There is no doubt that places can be branded (van Ham, 2010). However, minimal consensus exists on measuring the efficacy of place branding strategies. For Zenker (2011), two aspects are essential when beginning to speak about measuring the efficacy of a place brand. Firstly, and not surprising, is the appreciation of the physical endowment of a place. Physical attributes of a place are simply the most widely used elements in branding places (Ruzzier & Petek, 2012). Secondly is the consideration of how placeholders perceive a place. Placeholders' perceptions about a place are a construct of how place brand managers frame their stories about it. From this emerges the culture of a place.

The culture of a place is embedded in its history and present and future aspirations (Pedeliento & Kavaratzis, 2019). The consideration of place culture is vital in creating place brands. While urbanists have studied cities such as London, New York and Paris over an extended period, other cities in the developing world remain relatively unknown (van Ham, 2008). Thus, well-known cities are more unlikely to tweak their place brands. In the same breath, lesser-known cities have more manoeuvring room to create new place brands. However, it must be noted that creating place brands is a lengthy process and needs continuous reiteration until a memorable one is created (Vuorinen & Vos, 2013).

Residents play a vital role in creating a place brand (Braun *et al.,* 2013). These placeholders are seen as part of the place brand. Kavaratzis (2017) notes that in most place branding processes, residents are seen as end-users of place brands and are primarily used as brand ambassadors, only valuable for spreading good vibes about a place brand. This departure is significant because residents are the rhythm and heartbeat of places (Insch & Walters, 2018). Their inclusion in creating place brands only as end-users needs to be better-informed as it can rob place brands of credibility and, more importantly, authenticity.

In addition, there is a reciprocal and conditioning relationship between place culture and place image. Through this, four interrelated activities emerge. First, the culture of a place is expressed. This occurs through the expression of the identity of the place, which is given effect to by the numerous networks of relationships and associations between place brand managers and the placeholders of the city. These relationships and associations are built over extended periods. This means that place brand managers and placeholders need to engage continuously to re/construct the place brand. This is important because the place brand must be meaningful to placeholders and that it is not created unilaterally and then merely prescribed once created. Secondly, place brands leave impressions on people who encounter them.

In other words, place brands shape people's perceptions or images about places. Thus, place brands play a vital role in creating positive associations with places. This is not to say that place brands must ignore the negative spaces found in cities or negative stories about them. Baker (2007) argues, for example, that a bad news story

about a place can help strengthen a place's brand because such stories tend to captivate people for long periods of time. From this, a conversation about a place is generated, so its image captures people's imaginations.

Thirdly, place brands mirror the expectations that a city aspires to be. Mirroring relies on presenting the city in its best light (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). It includes bragging about a city's achievements and highlighting innovations in what it does (Locmele & Mousten, 2016). From this, mirroring is about performance. A place brand cannot make unjustified claims and not be able to substantiate them. Mirroring takes a balanced look between what a city can do in the present and it aims to do in future.

Lastly, influential place brands leave impressions on others (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013). Leaving an impression means that people talk about a place based on the verbal, visual and physical expressions of a place. This is important because the ultimate point of place branding is to make a place stand out from its competitors (Zavatarro, 2013). Through these four elements, place brand managers curate images, narratives and behaviours that construct favourable associations with a place.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter sought to clarify what place branding is and bring an understanding of the constituent elements to it. Martinez (2016) argues that research on the branding of places is increasing. However, this is not to say that the theory and application of place branding are coherent. As Anholt (2010) notes, for example, the interchangeable use of terms in the discipline needs to be clarified because it is an obstacle in progressing a distinct field of study. Hildreth (2010) opines that place branding needs further evolution to develop its lexicon. When one searches for universities with which to pursue studies related to place branding, their degrees are embedded in other fields of study, such as marketing and urban studies (Braun *et al.,* 2013). Apart from the International Place Branding Association (IPBA), which was founded in September 2016, not many institutions systematically study the branding of places (Fernandez-Cavia *et al.,* 2018). On its board are several influential scholars and practitioners who have consistently studied and made headway in place branding. They include the likes of Robert Govers, Magdalena Florek and Mihalis Kavaratzis.

A glance at the profiles of these individuals reveals that place branding is currently vexed. Govers is an international scholar and practitioner of place branding. He obtained his doctoral degree from the Rotterdam School of Management at the Erasmus University in the Netherlands (placebranding.org, 2022). Florek is an Associate Professor at the Poznan University of Economics and Business in Poland (Poznan University, 2022). Kavaratzis is an Associate Professor of Marketing at the School of Business at the University of Leicester (University of Leicester, 2022).

The wide array of backgrounds of these influential scholars on place branding indicates that the discipline is still maturing. Despite the confusion on the theory and application of place branding, it is abundantly clear that cities in so-called developed countries have had a head-start over their developing country counterparts (Shoaib & Keivani, 2015). On the one hand, cities such as New York, Paris and Tokyo have immeasurable global reach in terms of their place brands. On the other hand, one will need help to immediately conjure up place brands of cities such as Jakarta in India, Nairobi in Kenya, and Buenos Aires in Argentina. If anything, the mere fact that one must even further state in which countries these cities are points to the non-existence or lazy efforts in creating memorable place brands in the developing world.

In South Africa, Johannesburg has the most recognisable place brand in relation to other similar-sized cities. A quick website check of the cities reveals that many cities in South Africa still need recognisable place brands. Apart from the cities of Tshwane (Igniting Excellence) and Mangaung (At the heart of it all), the other five metropolitan cities have a place brand or even tagline they work with. Even in the case of Tshwane and Mangaung, their place brands have yet to garner much inquiry. This points to a need for a nuanced exploration of place brands from the perspective of cities from the Global South.

The following chapter traces the evolution of place branding from the 1900s to 2019.

CHAPTER 3: TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF PLACE BRANDING

3.1 Introduction

Place branding owes its existence to marketing praxis (Lilliker, 2015) but has since evolved to locate itself in urban geography and urban studies (Kotler *et al.*, 1993). The straddling of place branding between these two disciplines makes its study cumbersome and exciting. Interest in place branding has grown recently (Gertner, 2011). Hankinson (2015) firmly places the infancy of place branding in the 1950s. Critically, Giovanardi *et al*. (2013) note that the discipline's emergence from brand-management concepts, models and theories complicates the understanding of place branding. These scholars see the fluid relationship between place and brands as being problematic. At the centre of this complexity lies the question of whether places are brands.

The above notwithstanding, several scholars (Ashworth & Voogd, 1988; 1990;1994; Papadopoulos, 2004; Anholt, 2010 Pike, 2011; Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013) have made significant strides in initiating critical in-roads on the state of place branding. Their research has concentrated on discerning what place branding is and what it is not. However, the interchangeability of terms used within place branding praxis has complicated research into place branding. Used interchangeably, terms such as destination marketing, place marketing and place promotion are mistakenly confused to mean place branding. However, as Skinner (2008) and Martinez (2012) note, these practices and processes differ. Furthermore, the results attained by the application of each process vary. Destination marketing is handy in attracting tourism and its development; place promotion deals with communicating the characteristics of places; and place branding is an umbrella term for all the above (Lucarelli, 2015).

The debate on whether places can be branded is antiquated and mundane (Papadopoulos *et al.*, 2011). Instead, exploring the reasons why places brand themselves is more critical. The overriding motivation for promoting places (place branding) stems from their need to strategically differentiate themselves from others (Rein & Shields, 2007). However, the seeming ubiquity of branding application to places gives the impression that the practice is coherent and lucid. This could not be further from the truth, however. Place branding is quite fragmented, and although cities

such as New York and Paris have had considerable success in employing it (Ashworth, 2009), its genesis and understanding continue to be elusive, and this is even more pronounced in the settings of cities of the Global South.

This chapter then aims to present the evolution of place branding. Govers (2011) notes that place branding emerged as a sub-category of marketing. However, the increased interest in the branding of places has been such that the discipline can now stand alone with its lexicon and related definitions (Anholt, 2008). Herein, the evolution of place branding is traced through urban planning historical movements dating back to the advent of the City Beautiful movement in the 1890s until the second decade of the twenty-first century. Through this, the conditions of cities and the motivations (political, economic, and social) that contributed to the evolution and development of place branding as a separate, distinct discipline are explored.

3.2 A Timeline of place branding

The table below depicts the evolution of place branding through a timeline of significant events and prevailing trends in branding cities over time.

Table 3.1 Place Branding Through the Years

Development/Political Era	Planning Movement	Year (Approximately)	State of Cities	Branding Period	Level of Branding	Influences	Kinds of Cities Promoted	Form of Promotion	Kind of Branding
Late 19th Century Industrial Revolution	City Beautiful Movement (Garden City as a subset)	Early 1700s - 1898	Chaotic and in flux	First wave	Primitive	Beautification and Monumental Grandeur	Clean, self-contained cities (Chicago)	Targeted middle-class urbanites to move from block tenements	Attraction
Post-industrial, WWI, Great Depression and WWII (Post-war consumerism culture)	Turn to Modern Planning	1898 – 1950s	Mechanistic, “rational”	Second wave	Elementary	CIAM and Reformist Planning (institutionalisation of planning)	Highlighted order and functionality through zoning (New York)	Concentrated on highlighting environmental and social amenities	Smokestack chasing and urban boosterism

Development/Political Era	Planning Movement	Year (Approximately)	State of Cities	Branding Period	Level of Branding	Influences	Kinds of Cities Promoted	Form of Promotion	Kind of Branding
Civil Rights Movement	Reaction against Modernist Urban Planning (Jane Jacobs,	1954 – 1969	Urban Crisis (cities experiencing downturns and urban renewal programmes)	Indistinct	Secondary	Urban Regeneration and Desegregation	Modern housing, shopping centres and community facilities (Baltimore, Chicago)	Improvement of ghettos because of zoning	Promotion
Environmentalism	Nuanced realisation that human population outstripping what the planet can sustain	1969 - 1980	Rapid urbanisation with unprecedented levels of consumption	Third wave	Secondary	Deteriorating environmental well-being of cities with heightened levels of pollution	Environmentally sensitive cities with a focus on clean air and water (Vancouver)	Cleanliness and back to basics development	Place Promotion
Post-modernism	Liberalisation of Planning (laissez faire) and Entrepreneur	Late 1970s to mid-1980s	Urban Decay despite urban renewal	Fourth wave	Tertiary	New Urbanism	Compact cities as a response to sporadic urban sprawl	More formalised and an attempt at addressing	Place Marketing, Promotion

Development/Political Era	Planning Movement	Year (Approximately)	State of Cities	Branding Period	Level of Branding	Influences	Kinds of Cities Promoted	Form of Promotion	Kind of Branding
	ial Governance		programmes of the 1960s				(Brandevoort in the Netherlands)	residents' needs	, Prestige Projects
Sustainability	Refocus on Environmental Planning	Late 1980s	Rapid urban growth and overpopulation (gave rise to thoughts of sustainable development)	Fourth wave	Tertiary	World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission)	Eco-cities (Helinski, Finland; Cape Town, South Africa)	Highly formalised	Place Marketing
Globalisation	Continuation of the liberalisation of Urban Planning and Entrepreneurial governance with an	1990s	Cognisance of Climate Change	Fourth wave	Advanced	Global City thesis (Sassen, 1991) and Congress of New Urbanism (Duany, Plater-Zyberg and others)	More globally connected cities (New York, Tokyo)	Mass media	Place Wars, Global City

Development/Political Era	Planning Movement	Year (Approximately)	State of Cities	Branding Period	Level of Branding	Influences	Kinds of Cities Promoted	Form of Promotion	Kind of Branding
	infusion of NPM								
Globalisation II	Sustainable Development	Early 2000s – 2019	Fluxed - continued rapid urban growth, a refocus on rural development	Fifth wave	Highly Advanced but still with incongruences	9/11; 2008 fiscal crisis	Cities worldwide recognising significance of having a footprint on global economics (Johannesburg)	Social media	Place Branding

3.2.1 The first signs of urban place promotion

The unfolding story of place branding is best understood in consecutive waves (Green *et al.,* 2016). The first of these relates to the primitive wave of place branding situated in the late 1890s. Embedded in the rapid period of industrialisation of the late 19th century in America and Britain, members of society such as aristocrats and other influential individuals (landowners) owned and controlled vast urban spaces (Briciu & Briciu, 2016). However, more than the ownership of these spaces was needed to advance their agendas. Thus, these spaces needed to differentiate themselves from others to attract the best talent to move their economies forward and, more narrowly, the legacies of the urban elite (Silvanto & Ryan, 2014). At this point, this practice of differentiation took on the guise of marketing.

The elite bands of urbanists in America and Britain began to employ different techniques to highlight the offerings of their places (Zenker *et al.,* 2013). These included the selected mapping of favourable spaces within cities and proclamations about the benefits of locating and being within these spaces (Burgess, 1982). Avraham and Ketter (2008) suggest that these were the primary tools used for creating positive perceptions about cities and places; thus, the promotion of places was underway.

The progressive era of urban planning, which lasted from 1890 until 1915 (Thane, 2020) internationally, ushered in new philosophies about the running and management of cities (Mattson, 2010). During this period, perceptions about and images of places owed their birthing mainly to the ideas of Ebenezer Howard (1902) and later Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker (Hall, 1993). These urbanists pushed the agenda of the Garden City Movement, which sought to create utopian cities far different from those seen during the Industrial Revolution. Their ideas centred on creating cities with manageable populations and open public spaces (van Rooijen, 2000).

The cleanliness and manageability of these cities became the trump card for promoting them (Xie, 2006). For example, one of the first Garden City towns, Welwyn, founded in 1920, revamped its branding in 2019 to conjure an imagery of laidback living through its use of the *Discover the best of town and country* tagline (Ward, 2005). Even in the 1890s, the connotation of “town and country” presented Garden City towns

as sites offering the best of both worlds and as alternatives to the run-down industrial city. Not surprisingly, these connotations and assertions still form a large part of place branding in modern times.

The Garden City was a subset of a broader movement known as the City Beautiful movement (Freestone, 2020). This movement was an attempt in mainly America and Britain to reorganise their cities (Gilbert, 1991). According to Hess (2006), it emphasised nationwide comprehensive planning, heightened regulation and the infusion of public open spaces and civic art in urban design endeavours. The popularity and application of the principles of the City Beautiful movement waned towards the beginning of World War I (WWI) (Wilson, 1981).

At that point, the promotion of places emerged mainly as attraction (Ostergren, 2005). Gertler *et al.* (2002) argue that the ability of a place to attract people is dependent on environments that are open to creativity and diversity of all sorts. This means places seeking to attract people and businesses must be open to change. An essential extension of place attraction is retention. It is futile for a city to attract a young, creative populace but not be able to retain it, for example. This leads to discontinuities in the place brand message of such a city. Lawton *et al.* (2013) note that place attraction and retention do not coexist simultaneously.

Therefore, it becomes critical for city governments to strike a balance between the aspirations and realities of their cities to not overpromise on what they can deliver. For this reason, Garden City schemes depended heavily on attracting investment from wealthy individuals who invested heavily in quickly building up towns and cities fit for a burgeoning middle class (Hardy, 2003; Alexander, 2009). It meant that these investors could either make considerable returns on their investments or losses in a brief period.

In the developing world, the moves made in mostly Anglo-American cities coincided with the height of colonialism (Isaacman & Roberts, 1995). There were also currents of projecting positive images and identities in cities of the developing world (Mihailovich, 2006; Freire, 2014). Port cities, which presented as landing boards into and out of distant continents such as Africa and Asia, gained more publicity through attraction (Lee & Huang, 2021). For example, Bickford-Smith (2016: 202) notes how

the concept of “local colour” played a crucial role in attracting tourists to Durban, South Africa, in the 1890s. Meant by local colour is the use of customs, local speech, attire and other specific features of inhabitants in targeting tourists and investors. Sihlongonyane (2015) avers that even Johannesburg, a landlocked city in South Africa, began projecting modernist images of itself from its founding in 1886.

However, port cities were significant around this time because they were the meeting points of many diverse cultures (Lewis, 2009). Port cities in these settings enabled the mingling of the locals with the so-called modernity of the developed world (McPherson, 2002). The advent of air travel had not taken root at this time. Thus, people who had visited port cities in the developing world began to formulate identities and images of cosmopolitan places outside Anglo-American countries (Goh, 2014). These included writers, historians, painters, and photographers (Hight & Sampson, 2013). The wide array of these promoters shows that professionals and amateurs were among them (Lydon, 2013). This is significant because it underscores that the formulation of identities and images was not only the purview of cities in the developed world. Through these examples, place attraction represents the first wave of the evolution and development of place branding as it is known today.

3.2.2 The turn to modern planning

The second wave of place branding is rooted in the early 20th century through a transition to modern architecture and urban planning (Rego, 2021). Following in the footsteps of the City Beautiful movement, several prominent architects came together in 1928 to form the Congrés Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne (CIAM) or the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (Domhardt, 2012). These architects included the likes of Le Corbusier, Sigfried Giedion and Karl Moser (Mumford, 2014). CIAM held several congresses in Europe to reshape ideas around architecture and urban planning. The first of these congresses, CIAM 1, held in 1928, focussed on affordable small-family housing units. The second congress, CIAM 2, 1929, paid attention to the design of such settlements consisting of the units contemplated in CIAM 1.

In the same year, the famous Stock Market Crash hit America, and this was the precursor to the Great Depression, which lasted until 1939 (Temin, 1991). The effects

of the Great Depression would, however, reverberate worldwide. In response to the devastating effects of the Great Depression, then-American President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced the “New Deal” (Rosen, 2007). The New Deal was a package of programs which sought to reform financial markets and a suite of public work projects aimed at reducing unemployment (Kennedy, 2009). This deal is similar to South Africa’s Reconstruction Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was a reformist programme aimed at, among other things, balancing the socio-economic inequalities that were present in South Africa because of apartheid (Davies, 2021). The programme was introduced in 1994 but was discontinued in 1996 (Adelzadeh, 1996). This was in the infancy of the democracy of South Africa, and the country tried to portray an image of reconciliation through the Rainbow Nation country brand (Westhuizen, 2001).

The third instalment, CIAM 3 in 1930, gave birth to the concept of “The Functional City” (Gold, 1998). The Functional City held at its core the idea that housing could be organised around functional elements of the city (Kallis, 2021). At that juncture (around the 1930s), American cities used large factories, ports, and themed recreational spaces to organise around (Mumford, 2019). In effect, this idea gave rise to “smokestack chasing”. Smokestack chasing is an economic approach that focusses on attracting a major investor, whether it be a company, mine, university or the like, to boost local economic development (Nel, 2001; Bond, 2003).

Typically, smokestack industries are heavy and focus on manufacturing (Craft *et al.,* 2021). They include manufacturing heavy machinery, cars, ships, steel, and chemicals (Florida, 2006). Cities such as Detroit (“Motor City”) in the U.S., Eindhoven in the Netherlands (through the presence of Philips Electronics) and Wolfsburg in Germany (through the presence of Volkswagen Motors) fit the mould of cities founded on smokestack-chasing endeavours (Strangleman, 2013).

Thus, smokestack chasing was pursued under Perroux’s growth pole theory (Akpadock, 1993). Central to the growth pole theory lies the idea that economic growth diffuses from a crucial point of activity to immediate surrounding areas, and in turn, these (surrounding) areas function as additional points to their surroundings (Nichols, 1969). Viewed this way, geographic space is not static, but rather, it is malleable to external economic forces (Lasuen, 1969). According to (Komarovskiy & Bondaruk,

2013), the development of growth poles is dependent on (i) the acquisition of special purpose public financing and (ii) the identification of suitable sites based on available infrastructure. The basic premise of Perroux's idea is that economic centres become the focal point of specialised labour. The original growth pole, owing to its superior workforce and economies of scale, attracts other enterprises and, as such, several growth poles emanate from it. Ordinarily, the state-controlled and directed economic development in industrial estates, which typically catered for light industrial development (Scott, 2001). For example, Levitt (2004) notes how the city of Detroit in America portrayed an image of efficiency in production to lure investors to its expanding motor vehicle manufacturing brand portfolio.

World War II (WWII), which began in September 1939 and ended in September 1945, soon followed the crisis of the 1930s (Burds, 2009). The post-WWII era presented a watershed moment in consumer culture (Paulson & O'Guinn, 2018). This refers to a shift wherein individuals began to glamorise and reinvent themselves (Featherstone, 1982). Put differently, it speaks to the elevation of the individual as a unique part of a more extensive system. In turn, this shift in consumer culture gave rise to marketing as a distinct management discipline because marketers had to appeal to the demands of an enlightened consumer base (Baker, 1999).

Incidentally, around the same time as marketing was taking hold, the economies of America and Britain experienced booms after this war, resulting in the intensification of export-led manufacturing under Fordism (Broadberry, 2004). However, the assumed benefits of Fordism (simplification of mass production) also led to widening the gap between the rich and the working class (Lipietz, 2001). Amidst these developments, cities in these settings were in decline and needed new imageries. From this, several city-building processes emerged. Hubbard *et al.* (2003) opine that in Britain, for instance, the city rebuilding processes infused the rhetoric of hope and potential for the future.

Similarly, in America, Bennet and Reed (2018) note how rebuilding cities centred on developing new kinds of cities darted by high-rise buildings and high-speed motorways. These grand visions of cities of the future effectively engendered the aspirational nature of promoting places, particularly cities, because they not only contemplated the eradication of the ills of cities of the 1950s but also offered visions

of what they could be in the future at the same time. The marketing of places took root at this time (Rainisto, 2003; Edquist, 2013).

These grand visions led to the coining of terms such as “Industrial City” and “Modern Service City” (Mommaas, 2004: 512). This included New York and Philadelphia in America, London in Britain, Berlin in Germany, and Paris in France (Newman, 2007). Characterised by nuanced levels of consumerism seen through the development of shopping malls, these cities, through their promotional campaigns, are aimed at capturing the minds of their residents, businesses, and external investors alike (Ward, 2005). However, the urban utopia predicated on the rebuilding of cities also created unintended social frictions such as class and race conflicts seen in cities even today (Pernice, 2006). In other words, the promotional campaigns created marginalised enclaves within cities that were not conversant with their messages. For example, Cortina (1990) notes how American places like the Bronx in New York became even more racially divided and poorer because of concerted efforts to promote places.

Regardless, expansion in manufacturing accompanied rebuilding cities in these settings (Lewis, 2008). This expansion heralded competition for external capital through what can be termed urban boosterism (Sklair, 2006). Bednarek and Daly (2001: 7) define urban boosterism as “the effort to promote the growth and development of one’s city, which often included a sense of competition with rival cities”. Viewed from this definition, boosterism presents towns and cities as safe, having civilised communities and a well-behaved labour force eager to work. Marcouiller (2007) notes that boosterism imbues the simple view that development has automatic benefits, placing developmental benefits above other costs, including residents. Indeed, Vives Miró (2011: 3) avers, “the implementation of growth at any price policy subordinates social justice and environmental issues”.

The assimilation of urban boosterism in urban planning policy fits neatly within the modernist era of planning, which saw nation-state-driven regional planning as its primary conduit (Hiller, 2000). Within the modernist tradition of planning, Irving (1993: 476) notes that “there is a belief in linear progress, positivist, technocratic, rational planning of social and geographic space”. Thus, the state became the main driver of economic development by (i) availing strategically located land and (ii) raising funds from the elite (Watson, 2009). This planning mode is exemplary of the Chicago School

of Thought (1918 – 1933), from which the modernist planning tradition began (Cavan, 1983).

Protagonists of this school of thought see land, culture, and population dynamics within a city as inseparable, i.e., places are ecological models from which natural and social systems can be investigated (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Walton (1993) sees this school of thought as giving rise to the analysis of urban differentiation, succession and place-political pluralism. This pluralism speaks to the conscientious practice of nation-states and cities giving order in otherwise chaotic spaces and their images and meanings. Put differently, there is a realisation on the part of city governments that places are not merely spatial agglomerations. Instead, places are manifestations of the narratives generated by city governments through the promotion of places.

Greenberg (2009) best exemplifies place-political pluralism through her book, “Branding New York: How a City in Crisis was sold to the World”. She explores the dual emergence of the industrial city and media technologies and draws a parallel between urbanisation and the art of representation. She argues that the interplay between these elements resulted in the formation of symbolic economies during the 1950s in the construction of a brand image for New York. The proliferation of mass media drove the expansion of symbolic economics. For instance, (Classen, 2004) notes that by 1955, three-quarters of American households had television sets compared to a mere 178 000 sets in 1948. McCarthy (2013) argues that television formed part of the US government’s arsenal in promoting ideas of its (i) dominance, suppressing the threat of Soviet communism, and (iii) underplaying its race and class differentials. Therefore, while domestic political upheaval was rife and international relations with the Soviet Union were at an all-time low, mass media, particularly television, cemented American city boosterism and idealism.

The ultimate promise of the modernist tradition of planning remained the same. Monclus and Medina (2016: 21) see the aim of modernist urban planning as “the transformation of quantity into quality through abstraction and repetition”. Indeed, Aoki (1992) and Watson (2009) argue that urban planning under the modernist tradition of planning was callous and a response to counter the blight and pathology found in nineteenth-century cities (Aoki, 1992, Watson, 2009). As Harvey (1990: 66) notes, protagonists of modern planning “saw space as something to be shaped for social

purposes." Effectively, the modernist planning paradigm was contra to the City Beautiful movement, which prevailed in the preceding century (Freestone, 1996). Rather than focus on the beautification of cities and their grandeur, modernists advocated for functionalism with little regard for the involvement of residents in development processes (Relph, 2016). Subsequently, modernist urban planning gave way to gentrification, as it proved effective in removing slum conditions and replacing them with developments capable of yielding higher revenues for city governments and developers (Loopmans, 2008). It promoted unauthentic narratives of places and effectively removed the locals from being represented in them (Johansson & Cornebise, 2010).

By the late 1950s, place branding had not become a discernible discipline. It was still embedded in the traditions of marketing. However, in 1958, Jane Jacobs, then writing for Fortune magazine, authored an article entitled "Downtown is for People" (Meeks & Murphy, 2016). In the article, Jacobs wrote, "If the downtown of tomorrow looks like most of the redevelopment projects being planned for it today, it will end up a monumental bore. But downtown could be made lively and exciting – and it's not hard to find out how" (Jacobs, 1958). This assertion affirmed that development projects could be geared towards uplifting sentiments about poorly performing cities and their enclaves.

Jacobs was laying the ground for the retelling of narratives of places through purposeful and decisive actions, which heralded the beginning of place branding. At that time, city governments across America and Britain were tasked with reimaging their cities as vibrant, dynamic places to live, work and play (Katz & Nowak, 2018). It moved away from viewing the city as only a place for work but also where life and recreation could intermingle based on messages of urban renewal (Harris & Lewis, 2001). Increasingly, there was a realisation that creating images of cities was a powerful tool in fostering loyalty to them (Lee & Lockshin, 2012). These imageries could be packaged and manipulated repeatedly to attract people deemed suitable and beneficial to the well-being and prosperity of cities (Young & Lever, 1997).

Modernist urban planning practices spread beyond Anglo-American countries. Specifically, the modernist approach to urban planning dominated the development of towns and cities in the colonised world (Parnell, 2017). In these settings, it distorted

the evolutionary development of cities in the so-called Third World, which led to the exclusion of a substantial proportion of endemic communities and their indigenous knowledge systems in city-building processes (Porter, 2006). As such, the narratives of the locals were lost in these cities, only to be replaced by romanticising foreign architecture and misplaced desires to be developed as understood in the West (Ooi, 2008).

None more so has this been a reality than in Africa. Most of the planning laws found on the continent display modernist ideas tinged with agendas that are dispositional and racist (Fält, 2016). The colonisers of the day embarked on a radical approach of institutionalised racial segregation and gentrification in various parts of the continent, including Tanzania, South Africa, and Namibia, between 1920 and 1947 (Schroeder, 2012). This resulted in the disenfranchisement of local people in these countries. This disenfranchisement meant that local people could fully participate in their economies, were restricted from entering certain parts of towns and cities, and lost security to the tenure of land (Claassens & Cousins, 2008). Thus, even the promotion of places in such settings was skewed in favour of the places habited and frequented by the colonisers to the detriment of places more the purview of local people (Muniz Martinez, 2012).

Watson (2009) argues that the presence of these ideologies in planning law in Africa presents dialectical conflicts between the obsession of city governments to create order and the urban poor's attempts to make ends meet. For this reason, Healey (2009) sees the presence of modernist planning in formerly colonised contexts as exclusionary, oppressive, and indefensible. From a branding perspective, cities in these contexts were seen as lagging in development, and there was an urgent need to modernise them (Lu, 2006). Thus, increasingly, the images being sought for cities in Africa, for instance, around this time mirrored those of American and European countries (Cohen, 2006). There is little surprise, for instance, that Johannesburg was likened to New York in the 1950s (Malaquais, 2006).

However, other parts of the developing world, like Asia and later Africa, underwent rapid decolonisation (Simon, 1984; Aspinall & Berger, 2001). This gave way to expressions of localised urbanity in these settings (Banerjee-Guha, 2010). In the same breath, it gave avenues for cities in these settings to infuse localised images and

identities (Geh & Sharp, 2008). However, much of the colonial thread remained in the narratives promoting cities in recently decolonised cities (Goh, 2014). In this way, it was not only the architecture of these cities but also the mental frames of reference that had been colonised (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2021).

3.2.3 The 1960s and the urban crisis

In her seminal book “The Life and Death of Great American Cities”, Jacobs (1964) continued to bemoan the monotony of the city made under the auspices of modernist urban planning. In particular, she questioned the little attention paid to complex, delicate social and urban fabrics of the cities of the 1960s. Indeed, the *Great Society*, a suite of programmes introduced by then-U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson, had a strong pillar to countering the urban crisis facing American cities (Crouse, 2018). This pillar focused on (i) the creation of alternative mortgage bond markets, (ii) liberalisation of the credit system for poor households and (iii) a change of the urban renewal program with a focus on accommodating low to moderate-income households (Brown-Collier, 1998). The modernist mould of urban planning reduced cities to single-use zones under the pretext of the comprehensive redevelopment of areas (Freestone, 1996), leading to the rise of urban ghettos.

As this was underway, Greenberg (2000) notes how American cities such as Atlanta, Los Angeles and New York began to conjure up new urban imaginaries through the self-publication of lifestyle magazines. These magazines highlighted the city’s identity and consumer patterns alongside each city’s desired lifestyle. Thus, the marketing of places was truly underway, and this trend has continued in various forms until today. Place marketing attempted to rebuild local narratives and deepened the codifying effects seen earlier within cities in the 1950s (Leontidou, 1993).

Simultaneously, cities across America and Europe attempted to attract tourists (Gotham, 2005; Näripea, 2009) to escape their mechanistic aesthetic brought by modern planning. John Urry would later term this the “Tourist Gaze” in 1990 in his most notable piece of work, “The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies” (Urry, 1990). The tourist gaze signalled the commodified spaces within cities whose landscapes had been reified more abstractly to their everyday reality for the benefit of tourists. The recognition of famous personalities promoting places was

allied to the attraction of tourists through the tourist gaze. For instance, Leonard (2013) notes how the Lord Mayor recognised the popular music group “The Beatles” as Liverpool’s ambassadors on their American tour in 1964. The use of the word “promoting” above is deliberate. Whereas the place marketing of the 1950s applied smokestack chasing and urban boosterism for raising external by emphasising rigid, mechanical spaces, place promotion leveraged messy, diverse, multicultural spaces of cities to attract tourists and capital investment (Bayfield, 2015). Increasingly then, the state’s role in promotional efforts decreased (Eraydin, 2014). Instead, the scope for individual regions and cities increased for them to self-promote (Rodwell, 2010).

Specifically, places relied heavily on the *made-in* image to self-promote and influence consumer decisions about them (De Nisco *et al.,* 2013). Broadly, the *made-in* concept refers to the image consumers associate with the place products are made or produced (Herstein *et al.,* 2014). For example, *Toyota* is synonymous with Japan (Chinen *et al.,* 2000). Other such conceptions of *made-in* images are particular to the scale of a city. For instance, *BMW* is known to be produced in Germany but specifically in Bavaria (Ewing, 2014). Through the *made-in* concept, cities in the developed world during this time were able to initiate and cement a foothold in the world’s economy.

However, this was happening in more than just the developed world. For example, Singapore, a tropical city-state, developed its first country brand through *Instant Asia* in 1964 (Ooi, 2006). Through this country brand, Singapore sought to project Asian cultures, festivals, and food in a single destination (Chang, 1997; Saunders, 2004). Therefore, the strategic and purposeful promotion of places to attract tourism and investment was no longer the sole purview of developed countries, regions, and cities. The combination of the *made-in* concept in the developed world and focussed place promotion endeavours of countries in the developing world signalled a significant milestone in how places inscribed themselves to foreign markets. This was important because local economic development is inadvertently shaped by the circumstances of the world economy (Scott, 1996). As Porter (2000) points out, the significance of an outward look for a country’s economy cannot be understated.

3.2.4 The 1970s and economic troubles

Beginning in the late 1960s, there were echoes of the City Beautiful Movement, which called for development to take cognisance of nature and its resources (McClure, 2020). In America, the Environmentalism Movement had garnered momentum (Burke & Seltz, 2018). At the root of this movement were calls for government to regulate air and water quality, which had become poorer over the years because of industrial activities (Dowie, 1996). As such, cities were under constant pressure to attract investment and, by so doing, avail economic opportunities in their jurisdictions. This led companies to take advantage of this situation by implementing lazy mechanisms to destroy and regulate of industrial waste (Dewey, 1998; Hoffman, 1999). Increasingly, measures meant to protect nature were flouted to the detriment of resources (Barca, 2012).

In response, around 20 million people across the length and breadth of America took to the streets to voice their frustration against the rapid dilapidation of the planet on 22 April 1970 (Dowie, 1996). This day became known as Earth Day and has been observed ever since (Dunaway, 2008; Dietz, 2020). The staging of the marches across America was fuelled by the Santa Barbara oil spill and photographs taken by astronauts from out of space (Clarke & Hemphill, 2002). A year earlier, a blow-out on an oil-rigging platform in the Santa Barbara channel, which caused a large oil spill (Baldwin, 1970). At the time, this was the worst oil spill in America (Molotoch & Lester, 1975). The photographs from outer space showed the planet's deteriorating state, which engendered a response from the marchers. In particular, the shrinking ozone layer was of special interest to these marchers (Chopra *et al.,* 2009).

The 1950s and 1960s saw rapid industrialisation and a simultaneous degradation of the planet's environment (Lee, 2017). In contrast, however, the 1970s marked considerable downturns in economic growth worldwide (Kindleberger, 1982). In the main, the oil price crash of 1973 deteriorated the gains of developed countries (Perron, 1989) and further weakened the economic outlook of developing countries that depended on export markets (Riedel, 1984). For example, Knight (1998) notes how developing countries in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Africa accrued vast levels of debt in their attempts to keep their economies afloat. In Africa, however, there was a divergence in how the continent had come to be seen as an impediment to

development (Diao *et al.,* 2017). Ranger (1968: xxi) notes an increase in rhetoric emphasising “African activity, African choice and African initiative”. Cities in Africa were being portrayed as viable locations for investment and business (Delgado & Brown, 1998).

In Asia, the situation concerning economic growth was slightly different. Asian countries diverged from the central themes of the prevalent ideology at the time by making space for the driving of their economies by strong central states (Chang, 2004). Ricz (2015) sees this as the rise of the so-called developmental state ideology. Countries in this region avoided taking loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), opting to oversee and spearhead the running of their economies (Kitthananan, 2008; Beeson, 2009). Countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong invested heavily in industrialisation, which saw their economies grow at more than 7% per annum (Leftwich, 1995). Collectively, these four countries became to be known as the Asian Tigers (Barro, 1998). Through their heavy industrialisation, the Asian Tigers concentrated on exports and, as a way of cementing their foothold on the global economy, used the “Made in…” labelling, which effectively gave rise to the “Country of Origin” concept (Kotler & Gertner, 2002). The country-of-origin concept has since been used to highlight the quality of products made in a particular country, and thus, forms part of nation branding (Kaneva, 2011).

Thus, “place promotion” buoyed the attraction of investment and tourists and subsequently crept into urban policy in the 1970s (Hankinson, 2010). In line with declining world economies, local governments in the West continued to promote cities through financial injections in special development zones (Burgess, 1982). This signalled a turn from simply being tourism attraction efforts to more sophisticated forms of branding places (Hanna & Rowley, 2008). As an example, Milton Glaser, a graphic designer, developed the “I love NY” slogan and logo in 1977 (Velissariou & Gkougkoulitsas, 2019). The fact that the abovementioned campaign employed a consultant was crucial in signalling the advent of place branding praxis (Sztejnberg & Giovanardi, 2017).

This broadly coincided with the rise of entrepreneurial urban governance towards the late 1970s (Hutton, 2004). Leitner (1990) suggests that the move away from conceiving cities as drivers of local development rather than a unit of autonomous

decision-making underpinned the entrepreneurial city. Entrepreneurial urban governance shifted focus from merely providing public services and goods to boosting investment, development, and employment through more innovative ways than the previous management styles practised by previous city governments (Shapely, 2011). Amongst these innovations in entrepreneurial urban governance was the realisation of working more closely with the private sector and recognising the market forces motivating these actors (Mack & Mayer, 2016). Thus, entrepreneurial governance bridged the gap between service delivery models and market issues on the part of city governments to deliver what Harvey (1989: 12) terms “Keynesian state-welfarism”.

Painter’s (1998: 261) definition of entrepreneurial urban governance is crucial for the current study:

> “a shift from urban politics and governance away from the management of public services and provision of local welfare services towards the promotion of economic competitiveness, place marketing to attract inward investment and support for the development indigenous sector firms”.

The latter part of the definition speaks explicitly to marketing places as an integral part of this form of governance. This aspect of entrepreneurial urban governance deployed large redevelopment projects and the bidding for and of hosting mega-events, particularly sports events (Edizel, 2013). Mega-events are popular drivers for localised urban development and, in most cases, the focal point of urban renewal projects. They include the development of large-scale projects such as Olympic stadiums and villages, and Expo centres (Gospodini, 2009). Mega-events and their accompanying projects draw significant attention to a city over a brief period, and thus, some scholars (Hiller, 2000; Horne & Manzenreiter, 2006) have questioned their credence and overall durability beyond a particular event.

Cities outside America and Western Europe also embraced the turn towards more entrepreneurial forms of governance. For example, Singapore changed its country from “Instant Asia”, which had been coined in the 1960s, to “Surprising Singapore” in the 1980s (Ooi, 2008). This latest version of the country brand sought to counterbalance images of modernity with those of exotic Asia (Saunders, 2004). Through the successive change of country brands in Singapore, for example, there is

a suggestion that other parts of the world were not merely catching up with America and Western Europe regarding place promotion but were truly immersed in the activity. Despite these developments, place branding did not emerge overtly, but place promotion was still rife then (Cleave & Arku, 2014).

3.2.5 The 1980s and the turn to post-modernism

In 1979, Margaret Thatcher became the first female British Prime Minister (Reitan, 2003). Two years later, in 1981, Ronald Reagan became President of the United States (Vaughn, 1994). Their assumptions of office coincided with the fiscal crisis of the 1980s and 1990s, which were characterised by rapid de-industrialisation, a declining tax base and decreased public expenditure under the auspices of neoliberalism, which brought about post-modernism (Iversen, 2007). All these events negatively impacted cities in Anglo-American cities and beyond; thus, the promotion of places declined in this period as well (Kavaratzis, 2005).

Together, these governments (the U.S. and the United Kingdom (U.K.)) erased the Keynesian outputs from which much of the post-WWII rebuilding programmes were predicated (Mankiw, 1995). This move saw the espousal of more neoliberal assumptions for the development of the world economy, and so, respectively, this saw the emergence of what became Thatcherism and Reaganomics (Lee, 2009). For Thatcherites, the priority in setting up the economy was to fight inflation (Evans, 2009). However, Thatcher recognised that eventually, attempts to reduce inflation tended to impact economic growth and, by extension, employment negatively. Thus, as Champroux and Sowels (2015) note, she countered this by introducing the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, a plan seeking to reduce inflation by controlling the money supply.

In contrast, Reagan's approach prioritised tax cuts with acceptable levels of budget deficits (Block in Martin *et al.,* 2009). In this regard, tax increases were a means of overcoming budget deficits (Velasco, 2000). Therefore, Thatcherism aligns more closely with monetarism, while Reaganomics align more closely with supply-side economics (Ashford, 1990). Briefly, monetarism relates to controlling money stocks to set off the inflation rate (Arestis & Sawyer, 2002) and so assumes a heavy presence

of the state in the economy. Supply-side economics argue for lowering taxes to stimulate the economy while pulling back state intervention (Marshall & Arestis, 1989).

Consequently, cities planning in America and Europe underwent a more laissez-faire transformation (Berend, 2016). The laissez-faire approach to urban planning saw the development of cities with minimal control from local authorities (Davies, 2002). The laissez-faire approach emphasised a “let do and let go” attitude towards the development of a city (Vojnovic, 2003:20). The laissez-faire approach to planning fitted well within the economic policy stances that the U.S. and the U.K. took under Reaganomics and Thatcherism respectively as it required little public participation (Jacobs, 2003). This resulted in different urban governance crises, which required city governments to reimagine themselves and the places in their jurisdictions (Kavaratzis, 2005). At this point, the promotion of places was well underway. Not only that, research into the promotion or marketing of places made its first appearance in the 1980s (Kozma, 2010).

Promoting places during the 1980s purposefully targeted specific audiences externally and internally (Zenker, 2009). This established the link between cities’ commodification and consumption (Young & Markham, 2020). Put differently, this link speaks to integrating old and new imageries into places to escape old perceptions about them while simultaneously creating hope in new ones. Eisenschitz (2021: 6) notes, “the combination of entrepreneurialism, regeneration and place marketing makes a powerful narrative because it introduces politics in non-threatening ways.” Indeed, Ms Thatcher, for example, used Canary Wharf to show how impoverished areas could transform into more profitable ones (Eisenschitz, 2010). Not only was this an attempt to highlight the use of imageries, but Thatcher also intended to make a political statement that previous governance systems had failed to uplift impoverished areas and that a purposeful attempt to reimagine them was critical (Brown, 2020).

In attempts to reimagine places, place marketers employed “prestige” projects (Metaxas, 2009). Loftman and Nevin (1995: 300) define a prestige project as “a pioneering or innovative, high-profile, large-scale, self-contained development which is primarily justified in terms of its ability to attract inward investment, create and promote new urban images”. Given this definition, the traits and aims of place marketing remained unchanged over time as they prioritised private sector

development potential, keeping up with the trends initiated by Thatcher and Reagan. In the same breath, the place marketing of the 1980s surfaced nuanced levels of thinking about brands, which led to the construction of terms such as brand equity and strategic brand management (Hankinson, 2010). In other words, the audience for which a place image was created began interrogating their values about it. The concept of endorsing products, places, and the extension of product segments, is built on this idea (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

Increasingly, cities worldwide recognised the significance of creating images for themselves to establish a footprint in the world economy. Alongside prestige projects, cities worldwide were increasingly vying to host mega sporting events (Ashworth, 2009). For example, Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) hosted a series of cricket tournaments in the 1980s to highlight the city's infrastructure to the world (Raj, 2013). Thus, the promotion of places outside the more well-known territories of America and Western Europe was on the rise. As such, the 1970s and 1980s represent the third and fourth wave in the evolution of place branding.

Like what had happened a decade earlier, nature and development were squarely back in focus in the 1980s. Beginning in 1983, the World Commission on Environment and Development or, as it would become known later, the Brundtland Commission deliberated on the limits of development on Earth (Borowy, 2013). However, unlike the Environmentalism Movement founded in America, the Brundtland was worldwide, and many countries would become signatories to it when it concluded in 1987 (Sen, 2013).

Critically, the Commission coined the term "sustainable development", which has become a cornerstone of significant developments worldwide (Bergmann, 2015). Likewise, many cities worldwide have attempted to highlight how sustainable they have been in their place branding campaigns since then. For example, Vienna in Austria is considered the world's greenest city; as such, it highlights this in its place branding (Fleytoux & Libert, 2021). The highlighting of green cities has formed a sub-category of place branding, namely, green place branding (Acuti *et al.,* 2019).

Andersson (2016) sees green place branding as a means to attract social and financial capital by highlighting how green a place is or could become. In the main, this followed the hyping up of places and projecting them as eco-cities (Andersson & James, 2018).

At their heart, eco-cities aim to “rebuild cities in balance with nature”. (Roseland, 1997: 197). They seek to promote eco-urbanity. Radovic (2013) sees eco-urbanity as striking a balance between urbanism, architecture, and ecological sustainability. Thus, the promotion of places, even in the 1980s, relied on city governments being aware of trends taking root in the world and then internalising them to form positive images.

3.2.6 The 1990s and the globalising world

Around the 1990s, urban planning continued displaying entrepreneurial governance models with an injection of New Public Management (NPM), which emerged towards the end of the 1980s (Lapsey, 2009). NPM refers to the infusion of private-sector ideas and practices in the public sector (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2003). This idea’s underlying premise is to maximise public-sector institutions’ operations. Stoker (1998) argues that the traditional role of government as a provider of welfare and services changed to that of an enabler under NPM assumptions towards the end of the 1980s. NPM followed the themes of laissez-faire governance wherein city authorities became less authoritarian and more facilitative of development within their jurisdictions (Osborne & McLaughlin, 2005).

However, NPM differed significantly from Thatcherism-styled urban governance in that it required closer ties and cooperation with the private sector and increased the scope for the inclusion of communities (Stoker, 2017). These aspects are crucial as voices of disgruntlement saw a rise against development projects towards the end of the 1980s. Thus, NPM relied heavily on the conception of projects at an elevated level and their acceptance at grassroots levels, resulting in their “rolling out”, as Fuller and Geddes (2008) term it.

The infusion of NPM in entrepreneurial urban governance contributed little to advancing the evolution of place branding. Rather than using “prestige projects” popularised in the 1980s, the 1990s saw the marketing of places through the pursuit of “flagship developments” (Marshall, 1996; Smyth, 2005). The use of “marketing” intentionally highlights that place branding at that time still fell under the guise of “place marketing” and thus had not emerged as a distinct discipline.

However, this era saw the emergence of the concept of “place wars” (Hall, 1997). In short, place wars refer to expedited, knee-jerk solutions to selling places to citizens

and other audiences to improve them from a socio-economic perspective (Haider, 1992). Like flagship or prestige development projects, place wars rely heavily on developing infrastructure such as stadiums, convention centres, airports, and business incubation centres. Place wars used the development of such infrastructure as catalysts for the attraction of external capital while simultaneously building support from residents locally.

Place wars epitomised the global city concept, as referred to by Sassen (1991). Sassen's thesis on global cities is the successor to Friedmann's "world city hypothesis", formulated in 1986 (Massey, 2007). Friedmann's conception of world cities rests on cities with powerful politics, establishment and development of trade, culture, and education (Derudder, 2008). Sassen's global city expands on these but includes the role of Transnational Companies (TNCs) and their ability to influence global economics (Dawson & Edwards, 2004). In this way, global cities transcend geographic boundaries and limitations (Beaverstock & Boardwell, 2000)

Global or competitive cities depend heavily on distinctiveness (Turok, 2009). Distinctiveness or differentiation in cities manifests in several ways. While other cities differentiate themselves from others based on their infrastructure and amenities, others parade their social offerings (Bell, 2016). Distinctiveness promotes a coherent city image (McCarthy, 2006). Stylidis *et al.* (2015) argue that, in turn, all marketing endeavours within a city gear towards rekindling and reinforcing the image on all placeholders. However, Braun (2012) argues that creating a distinct, single-place brand is difficult to achieve because of the number of placeholders within a city. In addition, he argues that the involvement of a few experts is problematic as it can alienate other placeholders. Thus, the solution to overcoming these obstacles lies in embedding place branding within the city's broader administrative and political processes (Cleave *et al.,* 2017). This entails the brand's iterative pronouncements and making space for as many placeholders as possible to shape and contribute to the place brand (Braun *et al.,* 2013; Zenker & Erfgen, 2014).

In these cities, the place images portrayed are those of cosmopolitanism (Martinez, 2012; Georgiou, 2013). A myriad of diverse cultures manifest in global cities; their place brands are malleable to invoke different meanings for many people at a time (Anholt, 2005). In addition, global cities portray images of unlimited talent and diverse

knowledge bases (Casadei & Lee, 2020). However, Shortell and Krase (2010) argue that these portrayals of unity break at the seams when one looks at class, racial, and ethnic differentials in detail. Thus, the images of global cities need constant rehashing so that they are conversant with their placeholders.

3.2.7 Finally, place branding emerges

Only at the turn of the century in the 2000s does the explicit reference to place branding occur (Kavaratzis, 2005; Gertner, 2011). Saraniemi and Ahonen (2008) argue that such terms as destination branding fell under the broad umbrella of place marketing from the 1950s to the 1990s but increasingly became sub-areas of place branding in the 2000s. This turn of events presents the fifth wave and closes the evolutionary loop of place branding (Green *et al.*, 2016). The main shift from place marketing to place branding is embedded in three critical areas. First, there is a nuanced realisation that the branding of places is a strategic occupation on its own and not a by-product of others (Keillor, 2013). For instance, city governments' staff and departments were specifically dedicated to the branding of a city. In Johannesburg, this department is known as Group Communications and Marketing (Pritchard, 2018).

Secondly, the departments within city governments employ techniques far different from marketing (Gupta & Jana, 2003). These include slogans, mottos, mantras, and logos. Not that these are not present in contemporary marketing, but they are specifically set out to achieve the outcomes of place branding campaigns (Boisen *et al.,* 2018). Moreover, their lexicon differs greatly from promoting typical items such as goods and services (Morgan *et al.,* 2011). This was not lost in a city like Johannesburg. In 2000, Johannesburg began rebranding itself, which led to the coining of the "A world-class African city" place brand (Rogerson, 2014). In this way, place branding became part of mainstream city imaging techniques.

Further, place branding is seen as part of an arsenal to urban place management (Lucarelli, 2018). This is different from the practices of the past when the promotion of place was seen as incidental to urban governance and local economic development. Instead, place branding in sophisticated cities is a stand-alone practice that cements the integrity of the image of a city.

The first decade (2000 – 2010) of place branding theorisation focussed primarily on the applicability of traditional branding to places (Kavaratzis, 2004; Kaplan *et al.,* 2010). Acharya and Rahman (2016) identify brand identity, stakeholders, brand image, planning, strategy, promotion, brand sustainability, brand architecture and brand personality as focus themes in theorising place brands. From this, place branding was still finding its feet but was well on its way to its articulation in theory and application.

Between 2010 and 2019, a more critical stance applied to the theorisation of place branding (Dynon, 2011). Issues tackled under this critical lens include power, inclusion, the co-creation of place brands and ethics underpinning place brands (van Ham, 2008; Paganoni, 2012; Sevin, 2011). Peattie and Samuel (2015) note that place marketing is oriented towards consumers. An age-old challenge for place marketing relates to the specificity of the entity promoted and its target. These scholars (Freire & Crowther, 2007; Peattie & Samuel, 2015) presuppose an outward bias when applying place marketing. The promotion and marketing of a place hinges on appealing to an audience that is not necessarily a resident of that place. In this study, I propose the term mentrification as an example of this phenomenon.

Mentrification is like gentrification but operates at the level of place branding. It speaks to removing local identities and narratives of place branding messages due to unilateral (by city authorities) and uncollaborative place branding processes. Mentrification that without proper and adequate levels of coproduction of a place brand, placeholders cannot embrace, subscribe, and support its message. It contends that placeholders are likely to contest that place brand. The contestation of the place brand is psychological and needs to manifest itself in deliberate city governance discourses such as those presented by platforms such as city meetings.

Through mentrification, the place is central to branding messages, but residents play second fiddle. Recalling that places are constructs of social activity, the absence of residents in branding messages is, therefore, an erasure of the brand's essence (Kavaratzis & Dennis, 2018). Browning and Ferraz de Oliveira (2017) argue that the branding of places legitimises global capitalism. For this reason, Cleave *et al.,* (2017) argue that the capitalist capture of urban developments through place branding is inescapable. Critically, then, mentrification suggests committing a Faustian bargain at the expense of hollowing out of narratives of the loca,l i.e., residents, businesses and

their socio-economic and political activities, is inevitable (Giles *et al.,* 2013). As such, mentrification also speaks to the capture of a place by a select, elite few capable of directing place branding through their access to considerable financial means. The capturing of a place referred to above is not a physical occupation but psychological.

The unequal psyches of brand ownership between different placeholders relative to their financial muscle (re)inforces mentrification. The interactions fostered by metrification are extremely interpersonal because they rely on maintaining certain statuses and psyches. It is sustained through word-of-mouth, social media (Facebook's "Checking-into…" feature), blogs, and WhatsApp groups (Cleave *et al.,* 2016). Metrification is susceptible to erosion from below and above. By below is meant the urban poor and above, the urban elite. The urban poor, unable to afford the offering(s) of place branding, are extricated and alienated from such campaigns. Those in this category are often the residents of that place, and their role is usually limited to serving as ambassadors, employed in/directly by place marketers. In the case of the urban elite, they conceptualise and manipulate the messages of place branding. They can also curtail and limit the involvement of the urban poor in place branding campaigns. This is possible through their access to financial means and proximity to the higher echelons of city governance structures and other influential placeholders. The urban elite quickly employ the "Made in…" tag in marketing campaigns to legitimise their claim to places (Vesalon & Cretan, 2019).

3.3 Summary and conclusions

Places, whether cities or towns, have always managed to find a way of projecting positive images and identities to differentiate themselves from others (Warnaby & Medway, 2010). The primitive first wave of place branding manifested in the 1890s through a move towards beautifying cities in the form of the City Beautiful movement (Hildreth, 2010). The urban elite sought to attract the best talent and investment by providing settlements that were developed with nature in mind, and this was a massive detour from the cities that emerged because of rapid industrialisation. Around the same time, cities in the developing world were also experimenting with ideas of projecting images and identities. This is significant because branding places was thought to be synonymous with only places in the developed world. However, the

images projected in the developed world were still disproportionately the creation of colonisers and ignored narratives of the local.

A turn to more technocratic forms of city development and governance presents a second wave in the evolution of place branding. Looking to give cities more structure and order, planners and architects alike radically formalised the planning and development of cities (Yiftachel, 1998). As a result, cities became more functional and beautification, which had been the primary objective of the City Beautiful Movement before, was relegated to the margins. Instead, the functional city depended heavily on the idea of smokestack chasing as a way of attracting talent and investment in these cities.

Elsewhere in the developing world, colonisers were radically changing the way cities were viewed through nuanced and concerted efforts of spatial and racial segregation. This provided a platform for cities for colonisers and local people, with the latter being handed places that could have been more viable for economic and social development. In this way, the images of cities and towns in these settings displayed a dichotomy of progressive and regressive places.

Except for a few cities, such as Singapore, after rapid decolonisation after WWII in the developing world, the projection of images of places in these settings rested primarily with the colonisers (Tlostanova, 2012). In the developed world, the application of branding places experienced its third wave in the late 1970s through a turn towards more entrepreneurial forms of city governance. Moving away from attraction and marketing, places were promoted during this era (Hankinson, 2010).

The 1980s and 1990s marked the fourth wave of evolution in place branding. During this period, there was a sharp increase in the efforts to promote places. An uptake of New Public Management principles during the presidencies of Thatcher in Britain and Reagan in America characterised the 1980s. This led to a much more laissez-faire outlook on how cities were governed. Under this construct, cities could tap into their uniqueness to project positive images.

The 1990s were synonymous with the rapid globalisation of the world's economy (Anderson & Obeng, 2021). Due to globalisation, major cities such as New York, Paris and Tokyo set down the gauntlet in reaching new markets beyond their geographical

boundaries. This coincided with Sassen's thesis of the "global city", which succeeded the hypothesis of the world city brought forward earlier in 1986 by John Friedmann. To cement a foothold in the globalising economies, cities used distinctiveness as a weapon in place wars (Hall, 1997).

The last wave and the closing of the loop of place branding evolution manifested in the early 2000s (Gertner, 2011). This loop is closed by the realisation that there is a need for cities worldwide to project positive images of themselves and that place branding is an essential tool in urban governance. Furthermore, research into place branding broadened to encompass more philosophical questions, such as the role of residents in such processes and the building of models to measure the efficacy of place branding campaigns.

Interestingly, the branding of places did not only take place in the developed world. As early as 1890, for example, Durban in South Africa had attempted to project its image to the rest of the world (Bickford-Smith, 2016). In later years, cities like Singapore were deeply involved in branding themselves. This was not only a means of signifying or highlighting local assets, but it was for cities in the developing world to establish a foothold in global economies. So, while place branding was more commonplace in the developed world, it was not at all silent or absent in the developing world.

The next chapter (Chapter 4) visits the archives of Johannesburg, tracing the city's attempts at place branding from 1994 to 1999 under the mayoralties of Dan Pretorius and Isaac Mogase.

CHAPTER 4: THE ROARING 1990s

4.1 Introduction

The first section of this chapter explores the dynamics surrounding the branding of Johannesburg through the mayoralty of Dan Pretorius, whose term lasted only for a year in 1994 (Giliomee, 1995). Pretorius' mayoralty came at the end of apartheid, heralding significant changes to Johannesburg's governance and urban fabric. The second section presents the efforts of branding Johannesburg under Isaac Mogase, who was mayor of Johannesburg between 1995 and 2000 (Hanyane, 2008). Mogase was the first Black mayor in the history of Johannesburg and was tasked with laying the foundation for a new, dynamic, and cosmopolitan city. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the shifting political landscape that gave rise to the two place brands.

4.2 Johannesburg heading towards democracy

In 1990, former President F.W. de Klerk announced the end of the banning of liberation movements in South Africa, which included the ANC, Pan African Congress (PAC) and South African Communist Party (SACP) (Morris, 2001). This was a significant development as it led to the abolishment of apartheid and the democratisation of the country later in 1994 (Meintjes, 1996). The backdrop of these events was characterised by concerted international pressure to dismantle the apartheid system (Klotz, 1999). The South African political landscape was certainly tumultuous at the time, and the country was still engaged in a set of negotiations for a peaceful transition into democracy under the umbrella of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) (Bairstow, 2008). The old regime stubbornly tried to hold power (Miller, 2016). However, a disgruntled majority of the country's population sought a different, democratic future for South Africa (Raligilia, 2017). At the same time, South Africa also had to wage a considerable public diplomatic strategy to reimage itself (Abratt & Mofokeng, 2001).

This came as a substantial nation branding campaign, which labelled South Africa as the "Rainbow Nation" (Louw, 2016). The late Emeritus Archbishop Tutu is credited with the Rainbow Nation brand (Baines, 1998). Under this national brand, South Africa sought to project an image of a community inclusive of all races, a counter to what apartheid had attempted to break down (Tshawane, 2010). It was meant to galvanise

South Africans around the idea of a new, united nation while simultaneously allaying any fears from the international community that those who had perpetrated apartheid would face a backlash (Montle, 2020).

The idea behind an inclusive community was familiar and was an extension of Ubuntu (Buqa, 2015). The idea of ubuntu originated from the Xhosa saying “umuntu ngumunti ngabanye abantu”, meaning one’s humanity is expressed through their relationships with others (Battle, 1996: 99). Ubuntu is underscored by the collective consciousness of African people through their solidarity with each other, behaviour and treating others with humanity (Khoza in Roux & Coetzee, 1994).

The idea of crafting a new image was also preserved on Johannesburg. The brand image of Johannesburg had become tarnished during apartheid (Rogerson, 1996). Johannesburg was characterised by vast levels of racial exclusivity (Crankshaw & White, 1995; Rogerson, 1996). The economic, social, and recreational amenities of the city were skewed towards a White population who dominated suburban Johannesburg over Black people (Africans, Indians, and Coloureds) who lived on the periphery of the city (Seekings & Matisson, 2010). Not only that, but the economy of Johannesburg had declined significantly beginning in the 1970s, and thus, the city’s urban fabric had also suffered (Bremner, 2000). In the early 1990s, the further deterioration of the image of Johannesburg, particularly its inner city, was compounded by the relocation of significant businesses from the Central Business District (CBD) to affluent locations in the north of the city (Winkler, 2013).

Therefore, the deteriorating image, as well as the skewed economics of the city, threatened its brand equity. The city needed to leverage its assets to surmount its liabilities to make Johannesburg a premier destination. The city council, then known as the Johannesburg City Council (JCC) under the control of the Democratic Party (DP), already recognised the importance of the strategic location that Johannesburg held in Africa (Robinson, 1998). In 1991, Mayor Elliot Kretzmer appointed a Director of Commerce and Industry (Rogerson, 1996). The Director was mandated to promote economic development to present Johannesburg as a metropolis of international standing. In the main, this was motivated by the desire of the JCC to pitch Johannesburg amongst world cities such as New York, Tokyo, and Paris (Keeling, 1995). This desire culminated in the JCC undertaking a massive place marketing

campaign, which led to development of the tagline “Gateway to Southern Africa” in 1993 (Rogerson, 1996: 143). Bremner (2000: 188) notes that this marketing exercise was premised on positioning Johannesburg as a “launchpad” into the rest of Africa.

Aligned to Friedmann’s (1986) world city hypothesis, this was a last-ditch attempt of the DP-led JCC to carve out a niche for Johannesburg in regional and global economics. The place brand was primarily driven by the realisation that Johannesburg could become an economic powerhouse in South Africa and on the continent. As the city’s Director of Commerce and Industry put it, “Johannesburg is already recognised as the commercial, industrial, and economic hub of South Africa and Southern Africa, and there is consensus amongst many African countries that it will become the gateway to Sub-Saharan Africa and large parts of Africa (Wright, n.d: 14). Therefore, the position that the JCC was aiming at for Johannesburg was that of a premier destination for international business in Africa.

The recognition that Johannesburg was a strategic point of entry into the African continent despite the country being gripped by apartheid is significant. It projected Johannesburg as a point for gauging African development (Dittgen, 2017). Although the main entry into South Africa at the time was the Jan Smuts International Airport (renamed the Johannesburg International Airport and then OR Tambo International Airport in 2006), which was situated outside the city, most travellers into the country ended up in Johannesburg (Heine, 2008).

Whether by intent or fluke, this place brand essentially played on the idea of Afropolitanism (Mbembe, 2020). Gikandi (2011: 9) sees Afropolitanism as a “description of a new phenomenology of Africanness – a way of being African in the world”. Afropolitanism diverges from how the African continent is perceived from the outside and inside. As opposed to seeing massive migration from Africa to other continents and countries as problematic, it emphasises a way of being in the world from an African perspective (Ede, 2016). Johannesburg did not only target international tourists or businesspeople but opened to a transient African population. Thus, with the infusion of Afropolitanism, Johannesburg became a point of orientation in South Africa and Africa more generally. The JCC was crafting a new brand identity for Johannesburg. In the past, Johannesburg had been closed to a majority African population (Clarno, 2013). The new place brand identity was more reflective of the

country's demographics. By default, Johannesburg was at the frontline of South Africa's quest to reimagine itself.

In a push to bolster the "Gateway to Southern Africa" place brand, the JCC, in conjunction with the Johannesburg Publicity Association (JPA), which had been established back in 1925, they focussed th on preparing for bidding for the hosting of the 2004 Olympics between July 1993 and January 1994 (Rogerson, 1996). Durban and Cape Town also put up their hands in showing interest in hosting the games (Bob *et al.,* 2008). Eventually, the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) awarded the rights to bid for the games to Cape Town (Hillier, 2000; Swart & Bob, 2004).

Despite Johannesburg received great publicity as its bid had been communicated and presented on various forms including but not limited to Anglo America, ratepayers' and residents' associations, civil associations, and business (GJTMC, council meeting, 27 September 1994). In addition, the city received considerable airplay on radio stations such as Talk Radio 702 and Afrikaans Stereo, as well as appearing on television programmes. From this, the brand communication strategy for Johannesburg was quite considerable. Through its communication strategies, Johannesburg was slowly but surely making huge strides in differentiating itself from its peers in South Africa and the continent. This gave Johannesburg an air of distinctiveness compared to other African cities because it saw itself as having the capacity to host the biggest multisport events in the world. Apart from Cape Town, no other African city had put its hand up in bidding for the games (Swart & Bob, 2004).

However, the city had not pushed for publicity on traditional Black community radio stations (Tomaselli & Nkosi, 1995). The platforms from which the city received its most significant publicity were the purview of a majority White audience (Jacobs in Gunnerson *et al.,* 2007). Thus, the brand message of the city was arbitrarily skewed towards a White, urban population. As such, the brand message of the city relegated a substantial proportion of already alienated Black residents to the margins of not being of and in the city. This presented a place brand gap because the communication strategies of the city still presented Johannesburg as an unequal space. Thus, the place brand experience could have been better depending on where people whole lived in the city. This was problematic because it reinforced the view that

Johannesburg was meant for a select, elite few. The heavy involvement of the Director of Commerce and Industry in communicating the brand showed that the process was centralised. More critically, by not taking up previously neglected spaces of the city in its communication strategies, the JCC effectively demonstrated its stubbornness to move towards fully democratising Johannesburg.

Besides the unsuccessful 2004 Olympic bid, Johannesburg hosted the World Squash Tournament, National Badminton Championships, World Ten Pin Bowling Championships, Soweto Marathon, and the ATP World Doubles Tournament (GJTMC council meeting, 27 September 1994). With the view of hosting the World Corporate Games, the JCC made presentations in Amsterdam, Bonn, Stuttgart, and Zurich to garner support for these games to be hosted in Johannesburg (GJTMC, council meeting, 27 September 1994). Regionally, presentations on the same games were made in Kenya and Namibia (GJTMC, council meeting, 27 September 1994). These were games dominated by White people and hence were seen as “white games” signifying the exclusion of the Black majority in the imagination of the city brand.

In March 1994, the DP appointed Dan Pretorius as mayor of Johannesburg (Giliomee, 1995). Reflecting on the strides that the JCC had made in pushing Johannesburg on the world stage in the previous year, Pretorius remarked:

> “The past year was full of excitement and disappointments for everybody involved in sport in this region, but all the events, whether positive or negative, only motivated everyone more than ever to establish and build Johannesburg as not only the sporting capital of South Africa but of Africa – and for Africa” (GJTMC, council meeting, 27 September 1994: 39.6).

The latter part of Pretorius’ assertion is critical because it cast Johannesburg as a host of major sporting events in South Africa and the continent. This was important in relaunching South Africa on the world map since South Africa had lost touch with most of the continent and the world because of apartheid (Matsinhe, 2011). It was clear that the JCC realised the distinct and unique position that Johannesburg had in carrying the brand message of South Africa to the rest of the world. It realised that Johannesburg was essential in generating enthusiasm and support for the country but, at the same time, also appreciated that the city was important in and for Africa because

smaller conurbations such as cities are more manageable to brand than whole countries (Caldwell & Freire, 2004).

A month later (in April), South Africa opened the polls for its first democratic elections (Cuddumbey, 1995). The ANC won the elections, and Nelson Mandela became the country's first Black president (Limb, 2008). While this signalled the coming of political freedom in the country, South Africa still needed massive, structural reforms to its socio-economic structures (Adejumobi, 2000). Similarly, the JCC needed to make inroads in attracting investment to revive Johannesburg's economy and safeguard its placeholders' prosperity. However, international investors were put off by the perception that South Africans were reluctant to invest in their economy (Calof & Viviers, 1995). Apartheid had ensured that the economic benefits of South Africa were mainly in the hands of a minority White group who feared hostile takeovers by the newly elected government (Goodwin & Schiff, 1995). This group did not necessarily want to tie their assets and money to a country that could evict them after gaining democracy.

To allay risk perceptions, the JCC tasked the Director of Commerce and Industry with fostering positive international investor attitudes (GJTMC, council meeting, 27 September 1994). The Director approached and communicated Johannesburg to multinational corporations such as Apple, Pepsi, General Motors, Reebok, Peugeot, and banking groups in China. Other interventions by the Director of Commerce and Industry included hosting international exhibitions such as the Chinese Exhibition and the *Made in USA Expo,* a co-sanctioned exhibition between the US Department of Commerce and Johannesburg (GJTMC, council meeting, 27 September 1994).

Coupled with these efforts, the Department of Commerce and Industry within the JCC conducted numerous overseas visits with the aim of (a) building an international image for Johannesburg and (b) initiating corporate relationships (Rogerson, 1996). Cities such as Tokyo, London and Paris were amongst those with which these relationships were sought (van Wyk, 1997). By the end of 1994, all these cities had tentatively agreed on arrangements for such relationships and hinted at establishing sister city arrangements with the JCC (Harrison, 2015). The Director of Commerce and Industry was heavily involved in bringing these arrangements into effect, and these efforts underlined the city's desire to link to leading cities in the world.

Through seeking sister city arrangements, the bidding and hosting of mega events and festivals, the efforts of the JCC in branding Johannesburg in the early 1990s are reflective and in alignment with traditional processes of urban boosterism and tourism attraction. Many place branding campaigns rely heavily on hosting mega-events (Herezniak & Florek, 2018). In addition, these efforts were geared towards attracting FDI into the city and, more generally, South Africa.

Johannesburg applied a two-pronged approach to its place branding. On the one hand, it focussed on rebuilding its brand image in the minds of local placeholders. However, Johannesburg was still essentially the purview of White people, and therefore, a large proportion of the Black population were excluded from the imaginings of the city's brand identity. On the other hand, it applied an international outlook to establish a foothold in the global economy. However, the international businessperson or tourist targeted by the place brand was from overseas, meaning White Americans and Europeans. Therefore, the orientation of the place brand further exacerbated the exclusion of Black people within the city. Put differently; there needed to have been more time to bridge the city's place brand gap as vast levels of inequality were still present in Johannesburg.

The JCC was aware of its deteriorating image among local placeholders and the international community. However, this recognition was skewed towards white people. As much as the city needed a brand identity anchored in Africa, it neglected to bring along most Black people in Johannesburg and the country more generally. In its drive to become a global city (as espoused by Sassen), the place brand strived to attract Euro-American businesses while ignoring those in Africa. Moreover, the place brand was dismissive of the changes underway in South Africa, i.e., moving from apartheid to democracy; the city's brand identity (Gateway to Southern Africa) was in flux.

Two factors compromised the durability of Johannesburg's brand identity. Dan Pretorius was a caretaker mayor who only served nine months (March – November 1994) in office (Giliomee, 1995). The levels of power afforded to him were limited. For this, the place brand did not have a face easily associated with it and lacked personality. Place brands are easily recognisable when linked with prominent figures such as celebrities (Kaplan *et al.,* 2010). Secondly, owing to the majority stake that the ANC had in Johannesburg following the elections, the previous administrations,

including Pretorius, were relieved of their duties towards the end of 1994 (Bremner, 2000). Significant changes occurred in human resources in municipalities across the country at the time (Powell, 2012).

This presented a discontinuity in the brand identity of Johannesburg as the new administration no doubt wanted to set its image. This was not alarming, given that the ANC was a majority Black political party (Southall, 2016). It set out to paint Johannesburg as an inclusive city, open to all who resided there. In its election manifesto, the ANC advanced the ideology of reconciliation and the discourse of a Rainbow Nation (Bornman, 2006). The Rainbow Nation concept was South Africa's attempt at formulating an identity and nation-building place brand (Baines, 1998; Barnett, 1999). It played to the multiculturalism found in the country (Everatt *et al.,* 2005).

While the Rainbow Nation was used to galvanise South Africans behind a shared vision for the country, the ANC did much work in improving the lives of its citizens. To this end, the ANC rolled out the Reconstruction Development Programme (RDP) (Ittmann, 1996). The RDP was a macroeconomic policy that aimed to reverse and equalise the imbalances brought about by apartheid (Adelzadeh & Padayachee, 1994). The RDP centred on five critical programmes, and these were namely (i) meeting basic needs, (ii) building human resources, (iii) building the economy, (iv) democratising the state and society, and (v) implementing the RDP (Fatti, 1996). The government amended the LGTA of 1993 with the introduction of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (Harrison, 2001).

The IDP was seen as an instrument to assist local municipalities in achieving the objectives of the RDP. However, most people in South Africa myopically conceived the RDP as a housing scheme (Crankshaw & Parnell, 1996). Likewise, the JCC, in rolling out the RDP, concentrated on providing shelter and essential services to its residents (Charlton, 2010). These occurred in the inner city and townships on the outskirts of Johannesburg (Mosselson, 2017). Thus, while the process of equalising the physical and spatial disparities amongst the places of Johannesburg was underway, the more intangible socio-economic divide remained wide and grew (Moolla *et al.,* 2011). Viewed in this way, the place brand, Gateway to Southern Africa, constructed under the DP, successfully launched Johannesburg as a significant

business point in Africa. However, it failed to bridge the gap in racial and class terms between White and Black people.

4.3 A teething democracy with Isaac Mogase at the helm

As part of its transitioning and, to an extent, unshackling of the past, the ANC appointed Johannesburg's first Black Mayor, Isaac Mogase, in 1995 (Hanyane, 2008). Mogase inherited a very divided city with growing imbalances amongst its residents in socio-economic terms (Beall *et al.,* 2014). Despite the intents and rollout of the RDP in 1994, White residents were still wealthier than their Black counterparts. In addition, there were still stark differences in the physical environments of Black and White people manifested in the quality of service delivery in their respective places (May, 1998). This should come as no surprise, as apartheid lasted for forty-six years, and the country had only been a democratic state for a year (Thomson, 2008). South Africa needed much work to begin to reverse the imbalances of apartheid.

In addition, the landscape of local government was confused in 1995. This was despite the enactment of the Interim Constitution and the Local Government Transition Act of 1993 (LGTA) the year before (van Rensburg & Naudé, 2007). The ICLGTA did not repeal the pieces of legislation that led to the racial and spatial division of South African cities (Mathekga & Buccus, 2006). Like other cities across South Africa, the JCC underwent significant institutional transformations (Tomlinson, 1999). Starting with seven mini municipalities, the JCC ended with four autonomous municipalities at the end of its restructuring in 1995 (Tomlinson, 2017). After this, the JCC became known as the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Municipality (GJTMC) (Banister *et al.,* 1997). Along with Pretoria, Durban, and Cape Town, the GJTMC was one of the so-called Major Urban Areas, which meant it was awarded the status of a metropolitan municipality (GJTMC council minutes, 19 January 1995). Apart from providing essential services as expected from local government councils, metropolitan municipalities needed to create revenue as they depended less on national and provincial intergovernmental transfers (Van Ryneveld, 2007).

The move to gain metropolitan status led to the expansion of the boundaries of the GJTMC to include wealthy suburbs such as Sandton and poverty-stricken townships like Alexandra and Orange Farm (van der Merwe & Davids, 2006). To bridge the gap between its residents, the GJTMC adopted the motto "One City, One Taxpayer" (Bell

& Bowman, 2002). The idea behind the slogan was that cross-subsidisation and resource redistribution would occur from wealthy to poorer areas within the city (Peyroux, 2005). However, this arrangement became problematic as the residents in poorer areas of the city boycotted the payment for services to protest against the massive inequality amongst the city's residents (Clarno, 2013). In response, the affluent, majority White areas also held back on paying for services in protestation (Beall *et al.,* 2000). Effectively, then, the GJTMC was back where it began in terms of equalising the imbalances within its area.

Following the reorganisation of the GJTMC, the first city logo was created. Figure 5.1 overleaf is a picture of the logo that was created. The logo showed the iconic skyline of Johannesburg and the Telkom Tower in black and six directional arrows pointing to all points of the city. These arrows were meant to show that the city was responsible for all its areas, an attempt to equalise the brand experience in the city. It showed the seriousness with which the JCC took service delivery throughout Johannesburg and that it was not concentrating its efforts only in certain areas (GJTMC, council minutes, 19 January 1995). This was important in bridging the place brand gap that had been present with the previous mayor, Dan Pretorius.

Figure 4.1: Johannesburg city logo

Source: GJTMC minutes, 17 August 1995: 5.59

The GJTMC had to find alternatives to improving service delivery across its area and simultaneously stimulate its economy. For this, the GJTMC began considering how it could make Johannesburg resonate with its placeholders. Internationally, the GJTMC considered the option of a sister city arrangement with the city of Birmingham in the United Kingdom (Bremmer, 2000). Sister city arrangements are relationships based on long-term, reciprocal exchanges between cities in material and cultural terms (Cross, 2010). The arrangement with Birmingham was considered to attract investment and explore models of best practices for urban governance (Harrison, 2015). While this interest was received positively, the GJTMC was cautious because it could not enter into such an agreement since it was still a transitional body (GJTMC council meeting, 31 August 1995). The push for this arrangement was timely. Birmingham was a stable city council from which the GJTMC could learn a lot, bringing

the opportunity to appropriate city governance strategies conversant with rapidly changing times.

Being a metropolitan municipality, the GJTMC could not rely on traditional local governance mechanisms, i.e., delivering essential services. The GJTMC needed to be more entrepreneurial (Mears, 1997). The impacts of the RDP were hard to trace in Johannesburg (Adelzadeh, 1996). Even nationally, the new government began encountering problems implementing the RDP (Blumenfeld, 1997). Cameron (1996) notes that the RDP failed to provide tangible evidence concerning the key programmes that it had set out to implement. Increasingly, organisations such as the World Bank pressured the ANC to alienate the RDP and replace it with a macroeconomic policy that espoused a more neoliberal stance (Mengisteab, 1999).

The ANC-led government discontinued the RDP and introduced the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) programme in 1996 (Weeks, 1999). GEAR was touted as a five-year macroeconomic policy (Streak & van der Westhuizen, 2004). At its heart, GEAR aimed at (i) letting the private sector lead economic development, (ii) reducing the role of the state in economic development, (iii) privatising state-owned assets, (iv) reducing government spending, (v) increasing international competitiveness and (vi) encouraging export-orientated economy (Visser, 2004). GEAR proposed a much more neoliberal stance than had been done by its predecessor, the RDP.

For Johannesburg, the international competitiveness outlined in GEAR was cardinal. Until 1996, the place brand in operation, “Gateway to Southern Africa”, had positioned Johannesburg to the international community. More significantly, the early articulations of Johannesburg’s place brand presented the city as a site for hosting major sporting events. This strategy relied heavily on displaying the infrastructure of Johannesburg to the world and aligning the city to the world city hypothesis. Through the “Gateway to Southern Africa”, Johannesburg positioned itself as a significant entry point for international businesses and tourists. This is important for two reasons. Firstly, as a point of entry, Johannesburg set the tone for what it is like to be in Africa. This way, Johannesburg strategically set itself up as the continent’s development benchmark. Secondly, the tagline underplayed and, to a certain extent, undermined the efforts of other African countries to vie for international business. Of course, this is

unsurprising because place branding is an arena for contesting and imprinting place images (Valaskivi, 2016). The GJTMC was purposefully setting out to differentiate Johannesburg from the rest of its peers in Africa.

Johannesburg sought to monopolise the attraction of business and tourists in Africa. Johannesburg benefitted immensely from easing trade restrictions and embargos coupled with the reopening of South Africa that occurred towards and after 1994. The stubborn and challenging nature of air travel on the rest of the continent also played handsomely into the hands of Johannesburg. Johannesburg quickly pointed this out by stating the ease of getting into and out of Africa through its airport, then called Jan Smuts Airport (now O.R. Tambo International Airport) (Cobbett, 2014).

In the end, however, the “Gateway to Southern Africa” place brand was problematic on three fronts. Firstly, Johannesburg targeted the whole of Africa but focussed on a particular region, i.e., Southern Africa. Secondly, “Gateway” suggested a channel into Africa and effectively removed Johannesburg as part of the continent. Recalling that South Africa was emerging from apartheid and given the number of its exiled leaders in the rest of Africa, this strategy had the potential of alienating the country and, more pointedly, Johannesburg from the rest of the continent. Lastly, the strategy aimed at the international business and tourist community. It did not make room for the African businessperson or tourist. This smacked of a superiority complex and indifference to the struggles and opportunities presented by other African countries. This should not have been surprising as South Africa and Johannesburg were carving out a niche in global politics and economics (Draper & Scholvin, 2012).

4.4 The Golden Heartbeat of Africa

Following the opening of Johannesburg, which came after the democratisation of South Africa in 1994, the city experienced exponential immigration (Moyo & Cossa, 2015). This influx of people into the city came locally, regionally, and internationally. Locally, people were moving from other parts of South Africa into Johannesburg (Landau, 2007). Regionally, the city received migrants from countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Malawi (Ostanel, 2012). Internationally, people from as far as China were moving into Johannesburg (Harrison *et al.*, 2012). Seeing this, the GJTMC needed to make its place brand and identity more resonant with its ever-increasing metropolitan and local placeholders (Peberdy, 2001). To this end, the

GJTMC developed the place brand “Golden Heartbeat of Africa” in 1997 (Bremner, 2000: 189). This mantra was much more narrowly conceived as it primarily focussed on rebuilding the inner city of Johannesburg. Simple as it was, the new mantra made a play on three critical issues. Firstly, it paid homage to the founding history of the city (gold). This spoke to the rootedness of Johannesburg to its founding. Secondly, it maintained that Johannesburg was a significant player in economic and cultural terms in Africa (heartbeat). This highlighted the dynamism that Johannesburg had to offer on the continent. Finally, it promised an alliance with the rest of Africa rather than only with South Africa. Johannesburg and South Africa had realised the significance of pan-Africanism for pushing their agenda(s) on the continent (Soske, 2015).

As had been the case before, this new place brand adopted by the GJTMC had international and local dimensions. Reaching out to the international community was essential because it projected Johannesburg as a site open for business and showed that the city was willing to learn from leading cities. This dynamism cannot be understated as international companies constantly look for places to invest in that are flexible in their approach to urban governance (Bartley & Treadwell Shine, 2003). However, Tomlinson *et al.* (1999) warned that much of Johannesburg’s place branding had been modelled along American lines. This led to the city needing to pay more attention to local assets in its attempt to create a clear vision for its future development.

van Assche *et al.* (2020) point out that embedding the local in place branding is essential because it imbues the place brand with authenticity. Not only that, incorporating the local often leads to the support and ambassadorship of the place brand, giving it personality (Sevin, 2011). Critically, the Golden Heartbeat of Africa place brand was developed with several placeholders (Bremmer, 2000). These included civil society, business, and labour organisations. Klijn *et al.,* (2012) argue that including multiple placeholders in place branding makes the brand message transparent. The onboarding of these placeholders in creating the place brand signalled that the GJTMC was serious about expanding access and democratising urban governance processes within Johannesburg. Sihlongonyane (2015: 2139) points out that the place brand sought to “galvanise processes of participation, partnership, and the spirit of “Ubuntu” within Johannesburg”. Briefly, Battle (2009: 1) defines Ubuntu as “…an African concept of personhood in which the identity of the self is understood to be formed interdependently through community.” Viewed this way,

this place brand sought to improve the experience of placeholders in Johannesburg and by so doing, increase its equity, something that had lacked in its predecessor, “Gateway into Southern Africa”.

“The Golden Heartbeat of Africa” place brand aimed at creating feelings of belonging within the city amongst its placeholders. This strategy was an add-on to “Gateway to Southern Africa” because it looked internally and appreciated the multiculturalism of Johannesburg brought about by its people, from not only South Africa but also a growing contingent of African migrants. Through this place brand, Johannesburg reaffirmed its allegiance to Africa. Simultaneously, however, the strategy still opened Johannesburg to the rest of the world in that it positioned the city as the rhythm of the continent.

Through this place brand, Johannesburg highlighted the dynamism of African spaces and places found. Colonial urban planning in Africa created various places (Thomas, 2003). Ranging from highly European-styled cities to rural villages, African places boast spatially differentiated landscapes with their accompanying placeholders. The duality of this strategy meant to (a) reinforce support for the city locally while (b) attracting international businesses and tourists into the city. The strategy created a platform wherein local placeholders became the ambassadors of the place brand of Johannesburg. This gave the place brand personality and a sense of familiarity, which are essential in fostering support for and uptake of a place brand (Mariutti & Giraldi, 2020).

The appreciation of placeholders in this place brand must be considered. Johannesburg was, and to an extent, still is, a divided city. However, the strategy allowed local placeholders to plug themselves into the city’s place brand. In this way, the strategy legitimised people’s struggles within the city while simultaneously bringing them on board in attempts to reimage Johannesburg as a city with many opportunities to change their lives.

4.5 Charting the future for Johannesburg

Besides creating a place brand, the GJTMC had also begun moving on to developing an organisational vision. The city prompted this exercise to overcome its debt crunch (Cartwright & Marrengane, 2016). Pieterse (2019) notes how Johannesburg was on

the verge of bankruptcy in the mid-1990s. The city's capital budget was less than $ 50 million (Ngobeni, 2008). This differed significantly from what the GJTMC needed to run a productive and prosperous city. The fiscal difficulties of the city were created by a combination of (a) a poor revenue collection system, (b) non-payment for services by residents and (c) a stagnating national economy (Reddy, 2008).

In response, the GJTMC formulated a strategic vision, which resulted in iGoli 2002 (Parnell & Robinson, 2006). Subtitled "Making the city work…It cannot be business as usual", this strategy was aimed at addressing the financial issues faced by the city (Dlamini, 2011). The newly appointed City Manager spearheaded the formulation of this strategy, and he was assisted by Ketso Gordhan and the Transformation Manager, Pascal Moloi, with the aid of other reformers (Tomlinson, 2017).

Moloi recalls, "Remember, we were dealing with a fiscal crisis, and we realised that it was an institutional crisis. Once we started dealing with the institutional crisis, we realised that it's a cultural or community or behavioural, identity crisis". Moloi's comment pointed to a chasm between Johannesburg's lofty ideals and operational issues. This presented a place brand gap. The city and its placeholders were at odds with each other because of their respective expectations.

Moloi described the challenges the city faced in trying to overcome its financial constraints (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "We were not allowed as municipalities to go beyond our borders to raise funding. This was part of the reason why we had a financial crisis in the first place in Joburg. We had gone out to Japan to raise a loan only to find out that Treasury wouldn't allow it, and we'd already budgeted for a R 900 000 000 injection."

However, he went on to express the relief he felt when the strategy was in place (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "But with the iGoli 2002 and the brand (beginning), we were able to go to Treasury and get permission to go on a roadshow internationally to raise our first bond".

The iGoli 2002 strategy sought to radically change the processes through which the city was delivering its services, and it displayed vast levels of neoliberalism (Catchpowle & Cooper, 2019). It contemplated the privatising departments/units within the city, leading to the creation of the city's Municipal owned Entities (MoEs), a process finalised in 2004 (Iroanya & Njingolo, 2017). Mogase saw iGoli 2002 as a tool for "enhancing service delivery, promoting accessibility, encouraging and facilitating community participation and promoting political involvement and policy-making" (Kongwa, 2000: 50). The iGoli 2002 strategy was underpinned by six principles (Didier *et al.,* 2013). These were namely, (i) a People/Human City, (ii) an Economic Hub of Africa, (iii) a Sustainable Environment, (iv) Integration, (v) a Crime Free and Safe City and (vi) a Vibrant Metropolitan Area and Local government. IGoli 2002 reinforced the "Golden Heartbeat of Africa" place brand by focussing on local placeholders and the international community. As mentioned earlier, the GJTMC faced a fiscal crisis, its management structures were in trouble, and it had a low tax base (Iroanya & Njingolo, 2017).

The transformation team that came up with iGoli 2002 had to employ a two-pronged approach to rescuing the GJTMC. Firstly, it had to use a going-back-to-basics approach to urban governance within the city. This meant that it had to find ways to encourage its placeholders to pay for the services they were receiving. This included both previously well-off and disadvantaged areas of the city. Secondly, owing to the low yields of revenue collection within the city and the country's slowing economy, the GJTMC had to attract considerable amounts of FDI into Johannesburg.

These approaches were conditioning of each other. Moloi described how beneficial the exercise of producing iGoli 2002 had been (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "It was powerful in that once we started a process of formulating iGoli 2002, it helped us package the brand, it helped in many other platforms. It helps in sports, it helps in the economy. People can go out there and see a much stronger Joburg economy".

Local placeholders invested in a place brand provide excellent opportunities for word-of-mouth support to potential international investors (Cleave *et al.*, 2016). International buy-in and take up of a place brand provide economic opportunities for local

placeholders (Virgo & De Chernatony, 2006). Combined, these two aspects increase the place brand experience and its equity. Put differently, it allows those concerned with a place to live the brand and assimilate it within their daily lives.

Critically, the iGoli 2002 strategy was the first utterance of a City Development Strategy (CDS) in Johannesburg. A CDS is a strategy that "imagines a collective, participatory visioning exercise(s) to establish priorities and strategies for future development" (Parnell & Robinson, 2006: 339). In the case of the GJTMC, iGoli 2002 served the purpose of (a) realigning its priorities regarding service delivery and (b) integrating the voices of local placeholders in exploring the best probable future for Johannesburg.

Aligned with the first articulation of its CDS, the GJTMC also initiated efforts to design the city's coat of arms, flag, and logo. In the case of the coat of arms and flag, the following process was followed (GJTMC council meeting, 20 February 1997: 1.1):

i) A competition soliciting designs was commissioned for the 20th of January 1997.
ii) The evaluation of submissions was scheduled for the 21st of January 1997.
iii) An evaluation was undertaken by a technical committee on the 22nd of January 1997.
iv) Party caucuses discussing the items were held between 22 and 31 January 1997.
v) Civic relations committee discussed the items with other placeholders outside of the city on the 27th of January 1997.
vi) An Executive Committee meeting was held on the matter on the 18 February 1997.
vii) The item served as an agenda item at Council meeting on the 20th of February 1997.
viii) There were plans to submit the item for consideration to the Gauteng Legislature in the last week of February 1997.
ix) Registration was also planned for the last week of February 1997.

After this process, the motto, *"*Unity in Development*",* was developed for the GJTMC.

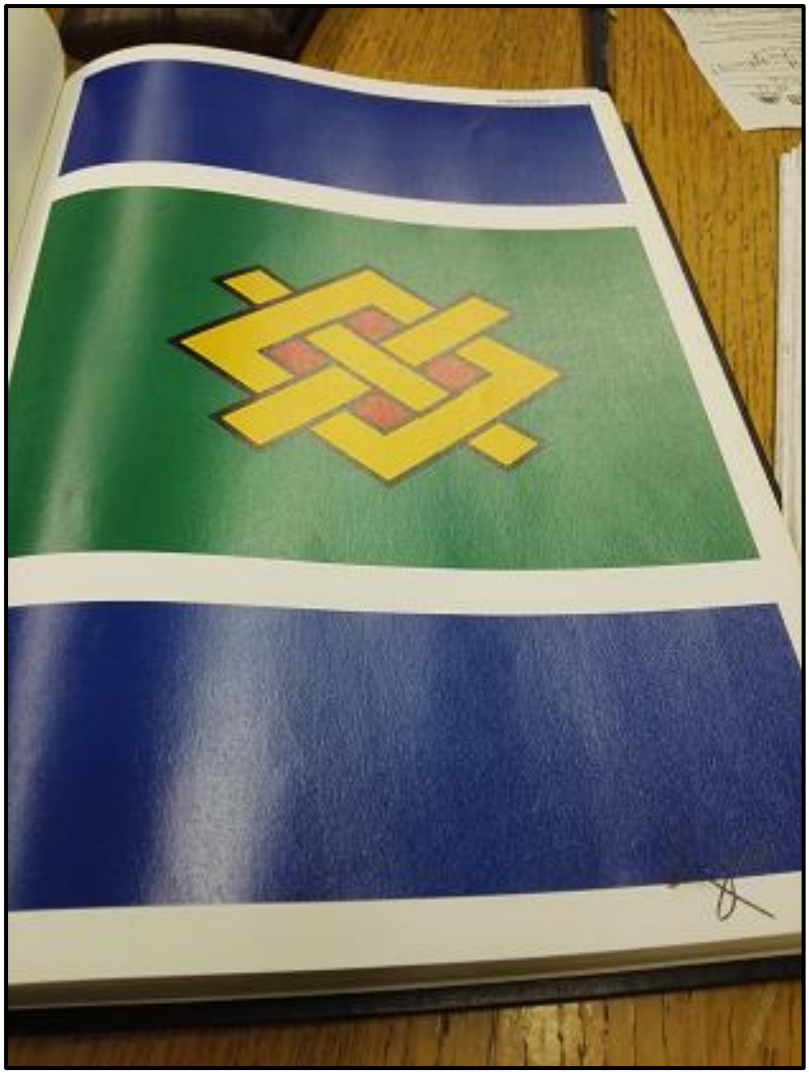
Figure 4.2: Coat of Arms of GJTMC

Source: GJTMC council meeting, 20 February 1997: Annexure A

The GJTMC adopted the six colours adopted in the national flag (green, blue, red, gold, white and black). According to the GJTMC, green was used to signify growth and development. The gold was used as an interweaving element that connected the city's activities. Red appeared in the spaces created by the diamond formation for focus. The supports were provided by the two lions, whose gender was undetermined.

The coat of arms for Gauteng also had lions as supports. However, in this case, the lions, differed in that instead of having manes, they were adorned with traditional beadwork. The base compartment was of the colours blue, white and black, symbolising the road ahead while simultaneously recalling the presence of the national flag in the city.

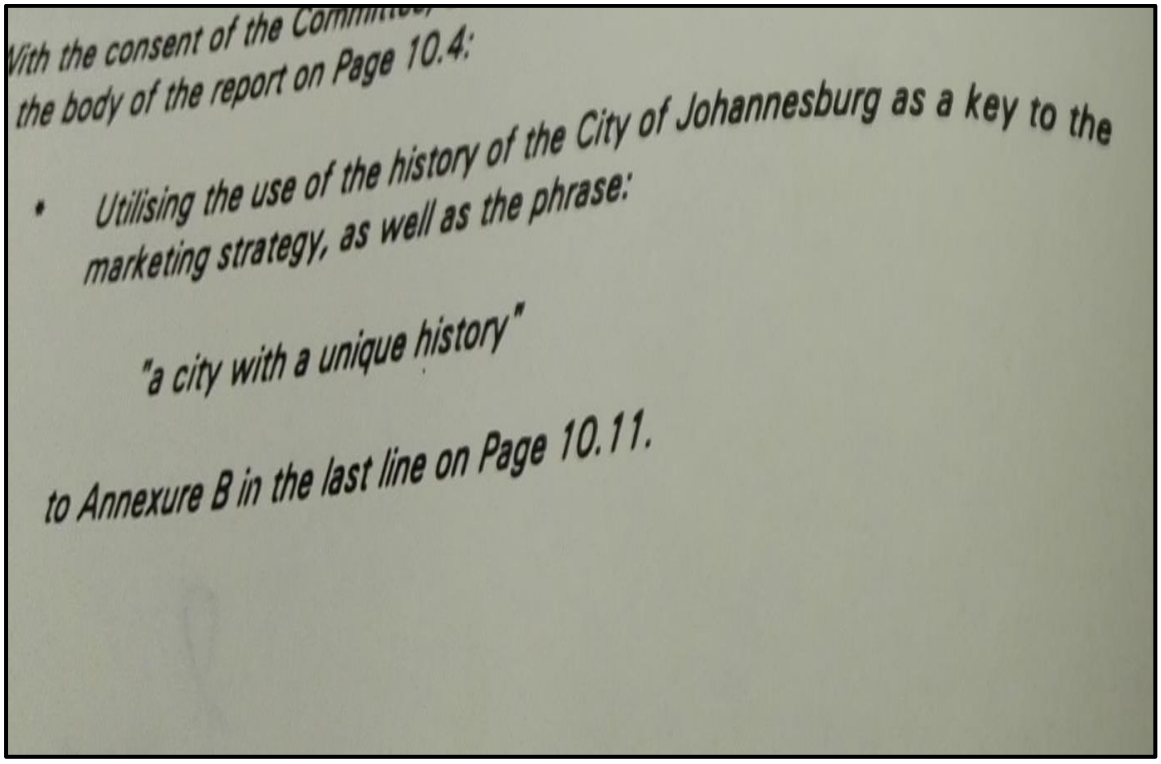
Figure 4.3: GJTMC Flag



Source: GJTMC council meeting, 20 February 1997: Annexure C

In the flag, the central concept of the coat of arms remained. The location of the central concept reinforced the GJTMC's central location in Gauteng. In addition to these items, the GJTMC, through the joint auspices of the Department of Sport, Art, Culture and Economic Development and the JMTA, continued to promote the city as a tourism and development destination. This promotion relied heavily on rekindling the history of Johannesburg. Considering this, the tagline "a city with a unique history" was adopted (GJTMC, council agenda, 20 February 1997).

Figure 5.4: Proposed Interim Strategy



Source: GJTMC agenda, 20 February 1997: 54

Paying homage to the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand, the city is unique because it had no geographical feature from which it emerged. Usually, big cities find their establishment through the presence of features such as rivers and harbours. (Peng *et al.,* 2018). Thus, even when unintentional, the city continued to promote itself. In his foreword regarding the granting of the freedom of the city to Mr Walter Sisulu, Mogase stated that:

> "Our city is driven by a new vision and a consensus-based strategic plan guiding our transition to a positive conclusion. Our vision incorporates the capacity to serve traditional functions as well as the creation of development opportunities for all emerging entrepreneurs and sustained economic development" (GJTMC special meeting minutes, 20 March 1997: 1).

Through this, Mogase effectively opened the avenue for the GJTMC to seek alternative forms of governance in Johannesburg. In the first instance, he cemented the local government's essential role. This is critical because the provision of essential services by a municipality to its placeholders is enshrined within the Constitution of

South Africa (Chikulo, 2016). More critically, Mogase tied the city to more entrepreneurial expressions of urban governance. Place branding makes cities more entrepreneurial (Boisen *et al.,* 2018).

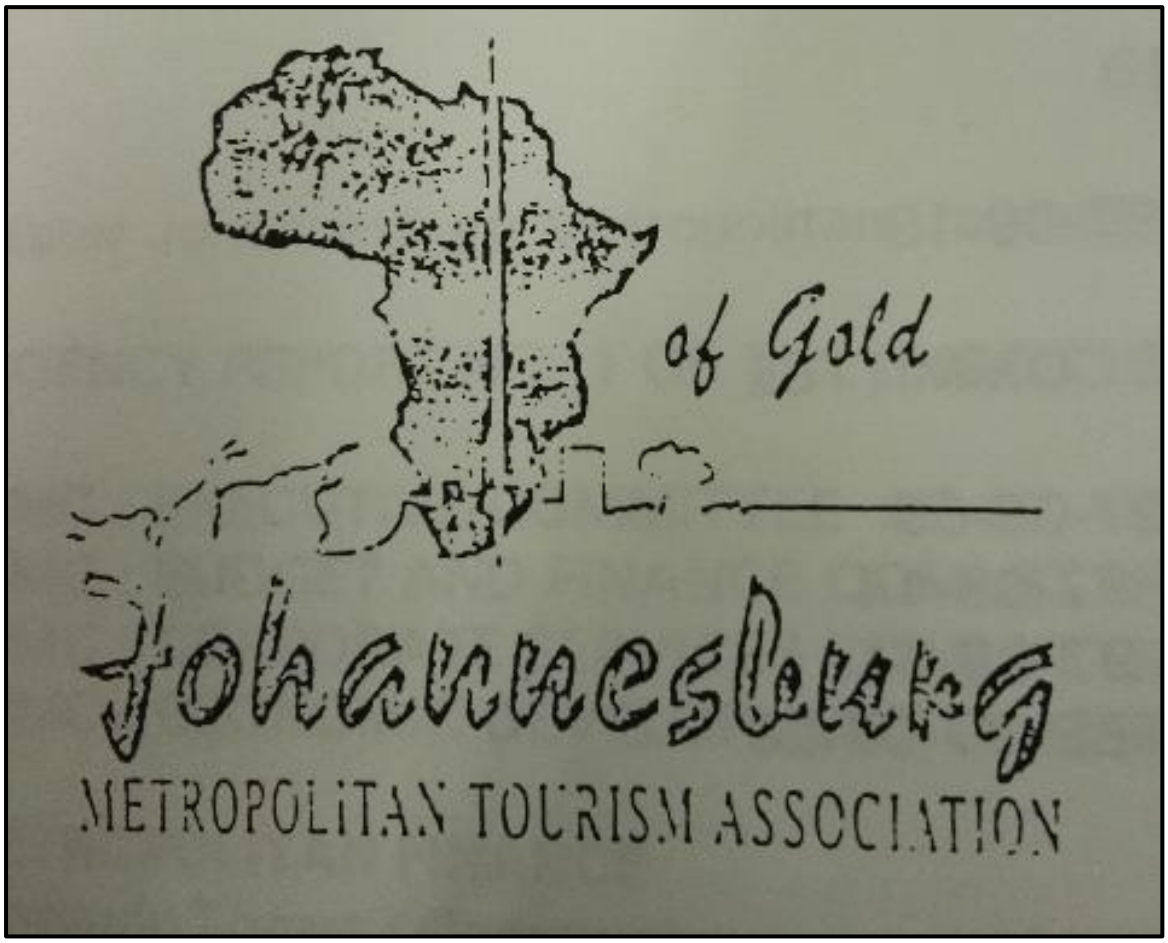
The vision was underlain by six crucial strategic thrusts, namely (a) service delivery, (b) management of urbanisation, (c) public safety and security, (d) communication and marketing, (e) organisational transformation and (f) economic growth and development (GJTMC, council meeting, 20 March 1997). With specific reference to place branding, communication and marketing are significant. Under this thrust, the GJTMC hoped not only to enhance and promote the city's image but also to improve co-operative communication between itself and its placeholders and to improve internal communication between its various sections.

The city instigated a process to create a corporate identity in the same year. From the perspective of the GJTMC, this was important for two reasons. Firstly, the council believed that a professional, people-centred image, which was consistent, would reflect the city from the outside world. Secondly, it was believed that the corporate image would instil pride amongst city employees and its placeholders. In addition, the corporate identity would be a signaller of the city's planning. The GJTMC also considered ways to manage its image so that its use could be misused. One of these interventions included the deliberate separate use of a proposed logo and the coat of arms, registered with the State Herald. The coat of arms would be limited to high-profile engagements by the city's top executives, including the mayor, chief executive officer and councillors.

The creation of a corporate identity would be undertaken in three phases. Phase 1 included the conceptualisation and design of the identity. This entailed the outsourcing of the exercise to external consultants. Phase 2 encompassed the corporate identity's application to items such as stationery, signage, vehicles, clothing, promotional items and, banners and pennants. This phase was crucial because it would ensure that the identity would be remembered as people interacted with branded items continuously. The last phase involved corporate advertising in newspapers, magazines, billboards, radio, and television. These processes rested with the city's Strategic Executives of Sport, Arts and Culture and Economic Development. At that time, the JMTA was still operating and had cemented its place as a necessary entity for developing the

GJTMC. The JMTA's budget increased from R 2 million in 1995 to R 4 32 million in 1997 (GJTMC, council agenda, 18 September 1997). The increase in budget highlighted the seriousness with which the GJTMC took to positioning Johannesburg on the world stage.

Figure 5.5: Logo of the Johannesburg Metropolitan Tourism Association (JMTA)

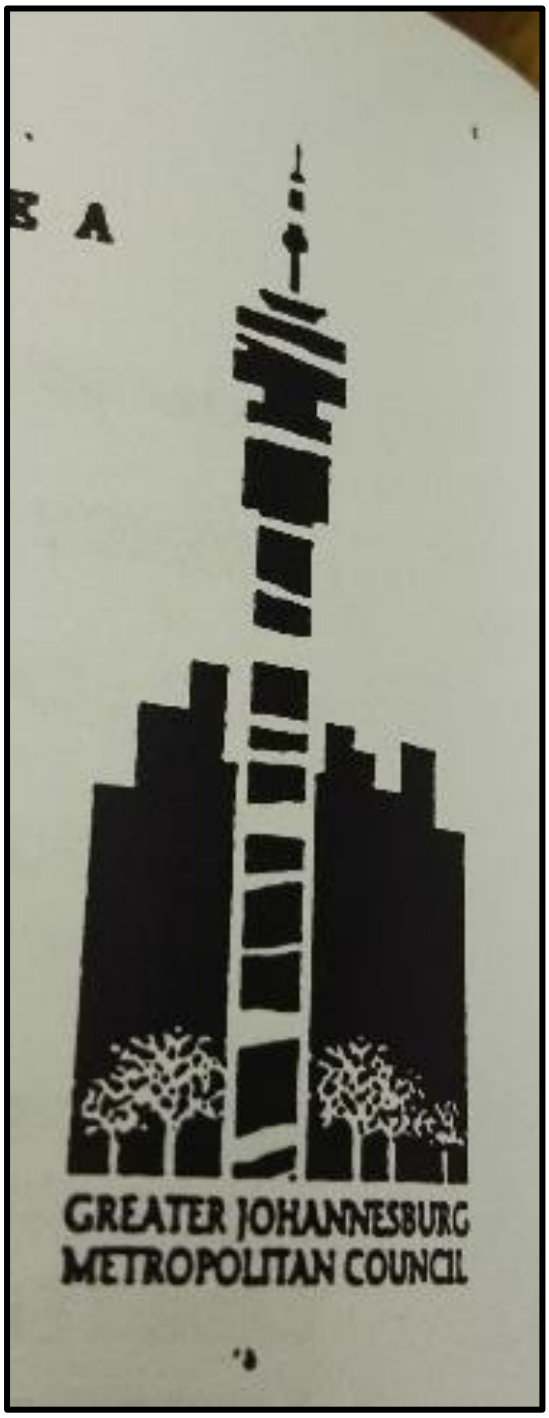


Source: GJTMC, council agenda, 18 September 1997

The logo of the JMTA retained Johannesburg's iconic skyline but also infused it with trees, which embraced the city's stance on sustainable development. In addition, the African continent was added to emphasise that while the city was seeking international markets, it was still of the continent. Lastly, gold was mentioned to relate to the city's historical beginnings. Throughout its branding efforts, the GJTMC had always made it a point to highlight gold as the origin of the city. Also, the GJTMC had expanded the

footprint of its image to the rest of the continent rather than concentrating on being the gateway to Southern Africa through the “Golden Heartbeat of Africa” place brand.

Figure 5.6: Logo of the GJTMC



The logo depicts the Hillbrow (Telkom) Tower in black and white, sandwiched by two black blocks of flats on either side. The black and white of the Hillbrow Tower analogises the demographics of Johannesburg, with Black people being the majority in the city and White being in the minority (Tomlinson *et al.,* 2003*).* In addition, the dominance of the Hillbrow Tower is significant as it forms part of the recognisable skyline of Johannesburg, and thus, it lends itself to being a significant landmark and point of reference within the city (Nuttall, 2004). The two blocks of flats are interspersed by white trees depicting the green agenda that the GJTMC had been garnering (Schäffer & Swilling, 2013).

In 1998, the government released the White Paper on Local Government, which articulated the mechanics of a new form of local governance and re-emphasised the IDP’s importance in equalising spatial and economic imbalances in the country (Harrison, 2001).

1998

The IDP became the focal point for conceiving and budgeting for development in local government (Scott, 2005). It also provided the avenue through which local governments approached provincial government for intergovernmental transfers

(Dlamini, 2011). This included several changes to pieces of local governance legislation, including, amongst others, the Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998). These changes aimed at making local government processes more coherent and strategic.

Three significant events related to Johannesburg's branding occurred in the same year. Firstly, the JMTA became known as Johannesburg Tourism (JT). The Economic Development and Marketing sub-clusters were integrated within Johannesburg Tourism. The annual budget of this newly formed Department also decreased from R 4 32 million to R 3 024 million. Secondly, the city launched its website, strengthening its branding footprint (Lauferts & Mavunganidze, 2009). Thirdly, the city adopted a new logo (Figure 5.6), commissioned for design in 1997. Throughout the development of place brands in Johannesburg, the elements of gold and the city's skyline remained a solid focal point. This is important because it shows consistency. Place brands that change frequently and dramatically have little recollection in the minds of placeholders (Zenker & Braun, 2010).

Under the shifting landscape of local governance in the country and on the back of a comprehensive study, the Municipal Demarcation Board conferred the status of "Category A" municipality to the GJTMC under the Municipal Structures Act (Netswera, 2005). This categorisation meant that the GJTMC would perform the responsibilities of a local municipality, such as service delivery, but also must create its revenue stream outside provincial and national government transfers (Monkam, 2014). Put differently, this categorisation forced the GJTMC to become even more entrepreneurial and with this move, the place brand of Johannesburg would have to be significantly bolstered for it to stand out.

This saw a reprioritisation of branding Johannesburg in 2000. The GJTMC initiated several initiatives in this respect. Amongst these was the commissioning of a Customer Satisfaction Assessment that dealt with two interrelated issues (GJTMC council meeting, 21 September 2000: 8). The first related to the gauging of customer satisfaction as far as service delivery was concerned in the city, and the second revolved around assessing residents' satisfaction with the vision that the city had produced in 1997. The GJTMC had established a CDS, which contained a revised vision for the city based on the feedback received from the assessment as set out in

the visioning exercise that culminated in the formulation of iGoli 2010. Parnell and Robinson (2006: 337) point out that the iGoli 2010 strategy "emerged out of the local demand for a post-apartheid vision for South African cities as well as a renewed enthusiasm for city-level economic planning within international development agencies and consultants." The iGoli 2010 strategy explicitly made Johannesburg an "African world-class city" (GJTMC council meeting, 21 September 2000).

This vision was underpinned by the city's aspiration of being a city with increased prosperity and quality of life. For the GJTMC, sustained economic growth and development were the critical drivers for attaining such a state. The vision also changed to having goals instead of thrusts, as contained in the 1997 version. Specifically, these goals were (a) improved safety and security, (b) the improvement of life expectancy and health, (c) solid and sustainable economic growth, (d) improved wealth distribution through the creation of higher quality jobs, (e) poverty reduction and increased household income and (f) deepening democracy. However, Kongwa (2001) points out that the iGoli 2010 strategy was contra to the spirit of CDSs, which require a collaborative effort between city governments and residents in their development. He argues that the strategy was an effort by the ANC in the GJTMC to consolidate political power instead of being a genuine output for planning strategically for and about the city.

At the end of 2000, the GJTMC was fully restructured, which resulted in the absorption of the four independent councils and neighbouring Midrand into one unicity (Dlamini *et al.,* 2001). From that point, the city became known as the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (CoJ) (Pieterse, 2019). While there remained many obstacles for the CoJ to overcome, Mogase and his transformation team had succeeded in setting the processes for taking Johannesburg into its new development phase.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the branding efforts of Johannesburg close to the beginning of democracy in South Africa. It set these efforts against the prevailing economic and political conditions besetting the city at the time. Even at this stage, when place branding was not clearly defined as a discipline, Johannesburg appreciated the benefits of having a distinct place brand that would strategically position the city in the

global economy. However, the changes underway proved challenging for Johannesburg to balance its aspirations and realities.

The culmination of the development of the Golden Heartbeat of Africa place brand, and the appointment of a Black mayor in Johannesburg coincided with the rising sentiments of Afropolitanism. Through this place brand, Johannesburg sought a way to go back to the people and being of Africa. Thus, Johannesburg as a city played a critical role in sensitising South African people with the idea that they were not alienated from the continent. Previously, under colonialism and apartheid, the country was governed without anchoring to and relying on African partners (Geldenhuys, 1984).

This move of anchoring to Africa presented a considerable challenge for the GJTMC. It owed much of its existence to its founding because of gold and the exploitation of cheap Black migrant labour (Rogerson, 1999). In the same breath, it had the challenge of trying to appeal to the old guard to keep investing in the city while also appealing to the increasing migrant labour force. The GJTMC had to assure the international community that business was different. At the same time, the city had to tell the story that those who had invested in the city's development were safeguarded, really appealing to the norms and standards of land ownership as understood in the so-called developed world (Kaul & Mendoza, 2003). Thus, the re/branding of Johannesburg was not coincidental; neither was it altruistic. Instead, it was purposeful and strategic.

From the early 1990s to 2000, the city developed two distinct strategies, namely "Gateway to Southern Africa" and the "Golden Heartbeat of Africa". In both cases, these strategies were not aspirational but affirmative. Johannesburg was bullish about its position in Africa. This bullishness came not only from the city's strategic location within South Africa but also from the realisation that Johannesburg had the potential to become an economic powerhouse on the continent.

The branding efforts of Johannesburg between 1994 and 2000 display elements of rudimentary and advanced applications of place branding. In the case of the "Gateway to Southern Africa" place brand, the city attempted to target international businesses and tourists. However, the place brand neglected local placeholders and it removed Johannesburg from being part of Africa. The place brand painted the city as a conduit

into Africa. It missed the opportunity of unequivocally laying claim to and of being of Africa.

The GJTMC remedied this omission through the “Golden Heartbeat of Africa” place brand. The place brand aligned the prospects of Johannesburg with that of the rest of the continent. Whereas the previous place brand had overplayed the importance of Johannesburg to Africa, the “Golden Heartbeat of Africa” place brand essentially turned that idea on its head in that it realised the importance of Africa to Johannesburg. This place brand made space for a reciprocal flow of benefits between Johannesburg and Africa. In addition, applying a going-back-to-basics approach, this place brand targeted a wider audience, including local placeholders, international businesses and tourists.

Furthermore, towards 2000, Johannesburg moved away from focussing its branding efforts on hosting sports events. This was important in highlighting the consideration Johannesburg made when branding in that it began looking at broader socio-political challenges and opportunities. It showed that Johannesburg was becoming apt at place branding. For instance, moving closer or back to Africa was critical for the city and South Africa. The previous detachment from the continent painted Johannesburg and South Africa as being out of touch with happenings on the continent, and this resulted in contempt for the country and, by extension, Johannesburg by other African countries.

The following chapter explores the “A world-class African city” place brand under the mayoralty of Amos Masondo between 2000 and 2011.

CHAPTER 5: THE RISE OF A WORLD-CLASS AFRICAN CITY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter casts a spotlight on the dynamics that shaped the creation of the "A world-class African city" place brand, which was effectively coined in 2000 under the mayoralty of Isaac Mogase (Sihlongonyane, 2015). However, the place brand was most often associated with Amos Masondo, who served as city mayor between 2000 and 2011 (Bethlehem, 2013). The chapter begins with Masondo's first term in office. It explores how the city positioned the place brand as a direction-setting instrument for navigating the urban governance challenges it faced at the turn of the century. The chapter then moves on to give an account of how the city of Johannesburg consolidated the gains made through the place brand in Masondo's second term. The chapter concludes by highlighting the gaps in place branding in the context of cities in the developing world. All this is done through the perusal of the archives of the city and by piecing together interviews held with Pascal Moloi[1], Isaac Motswaneng[2] and quotations[3] from Jeremy Sampson[4] as well as Giles Shepherd[5].

A dearth of literature details the events surrounding the development of the "A world-class African city" place brand. This chapter bridges that gap and adds a layer of depth to the understanding of the motivations that influenced the city of Johannesburg to pursue the ambitious objective of being one of the leading global cities. The significance of this chapter is underscored through its presentation of first-hand accounts from the critical personnel, including the city manager and brand consultants who formulated the place brand in question.

5.2 A world-class African city emerges

Towards the end of 2000, the CoJ saw to the implementation of the finishing touches of the iGoli 2002 strategy (Kongwa, 2001). This strategy had been developed as a response to the mounting debt and overall fiscal crisis that the city faced in the mid and late 1990s (Didier *et al.,* 2013). With the iGoli 2002 strategy in place, the CoJ

[1] Pascal Moloi was the City Manager from 2000 to 2005 after having served as the city's Transformation Manager between 1997 and 2000. He was CEO of the Housing Development Agency at the time of the interview. The interview was conducted on 14 June 2016.
[2] Not his real name. Isaac was a Marketing Specialist within the city's Group Communications Department. The interview was conducted on 24 March 2016.
[3] Quotations obtained from interviews held with Cityscapes and Brands and Branding respectively
[4] Jeremy Sampson was the founder of Interbrand
[5] Giles Shepherd was the co-Managing Director at Interbrand

managed to decrease the debt and streamline the city's administration, which led to the formation of the CoJ unicity (Kongwa, 2001; Reddy, 2008). For example, the CoJ managed to carve out an operating surplus of R 153 million in 2001, a far better picture than the deficit of R 259 million in 1999 (Reddy, 2008). It also saw the finalisation of establishing the fourteen MoEs in the city (Galene, 2019). Following the relative success of the implementation of iGoli 2002, the CoJ immediately set about initiating a long-term vision, iGoli 2010, which aimed at driving the city towards a position of global competitiveness (Oduwaye, 2009). This move was driven primarily by the fact that it had to deal with day-to-day issues because of the need for a long-term vision for Johannesburg.

Through the development of iGoli 2010, the "a world-class African city" (WCAC) place brand was born (GJTMC, council minutes, 12 December 2000: 12). This strategy envisioned Johannesburg as taking its place amongst the global cities of the world. According to Sassen (2000), global cities are strongly networked to the global economy, producing nuanced levels of polarisation owing to the concentration of very high-paying jobs in those cities. Such cities include New York, London, Paris, and Tokyo (Rodwin, 2006). The idea of the global city is an evolution from Friedmann's world city thesis and has been mostly associated with Saskia Sassen (Alderson & Beckfield, 2006).

Like the Gateway to Southern Africa and Golden Heartbeat of Africa place brands, the WCAC place brand also retained international and local outlooks. Throughout its place brands, the CoJ had become accustomed to employing a dual approach to branding Johannesburg. As Sihlongonyane (2015: 2142) points out, this "branding endeavour was not solely about the deployment of narratives of globalization but mobilization of local African images as well". This was significant because, since 1994, Johannesburg had been projected as the poster child for the display of the democratisation and development of South Africa (Kaplan, 2004). Captured succinctly earlier in 1996 and 1997 through then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki's "I am an African" speech and thesis on the African Renaissance, respectively, South Africa was waging a considerable public diplomacy effort in Africa and the world more generally (Lepan, 2017). Johannesburg was significant in this drive. The CoJ strategically and purposefully linked Johannesburg to an international discourse that sought to make the city accessible to its local placeholders and simultaneously alerted the world that

it was making strides in becoming one of the leading global cities emerging from the Global South.

5.2.1 Amos Masondo takes charge of the world-class African city

Along with the emergence of the WCAC place brand, Johannesburg underwent a change of mayor in 2000 (Bethlehem, 2013). Still governed by the ANC, Amos Masondo succeeded Isaac Mogase to become mayor of Johannesburg following South Africa's staging of its second local government elections in December 2000 (Visser, 2006). Masondo was born in 1953 and grew up in Soweto (Asheeke, 2021). Masondo joined the National Youth Organisation (NAYO) and the South African Student Movement (SASM) in his twenties. Both organisations made significant efforts to fight against apartheid (Houston & Magubane, 2006). For his involvement in the struggle against apartheid, Masondo was imprisoned from 1976 to 1981 on Robben Island (Cascio & Luthans, 2014). He was detained again in 1986 until 1989 (Hlongwane, 2008). Upon his release in 1989, Masondo helped form the United Democratic Front (UDF) (Ngwane, 2003). In the same year, he held the position of regional secretary for the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) (Bond, 2002). In 2000, he became a member of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature, and on the back of this, he was appointed as the mayor of Johannesburg by the ANC (Visser, 2006).

Masondo inherited a very different Johannesburg from Pretorius and Mogase when he took over. Through iGoli 2002, the city finalised the establishment of its MOEs, and as such, the operational architecture of the council displayed a much more entrepreneurial façade (van Vuuren, 2012). With a much more stable governance structure, Masondo and his administration set out to push the envelope in making Johannesburg a city of world standing.

However, the city had to begin this task locally. Looking to strengthen the local component of the WCAC place brand, the CoJ incorporated Soweto into its jurisdiction in 2001 (Grant, 2001). Previously, Soweto was administered as a separate space and not part of greater Johannesburg under the construct of Transitional Metropolitan Local Councils (TMLCs) (Dirsuweit & Wafer, 2006). TMLCs were formed through the Local Government Transition Act of 1993 when South Africa was reorganising its local

sphere of government (Franzsen, 2000). They were dismantled through the introduction of South Africa's Constitution in 1996, which sought to increase the representation and participation of all people in their places (Netswera, 2005; Pieterse, 2019). Increasingly, the city recognised the significance of having Soweto as part of its face from a branding perspective.

For example, the CoJ estimated that Soweto contributed about 4% to the city's economy despite its limited attachment to the city's broader economy (Grant, 2013). In addition, Soweto provided a value-added solution regarding the city's cultural proposition (Rogerson, 2008). Soweto is home to two Nobel Peace Prize winners, Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who coincidentally lived on Vilakazi Street at different times (Dondolo, 2018). This rich history added shine to the place brand of Johannesburg and contributed significantly to its equity. For once, the CoJ was considering leveraging assets from previously excluded areas of the city. In this way, the brand gap, which the city had suffered under the "Gateway to Southern Africa" place brand coined by the NP in 1993, was slowly being bridged.

Moloi reflected on the efforts of bringing Soweto into the limelight (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "So, we branded Soweto, we branded bed and breakfast areas and paired them with big hotel chains. I can proudly say we transformed Soweto mentally and spatially to say that it can be a city on its own. It has about a million people. Some of them literally live, play and work in Soweto."

This showed a seriousness of making all areas within Johannesburg more autonomous and self-reliant. Furthermore, incorporating townships into the city's overall place brand signalled an expansion of Johannesburg's brand portfolio.

On the international front, the branding efforts within CoJ were mostly directed towards hosting the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) scheduled for 2002 (CoJ, council minutes, 22 August 2002). The hosting of this event was a culmination of three years of planning between the CoJ and the Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future of the United Nations (UN) (Bäckstrand, 2006). This summit allowed world leaders to review the progress made concerning Agenda 21 and other

recommendations adopted at the conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (Hens & Nath, 2003).

5.2.2 Johannesburg opens to the world

Ahead of the summit, The CoJ embarked on a visibility campaign. The campaign saw the CoJ adopting the motto “Joburg: Sensational City” (CoJ, council meeting, 22 August 2002). The rationale for framing this motto was threefold. Firstly, the CoJ wanted its placeholders to see it as a city anchored in Africa; Johannesburg was vibrant and reflective of their realities. At the time, Johannesburg experienced vast levels of inter-continental immigration. In the past, the city’s place brands had underplayed the significance of this influx and how its African contingent of immigrants contributed to Johannesburg’s metamorphosis in cultural terms (Bethlehem & Kurgan, 2009). If anything, the neglect of these immigrants in previous place brands had pitted them against residents and as such, the relations between the two groups were often tumultuous (Landau, 2007). Through this, the CoJ aimed to elevate its place brand experience from the perspective of its local placeholders. This was important because it hoped to garner support and buy-in from these placeholders to bring a face to the strategy. The CoJ was employing local placeholders as the ambassadors for this strategy.

Secondly, the CoJ wanted to highlight its booming hospitality industry and the infrastructure to support it (Rogerson, 2005). Through this, the CoJ underscored the benefits of hosting world-relevant mega-events. The CoJ had already begun to use the WCAC place brand, and the city needed to prove its self-proclaimed billing of a world-class city. The conference provided an opportunity to gauge the performance of the city’s place brand against its promise and reality. Creating a place brand image is manageable (Anholt, 2010). However, it is more challenging to tie that image to how a city realises its aspirations is more challenging. Given this, the CoJ aimed to position Johannesburg as a premier host of mega-events by actualising and executing its place brand promise.

Lastly, the CoJ wanted to learn from hosting mega-events to replicate the experiences in future. As much as the city had succeeded in hosting mega-events before, it knew there was scope to do better in the future. This showed that the city was willing to be nimble in its endeavour to become a leading global city. Learning from leading global

cities held the prospect of the CoJ increasing the equity of its place brand. For example, New York (the city that never sleeps) and Paris (the city of romance) continue to capture people's imaginations worldwide even when they have never been there. In the same vein, through learning, the CoJ desired to imprint Johannesburg on the collective imaginations of its local placeholders and the international community.

In addition to the "Joburg: Sensational City" motto, the CoJ also adopted a mission, which was "to change the way Johannesburg and its citizens see themselves and, by so doing, change the way the world sees Johannesburg, specifically to increase tourism, increase investment and build city pride" (CoJ, council meeting, 22 August 2002). Again, and not surprisingly, this mission statement had local and international implications. Locally, the mission meant to (a) create awareness for the WSSD and the economic benefits attached to it; (b) sensitise residents of the connection between the issues of the WSSD and their everyday lives; (c) to build pride amongst residents about the city and (d) showcase the stance of the city on sustainability through its development projects (Seyfang, 2003). The mission aimed to reduce perceptions of crime and grime in the city. Internationally, the mission was geared much more strategically as it looked towards (a) mobilising the world around the issues of the WSSD and showing the role of Africa in the sustainable development agenda, (b) raising Johannesburg's and South Africa's capability of hosting mega-events and (c) marketing Johannesburg and South Africa as a viable investment and tourist destinations.

In this way, CoJ extended its place brand to encompass issues not only related to it but also played a role in spreading the brand of the country (Tibbs, 2002). Then-President Thabo Mbeki used the welcoming ceremony of the WSSD to deliver a speech in which he coined the concept of "global apartheid" (Bond, 2004: 817). Global apartheid refers to:

> "an international system of minority rule whose attributes include: differential access to basic human rights; wealth and power structured by race and place; structural racism, embedded in global economic processes, political institutions and cultural assumptions; and the international practice of double standards that assume inferior rights to be appropriate for certain others, defined by location, origin, race and gender" (Booker & Minter, 2001: 2).

Viewed from this, the WCAC place brand stood in direct opposition to the concept of global apartheid in that it elevated the significance of Africa to the rest of the world. Historically, colonial powers plundered Africa and laid waste to its resources without giving credence and dignity to its people (Arowolo, 2010). This led to the underdevelopment of Africa and, to a significant extent, to the resentment that its people had towards each other and themselves (Pheko, 2012). Thus, the CoJ extended its place brand to Africa to expose issues that plagued the continent, a function of co-branding.

In deploying the brand message for the WSSD, Masondo was assisted by members of the Mayoral Committee, Councillors, the City Manager, Corporate Sponsors, residents, and the city's Communications Department. The city communicated this message through mass media, community forums, stakeholder briefings, corporate events, public relations campaigns, and the city's website. The intended purpose of this exercise was to have Johannesburg seen as (a) a vibrant, Afropolitan host city, (b) to promote Johannesburg's sub-brands, and (c) ensure the recyclability of the branding concepts to stage other events such as the Cricket World Cup that was scheduled to take place in South Africa in 2003 (Brooks *et al.,* 2004). The broad spectrum of placeholders involved in communicating the message, coupled with the array of platforms on which it was communicated, was indicative of the city's desire to make the summit a success as well as make the processes of hosting the event transparent, thereby democratising the operations of the city.

Moloi pointed out how the city had targeted the hosting of events to highlight Johannesburg's brand (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "But you know, the brand going out there, raising funding, putting our hands out and up for hosting major international events. Of course, the first one in 2002 was the World Summit. It gave us so much that now it's embedded in the UN literature that there was a Joburg declaration" (related to climate change).

The heavy reliance on hosting major events revealed a significant weakness in Johannesburg's branding processes. For example, the WSSD was held at the Sandton Convention Centre (Wapner, 2003). Sandton is an upmarket area of the city (Swart, 2010). The WSSD did not make landfall in any of the township areas of

Johannesburg. To the international community, Johannesburg was seen as a buzzing, modern metropolis, an image commensurate with the ambitions of the WCAC place brand. Locally, however, the place brand brushed the not-so-well-off places of the city under the proverbial rug. Like before, the place brand experience for people in poorer areas of the city was far different from those from more affluent areas. In this way, a brand gap emerged, and as such, its equity was questionable.

5.2.3 Charting the future for the world-class African city

Sometime after the end of the WSSD in late 2002, the CoJ replaced the iGoli 2010 strategy with iGoli 2030, which would later be called Joburg 2030 (Parnell & Robinson, 2006). Officials in the CoJ felt that iGoli 2010 needed to be more long-term and that the city needed a much longer visioning policy to guide its development (Tomlinson *et al.*, 2003). Joburg 2030 was a long-term economic development strategy which sought to make the city "a world-class city with service deliverables and efficiencies that meet world best practice" (Seedat & Gotz, 2006: 1). At its heart, the strategy imagined a future where Johannesburg would move from its mining/manufacturing history to one encompassing an economy based on services by 2030 with the view of ridding the city of inefficiencies and poverty (Vyas, 2014). This was an attempt to close the gap between the aspirational nature and reality contained in the WCAC place brand. The intense focus on economic development of Joburg 2030 moved away slightly from the imaginings of the earlier iGoli 2002 and 2010 strategies. Whereas the latter strategies focussed primarily on reorganising the CoJ Johannesburg from operational and institutional perspectives, Joburg 2030 was attuned to gearing Johannesburg towards a much more prosperous economic future through a long-term visioning exercise.

The Joburg 2030 policy provided a roadmap for the type of city Johannesburg aimed to become by 2030 (Beaureguard & Tomlinson, 2007). Sihlongonyane (2016) opines that Joburg 2030 fits neatly with the discourse of globalisation. Joburg 2030 was unlike its predecessors, IGoli 2002 and 2010. iGoli 2002 was a short-term strategy to reorganise local governance, improve fiscal stability, and increase management capacity for a unified Johannesburg (Pieterse, 2019). iGoli 2010 provided a framework for long-term policy decisions (Parnell & Robinson, 2006; Oduwaye, 2009). Joburg 2030 took a deep, internal introspection of what Johannesburg is and could be in future in line with the attainment of global city status (Beavon, 2006).

In early 2003, South Africa hosted the International Cricket Council (ICC) World Cup between 9 February and 23 March (Davis & Upson, 2004). While this tournament was hosted in other cities across the country, it was significant because its final was played at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg (Swart, 2017). Once again, this allowed the CoJ to host and oversee a significant sporting event and, in the process, cement its status as a world-class city. Moloi reflected on this (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "We hosted the 2003 Cricket World Cup, and it was phenomenal. In fact, in my house I still have a bat-shaped whisky bottle – it was a thank you gift from Mr Alibacha (A high ranking cricket official in South Africa) and I vowed that I won't open that bottle until South Africa wins a Cricket World Cup. It's gonna be a long time and it's evaporating (laughing)."

He added (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "We took pride in that…it allowed us to put our hands up for Miss World, but we were able to host very high profile, senior events. I'm not being disrespectful to other cities, but it was almost like we were anchoring Joburg. Remember some of the claims that we made other than being a host city or a street that hosts two Nobel Prize winners in Vilakazi Street, but we were almost the centre of SADC and we wanted to keep people in Joburg for at least three days whether they are tourists, businesspeople, or sports people."

CoJ's exploits in hosting mega-events were deliberate in cementing its place brand. The city took advantage of its history and location in broader political discourses in South Africa to the detriment of other cities. In this way, officials in the CoJ were pinning Johannesburg as the site from which to measure the prosperity and welfare of South Africa.

Also, in 2003, the CoJ formulated a long-lasting corporate brand/identity. Until then, the CoJ had branded Johannesburg ad hoc, and the city was looking for ways to save on costs but simultaneously build a strong, reputable, and sustainable brand identity. Considering this, the CoJ initiated a three-year branding strategy that would see its culmination in 2006 (CoJ, council minutes, 20 March 2006: 48.2). Three distinct elements formed the crux of the city's brand. These were namely (a) the geographic

space that was Johannesburg along with its people, history, pulse, and pace, (b) Johannesburg's position and status as a regional economic powerhouse in Africa and (c) the council as the deliverer of services and custodian of the brand. The CoJ invited proposal submissions from South African marketing/advertising firms.

Figure 5.1 City of Johannesburg Logo

Source: CoJ, council minutes, 18 September 2003

Ultimately, Interbrand Sampson De Villiers won the bid (CoJ council minutes, 18 September 2003). When Interbrand Sampson took over the campaign, Giles Shepherd, co-managing Director at the company, mentioned that there were several questions that they needed to answer. Amongst these were:

> "Who does the city answer to, who are its customers, why does it need their positive attitude and what effect could a branding strategy have on creating this?"

He also mentioned that from their research, many people believed to be living in Johannesburg rather than in the City of Johannesburg. In other words, Johannesburg residents had a dichotomous view of the city. They saw Johannesburg as the place they worked and lived but considered the government as something different and detached to them.

Going back to the brief, Jeremy Sampon, founder and CEO of Interbrand recounted:

> “I recall starting my presentation by explaining that a brand was a little like building a house: decisions have to be made about who is going to live in it, the design, then the foundation, the walls, the roof and the finishes. Only later, after we were informed that we had to give other consultants a chance, much to our sadness, came the line: “A world-class African city.”

Sampson explained that his sadness came from the fact that a word can lay claim to many interpretations. For him, the “African city” component of the place brand was too limiting. He had wanted to expand the reach of the city’s place brand. At the heart of Sampson’s concern were two issues. Firstly, he argued that Johannesburg had a unique history, and he wanted to exploit this. Secondly, he thought attaching the city’s brand only to Africa was a mistake as Johannesburg was home to other people from other parts of the world. Despite these reservations, the brand strategy Interbrand developed led to fundamental changes to the city’s logo. Whereas the logo had sported an apostrophe in “Jo’burg” previously, it was replaced by the Telkom tower in the form of an exclamation mark. In addition, a gold dot donned the new logo. The dot played on the history of the discovery of gold, while the exclamation mark “expresses the city’s identity as a lively, vibrant and dynamic place” according to Interbrand. Critically, this culminated in naming Johannesburg simply as Joburg (CoJ, council meeting, 18 September 2003).

At coining “Joburg”, Sampson explained that the “City of Johannesburg” was merely a geographical representation. For this reason, “Joburg” was chosen as an affectionate reference point for residents and tourists. This move, he felt, made residents identify and relate more with the city. Shepherd argued that the city had to deliver services well for the brand message to work, He felt that if this were not in place, no amount of branding would endear the city to its residents. The brand promise had to be matched with effective service delivery.

Within Johannesburg, Moloi recalled that there had been contestations over the city’s name. Were they to call the city Jozi or Joburg? Eventually, they settled on the name Joburg. There was an elaborate effort made to avoid calling the city Johannesburg (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “It’s almost like it came out organically. People all over the world could say I came from Joburg, but Jozi people call themselves as Jozi people than Joburg people”.

The point of contention here was the conundrum of whether the city called itself as seen from the outside or as it saw itself (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017)

> “Now I’m glad when I see young men wearing caps saying Joburg because we used to ask them why they wore NY caps, why don’t you take pride…whether its Jozi or Joburg? So, that’s what we also wanted to instil…to say that it is your city”.

Moloi believed that Joburg was effectively reaffirming itself to its local placeholders. In branding terms, the city was increasing its brand equity by realising the importance of infusing its place brand with the local. This function of branding is essential because it legitimises a place brand and increases support for and buy-in from residents to the extent that they can be its ambassadors, thereby giving it personality.

Moloi outlined why it was important for Joburg to initiate a coherent branding strategy for the city. He noted (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “The first thing we had to do was to bring all municipalities into one sub-structure (referring to the restructuring process initiated in the late 1990s). The thing that we had to do was to get that identity going.”

By then, the city had a draft logo taken from the old metro council. This prompted the commissioning of the creation of a permanent logo. Consequently, the city effectively needed two logos; one was the mayoral logo, and the other was the city logo. The likes of Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2009) and Govers (2013) point out that creating logos differs from creating an identity for a place. Johannesburg’s identity is deeply connected to gold, its founding *raison d’etre;* hence, the city has the nickname *eGoli* (place of gold) (Crankshaw *et al.,* 2003).

He went on to say (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “The second thing that we did was to put together the corporate brand manual. It’s a big Bible that dictated the font, the look, the feel, letterheads”.

He commented on two significant issues when the city’s brand identity was established (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017).

> “It was never really intended for the entities (referring to the city’s municipal owned entities) to have separate brands and/or logos. Despite having fourteen entities…they were never meant to have separate brands. I remember our argument was that even though we were establishing fourteen entities, we always saw the 2.5 million people of Joburg then as the mayor’s people. We were always insisting that the mayor is the brand, and that the city belongs…is led by the mayor. But before we knew it…City Power had its little bee, Pikitup with their own…it was catchy…. Different CEOs gave themselves different titles.”

He bemoaned that these entities had no consistency in affording titles to their CEOs. He pointed out that others referred to themselves as Managing Directors while others called themselves CEOs (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017).

> “In fact, the CEO of City Power even called himself the president (laughing), taking the American style of naming their leadership. That was the first one.”

> “The second was the regions. So, we established nine regions and people started naming the regions. For time being, we settled for Region A, B, C. We fought over colours. And you sit in the room, people fight for the green colour, pink colour, and red colour. But all of that was almost like we were turning things as we were going. We didn’t have the luxury of waiting two years for Brand Africa to come up with a single brand and all that. But (“mina”), I think myself and that mayoral committee prided ourselves in the Joburg logo. I mean if you look at how the logo is written…it’s a mix of fonts and for us that illustrated the diversity of the city and then I’m not sure if you noticed the “I” …which is actually the Hillbrow Tower and uhhh…the colour mix also reflected the diversity of the demography of the city. So that logo for me stood out as defining Joburg”.

These considerations showed that Joburg began taking a measured approach to dealing with its place brand. One can see that the city appreciated the benefits that a coherent place brand could deliver and, as such, took steps to ensure that it was protected.

Following the change in the city's logo, Masondo remarked:

> "The new logo seeks to galvanise citizens of Johannesburg behind a common vision of building a word-class African city: young, ambitious, and successful. We have learned valuable lessons from cities like Singapore and New York and that a brand is one of the most important assets of a city. It's about value, prestige, and emotional attachment" (Bond, 2007: 2).

Masondo was determined to position Johannesburg on the world map. Not only that, by boldly embracing the place brand, Masondo effectively gave a face to it and, by extension, personified the "A world-class African city" place brand. This was important because it gave placeholders a reference point to engage with the place brand, effectively adding to its authenticity and legitimacy.

On the back of the move to change its vision and logo, Mandy Jean Woods, the then Director of Tourism and Marketing, announced that Johannesburg had been named South Africa's premier city in the Markinor/Sunday Times Top Brands Survey in 2003 (Marsland, 2003). This annual survey seeks to recognise top brands in particular categories, including retail, beverages, and best companies to work for, amongst others (Scheffer & Crystal, 2008). Masondo said this accolade only cemented the view that Johannesburg was a world-class African city. As he put it:

> "Johannesburg remains South Africa's commercial and industrial heartland and as the nation's main centre of finance, business services, information and technology and telecommunications. This award epitomises this view" (CoJ council meeting, 20 March 2003).

This award was a signaller that Joburg was on the right track in branding Johannesburg and further bolstered the idea that the place brand had a significant impact locally and internationally. The positioning of a city through a place brand is always questionable because it relies on several matrices, including the reception of awards (Urde, 2013). Given that Joburg received its award from a South African

publication rather than an international one, it begs the question of whether Johannesburg had truly arrived on the stage of global cities.

Asked what he thought of the impact of the brand, Moloi offered three significant observations. The first was that the brand raised the bar by saying that Joburg was a city and not just a municipality (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "We're not just a municipality. We are a city, and we are a world city. That gets reinforced. That we're a city and a world-class one at that."

The second thought related to the architecture of the city's logo. Precisely, the exclamation mark. It was not only an exclamation mark, but it also represented the Hillbrow Tower (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> **"**That wow factor… the brand is a wow. The city has to wow you …it has to be an experience that whether you're in Soweto on Vilakazi Street or Stjwetla in Alex or in Ivory Park etc. there has to be something that wows you. I think we managed to get the wow effect."

Lastly, for Moloi, the impact of the brand spoke to a message that said, "it's possible" (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017).

> "The governance issues …it sounded so difficult. It doesn't matter whether it was Mogase's or Masondo's era…the brand must still suggest that there is proper governance and proper administration."

From these observations, Moloi believed that the city's place brand played a vital role in reassuring placeholders that the city was in control and was doing its best to safeguard the prospects of their livelihoods. Moloi was speaking about balancing the promise made through a place brand and how a city performs in realising it, given the limited resources that municipalities have at their disposal.

5.2.4 The world-class African city show goes on

The year 2004 proved to be significant for South Africa and Johannesburg. In May, FIFA awarded the rights to host the FIFA Soccer World Cup in 2010 (Alegi, 2008). South Africa had to step up its efforts to develop its economy and infrastructure (Cornelissen *et al.*, 2011). Joburg was no exception to this. Not necessarily in line with

the preparation for hosting the World Cup, Joburg undertook a massive transformation agenda, which culminated in three major projects.

Firstly, the city initiated a process of renaming streets that were named after people who had had an active role in enshrining apartheid in South Africa to people's names that had played a massive role in the fight against that system (Adebanwi, 2017). One such street was Bezuidenhout Street, renamed Miriam Makeba Street, in Johanesburg's cultural precinct, Newtown (Ndletyana, 2012). Makeba, popularly known as Mama Africa, was a South African musician who participated in the fight against apartheid (Sizemore-Barber, 2012). Throughout her career, Makeba performed in Africa while living in Guinea and internationally, spreading anti-apartheid sentiments (Mwamuka, 2021). At the opening ceremony of this street name change, Masondo said:

> "Our mission is to build Johannesburg into a world-class African city. Part of this entails positioning Johannesburg as the cultural hub of the African continent" (Mhlambi, 2004: 1).

By so doing, Joburg effectively claimed the singer as its own. Owing to her international fame and status, Makeba personified and played an ambassadorship role in the city's place brand.

Brand ambassadorship in place branding has been introduced before (Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013). For example, the "I ♥ NY" place brand was re-entrenched and catapulted to the minds of New Yorkers throughout the airing of the American sitcom "Friends" (Sadler & Haskins, 2005). The sitcom's set included a fictional café called "Central Perk", referencing New York's iconic park, Central Park (Sutton, 2019). The show lasted for an impressive ten seasons, from 1994 until 2004 (Hamad, 2018). The show's cast included actors such as Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox, Matthew Perry, Matt LeBlanc, and David Schwimmer, and they became synonymous with New York as they constantly referred to the city, unwittingly becoming ambassadors (Todd, 2011). According to Braun *et al.* (2013), ambassadors give credibility to and legitimise the message of a place brand.

Secondly, Joburg oversaw the completion and opening of South Africa's new Constitutional Court on Constitutional Hill (Sacks, 2020). The Constitutional Court

replaced the old awaiting trial wing of the prison that mainly held political prisoners (Autry, 2010). Most of the prison was demolished save for the stairwells that were retained as reminders of the strides made in fighting for democracy (van der Merwe & Patel, 2017). By constructing this institution, Joburg made significant strides in imprinting the city in the minds of South Africans and the international community. In the same breath, Joburg was putting up its hand in projecting Johannesburg as the place where reconciliatory engagements occurred.

Lastly, the city finished the construction of the Nelson Mandela Bridge (Blyth, 2005). The Nelson Mandela Bridge connects Newtown and Braamfontein in Johannesburg's CBD (Gregory & Rogerson, 2019). Named after one of the most celebrated anti-apartheid stalwarts, Sihlongonyane (2021) sees the bridge as a recalling of the democratic ideals in South Africa and a grand expression of place branding in Johannesburg. Monuments and landmarks are hallmarks of many place branding campaigns (Kavaratzis, 2005). For instance, Paris in France is easily identifiable through the Eiffel Tower, and the Big Ben clock is a constant backdrop in London in the UK.

The construction and naming of monuments after famous people are also a subset of place branding praxis (Fourodi *et al.,* 2016). Kotler and Gertner (2002) opine that part of a place brand's success stems from embedding cultural, historical, and archaeological monuments in its tapestry. This is almost natural as residents and visitors alike become familiar with and, to an extent, orient their activities around such monuments (Chappelet, 2015). A famous city that has employed this ploy in its place branding is Paris in France, using the Eiffel Tower (Warnaby & Medway, 2010).

In addition to its transformative agenda, Joburg sent representatives from the Tourism and Marketing Department and two councillors to attend the World Travel Market that was to take place in London on 8 November 2004 (CoJ council meeting, 14 October 2004). The main objective of this visit was to enter initial engagements about hosting the FIFA Soccer World Cup™ 2010, as South Africa had lost out to Germany for hosting the 2006 edition. Secondary objectives included (a) networking, (b) building relationships, (c) learning from influential individuals and cities, and (d) extending an invitation to visit Joburg (CoJ council meeting,14 October 2004).

In 2005, the top executive of Joburg visited Tokyo, London, and Amsterdam as part of a fact-finding visit around the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) issue in 2005 (CoJ council minutes, 23 June 2005). The GCRO is a cluster of towns and cities in and around Gauteng that contribute economically to the province (Greenberg, 2010). The visits were meant to work out modalities and processes for making Gauteng perform economically on the regional and world stage (Greenberg, 2010). Apart from this, the GRCO is a research institution which collaborates frequently with the Universities of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and Johannesburg (UJ) on matters related to the development of the province (Washbourne *et al.,* 2021). Moloi said that the premier at the time, Mbazima Shilowa, sponsored the trip (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017).

> "We came back with a very strong view of this Gauteng Global City-Region, and we always thought that Joburg would be at the centre of this city region."

The GCRO established its offices in Johannesburg (Mushongera & Culwick, 2017). However, again, officials in Joburg ensured that Johannesburg was the centrepiece of gauging development in South Africa. The continued entrenchment of significant developments within Johannesburg showed that the city remained a hot topic among local placeholders and the international community. This occupation is essential because it highlights Johannesburg's connectivity and integration into the global economy and simultaneously presents the city as a unit of analysis for structural changes occurring in South Africa, both of which are components of the global city thesis (Simon, 2007)

5.3 A world-class African city for the future

The ANC nominated Masondo for a second term, and he retook charge of the city in 2006. The move to appoint Masondo as mayor for a second term signalled stability and improved chances of survival of the WCAC place brand. In his second term, Masondo sought to consolidate the gains of Joburg's brand and, along with his administration, adopted the Growth and Development Strategy (GDS) for the city, Joburg 2040. The GDS came when the CoJ realised that its urban development rate threatened the city's sustainability (Peyroux, 2015). As such, Joburg 2040 was a policy with an outlook of balancing economic growth, social development, and agendas linked to sustainable development (Hetz, 2016). The Joburg 2040 GDS consolidated

all other strategies in operation in the city (Joburg, 2011). These included Joburg 2030, the Human Development Strategy (HDS) and the City Safety Strategy (CSS) (Ebrahim, 2017).

The vision of the Joburg 2040 reads:

> "Johannesburg – a World Class African City of the Future – a vibrant, equitable African city, strengthened through its diversity, a city that provides real quality of life, a city that provides sustainability for all its citizens, a resilient and adaptive society" (CoJ, 2011: 3).

The vision continued to paint Johannesburg as an inclusive city for all while simultaneously pushing for its position as a significant economic player in Africa.

Regarding being part of the continent, Masondo avered:

> "We added the African element because we didn't want to be a city alienated from itself. Joburg is a city on the African continent; we needed to re-assert our Africanness. We needed to inspire new values and fight Afro-pessimism" (CoJ council minutes, 31 May 2006).

In this way, Masondo restated Johannesburg's stance of being an Afropolitan city (Mbembe, 2020). To reiterate, Afropolitanism is an identification mode (Skinner, 2017). It refers to "a way of being African in the world" (Gikandi, 2011: 9). Masondo's utterances were meaningful because Johannesburg was still experiencing vast levels of inter-continental immigration at the time (Crush, 2005). In a way, Masondo was making way for the ever-increasing numbers of immigrants from Africa and other regions of the world, thereby increasing the equity of the city's place brand. Donald *et al.,* (2009) argue that the infusion of transient populations in place branding messages contributes to the cosmopolitanism of a place.

Reflecting on the degree to which the WCAC place brand was espousing African-ness, Moloi commented (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "It got diluted somewhere and it ended up saying that we are African or that we wanna be an African city. It was aspirational."

Moloi believed the leadership at that time was very arrogant to say that they were indeed Africa's world class city. He added (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

"We might have our problems, but our vision and comparator are world cities. We saw ourselves as a metropolitan conurbation of a world standard and we were defining the world standard in African terms."

He just fell short of saying that Johannesburg was the leading city in Africa in terms of development.

However, Moloi contested that the place brand did not paint the exchanges between the city and Africa as unilateral. He mentioned that Joburg had approached other cities in Africa to form partnerships. According to Moloi, Addis Ababa was significant for Johannesburg (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017).

> "We had a very strong partnership with Addis Ababa. My appreciation, personally, of Addis Ababa was that it was a chartered city, and our aspiration was always that Joburg would be a charted city."

A charted city, he explained, did not have universal legislation pertaining to it as they did to the rest of the country. Such a city was both a city and a municipality (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017).

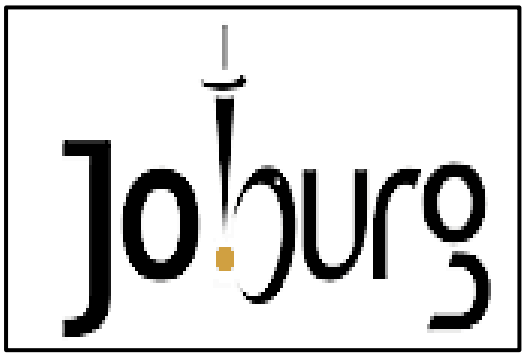
> "So, when we say world-class, we need to be able to compare with Lagos, Addis Ababa but also definitely compare with New York, Paris, and we took a trip around the world looking at those comparisons."

It was important for Joburg to nurture relationships with cities regionally because it could enter into mutually beneficial arrangements with them and not be isolated from the continent, as had been the case during apartheid. Former colonial powers communicated directly to their countries of origin and did not necessarily form diplomatic ties with countries around them (Aniche, 2020). This was the case in colonial and apartheid-South Africa (Heleta, 2016).

Critically, Joburg commissioned two significant analyses in 2006 (CoJ, council minutes, 31 May 2006). The first was the enhancement of the Joburg brand identity.

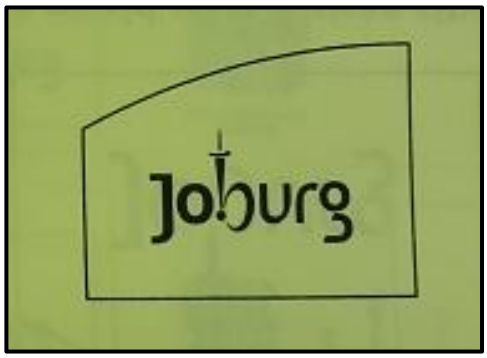
Since 2003, Joburg has made a conscious effort to grow and maintain its brand identity on a long-term basis. Although the city's brand identity was more visible, particular technical issues had arisen that threatened its viability and authenticity. Joburg appointed the Switch Design Group (Switch), a South African brand-consulting firm, to assist the city in identifying these frailties (CoJ, council minutes, 31 May 2006). This was the finalisation of the process initiated in 2003. After this analysis, Joburg made two significant changes to its brand identity. Firstly, Switch placed a holding shape around the identity.

Figure 5.2: Joburg logo 2002/3)



Source: (CoJ council minutes, 31 May 2006)

Figure 5.3: Joburg logo 2006, 2006)



Source: CoJ council minutes, 31 May 2006

According to Switch, there were four reasons for introducing the holding shape (CoJ Corporate Identity Usage Policy, 2006: 3).

a) The rising curve at the top of the shape represents the horizon. The horizon was an analogy for hope and inspiration for the future. The horizon also represented a sunset and the blessing of the city's skyline.

b) A rectangular holding shape was too conservative. The curving shape reflected the pioneering spirit of the city's people.

c) The holding shape amplified the city's identity when placed next to other brands so that it was contained and did not "run" into other brands.

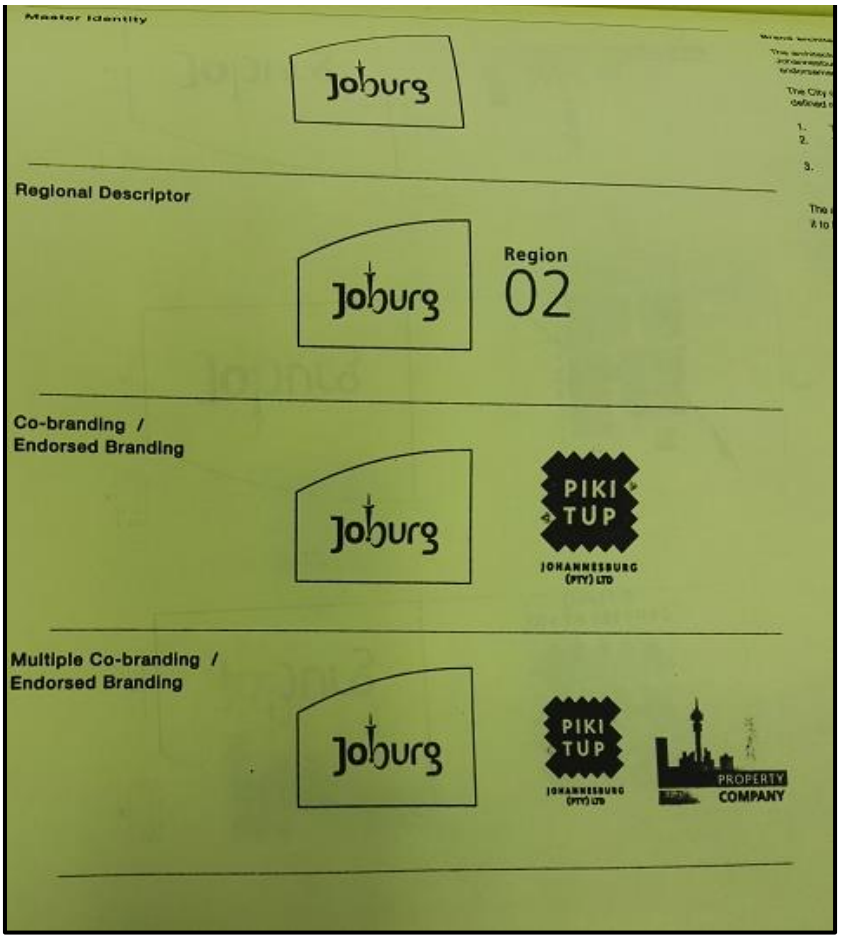
d) The shape itself became the property of Joburg and, therefore, built the city's visual image.

The second change to the city's brand identity was the colour. Whereas the dot had been gold in the earlier version, Switch introduced a warmer yellow colour. According

to Switch, this change was functional and emotional. From a functional perspective, the gold colour was difficult to achieve because it was metallic. Put on different materials, the colour reproduced inconsistently, threatening the longevity of the city's brand identity. Emotionally, the gold colour was usually dull when reproduced. Yellow then represented the warmth of the city's brand identity (CoJ, Corporate Identity Usage Policy 2006: 5).

The city's brand architecture also underwent a couple of changes. The first is related to the sizing relationship between the logo when placed next to another brand. The second relates to the placement (positional and proximal) of the city's brand to another. Both these changes intended to make the brand identity of Joburg dominate when there were co-branding exercises. Overleaf are illustrations of the changes mentioned above.

Figure 5.4: Co-branding Architecture changes of the brand identity of the CoJ



Source: CoJ, council minutes, 31 May 2006

The second of the two analyses was a five-year review of the city's marketing policy. From this review, five crucial points of consideration for the city emerged. Firstly, there was a realisation that no department's core function was the city's marketing, branding, and promotion. Secondly, target audiences did not understand the city's objectives and service delivery capabilities. Thirdly, severe perceptual gaps emerged due to neglecting sustained marketing and brand communications campaign(s) for the city over time. Fourthly, there was no collectively shared uniform brand identity for the city. Lastly, residents still needed to understand that the area of jurisdiction of the city included all regions, and they still thought of Joburg as only encompassing the inner city.

In response to the review's findings, the policy adopted a four-pronged strategy. Firstly, the city developed a marketing strategy based on the Joburg 2040 GDS and the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). Secondly, the city resolved to upscale its communication processes with the view of marketing economic development focussing on a combination of short, medium and long-term components of the Joburg 2040 GDS. Beall *et al.,* (2014: 3 - 4) note, "New understandings of local government in Johannesburg have been quickly shaped by the imperative of developing rapid and pragmatic approaches to service delivery, spatial restructuring, urban economic development and institutional reform." They state, "This has left open the questions of whether a balance could be achieved between equity and efficiency goals and whether early commitments to participatory processes and responsive could be maintained." These concerns underpinned the desire of the city to be inclusive and transparent. Thirdly, the city sought to support business thrusts articulated in the Strategic Thrusts. Lastly, the city strengthened efforts in producing a marketing programme for the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup™, explicitly focussing on investment promotion, strategic partnerships, sponsorship opportunities and legacy planning.

These efforts took place in an environment of collaboration, and the city did not take issues of building consensus around the place brand lightly. Moloi stated that Joburg used "imbizos" to create and negotiate the city's brand identity. "Imbizo" is a Zulu word for gatherings (Mabelebele, 2006). Moloi went on (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “Look, Masondo was very pedantic about his imbizos. In all his imbizos, he would talk about five things. But underlying those five things was the brand of the city. He really pushed hard at least for his first term. He pushed issues around the inner city, he pushed for issues around HIV/AIDS; he pushed for health issues…but in pushing for all that, it wasn’t so much an issue of consultation, but it was almost like a selling job to say, look the city comes first, its people come first.”

Moloi argued that the city could have gone out and assessed the efficacy of its logo or brand (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017).

> “We didn’t go out to communities and say do you want Joburg or Jozi? We left that to developers, they did their own market research, they assessed that. But politically, I don’t think that the Council or the mayor went out to do it. But once it was adopted, he (Masondo) went out forcefully out there to sell it. In many ways, in our cars, the way we looked, we got very positive responses.”

There were more consultations and deliberations with internal departments because each unit or entity wanted to have its own identity. Despite this push for individual identities, Moloi said that it was necessary that the city logo also feature prominently across all entities. Considering this, it is argued that Joburg used its imbizos to rubberstamp ideas that emerged from the executive. The imbizos were not a platform for debating these issues. Whether purposefully or inadvertently, Joburg missed the opportunity to set in motion the processes of democratising the city’s branding. It left Interbrand Sampson with too much leeway to produce narratives for the city that may have needed to reflect local placeholders (Charlton, 2015).

There needs to be more literature to suggest that the officials in Johannesburg have ever conducted a survey on the efficacy, reception, and perceptions of its place brand from local placeholders. This is discouraging from the viewpoint that local placeholders, such as residents and businesses, play a key role in legitimising a place brand (Braun *et al.,* 2013). The lack of participation of local placeholders in formulating the WCAC place brand is surprising. In the first instance, since the democratisation of South Africa, Johannesburg pinned itself as an exemplar of progress and development in the country. In the second instance, the establishment of Masondo’s imbizos fell

short of carrying the voices of local placeholders in the city's place brand. These gatherings proved to be nothing more than rubberstamping events, an acceptance of what the city prescribed to its placeholders. The autocratic nature with which Johannesburg's place brands had been contrived reinforced the chasm between placeholders and the city. To an extent, the lack of participation (from the perspective of local placeholders) in the WCAC place brand was a symbolic representation of the disjuncture between the ethos of the country's Constitution and the neoliberalism of the Johannesburg's service delivery system, seen through the establishment of its MOEs.

Looking at issues that affected the validity of the place brand, especially amongst local placeholders, Moloi bemoaned the billing crisis that the city faced at the time. He argued (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "We were trying to put forward a very strong brand with a very consistent customer interface and billing system. So, the billing system almost compromised the message of the brand. You can't brag. You go into massive and sometimes high-level audiences…you go through an audience of the ANC and brag about Joburg's achievement. And one person, only one person who happens to be a senior leader in the community and lives in Joburg says …No, but what about my bill? So, it compromises all that. So, we had system problems, we had human resources problems."

The city was at pains at trying to build consolidated views of its customer base, not merely looking at them as beneficiaries of service delivery but looking at them as partners in development. However, the billing crisis put a strain on customer relations. He said (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "Every time you get the one right, the other goes wrong."

He mentioned that the city had been on the verge of fixing its billing crisis by the time he left. He continued (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "Building an integrated city with all its entities, I'm convinced was always going to be a long process. We saw the brand and ourselves as creating the platform. I had hoped that by then that we would've moved beyond the consolidation and

> begun to move to excel and become the thought leader in the sector and in the world."

This admission showed that Joburg had encountered a few challenges in establishing Johannesburg as a leading city worldwide. While this represented a setback, it also showed that Joburg was willing to take up its position in global economic discourses. Joburg treated every setback as a learning curve with the view of strengthening its place brand.

Considering the difficulties presented by the city's billing crisis and its impact on the place brand, Moloi suggested that the city used brand ambassadors to boost its support. He noted that sports people and musicians were mainly targeted for this exercise (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "We'd go out of our way to get Thandi Klaasen[6] involved in one way or the other. We wouldn't just use them at events but all along the mayor would want to see legends that are Joburg-based being profiled."

He recounted how the city had made sure that prominent football legends were involved when the Orlando Stadium[7] was demolished (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> "The mayor had given these legends a piece of the old ground. When it was re-opened, all those legends were back."

By so doing, the city effectively gave a face and persona to its place brand. Fleck *et al.* (2014: 84) opine that celebrities "…magically transport consumers to an idealized place, provided there was congruence between the celebrity and the brand." Joburg safeguarded this congruency by approaching celebrities born or plying their trade in Johannesburg.

This meant that the celebrities approached were attached to the city. This was important because the celebrities and personas that the city approached as brand ambassadors had played a part in the struggle against apartheid. Johannesburg was waging a massive public diplomacy agenda in the world. Part of this agenda revolved

[6] Thandi Klaasen was a jazz singer who had participated in the fight against apartheid.
[7] Orlando Pirates plays the majority of its home games at Orlando Stadium.

around the idea of dismantling what Thabo Mbeki had termed “global apartheid”. In part, then, the CoJ used its WCAC place brand as an attempt to emancipate South Africa and Africa, more generally, from the adverse effects of globalisation. Lall (2004) argues that the positive effects of globalisation have disproportionally accrued in the so-called developed world. Even a brief reading of the literature on place branding is instructive in delineating where the praxis is most dominant. Thus, in/advertently, the WCAC place brand was pushing against the grain.

In addition, the city held lunches for the elderly and, in doing so would, invite prominent personalities to these events (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “Every state of the city address, he’d (Masondo) would identify a family of a legend for various reasons (political, sports, etc.) and have that legend as a special guest of the mayor. I think it was more in the mayor’s DNA that he was that type of person, very respectful.”

Moloi was also very proud of the fact that the city had been home to the likes of the Sisulus, Mandelas, Mlangenis, and that Joburg had given them the freedom of the city awards (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “In my time, I was fortunate to preside over three awards, Bayers Naude, Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela and unfortunately we also had the privilege of burying them.”

He explained that burying the likes of Walter Sisulu and Bayers Naude was important. For instance, he recounted the story of how Bayers Naude had wanted his funeral to unfold (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “He wanted to be ridden in a donkey cart from his retirement village to the church, which was a very small church that could only accommodate cabinet members.”

Moloi opined that through such functions, there was a consolidation of what it meant to be Joburg (P. Moloi, personal communication, 14 June 2017):

> “All those functions were consolidating that we are Joburg”.

In 2007, Joburg saw a decrease in its efforts to brand the city. However, the city kept abreast with issues challenging the prospects of modern cities. The city adopted a robust green development agenda. Masondo believed that part of greening townships such as Soweto, Alexandra and others was a way of attaining the "world-class African city" status he had pushed so hard for. On Arbor Day in 2007, he said:

> "We cannot succeed in building into a world-class, African city for all if we do not address the need for the city to become environmentally sustainable" (CoJ, Arbour Day Speech, 1 September 2007).

The city's place brand showed an ability to adapt to issues plaguing cities worldwide. Apart from attempting to generate economic development and attracting FDI, the place brand exhibited a softer side in that it was put forward as a response to the issue of climate change, which was gaining momentum around that time. Moreover, five years earlier, Joburg hosted the WSSD, in which sustainable development issues were a crucial feature. Thus, the city was open to addressing challenges that threatened the vision articulated as part of its iGoli 2040 GDS.

In 2008, the place brand of Johannesburg suffered a triple blow. In the first instance, Johannesburg, like other parts of South Africa, was hit with a spate of sporadic xenophobic attacks (Matunhu, 2011). This dented the image of the city both regionally and internationally. Immigrants, especially those from Africa, were attacked and had their property vandalised and stolen (Everatt, 2011). Vahed and Desai (2013) argue that these attacks were prompted by the perception that South Africans held that immigrants were taking their opportunities for employment or criminal opportunism.

Secondly, South Africa needed help in providing electricity. This led loadshedding, which aimed at rationalising electricity provision by shutting off the supply at various locations at various times of the day (Blignaut *et al.,* 2008). For years, Eskom, South Africa's sole electricity supplier, had bemoaned the lack of investment in new infrastructure and its inability to maintain its old and ailing infrastructure (Steenkamp, 2016).

Lastly, the world suffered the worst recession since the Great Depression. The recession was predicated by the subprime mortgage crisis, which began in the United States and spread to Europe and the rest of the world after that (Demyanyk & Hemert,

2011). Despite these challenges, Masondo and Cape Town's Helen Zille were shortlisted as World Mayor of the Year (Lemon, 2009). Ultimately, Zille emerged as the winner among 820 mayors in the world (Johnson, 2018). Zille was a member of the Democratic Alliance (DA), the ANC's official opposition party (Roets, 2017). Johannesburg and Cape Town are significant cities in South Africa and have an enormous influence on the formulation of development policies (Didier *et al.,* 2013). Zille's win catapulted Cape Town's status and dented some of the achievements the ANC-run Johannesburg had attained over the years.

In 2009, Joburg articulated its desire to re-stitch the city's spatial pattern. To spatialise its place brand, Joburg launched its full-fledged Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, Reya Vaya (Guathier and Weinstock, 2010). This was a significant milestone because no other African country had a functioning BRT system (Hildago & Gutiérrez, 2013). Other countries such as Nigeria, Uganda and Tanzania had begun to contemplate and even initiate BRT systems, but none was as advanced as the one found in Johannesburg (Adewumi & Allopi, 2013). Locally, the cities of Cape Town and Tshwane soon followed suit in launching their BRTs (Gauthier & Weinstock, 2010). In this way, Johannesburg once again proved itself a pioneer in developing world-class infrastructure.

As a precursor to the World Cup in 2010, South Africa staged the Confederations Cup in the same year (Stetokoe, 2015). Once again, as had been the case with previous sporting tournaments, Johannesburg was home to the final match (Davies, 2009). After that, hosting the Soccer World Cup proper took centre stage in Johannesburg's branding efforts between late 2009 and early 2010. Isaac Motswaneng, a Marketing Specialist in the Group Communications and Tourism Department in the city of Johannesburg, noted (I. Motswaneng, personal communication, 23 March 2016):

> "The craze and the pressure was on Johannesburg".

Joburg had to be prepared as it would be the entrance site for international audiences. Also, being the entrance point, Johannesburg effectively became the tone-setter for the rest of the tournament. At the same time, the Ellis Park Stadium in Johannesburg was provisioned to host some games. The "A world-class African city" mantra was unleashed to project the city positively. Motswaneng said (I. Motswaneng, personal communication, 23 March 2016:

> “So, Joburg was branding itself in terms of anti-xenophobia, welcoming to all foreigners, home to the world, because it was going to be a home to the world for some time, so it needed to put a positive image. It was the city of gold, it was uh…the economic powerhouse of Africa and it was where everybody comes!”

The notion of Africa became a heralding ethos since this was the first soccer World Cup that would be hosted on the continent. Joburg tried to show that the tournament was not only a South African event but saw it as one for the whole of Africa.

When 2010 came, Joburg had the extra task of setting the tone for the World Cup. As such, despite the World Cup being a South African event, Johannesburg needed to take the attention away from other cities. The focus of this attention-capturing endeavour was dominated by tourism. In the past, Johannesburg had always had a problem of being seen only as a gateway and launch pad into Africa. Cape Town and Durban are major tourist attractions because they have oceans and coastlines (Maharaj *et al.,* 2008). Being landlocked, Johannesburg was not seen as a conventional tourist destination. However, Johannesburg was going to host the opening and closing ceremonies of the tournament (Briedenhann, 2011). According to Motswaneng, the city’s message was that it was of the people and, more importantly, “the money is here.” Joburg attempted to present the idea that other than hosting the tournament, it was a suitable place for business during and after the event.

Critically, the city still had problems with perceptions of crime and grime. As Motswaneng put it (I. Motswaneng, personal communication, 23 March 2016:

> “But uh…you know crime is like bacteria or dirt...uh…the insects and pests will follow the dirt. They will go where the food is, so Joburg is the hub because that’s where the money is”.

Joburg saw the people within its midst as valuable to each other. This is to say that even though there were not too many work opportunities, people in the city preyed on each other, making crime thrive in the city. However, in preparation for the World Cup, the national government committed that all cities would become organised regarding eradicating crime (George & Swart, 2012). There was a concerted effort from the city to deploy the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) to combat crime

before and during the World Cup. The levels of crime decreased dramatically (Pavoni, 2011). There was more freedom of movement in public spaces, including parks and streets, and there was also an increase in the appearance of public art (Berg & Shearing, 2011). The attitude of residents had changed positively because they were uncomfortable being in the street and other public spaces. This rubbed off on the international community, and the city held a successful tournament.

In line with the ANC's policy on the number of terms a mayor can serve, Masondo relinquished his mayoralty to Parks Tau following the local government elections held in 2011 (Ballard *et al.,* 2017). Masondo succeeded in advancing and protecting the "A world-class African city" place brand. As mayor, he provided the face and persona to it. Despite the city's challenges under his administration, the place brand was consistent, and little was done to alter its message. The consistency with which he held the place brand ensured Johannesburg was on the map. This was both locally and internationally. This was cemented by the city's continued drive to host world-relevant mega-events, including the WSSD in 2002 and the Soccer World Cup in 2010.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the similarities with which the CoJ pursued its WCAC place brand in countries in the developed world (Acharya & Rahman, 2012). The processes that the CoJ applied in its branding process follow the widespread pattern of developing a recognisable, buyable place brand. This is the first and most natural phase of developing a place brand (Ntounis & Kavaratzis, 2017). This phase deals with establishing an aspirational vision, either derived from romanticising a place's history or charting a future not necessarily dependent on the endowments of a place (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2010).

The branding of Johannesburg under the mayoralty of Masondo was ambitious, but it needed the critical element of involving local placeholders. It depended heavily on the hosting of events and the employment of branding consultants. In this way, the branding in Johannesburg failed to push to the fore the democratising nature of place branding as seen elsewhere in the world. For example, Anholt (2005) and Kavaratzis (2012), both prominent scholars in place branding, have constantly called for the inclusion of local placeholders in these processes. They argue that failure to do so makes place brands illegitimate and unpalatable to these placeholders.

Not only have the branding processes of Johannesburg been exclusive of local placeholders, but the city has also yet to effectively measure its place brand's efficacy. It is one thing to develop a place brand but another to measure its performance performs across several scales (Zenker & Martin, 2011). Hankinson (2015) points out that measuring the efficacy of a place brand is necessary to ensure its longevity and sustainability. This presents the evolutionary phase of investigating place branding (Vuignier, 2017).

In the case of Johannesburg, the place branding process has yet to evolve from the vision-setting mechanism aspect of the practice. The practice in the city, despite having existed since its establishment (Sihlongonyane, 2015), is still in its infancy. The city can fully and meaningfully engage with aspects related to its place branding. Through this opportunity, the city stands a chance of building or cementing a place brand that not only speaks to its aspirations but is also reflective of the lived experiences of its placeholders.

The reliance on modes of place branding praxis from developed countries leaves a void in developing countries because cities there have yet to find their niche or selling in the context of global cities. Cities such as New York and Paris have yet to depend on selling double-bound visions of belonging to a local and international location. Instead, they have stepped out on their own to the extent that they are almost independent of the aspirations and realities of their countries, not to mention continents. Without labouring the point, these cities have long histories embedded in colonial expansion. Cities in developing countries do not have such histories. However, their colonial or imperial histories have not been sufficiently revisited or abolished to uncover new trajectories. Place branding is an avenue through which these cities can explore alternative futures.

The following chapter explores Johannesburg's branding efforts under the mayoralty of Parks Tau.

CHAPTER 6: A WORLD-CLASS AFRICAN CITY IN FULL FLIGHT

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the continuation of the "A world-class African city" (WCAC) place brand under the mayoralty of Parks Tau, who succeeded Amos Masondo in 2011(Harrison, 2015). The chapter uses Tau's State of the City Addresses to frame his vision for the city. Insights provided by Ms Tshidi Mlaba[8] (Director of Group Communications and Marketing within CoJ) supplements these addresses.

The chapter begins by exploring how the city leveraged its place brand to discover its niche in global cities. The chapter then describes how CoJ deployed its place brand as a public diplomacy mechanism at a local and international level. A brief analysis of the performance of the place brand during Tau's time in office is then offered. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the state-of-art of the praxis of place branding in Johannesburg.

Given that the WCAC place brand was in its third term of existence when Tau took charge of the CoJ, it showed that the city had faith in it. Short-lived place brands tend to change drastically without giving due respect to the gains made by previous ones (Gartner, 2014). Therefore, the continuance of the WCAC place brand is a critical point of exploration for this chapter because it provides a lens to gauge the evolution and maturity of the branding processes in Johannesburg.

6.2 Introducing Parks Tau

In 2011, Amos Masondo relinquished his mayoralty to Parks Tau (Harrison, 2015). At the time of his appointment, Tau was 41 years old, making him one of the youngest mayors to oversee the governance of a metropolitan city in South Africa (Harrison *et al.,* 2019). Tau began his political career at an early age. He became engaged in the fight against apartheid when he joined the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) in 1984 (Mgabadeli, 2016). In 1989, Tau was elected president of the Soweto Youth Congress, which would later become the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) (Harrison & Rubin, 2019). In 1996, Tau became the regional secretary of the ANC in Johannesburg (Nganje, 2021). Following the first local

[8] Ms Mlaba responded to the Questionnaire in writing as she could not offer an interview.

government elections in 2000, Tau was appointed a Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) in Johannesburg (Ringwood, 2016). He was MMC for Development Planning, Transportation and Environment between 2000 and 2003 (Harber & Bryer, 2020). In 2003, he changed portfolios and became MMC of Finance and Economic Development until 2011, when he became mayor.

He assumed office as mayor of Johannesburg on 26 May 2011 (Todes, 2014). Tau took over Johannesburg a year after the country had successfully hosted the second biggest sporting tournament after the Olympics in the form of the FIFA Soccer World Cup (Walker *et al.,* 2013). Significantly, the final of this tournament was held at the FNB Stadium, which was named Soccer City during the tournament in Soweto (Molloy & Chetty, 2015). During Masondo's term of office, Soweto was increasingly seen as an important cultural hub of the city. As part of the requirements for Johannesburg to host the final of the World Cup, it was required to improve its infrastructure considerably. As a result, Johannesburg saw to the partial completion of the Gautrain and Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transit services (Allen, 2013). Tau inherited a progressive city with elevated levels of development, like those seen in developed countries. To emphasise this point, it was not until 2011 that the City of Cape Town opened the first part of its MyCiTi BRT system, and eThekwini only launched its GO! Durban BRT system in 2015. (Schalekamp, 2011; Petterson, 2017).

On the back of these achievements and at the event of his acceptance speech, Tau avered:

> "We transformed Johannesburg into a desirable destination for trade tourism and investment, a proud and successful host of major events" (Tau, 2011: 14).

By the time Tau took over as mayor, Johannesburg had begun to use the WCAC place brand earnestly. As such, from the onset of his mayoralty, Tau looked to cement the status of Johannesburg as a formidable destination for business and tourism. This was significant because Tau and his administration recognised that Johannesburg was a focal point in South Africa's economic development trajectory. The singling out of being a host of significant events was also critical. It set the tone for Tau in projecting Johannesburg as a capable and well-resourced site for hosting world-significant events. Read in this manner, Tau was pulling the strings in casting an image of Johannesburg as a transformative space with the view of improving the city's

economy. These efforts were beneficial and aligned seamlessly with the WCAC place brand.

6.3 The costs of being world-class

In the same year that Tau became mayor, xenophobic attacks occurred across South Africa, and this marred its image on the international stage (Everatt, 2011). These attacks occurred in Johannesburg (Chinomona & Maziriri, 2015). The city suffered the perception that it was welcoming immigrants from other parts of the world but was ruthless and often violent towards those who came from Africa (Hayem, 2013). As such, this conundrum presented a gap in the performance of the city's place brand. The WCAC place brand ushered in images of modernity and that Johannesburg was anchored in Africa. This place brand gap stymied the notions of Johannesburg being an Afropolitan city.

The negative perceptions about Johannesburg from the perspective of African immigrants threatened the legitimacy and authenticity of the city's place brand. This was different from the sort of attention that the city was looking for. In response, Johannesburg, much like the rest of South Africa, deployed a diplomatic stance to allay fears that it was a safe place for African immigrants. In responding to these attacks, specifically in Johannesburg, Tau believed that it was essential to understand processes of immigration and social integration from a local government perspective and thus worked towards formulating policy that addressed this issue (Tau, 2016).

However, Misago (2016) argues that South Africa's and, by extension, Johannesburg's response to the violent nature of the xenophobic attacks was characterised by denialism. She notes that many politicians seldom spoke about social cohesion among South Africans and African immigrants when the attacks flared up (Hlatshwayo, 2011). Ngwato (2012) argues that the government's responses in reaction to these attacks could have been better resourced, convincing, and backed by political commitment. Ngwato's argument highlighted the frailties and double standards of South Africa's immigration policies. It was not the first time that xenophobic attacks had swept through the country. The year 2008 effectively signalled the first wave of these attacks (Hlatshwayo, 2011). Four years had passed since these attacks flared up, but no real action had been taken to stem potential future flare-ups (Matunhu, 2011).

Nevertheless, it was incumbent on Tau and his administration to demystify perceptions that Johannesburg was intolerant to a growing African migrant population in the city. This was important because, for a long time, Johannesburg had been paraded as the poster child for all things positive happening in South Africa. Negative perceptions about Johannesburg painted the same picture of the country. More than ever, the WCAC place brand had to reassure local placeholders, migrants, and the international community that Johannesburg was not only a global city but an Afropolitan one as well. In this way, the place brand doubled down to play a dual role. Firstly, it was used to foster feelings of social integration and cohesion amongst placeholders in the city. Secondly, it ushered in ideas of democracy held by the international community. Johannesburg needed to be seen as taking an active and decisive role in curtailing any further attacks on migrants.

Later, in November 2011, the South African government published its master plan for charting the development trajectory for South Africa entitled the "National Development Plan: Vision for 2030". Among its core issues, the National Development Plan (NDP) aimed to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030 (Kariem & Hoskins, 2016). At the time of its publication, South Africa was one of the most unequal societies in the world (Posel & Rogan, 2019). Being a national plan akin to the RDP and GEAR, the NDP had to be assimilated by all spheres of government in their operations (Flannery *et al.,* 2015).

A month earlier, the CoJ had published its own updated GDS in the form of the Joburg 2040 strategy (Ebrahim, 2017). Joburg 2040 was initially formulated in 2006 (Radebe, 2008). Worth noting, the CoJ stressed that this strategy was not a spatial or statutory plan (CoJ, 2011: 9). Rather, the Joburg 2040 strategy was a "pre-requisite for medium-term, strategic, spatially oriented plans for the infrastructure, housing and operational activities" (CoJ, 2011: 9). The Joburg 2040 strategy was a follow-up to the Joburg 2030 strategy developed in 2002. To recap, Joburg 2030 had outlined the desire for the city to be "a world-class city with service deliverables and efficiencies that meet world best practice" (Seedat & Gots, 2006: 1). As its vision, the Joburg 2040 strategy stated, "Johannesburg – A World Class African City of the Future – a vibrant, equitable African city, strengthened through its diversity; a city that provides real quality of life; a city that provides sustainability for all its citizens; a resilient and adaptive society" (CoJ, 2011: 13). This updated vision for Johannesburg moved away slightly from

operational matters. Joburg 2030 was more internally oriented and relied heavily on service delivery for its realisation.

However, the vision from the Joburg 2040 strategy was far-reaching and began to include placeholders in its manifestation. This can be seen as an attempt by the city to include its placeholders in determining their futures. Thus, this shows an element of the city democratising its processes and partnering with placeholders in shaping a shared future instead of prescribing what this could be. Also, including placeholders in the vision was necessary for the WCAC place brand because it began to infuse human faces into it. This was a ploy for the CoJ to increase support and buy-in to the place brand. In a way, it sought to give the place brand personality and ambassadorship.

From a place brand positioning perspective, the WCAC place brand was well-placed to keep Johannesburg at the forefront of South Africa's development trajectory. Moreover, it re-emphasised the need for cities to continually carve out a niche for themselves at the national and international levels. Cities operate in unparalleled uncertainty, and planning for their futures is tricky. However, as Rasoolimanesh *et al.* (2016) note, CDSs (a GDS in the case of the CoJ) are strategically positioned to forecast future possibilities for cities as well as attempt to circumvent undesirable futures, which in combination lead to a more predictable trajectory to development, at least from the perspective of analysing the expected flow of events without factoring in severe shocks like earthquakes, pandemics and the collapse of economies.

Thus, the coincidence of the publication of the NDP and the Joburg 2040 strategy bodes well for the CoJ because it did not have to scramble to align to the objectives outlined in the former. In this way, the CoJ cemented its position as an innovator in sourcing FDI and a pathfinder in urban governance. This is not to say that other cities across South Africa were not in the process of preparing their CDSs or GDSs. For example, the City of Cape Town only adopted its CDS in 2012 (City of Cape Town, 2012). The City of Tshwane adopted its first CDS, "Tshwane Vision 2055: Remaking South Africa's Capital", in 2013 (City of Tshwane, 2013). The point here, however, is that Johannesburg did not lag too far behind in aligning its policy directives to that of the South African government. The fact that Johannesburg had begun formulating its CDS in 2006 made it a leader and trendsetter in setting up such instruments in South Africa. In addition, it is essential to note that even Joburg 2040 had been entered

voluntarily, which shows some vision on the part of the CoJ. Visioning exercises are useless without purposeful action (Robinson, 2008)

In 2012, Tau used his first State of the City Address (SoCA) to highlight Johannesburg's challenges. He lamented:

> "…while the new democratic South Africa has ensured political participation, created access to economic participation and enabled the freedom of movement for people, the transformation has not been equally beneficial for all. This is mirrored in Johannesburg. Thus, while Johannesburg has changed politically, transformation from a spatial, socio-economic perspective remains a dream to be fulfilled" (CoJ, SoCA, 2012: 1).

Having previously served in different capacities as MMC in Johannesburg, Tau understood the enormous effort needed to take Johannesburg into the future. This required that Johannesburg be nimble in navigating its development challenges, and its WCAC place brand was critical in this endeavour. Tau's remarks showed the varied place brand experience that placeholders had of the city in its different pockets. Johannesburg remained divided along racial and class lines by 2012 (Beall *et al.,* 2014). Previously disadvantaged and disenfranchised areas of the city, such as Soweto, Alexandra, Diepsloot and Orange Farm, still lagged far behind their suburban counterparts, such as Parktown, Rosebank, Bryanston, and Fourways, particularly in economic terms. This was also reflected in South Africa's overall space economy.

The year 2012 marked the 18th year that South Africa had achieved democracy. However, the economic benefits remained in the hands of a minority (Leibbrandt *et al.,* 2010). Worse, another class of people had emerged who exclusively held the benefits of the economy through such efforts as Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment (Herman, 2017). This posed a significant challenge for the place brand of Johannesburg because it promised to unleash the benefits of the city for all its placeholders. In response, Tau reiterated the significance of the Joburg 2040 strategy. He said, "Joburg 2040 is about achieving resilience, sustainability and liveability" (CoJ, SoCA 2012: 2). He saw resilience as the ability of the city to work hand in hand with its placeholders and adapting to new challenges by tapping into the diversity of the people in the city.

Tau recognised sustainability as the city's ability to offer good living standards while acknowledging that there were limitations to the city's resources in providing services. In this regard, he advocated for creating partnerships with the private sector. Regarding liveability, Tau perceived this as creating environments within the city that promoted civic engagement and fostered a sense of belonging in Johannesburg. Through these observations, Tau made space to realise the city's place brand. The claim of being "a world-class African city" was no longer sufficient but needed to be actualised. For this, Tau effectively allowed the city's placeholders to be part of the place brand.

Fair (2022) argues that place brand platitudes are insufficient to mobilise placeholders behind them. Instead, it is more practical that placeholders become the mouthpieces of the place brand (Braun *et al.,* 2013). While Tau did not directly speak to the place brand during this SoCA, there was a realisation on the part of the city that it had placed an enormous expectation on itself through the consistent rhetoric associated with the WCAC place brand. In pushing for the agenda of being world-class, the city needed to be humble enough to acknowledge its limitations and challenges. There was a backlog in the provision of housing and issues related to the delivery of services in the city.

In this respect, Tau could not claim that the city was world-class because there was a gap between what the place brand promised and how the city performed. However, he highlighted several successes the city had achieved, which could lay claim to the status of "a world-class African city." For instance, Tau emphasised the positive impact of the Rea Vaya BRT on transportation as well as the gains made in urban renewal projects, which included upgrading places such as Newtown, Brickfields and Marshalltown (Bethlehem, 2013). Jacobsen (2009) points out that a place brand's success depends on its performance in real terms. In other words, placeholders subscribe to place brands that are perceived to deliver on their promise.

At an international level, Tau was appointed the Deputy Chair of the United Nations Special Advisory Committee on Safer Cities (unhabitat.org, 2016). For Johannesburg, this was critical as the appointment signalled the city's desire to be at the forefront of formulating and shaping agendas impacting cities worldwide. Not only that, but this was also important for Africa at large because most developmental policies that are in

operation on the continent are derived from the Global North (Nijman, 2016). Therefore, through Tau, Johannesburg was strategically positioned to sensitise other global leaders to Africa's developmental needs.

6.4 A world-class African City there and here

In his 2013 SoCA, Tau presented several international events the city would host. These included the general annual meeting of the Metropolis and the fifth C40 Biennial Summit. The Metropolis is a network of global cities and metropolitan areas (Hall & Pain, 2012). Member cities of this network include Brussels, Berlin, Paris, Montreal, and Geneva (Bouteligier, 2013). The C40 Biennial Summit is a meeting of mayors of major global cities (Roman, 2010). At the time, Johannesburg was the only city in South Africa and one of only three in the rest of Africa to have been a part of this meeting (Sabine, 2014). Reflecting on the significance of these events, Tau proclaimed:

> "These initiatives are part of our International Relations Strategy that focuses on local government networks, strategic African cities, North-to-South relations, BRICS, and solidarity with people's struggle for self-determination and freedom. Through these global networks of local government leaders, this city continues to share its experiences and learn from other great cities" (CoJ, SoCA, 2013: 5).

Tau's utterance of sharing experiences and learning from other cities is cardinal. It spoke to a bullishness that was neither arrogant nor cowardly. On the one hand, he realised Johannesburg's significant position in Africa and leveraged it to the rest of the world. On the other hand, he accepted the city's economic limitations. He was willing to let the leaders of other prominent cities show Johannesburg how to cement its place in the global economy. These two aspects are essential because Johannesburg had long realised that its performance on the world stage was directly transferable to that of South Africa. In this sense, the place branding efforts of the CoJ are linked to higher strategic thrusts aimed at increasing Johannesburg's exposure Johannesburg to the world as well as its place brand equity. The CoJ was using all its assets to anchor Johannesburg into the global economy.

Hosting events was significant because Johannesburg flexed its muscle by highlighting world-class infrastructure and facilities. Johannesburg was ensuring that its place brand was walking the talk. Hosting events is a significant subplot of place branding (Herezniak & Florek, 2018). The benefits of hosting events include the attraction of tourists and the opportunity to open local businesses to international investors. From a place branding perspective, the successful hosting of events immensely communicates and promotes the city's brand identity. Thus, Johannesburg used the hosting of these events to advance a value proposition to its partners and simultaneously hoped that the benefits of this would filter down to its local placeholders.

The city wanted to learn how other cities dealt with contentious issues related to rapid urbanisation and globalisation. In this context, Mlaba, the Director of Group Communications and Marketing in Johannesburg, felt that the city needed an African and international outlook on its place brand. She cited Cosmo City as an example of how the CoJ had attempted to bridge the gap between the rich and poor as well as of diverse cultures in a place stating that (M. Mlaba, personal communication, 28 March 2016):

> "…you will find people of different income groups from all parts of South Africa and the continent living next to each other in Cosmo City".

Cosmo City is a mixed housing development situated north of Johannesburg, which began in 2005 and has approximately 12 500 units (Onatu, 2010). To ensure that the city's place brand was espoused, the streets in Cosmo City were named after African countries (Haferburg, 2013).

The convergence of brand image promotion and brand performance was significant for Johannesburg. On the one hand, the city had to appeal to a Westernised audience, which history has shown dictates what development means in the rest of the world (Owusu, 2003). Countries in the developing world look to countries such as America, the United Kingdom, and Germany as ideal propositions for development. This outlook is prevalent to the extent that developing nations do not look internally to define their concept/s of development. This harms indigenous knowledge systems (Tengo *et al.,* 2014).

On the other hand, the city had to show that hosting these events was in the interest of its placeholders by ensuring that benefits reached them. This is a tricky balance to strike wherein a city aspires to become a global city but simultaneously not alienate its local placeholders. This way, Johannesburg highlighted development from a Global South perspective and stayed true to its people and roots.

In addition to hosting events, Tau introduced two significant projects in 2013 (Harrison *et al.,* 2019). The first of these was the ambitious Corridors of Freedom (CoF). The CoF was aimed at re-stitching the spatial pattern of the city (Ballard *et al.,* 2017). Kotze and de Vries (2019) see the COF project as an attempt by Johannesburg to counter the image of neglect and decline within the city through infill development along strategic routes. In his State of the City address, Tau claimed that residents had the right to a "spatially integrated and united city" (Tau, 2013: 5). The CoF would be instituted over thirty years with the view of targeting transit-oriented development (TOD) (Kotze & de Vries, 2019). The CoF effectively became the logical progression of the BRT system initiated in 2009 by Amos Masondo. More than anything else, the CoF was a means of inner-city regeneration (Mosselson, 2018).

The CoF was a programme aimed at correcting and redressing the apartheid spatial pattern of Johannesburg (Pieterse, 2019). Like many other cities in South Africa, Johannesburg had a disparate spatial pattern, characterised by considerable inequalities in its space economy. Thus, the programme attempted to bridge the gap in these places and make Johannesburg more equitable. From this view, the CoF effectively became the tool to spread the city's place brand across Johannesburg. The WCAC place brand was traceable and palpable in Sandton, Parktown, and Woodmead areas. However, the same cannot be said for its applicability in places such as Diepsloot, Orange Farm and Alexandra. Thus, while the CoJ concerted much effort in promoting its image internationally, the CoF aimed at spreading the same locally. It was meant to improve the place brand experience of placeholders across Johannesburg.

The extension and inclusion of the local in place branding messages must be considered (Sevin, 2011). Eshuis *et al.,* (2014) argue that treating local placeholders as end-users of place brands is problematic because it marginalises them like other contemporary urban governance systems and tools. For example, bias towards pro-

urban development programmes excludes many people on the periphery, with only the urban centre receiving attention. Likewise, the same people are more likely to be excluded from place branding messages (Lichrou *et al.,* 2017). In the case of the WCAC place brand, images of modernity were promoted. However, several spaces within Johannesburg do not fit the mould of modernity. They display massive levels of indigence and are often excluded in matters that inform economic development. Through this, the CoJ inadvertently created a gap in its place brand.

The second of these programmes was “Operation Clean Sweep”, launched on 30 September 2013 (Peberdy, 2016). This operation aimed to rid the inner city of informal traders. The city of Johannesburg saw a need for a process to sanitise the inner city to instil a sense of civic pride and ownership in the inner city. While internally oriented, the sanitisation of the inner city had global outlooks as well. Thus, this operation was linked to the city’s branding campaign in that it aimed to project Johannesburg as a clean, modern city with a striving economy. However, it had the counter effect of vilifying poor people struggling to make ends meet and viewing them as part of crime and grime in the city. Bénit-Gbaffou (2016) opined that the operation was unsuccessful, but it helped to illuminate the intolerance of paradoxical presences within the city. Paradoxical presences meant that the city accepted formal businesses but did not appreciate the benefits of the informal economy. In the context of the WCAC place brand, informality was problematic. Despite its claims of wanting to be a global city in Africa, it can be argued that the WCAC is also quite paradoxical - the world-class element of the place brand talks about the modernity that the city aspires to, while the African element is seen as the informal part.

The operation drew furore from street traders, academics, and advocacy groups. In this sense, the WCAC place brand put the city directly at odds with those that did not adhere to rational, order-setting governance mechanisms due to their dire economic status. The informal economy is not synonymous with wealth creation and preservation in developing countries (Benjamin *et al.,* 2014). Instead, it is the sector most associated with connotations of survival. In contrast, the informal economic sector is celebrated as a site of innovation and entrepreneurialism in the Global North (Bureau & Fendt, 2011). This disjuncture connects with the idea of global apartheid as espoused by South Africa’s former president, Thabo Mbeki (Booker & Minter, 2001). As such, the equity of the city’s place brand was severely undermined.

The protection of a place brand image lies in its presentation of a place as a pristine element (Van Assche & Lo, 2011). This depends on projecting the place as manageable and governable. Like many other place brands, the “WCAC” brand did not make room for other representation alternatives. It is unlikely that the “African” connotation of the place brand spoke to the vast informality, physical and economic, found in Johannesburg. Instead, it is more likely that it spoke to the mere geographical position within which Johannesburg found itself. In this sense, the place brand is escapist and smacks of denialism. As much as the city claimed that the place brand was aspirational, it ignored most of the reality faced by most placeholders. Most people in Johannesburg live in substandard conditions, with colossal service delivery backlogs (Rudolf & Kroll, 2016).

Apart from the events that Tau highlighted and the two programmes, his 2013 SoCA focussed on issues related to urban governance. Tau went as far as quoting urban geographer David Harvey:

> “The right to the city is not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it after our heart’s desire. But the right to remake ourselves by creating a qualitatively different kind of urban sociality, is one of the most precious of all human rights” (Harvey, 2012: 939).

Given his background as an MMC in the portfolio of Development Planning, Tau was aware that the city was a multifaceted entity that required careful consideration when ascribing to lofty mantras such as “a world-class African city”. Place brands do not necessarily pick out stark differences in the space economies of cities (Jacobsen, 2012). As such, many place brands present a pseudo-homogenous image of a city. This is problematic from the perspective that ideas of order, harmony, and modernity exist in a city without sufficiently surfacing those pockets that are dysfunctional, impoverished, and unplanned (Skinner, 2005) This creates a dichotomy in the way that a place brand is viewed, received, and experienced. It creates a space for the displacement of specific individuals from places at a psychological level, a phenomenon earlier referred to as mentrification in this thesis.

Tau moved on to present five rights to the city of Johannesburg. The first of these was the right to developmental service delivery (CoJ, SoCA, 2013: 9). Borrowed from the NDP, which called for a developmental state, the CoJ saw itself as a deliverer of

services that was in touch with its placeholders but simultaneously looking to innovate in this aspect. This coincided with its desire to maintain and expand infrastructure efficiently. The city's MOEs were at the heart of realising this right. The second right was that of a spatially integrated and united city. The CoF programme was central to this right. The third is related to the right to a liveable city. Here, the CoJ sought to establish ways of providing access to a good quality of life, food, clean air, safety, and cultural expression. This right relied heavily on the city's ability to provide platforms and sites for sustainable human settlements that presented residential, employment and recreational opportunities. The fourth right was that of inclusive economic growth. The city planned to avail opportunities for placeholders to actively participate in the city's economy while paving the way for their destinies. This right dwelled on the realisation that the city alone cannot be the leading employer of its placeholders but that it could make processes more accessible for them to fully participate in building the economy of the city. The extent to which the informal economy and its participants were included in this is unclear. The last of the rights related to remaking the city's placeholders. This was based on the idea that placeholders only engaged with the city or found themselves in Johannesburg because they needed its services. Instead, Johannesburg wanted to change this by bringing in placeholders as partners in development through their different assets, be they financial or cultural, thereby creating ambassadorship for its place brand.

Linked to the WCAC place brand, these rights can be seen as instruments for its actualisation. The CoJ had increasingly become aware of the need to bring along its placeholders in realising the promises of its place brand. The continued isolation of placeholders did not bode well either for the city or its placeholders. As much as the placeholders had yet to have a direct role in creating the place brand, the CoJ realised that this group was a strategic partner in advancing its place brand. Noteworthy is that the rights discussed above are inwardly oriented, i.e., they speak something other than an internationally community. Given the presence of "world-class" and "African" in the place brand, this can be seen as an oversight by CoJ. However, the heavy reliance on the local relinquishes the CoJ of the burden of having to look outward because local placeholders become the ambassadors of the place brand.

The ambassadorship of the place brand from local placeholders was not an issue that was pursued purposefully by the city. The city meant to generate hype about the place

brand. As Mlaba explained, all matters related to branding and marketing the city were the ambit of Group Communications and Marketing. All suggestions came from the Department and were considered and approved (if applicable) by the mayoral committee. Mlaba underplayed the role external consultant in formulating the WCAC place brand. Interbrand Sampson developed the place brand (Gurney *et al.,* 2013). Thus, in many of the city's branding campaigns, the Group Communications and Marketing Department merely rubberstamped initiatives derived from the private sector. This is problematic because the private-sector is motivated by profit, making the branding processes of cities exclusionary to poorer sectors of society (Cleave *et al.,* 2019). However, Mlaba stressed that it was not only the department that engaged in the city's branding processes. Placeholders were also made aware of the city's branding campaigns.

This was important in gaining placeholders' support for the brand. The business community was also encouraged to participate as the city needed investment. Civil Society was invited to hold the city accountable to its governance and public leadership mandate. The role of ward councillors in the city's branding was to specifically push the service delivery agenda and promote citizenry by encouraging placeholders to participate in local governance matters. This also meant that placeholders inevitably became brand ambassadors and defenders (potentially attackers of the brand if they were not satisfied with service delivery). Other agencies involved in the branding processes of the city included consultants, all the major banks, the Universities of the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg, the South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC), and private radio stations through the airing of the city's adverts.

The city mainly used workshops (focus groups) to a proposed branding strategy and suggestion boxes to solicit creative ideas from a wide spectrum of placeholders within the city. Other methods included consumer surveys run by private consultants on behalf of the CoJ to gauge satisfaction levels with service delivery and brand perceptions. As far as the roles played in the branding processes of the city, she said that the mayor's office's role was to align the brand strategy to the city's visions. Thus, it played an oversight and political leadership role.

The Group Communications and Marketing Department played the leading role in developing marketing strategy documents, building the brand, and running brand awareness campaigns; the Department was effectively the city's brand custodian. The Finance Department enabled the process by releasing funds for approved branding strategies. The last Department involved in these processes was Procurement, which ensured that appropriate service providers could be appointed to assist the city in driving the place brand.

Group Communications and Marketing used meetings, e-mails, notice boards, and workshops to communicate the city's brand. Meetings were used to set up steering committees responsible for specific branding strategies. E-mails were identified and used for their massive reach and ease of use, while notice boards were scattered in the Metro Centre Building in Braamfontein in lifts and lavatories. Workshops were used for training and ensuring compliance with how the city's brand could or could not be used. The main messages for communicating about the brand centred on creating awareness and establishing internal brand support. Feedback was also seen as crucial as the city's brand continuously evolved. The department communicated the brand with the mayoral committee to attain advice and approval, while the Legal Department was consulted for the official registration of the city's logo and brand.

6.5 The high stakes of a world-class African city

At the beginning of 2014, Gauteng recorded more than five hundred service delivery protests, with a considerable percentage occurring in Johannesburg (Abraham, 2017). As a way of allaying the frustrations placeholders had in Johannesburg, Tau used his 2014 SoCA to present the narrative that

> "Johannesburg is a City at Work: Joburg, South Africa's most dynamic city. We are a city at work to remake itself and shape its future, as a sustainable, liveable, and resilient city – a city that cares for its people and their future" (CoJ, SoCA 2014: 1).

The words "sustainable", "resilient", and "liveable" were continued from the SoCA delivered in 2013. However, the rights to Johannesburg of the previous SoCA were dropped. In line with this revised vision for Johannesburg, Tau explained how Johannesburg was a city at work. For Tau, Johannesburg was at work in (a) creating

an environment for democracy, transparency, and accountability; (b) building an economy for the future; (c) making Johannesburg a smart city; (d) building better communities; (e) transforming movement and spatial patterns and (f) leading a Green Revolution. Concerning creating an environment for democracy, transparency and accountability, Tau mentioned that Johannesburg was rated as Africa's most competitive city according to The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). The EIU is a research and analysis organisation providing forecasts and advisory services to countries and industries (Badu *et al.,* 2012).

The competitiveness that Tau referred to related to Johannesburg's ability to attract capital, businesses, tourism, and FDI. Tau touted the Jozi@Work programme as the enabler for creating the future economy of Johannesburg. Jozi@work was the extended public works programme in Johannesburg aimed at providing employment opportunities primarily for the youth, especially in previously disadvantaged areas of the city (Knopjes, 2016). In making the city smart, Tau intimated how Johannesburg had made strides in providing eighty fixed satellite and mobile clinics since he took over in 2011. He especially brought home the point of how the city had seen a decline in the HIV transmission rate between mother and child, which had decreased from 3.2 per cent in 2010 to 1.5 per cent in early 2014.

The link to "smart" is confusing because, given the movement to "smart cities", one would have expected a discussion on how Johannesburg was gearing itself towards a more data-intensive future. In the pursuit of building better communities in Johannesburg, Tau once again referred to his legacy project, the CoF and the Rea Vaya BRT. He saw these projects as integral instruments in reversing what had been termed "the challenge of apartheid geography" in the NDP and hoped the projects would make Johannesburg a more equitable place (South Africa, 2011: 260). There was a reiteration of these projects concerning the transformation of movement and spatial patterns within the city. Tau promised to source alternative energy sources for Johannesburg to decrease carbon emissions and improve the city's quality of clean air.

Despite the claims of "A City at work" and the spirited offering of the rights to Johannesburg the previous year, the CoJ struggled to provide employment opportunities for its placeholders. According to official reports, the city had an

unemployment rate of 52,5 % in 2014 (CoJ, 2020: 16). Therefore, there was a mismatch between these claims and what the city could provide in terms of employment, given the prominent levels of migration into Johannesburg (Mlambo, 2018). Thus, the performance of the city's brand image suffered because of rapid urbanisation and population growth that outstripped the rate at which the city could provide employment and residential opportunities (Simatele *et al.,* 2017). A place brand gap emerged once again.

Mlaba thought this was because of CoJ's success. The WCAC place brand had created an imbalance between demand and supply. Johannesburg is part of the local tier of government. In South Africa, local government is entrusted with issues of essential service delivery (Beall *et al.,* 2000). This includes providing water, sanitation, electricity, and refuse removal. However, Johannesburg is also a metropolitan city (Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004). Thus, over and above essential service delivery, metropolitan authorities are expected to generate significant revenue without relying on intergovernmental transfers (Slack, 2007). Therefore, metropolitan municipalities compete with each other locally and internationally to attract FDI (Krugell & Matthee, 2008). The tension between dealing with basic issues and promoting a brand image internationally put Johannesburg in an awkward place. The brand promise was effective in drawing people to the city. The city needed help accommodating the increasing numbers in its jurisdiction.

The city's services are enshrined as basic human rights within the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) of South Africa (Greenstein, 2006). However, beyond a certain point, these services are commodified and must be paid for. What emerges is a conundrum for a city with global aspirations but is trapped by local, structural, and stubborn impediments. These ranged from a stagnating national economy and a growing, primarily poor populace which could not afford to pay for its services (Lundahl, 2019).

From the position below as it were, Harvey (2008: 23) states, "We live, after all, in a world in which the rights of private property and the profit rate trump all other notions of rights." Harvey's assertion is essential in understanding the divisive nature of the WCAC place brand when seen from the perspective of a poor placeholder in Johannesburg. The slogan alienates or marginalises such an individual and builds

contempt towards it because they cannot place themselves in it (Braun *et al.,* 2013). It is elitist and, bluntly, anti-poor.

In as much as the CoJ attempted to build morale around the place brand, as suggested by Mlaba, the city did not purposefully involve its placeholders in its creation. While placeholders were lobbied to support the place brand and, by default, become its ambassadors for the international community, the place brand effectively and ruthlessly left local placeholders behind. Seen from this perspective, the creation of place brands within the CoJ suggests that the opportunity for democratising its processes was not taken advantage of. In this regard, the claims of "a City at work" and the rights for Johannesburg that Tau so passionately advanced fell to the wayside and essentially became superficial calls to rally behind "a world-class African city" that a placeholder could not realistically support because it was not meant for them but instead was used as a pawn in a war that they did not wage.

The Joburg 2040 strategy, initially formulated in 2006 and updated in 2011, was specifically aimed at dealing with citysustainability issues until 2040 (Peyroux, 2015). Given that Johannesburg struggled to contend with the increase in its population, one could argue that the Joburg 2040 strategy and the city's WCAC place brand were at odds. Misalignments in GDSs and place brand narratives often occur when one and both overstate what a city can do given its current disposition and aspirations (Govers, 2011).

Despite the gap between demand and supply, Mlaba noted that the city launched innovative programmes and projects that were meant to differentiate it from other cities in the country. One of these projects was the "Green Bond" initiative, which supported the establishment and pursuance of the green economy as well as planting ten million trees in Johannesburg, thereby espousing contemporary ideas of a sustainable city. Green bonds are finance mechanisms with specific objective of raising funding for environmental or climate-related projects and programmes (Ngwenya & Simatele, 2020). Johannesburg was the first South African city to list a green bond on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), and it was valued at R 1.5 billion (Ganda *et al.,* 2015). Again, Johannesburg highlighted its pioneering spirit and set the marker for environmental projects.

Mlaba argued that these efforts could easily lead any city to overlook its placeholders. However, the CoJ managed to cultivate a culture of “Ubuntu” by building up a vibrant city accessible to a wide variety of people and businesses. Briefly, Ubuntu refers to the African belief that a person is because others are (Murove, 2012). Mlaba believed the WCAC place brand had other spill-over effects in that there was marked economic growth in the city. This was evidenced by the presence of multinational company offices in the city. In 2014, Johannesburg hosted most multinationals in South Africa (Luiz & Radebe, 2016). This economic growth meant considerable strides in the CoJ’s efforts to create jobs as the city was attracting considerable investment. She noted how the city had seen a reduction in poverty as more people had been absorbed into better-paying jobs, thus increasing the equity of the city’s place brand.

However, she said that the CoJ had become its worst enemy due to its success. She noted that, as with any other city faring well, Johannesburg started experiencing massive amounts of immigration at the local, continental, and international levels. This, she argued, compelled the city to upgrade its infrastructure because it had to look at the influx of people as a positive element. The influx boosted tourism in the city, and over time, the city’s image transformed from one that had depicted Johannesburg as a crime-ridden place to one of a city open for business and welcoming of its visitors and investors.

In late 2014, the JTC streamlined its activities and became Group Communications and Marketing (GCM). Through this, Johannesburg reduced duplicity in having internal departments that engaged in branding and promoting the city with an external agency that still required funding from the council. As Mlaba mentioned, all branding campaigns came and would be directed by this group henceforth. The presence of a dedicated marketing department meant that the city could direct the narrative of its place brand message.

Also in 2014, Tau was elected Co-President of Metropolis (Nganje, 2021). Metropolis is a voluntary organisation that provides leadership and advocates for central governments’ importance in recognising the contributions of metropolitan governance (Tladi, 2021). Tau’s star was rising, and, at every turn, he took the opportunity to put his hand up for global leadership roles. This transferred to the city of Johannesburg,

and by so doing, the WCAC place brand was continually strategically positioned on the global map.

6.6 The beginning of the demise of the world-class African city place brand

Tau's 2015 SoCA almost mirrored that of the previous year as he restated that Johannesburg was a world-class African city in that it:

a) Unleashed the potential and creativity of our youth, treating them as the assets they are: - This came on the back of the youth programmes that the city developed. These included Jozi@work. Tau realised that a significant percentage of the population was youth. Given the massive unemployment of youth in the city, the programmes created were a significant thrust in trying to reduce youth unemployment (Cartwright & Marrengane, 2016).

b) Treated our citizens as partners and co-producers of services, empowering them to be part of the solution: - Tau continued the tradition of Masondo to host "imbizos", which included the participation of local placeholders. However, the finalisation of the formation of the MoEs impacted people's access to government services. This process privatised the provision of services and increased their affordability (Karodia, 2010).

c) It was rewiring itself for the digital age- promoting access for all as it harnesses the promise of the 21st century: - Johannesburg had rolled out free Wi-fi across the city. This was available as a pilot in Braamfontein but had not been expanded to many townships such as Alexandra, Diepsloot and Soweto (Musakwa & Mokoena, 2017).
d) Innovated to solve problems that harvest power from waste, which makes paper from rubble, which turns fruit trimmings into bread: - Johannesburg invested heavily in recycling waste and supported urban agriculture. The recycling component was another avenue through which the city wanted to create employment. Urban agriculture was primed to lower levels of hunger and increase food security amongst the placeholders of the city (Rudolph & Kroll, 2016).

e) Had triumphed over complexity to build strong institutions: - this was about restructuring the municipality from several independent councils to culminate in the formation of Johannesburg. The process started under Isaac Mogase and was concluded by Amos Masondo (Wafer, 2011).
f) Was casting transformation in steel and concrete, rising along our Corridors of Freedom: - through the Corridors of Freedom, Tau hoped to initiate several development projects concentrating on infrastructure. Through these, CoJ aimed to reconcile the vast differences between its places and uplift previously disadvantaged areas (Pieterse, 2019; Harrison & Rubin, 2020).
g) It took its place brand on the world's great stages, amplifying the voices of urban Africa: - Johannesburg hosted several high-profile events, including the 2002 WSSD, 2010 FIFA World Cup and the Metropolis in 2013. The city promoted its image through these events and became well-known for hosting such.

Through these, the place brand of Johannesburg displayed a multiplicity in application and meaning. It focused on projecting the city as caring, democratic, dynamic, and pioneering. In 2015, the WCAC place brand was at its zenith in terms of exposure, and Tau was very visible then. It was easy to associate Tau with the successes and failures of the city; he became the face of the city and effectively gave a personality to the WCAC place brand. As a safeguard, Tau and his administration undertook two critical exercises to drive home the city's place brand. Firstly, they established the Office of the Ombudsman that year (Penny, 2016). This meant that residents could lodge complaints to an independent body and have their claims investigated. This showed that the city took seriously matters of accountability. From a branding perspective, this exercise was meant to increase the experience and equity of the city's place brand. Secondly, the CoJ was aware that times were changing, and it initiated infrastructural development projects. The city's infrastructure was deteriorating and failing to cope with the influx of people (Chirisa *et al.,* 2016).

The CoJ initiated infrastructure development/rehabilitation projects, including the M2 motorway upgrade (Lombard *et al.,* 2016). These projects were initiated to equalise the imbalances found in the different spaces of the city. The culmination of these exercises linked to a place brand that was reflective and continually striving to reiterate its currency in the global economy. This precluded the place brand from stagnation and irrelevance. It did not make any inroads in bringing the place brand closer to the

city's placeholders. These individuals were still looking in from the outside as the city did not bring them closer to the processes of creating and being part of the place brand.

In his last SoCA, Tau paid attention to what he termed the "economic democracy" of Johannesburg. Through this, he focussed on (a) the city's efforts of changing its spatial pattern through the Corridors of Freedom, (b) social housing, (c) youth development through the city's "Vulindlele eJozi", "Jozi@work", "JoziMyBeggining" programmes and (d) crime prevention and combatting. Vulindlele eJozi was an initiative for youth skills transfer, which the city developed in partnership with Harambee (Koopedi, 2016). It targeted bringing employment opportunities to the youth of Johannesburg by linking them with industry for training and employment purposes. JoziMyBeginning was a platform developed by Johannesburg to assist young entrepreneurs in establishing their enterprises (Knopjes, 2016).

The co-founding and co-sponsoring of initiatives by cities is a critical component of place branding. Through these efforts, Johannesburg promoted its place image once again. Critically, though, the target audience of this drive was the youth. Typically, young people have a weak place-attachment relationship with a place (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Young people are transient and seldom settle for prolonged periods in a place (Bailey *et al.,* 2012). Thus, imprinting the place brand of Johannesburg on this audience was strategic for several reasons. They would be leaders of commerce in the city in future. In turn, they would be loyal to the city and make investing in it easier. In this sense, the place brand of Johannesburg employed a long-term outlook. Place brands with a futuristic outlook typically outlast and outperform myopic ones (Anholt, 2005).

In August 2016, Herman Mashaba of the Democratic Alliance (DA) dethroned Tau to become the new mayor of Johannesburg (Macharia, 2016). The city reached a critical milestone in terms of its leadership. For the first time in twenty-one years, the governance of Johannesburg turned from the hands of the ANC to those of the DA (Chutel, 2016). This presented not only shifts in how the city would administer its services but dramatically changed how it would manage its branding processes.

6.7 Assessing the world-class African city place brand under Parks Tau

The WCAC place brand mainly stayed the same under the mayoralty of Parks Tau. If anything, Tau built on the successes laid down by Masondo. Tau inherited a recognisable place brand and thus could concentrate on charting a way into the future for Johannesburg through the Joburg 2040 strategy. This strategy was significant because it foresaw a development path for Johannesburg for three decades. This augured well for the city's place brand because it presupposed an elongated and predictable flow of affairs for Johannesburg. A place brand's longevity and survival depend on its transfer from one political leader to the next (Laforet & Saunders, 1999). This process of brand transference is more straightforward when the incoming leadership has the same ideological stance as their predecessor (Smith & French, 2009). In the transference of the mayoral chair between Masondo and Tau, the flow was easy, and one would have been surprised if the latter had moved to change the place brand altogether.

In the case of Johannesburg, the aspiration to be a global city became the backdrop of most of its place branding campaigns. The past campaigns, including "Gateway to Southern Africa" and "Golden Heartbeat of Africa", were pointed and unequivocal in propelling Johannesburg onto the world stage. In particular, the WCAC place brand positioned Johannesburg as a premier city becoming of age. Granted, the place brand put the city at odds with its local placeholders, but it also put Johannesburg on the map to benefit these individuals. It is hardly surprising that this place brand was the most recognisable of all the brands Johannesburg produced. It simultaneously rubbed people the wrong and right way up. It created dialogue and made local placeholders find their place in relation to it. Whether it reflected the realities of people or not, the place brand was instrumental in imprinting Johannesburg on the minds of local placeholders and the international community. Place brands are complicated expressions of political and urban governance ideologies. The consistency through which Masondo and Tau carried the place brand was exemplary of great place brand personality. Through these individuals, Johannesburg, for a time, had a story to tell and faces to go with it.

Moreover, the consistency with which the place brand appeared in different arenas of the city ensured that it was remembered easily amongst local placeholders and

international audiences. A brand's reputation and its association with performance are paramount for its survival. As Zenker *et al.* (2014) note, place brand reputation depends on the knowledge of a place and its characteristics on the part of placeholders. This knowledge is necessary for place brands to exist and survive. It is not generated organically, but city governments create it such that it resonates with their places. Additionally, this knowledge requires city governments to embed local placeholders into it to foster support for their place brands. Similarly, Johannesburg attempted to sell its place brand to its placeholders with varying success.

Buying into the narrative of a place brand from the perspective of local placeholders is a long-term project. In the main, local placeholders are seen as end-users of place brands (Govers, 2011). As such, their onboarding onto a place brand at a later stage poses several challenges. These include non-subscription or support for the place brand and even legal challenges to place brand claims. Thus, city governments must continually endear themselves to their local placeholders and international community. For example, in 2013, the CoJ was ordered to stop using the "a world-class African city" slogan by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) (Schaal, 2013). This came on the back of a legal suit brought by Steven Haywood, a city resident, challenging the authenticity of the place brand (Bianco, 2013). Haywood's main gripe with the place brand was that the city was not financially stable. However, the ASA overturned its decision when Johannesburg appealed, revealing that the report of the Auditor General claimed otherwise (Allison, 2013). Although this challenge tainted the image of Johannesburg, it also inadvertently played into the hands of the city. By receiving widespread media attention, the city milked this publicity. Thus, the CoJ fought for its place brand and continued pushing it to local placeholders and the international community.

Tau saw the branding of Johannesburg as necessary in projecting it as a global city to the world. This place brand's "world" and "African" connotations continued presenting Johannesburg as both of the world and being firmly rooted in Africa. This place brand's external and internal orientation is meant to make international audiences and local placeholders relate to it. However, the same argument also holds that the "world" connected more with affluent areas of the city and "African" resonated with the city's poorer areas. In this way, the CoJ missed the opportunity to use the place brand to equalise the city's spatial and socio-economic imbalances.

Encouragingly, though, the place brand was primed as a guide towards the city's vision as encapsulated within Joburg 2040 (Todes, 2014). Thus, the place brand was always meant to steer Johannesburg into the future. In this way, this place brand escaped being myopically conceived. Instead, the city used it strategically to remind itself, local placeholders and the international community of Johannesburg's potential and inherent prosperity.

6.8 Conclusion

Under the mayoralty of Parks Tau, the WCAC place brand was strengthened and popularised even more. The place brand enjoyed considerable international attention through the various appointments Tau attained in global forums. This was important in continuing the drive to make Johannesburg one of the leading cities in the world. As Moore *et al.,* (2000) note, the internationalisation of a place brand is critical in alerting the world of the offerings of a city. This is even more important for a city such as Johannesburg because it emerges from a continent that is myopically depicted as backwards and not espoused by development trends as understood in the developed world (Robinson, 2013).

It made sense for the city of Johannesburg to continually highlight its value proposition to the world. Not only that, but the touting of the WCAC also helped the city disassociate from the negative perceptions of the international community about Africa. Place brands are not only helpful in projecting the aspirations of cities and countries. Place branding has been used when a place is trying to shrug off negative perceptions about it (Dinnie, 2010).

Tau proved to be popular within the city of Johannesburg. Through his popularity, Tau managed to spread the message of the WCAC place brand and the projects he wanted to initiate. He personified the place brand and became its face. Having been born in Soweto, a township of Johannesburg, also helped in pushing the idea of what it meant to be from the city and thus, his rise to prominence and that of the place brand was closely linked. It reminded people that anyone could make it in the world with enough vision and effort.

While the internationalisation of the WCAC place brand is commendable, the same cannot be said for how it was advanced locally in Johannesburg. If anything, local

placeholders were only seen as end-users of the place brand. This could alienate this group and risk them developing resentment towards the place brand. Including local placeholders in creating a place brand or its narrative/s is essential in fostering positive associations with it (Chen & Dwyer, 2018). When appropriately and meaningfully engaged, local placeholders become ambassadors of the place brand. From a political perspective, the inclusion of this group leads to the democratisation of the city's governance processes (Ooi, 2008). In the case of Johannesburg, however, this opportunity was missed.

Moreover, the WCAC place brand displayed a dichotomy of modernity (world-class) and informality (African). This is almost inevitable given the legacy of apartheid planning that left South Africa's cities with a disparate spatial pattern (Ballard & Jones, 2021). Despite the innumerable attempts by the government to correct this disparity, the situation has remained stubborn (Berrisford, 2011). Johannesburg is a vastly differentiated city. It is, therefore, not surprising that the WCAC place brand fell into the trap of presenting parts of the city in a positive light while almost erasing or relegating impoverished ones to the margins. In this sense, the place brand inadvertently entrenched the spatial and social polarisation in the city. As with many other endeavours that seek to generate positive change, place branding is not without its collateral damage (Zavatarro, 2013). Place brands are not necessarily universal and applicable to all city areas (Edlins, 2013).

On a positive note, the WCAC place brand was closely linked to the city's strategic development and governance tools, which were, in turn, aligned to a national government agenda. In this way, the place brand played an integral role in localising the government's aspirations for Johannesburg. This meant that it was more straightforward for the national government to see synergies between itself and the projects that the city of Johannesburg wanted to run. There was an element of co-branding in this instance, and the brands of the city and government had a conditioning effect on each other.

Place brands that are couched within a broader portfolio are more likely to succeed because they reiterate the narrative of more prominent brands at a local level (Meyvis & Janiszeweski, 2004). The city of Johannesburg managed this aspect of branding very effectively. The city trumped other leading cities in South Africa by being the first

to launch several programmes. Through its place brand, the city of Johannesburg chartered many unknown challenges. However, having conquered these challenges, the city was always a point of discussion in South Africa and internationally.

Place branding within the CoJ under the mayoralty of Tau evolved from what it had been under Masondo. It began to recognise the significance of involving local placeholders in its continuance. Local placeholders were not involved at the onset of the creation of the place brand back in 2000. Instead, CoJ unilaterally gave this task to consultants. Through the involvement of local placeholders, albeit late, the city embraced ideas of democratising its place branding processes. In this light, the WCAC place brand moved away from its infancy. However, local placeholders' involvement was still insufficient to make the place brand fall into the category of advanced place branding. The place brand was still evolving.

The next chapter traces the changing sentiments around branding Johannesburg under the leadership of Herman Mashaba.

CHAPTER 7: HERMAN MASHABA AND THE DOOM OF THE WORLD-CLASS AFRICAN CITY

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is based on archival research. It peruses the State of the City Addresses (SoCA) of Herman Mashaba. The chapter aims to explore the dynamics shaping the place brand of Johannesburg under the mayoralty of Mashaba, which began in late 2016 and ended in early 2019. Specifically, this chapter examines the "A Joburg that works, is a South Africa that works" place brand. This place brand was a monumental but short-lived shift from the "A world-class African city" place brand, existed since early 2000. The chapter begins by foregrounding the political and economic climate that predicated Mashaba's assumption of office, as this signalled a significant change of direction in the administration of Johannesburg. The chapter then dissects the constituent elements of the "a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand. The chapter concludes by analysing the efficacy and reception of the "a Johannesburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand.

The significance of this chapter lies in highlighting the inherent weaknesses of place brands when new leadership and administrations take the reign of cities. The impulsive pursuit of new place brands often present discontinuities of well-established ones. This is a significant observation in cities of the Global South, such as Johannesburg, who do not have readily recognisable place brands like global cities such as New York, Paris, and Tokyo.

7.2 Winds of change in Johannesburg

On 3 August 2016, South Africa staged its fifth local government elections to elect the leadership for municipalities (Engel, 2016). Johannesburg falls within this sphere of government (Chikwema, 2019). The ANC and DA hotly contested for Johannesburg. The ANC had once again nominated Parks Tau as its mayoral candidate (Harrison *et al.,* 2019). The DA nominated Herman Mashaba as its candidate in the city (Ndletyana, 2018). In the end, the DA won the elections, and Herman Mashaba became mayor of Johannesburg (Booysen, 2016).

Born in 1959, Mashaba is a prominent South African politician and entrepreneur. He is well-known for his story as a boy who grew up in poverty and founded "Black Like

Me", a brand of hair products (Murray & Heil, 2003). Through this venture, Mashaba became a millionaire and one of South Africa's leading business figures. Politically, Mashaba was inexperienced but accepted his nomination as a candidate for the mayoralty of Johannesburg in December 2015 (Booysen, 2016). Before this, Mashaba was an ordinary card-carrying member of the DA, a position he had held since 2014. Between 2012 and 2014, he was the chairperson of the Free Market Foundation (FMF) (Groenewald, 2015). Founded in 1975, the FMF is an organisation that focusses on advancing human rights and democracy through ideas of press freedom, open society, and the rule of law (Whittaker, 2014).

Mashaba officially became mayor of Johannesburg on 29 August 2016 (Mbete, 2016). Ideologically, the DA prides itself on promoting liberalism (Lichtenstein, 2011). Liberalists support democracy, free markets and trade, limitation of government involvement in trade and industry, gender and racial equality and internationalism, amongst others (Bell, 2014). These were all sentiments held close by Mashaba since he had served as chairperson of the FMF. In contrast, the ANC called itself a "broad church" owing to its ideologies of communism and Africanism (de Jager, 2009).

There are vast differences in how these parties address governance, service delivery, social welfare, and the running of the economy. Thus, when the DA came into power in Johannesburg, it made several institutional and operational changes. Upon his assumption of office, Mashaba signalled his intent to reintroduce the MOEs into the city's structures (Gumede, 2019). Mashaba felt that the director and managers of the MOEs in Johannesburg were a law unto themselves and were not being held accountable for the multiple failures in their service delivery mandate (Petterson, 2017). Given his background in business, Mashaba wanted to run the city more efficiently. As a result of this desire, Mashaba's administration dismantled many of the programmes and projects that the ANC-led government had initiated previously.

Critically, however, the DA had yet to win the elections outright and needed a coalition arrangement to secure its victory. This coalition arrangement included other political parties such as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Congress of the People (COPE), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), Freedom Front Plus (FFP) and the United Democratic Movement (UDM) (Pieterse, 2019). It was the first time that Johannesburg would be ruled under a coalition government, and it represented the first time that the

ANC was not in control of the city since 1995 (Kotze & Bohler-Muller, 2019). Coalitions are more complicated than one-party politics because decisions are reached by consensus on widely varying political agendas (Himmelman, 2001). In other words, they require vast levels of compromise (Martin & Vanberg, 2004). However, coalitions are beneficial in promoting democratic ideologies because they ensure the accountability of all stakeholders (Bellamy, 2012).

The governance of cities under the guise of coalitions was new in South Africa, and many major cities faced considerable challenges in realising their developmental agendas because of this construct (Gray & Birrell, 2012). Johannesburg was not the only city that a coalition government would govern. The ANC's popularity declined before the local government elections and, subsequently, lost its majority in Tshwane and Nelson Mandela Bay (Pieterse, 2019).

The rise of the so-called small opposition parties coming together to take control of influential metropolitan cities such as Johannesburg and Tshwane was a sign of the changing political landscape in South Africa. These coalitions emerged when South Africa was embroiled in claims of sweeping corruption and graft. The corruption claims were laid squarely against then-President Jacob Zuma (of the ANC), who had been accused of laying waste to public funds (Lannegren & Ito, 2017). These accusations ranged from his role in the arms deal and his complicity to kleptocracy, which was eventually labelled as state capture that was occurring in the country (Ries, 2020).

The corruption claims at the highest echelons of the South African government did not bode well for its brand image internationally (Alence & Pitcher, 2019). Investors were pulling out of the country, and the accusations put off potential ones. While these were primarily political processes, South Africa did not wage a considerable or tangible public diplomacy campaign to allay the fears of investors and the international community. In Johannesburg, Mashaba had a new broom and made it clear that change was coming. He relied on improving service delivery to save the city's brand image. However, this was myopic in that Johannesburg had been projected as the centrepiece for showcasing development in South Africa (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2015). To an extent, Mashaba understood and appreciated this but set in motion dramatic changes to restore a new brand image for Johannesburg.

7.3 Introducing “A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works”

Not afraid to shoot from the hip, Mashaba criticised Tau’s administration for spending exorbitant amounts of money on branding campaigns. He alleged that his predecessors had spent a staggering R 300 million in what he called self-promoting campaigns in 2016 alone (Beaumont, 2020). Mashaba disdained the “A world-class African city” place brand. In his inaugural speech, he said:

> “It is a disgrace that our residents have had to endure your shameless self-promotion of a world-class African city while living with your less than world-class performance” (CoJ, Soca, 2016: 18).

Through this utterance, Mashaba signalled a changing of priorities regarding branding in the city. Mashaba made it his mission to return to basics and concentrated much of his attention on service delivery. For this reason, there was a marked reduction in the city’s branding processes. However, Mashaba did not entirely abandon the branding of the city. He began using “A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works” place brand (Ferguson, 2018). This new place brand took on a more operational outlook and became less visionary than its predecessor. As such, this presented a deviation from the grandiose aspirations that the WCAC place brand had aimed at.

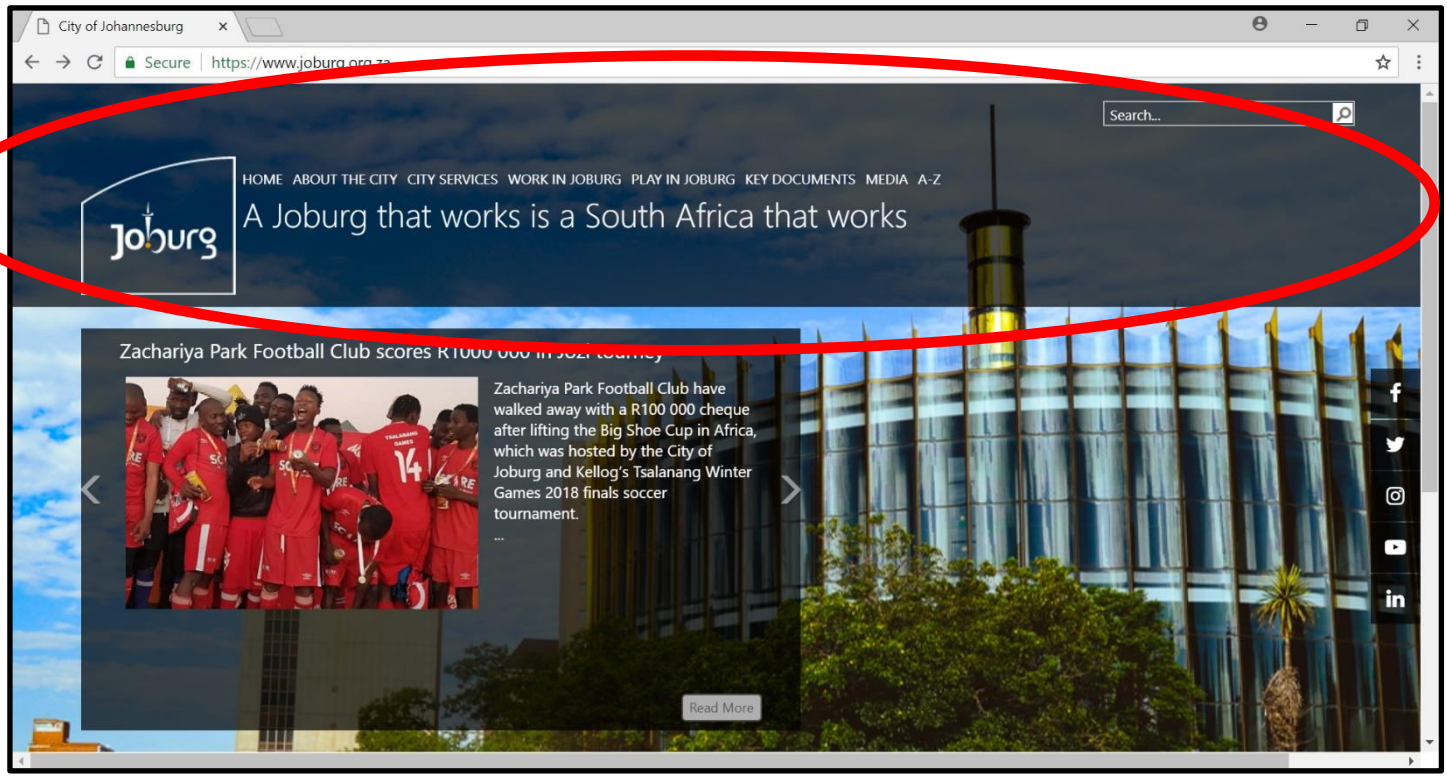
Like the previous mayors before him, Mashaba was aware of Johannesburg’s unique and strategic location in South Africa. At a national level, this new place brand saw Johannesburg as the engine room of South Africa’s economy. Regionally, it is recalled that Johannesburg had been chosen to be the headquarters of the GCRO. The place brand landed support for the idea of Johannesburg spearheading the Gauteng City Region’s developmental agenda. At a local level, the place brand sought to project Johannesburg as a city that was serious about creating employment and attracting investment for the benefit of its placeholders. Thus, the brand identity that Mashaba sought was that of a city whose institutional processes enabled it to deliver services efficiently to its placeholders. The place brand was meant to be practical. It was simple and pointed towards achieving the bare minimum of what local government was meant to achieve.

The inclusion of “Joburg” in the slogan is significant. Residents of Johannesburg affectionately refer to the city as Joburg, Jozi or eGoli (Nombembe, 2010). According

to Magoqwana (2015), “Johannesburg” refers to a more formal association with the city. It represents a transactional association wherein residents pay for services, and the city provides them. Thus, the slogan sought to endear the city to its placeholders and simultaneously place them at the heart of it. Through this, the CoJ aimed at creating a personal link between itself and its placeholders. This increases support for a place brand and makes local placeholders its ambassadors.

The use of city nicknames is popular in place branding praxis. For instance, New York is often referred to as “The Big Apple”, Las Vegas “Sin City”, Paris; France, is known as the City of Love; Mumbai in India is known as the City of Dreams; and Toronto in Canada is known as “Muddy York” (Doloi, 2018). Zinaida *et al.,* (2022) point out that giving cities nicknames adds to their identities, and this, in turn, establishes a brand for them. In addition, it brings familiarity with a given city to its placeholders (Schnell & Reese, 2014). This is an essential function of place branding as it bridges the gap between city governments and placeholders. It builds rapport and trust between these groups of individuals. And, in turn, it provides a platform of support for a given place brand (Insch & Stuart, 2015).

Figure 7.1 Johannesburg's new tagline



Source: City of Joburg website

The figure above illustrates the tagline that the city of Johannesburg developed when Mashaba took over as mayor. Interestingly, the logo to the left of the tagline was not changed, and as such, much of the city's brand architecture remained intact. Thus, the new place brand was superficial. It did not set out to reinvent Johannesburg or tell a new narrative. It was merely layered on top of an existing canvas. More critically, the place brand focussed narrowly on South Africa. In this way, the place brand eroded the gains made by previous ones in that it once again alienated Johannesburg from the rest of Africa and the world more generally. Hospers (2004) argues that place branding is not merely about rekindling fond associations amongst local placeholders but is a strategic endeavour in projecting a place to the broader world.

In its previous renditions, such as the "Gateway to Southern Africa", "Golden Heartbeat of Africa", and "A world-class African city", administrators had always applied a two-pronged approach to branding Johannesburg. They focussed on positioning Johannesburg internationally while simultaneously pledging allegiance to Africa. This was missing in Mashaba's place brand and, thus, the efforts to position Johannesburg as a global city waned.

Incidentally, the “a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works” place brand emerged at a time when South Africa was experiencing low economic growth. In 2016, South Africa’s economic growth was at a paltry 1.41 %, far from the 7% the country desperately needed to set a new developmental path (Blecher *et al.,* 2017). In a sense, the place brand was a response to the stagnating national economy, and it projected Johannesburg as the site from where South Africa’s developmental agenda could be staged. The place brand sought to reset the economic prospects of Johannesburg and set the city up as the catalyst for development in South Africa. This in and of itself was a considerable aspiration, but it lacked international connotations of development and positioning.

As such, the place brand folded internally. It created little to no space to contend with issues of global city competition, being African or social reconciliation. The place brand was purposely built to deal only with growing the economy of Johannesburg on a local scale and South Africa on a national level. It sought to make Johannesburg a functional city with elevated FDI and service deliverables (Kambarami, 2020). This place brand signalled a going-back-to-basics of sorts in terms of branding Johannesburg. It failed to recognise Johannesburg’s significant and potential role in Africa, not only in economic terms but also as a point of Afropolitan cultural exchange. Read this way: the place brand is meant to increase the equity of Johannesburg in economic terms only. However, it failed to recognise the more subtle but equally crucial factors such as social integration and cohesion.

Like other political processes, place branding is not immune from the impacts of city leadership change (van Ham, 2008). A place brand is more likely to survive with a new leader coming in from a political ideology similar to t its predecessor. The “A world-class African city” place brand survived three terms through two mayors because they were both from the ANC. However, Mashaba represented a different political ideology; thus, it was not surprising when he broke the mould as it was in the branding of Johannesburg.

The new place brand represented a discontinuity in the city’s branding efforts. This discontinuity meant placeholders had to unlearn the old and embrace the new. However, the haste with which the previous place brand was replaced did not allow placeholders to familiarise themselves with the new one. Moreover, placeholders were

not invited to participate in creating the new place brand. In this light, Mashaba's administration, like Masondo and Tau's administration, failed to fully immerse placeholders in processes related to branding the city. Go and Trunfio (2012) argue that consensus is critical in creating place brands. However, the plurality of places makes reaching a consensus amongst residents and city governments particularly cumbersome (Mayes, 2008). At the centre of this difficulty in reaching consensus lies the vested interests of influential individuals who subvert the narrative of a place brand. These individuals control so much of the narrative that they marginalise less powerful and poorer residents (mentrification) in place branding processes (Jernsand & Kraff, 2017).

Therefore, non-consensus creates a situation wherein a place brand is not experienced in the same manner across a geographical space. By so doing, the equity of the place brand is diminished because spaces in cities are not homogenous concerning their endowments. So, the lived experiences of people differ within the same city. In this way, the legitimacy and authenticity of a place brand become easily challengeable from different points of contention, depending on how one perceives and experiences a place brand. In the case of Johannesburg, at the advent of Mashaba's place brand, the city was still primarily divided along race and class lines. This situation that had not changed significantly since South Africa received political emancipation in 1994.

In addition to local placeholders not participating in creating the place brand, no ambassadors promoted it. In this way, the place brand lacked personality and was quite alien to local placeholders. For example, a search on the internet for the catchphrase "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" did not produce many results. It only brought up results for recruitment agencies trying to encourage those wanting to come and work in Johannesburg to consult them. Mashaba's background as a businessperson also played into the place brand not having much of a personality. Unlike Masondo and Tau before him, Mashaba had a limited time in politics and, so people at grassroots levels did not recognise him because he had not engaged with them for a long time. Place brand personality is important because it ensures that placeholders can associate a figure with a place brand and makes it familiar and approachable (Basfirinci, 2013). According to Chan *et al.* (2016), familiarity and association of a place brand with a person can be used as a measure of its equity.

Prominent levels of familiarity and association signal higher levels of a place brand's equity. This was not the case with Mashaba's place brand.

Silent or non-existent place brands are problematic for cities trying to cement a foothold in world economics (Lucarelli & Giovanardi, 2016). Johannesburg did not have a distinct place brand, which reversed the strides made in making it a global city. If anything, Mashaba and his administration jeopardised the city's ability to attract FDI because their place brand did not make room for the involvement of multinational companies. It depended too heavily on the city correcting itself without external help, which the international community had previously provided. The rolling back of branding processes in Johannesburg and the subsequent emergence of Mashaba's place brand projected an image of self-sustainability for the city. This could not be further from the truth. In 2016, Johannesburg needed significant FDI injections to initiate and sustain some of the programmes that the previous administrations had set up (Shill, 2018).

From the onset, Mashaba's election manifesto centred heavily on combatting corruption and getting back to basics, as he termed it. In his first SoCA on 3 May 2017, he bemoaned the price tag attached to the council chamber where he made his speech. He said:

> "Noting these serious challenges, I stand before you in amazement of this new Council Chamber. This R 360 million Council Chamber. It is truly a spectacular building; however, I am left thinking about all of the roads, houses and clinics that could have been built with this money" (CoJ, SoCA, 2017: 6).

He believed the money could have been used for matters of service delivery. Granted, a considerable percentage of what a municipality does in South Africa involves delivering services to residents. However, as a metropolitan municipality, Johannesburg is also expected to generate revenue (Sciara & Wachs, 2007). This means that metropolitan municipalities depend less on intergovernmental transfers than local and district counterparts (Wildasin, 2010). This oversight from Mashaba ignored the subtle power of place branding in attracting FDI and other business forms.

Mabillard and Vuignier (2017) point out that place branding depends on highlighting the hard and soft factors of a city's endowments. Hard factors include economic

stability, infrastructure, and technology, for instance. Soft factors include quality of life, image, and culture of a place. The “a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works” concentrated too heavily on the former. The place brand skewed disproportionately towards functionalism and ignored the significance of representation and symbolism (Giovarnardi, 2012). Thus, the equity of the city’s place brand suffered because not all its assets and endowments were exploited. If anything, Mashaba increased the chasm concerning how the city was experienced through his place brand because it deemed the city as being homogenous and equally resourced.

From a perspective of issues and feeding back into his getting-back-to-basics stance, Mashaba had identified ten issues challenging the city. The first of these was the new institutional makeup of the city through the coalition arrangement. To this end, he averred, “The people have chosen a diverse group of parties to lead them. Our people have elected this government intentionally so that no single political party can abuse their power in our city again” (CoJ, 2017: 2). Mashaba promised to work closely with his coalition partners and encouraged them to hold him accountable for all the successes and failures in the city.

Secondly, he articulated the need for the city’s administration to be more pro-poor. Mashaba bemoaned the lack of opportunities that placeholders had in the city. “We cannot build the city we all so deeply desire when so many of our people can only look from a distance at prosperity, reaching out, and being unable to access it” (CoJ, 2017: 8). He dedicated 60% of the city’s proposed budget to previously poor and underserviced areas in the city. This was important in attempting to equalise the imbalances in the different areas of the city and increasing the equity of his place brand. Historically, underserviced areas were left out (mentrified) of Johannesburg’s; as a result, the uptake of any place brand in such areas was usually low. This was problematic because place brands fare better when local placeholders are ambassadors (Braun *et al.,* 2013).

The third issue was the ambition of achieving a 5% economic growth rate by 2021 to create more job opportunities, particularly for the city’s youth, who had an unemployment rate of over 50% at the time. However, Mashaba did not indicate how he planned to achieve this. Tau’s administration had produced Jozi@Work to plug the gap in youth employment. A lack of a straightforward programme was problematic for

Mashaba's place brand, "a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works". Placeholders relate more positively to place brands with a discernible implementation programme (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2010; Zenker & Jacobsen, 2015). Previously, Tau had used the Corridors of Freedom to spatialize the "A world-class African city" place brand. This place brand was evident across Johannesburg. However, Mashaba's place brand was hardly ever spread across the city and, as such, was not well known.

Fourthly, the professionalisation of the city's civil service was identified as a significant way of combatting nepotism, an accusation which he had levelled against Tau. The professionalisation of the city's civil servants was in line with the National Development Plan (NDP), which sought to make the public sector more efficient. Mashaba highlighted that since he had taken over as mayor of the city, his administration had conducted a skills audit to ensure that every employee was in their position because of merit (CoJ, SoCA, 2017).

Next and related to the fourth issue of nepotism was combatting corruption. Corruption was a significant talking point in 2016 and 2017. Stemming from the allegations of corruption and kleptocracy levelled against Jacob Zuma and the ANC, political parties generally used anti-corruption rhetoric to garner support. Mashaba avered, "Corruption steals from the poor and must be stopped" (CoJ, SoCA, 2017: 16). Mashaba was of the view that the efforts made by Tau in setting up the Joburg Ombudsman office in 2015 had done little to curb corruption. In May 2017, Mashaba suspended the city's Ombudsman, S'du Gumede, on allegations of maladministration (Mathope, 2017). In September of the same year, the Labour Appeal Court declared Mashaba's suspension of Gumede as procedurally unfair (Fourie & Phetho, 2017). Mashaba appealed this decision.

The sixth of these issues was the production of an official housing waiting list. Mashaba had estimated that the housing backlog had stood at 300, 000 units, and the city provided only 3500 units annually. This was far from where the city should have been in terms of delivering houses to its placeholders. Mashaba bemoaned, "The frustration of our communities lies in the fact that people have been sitting on housing lists since 1996, which remain a secret" (CoJ, SoCA, 2017: 17). The issue of housing lists was not unique to the city of Johannesburg. Nationally and across municipalities, residents were still waiting to be allocated housing (Oldfield & Greyling, 2015).

Housing provision in South Africa is a competency of national and provincial governments (Koma, 2010). Local governments provide suitable land for establishing government housing schemes (Mashabela *et al.,* 2022). In this light, local governments, including the city of Johannesburg, have little leeway in fast-tracking the allocation of houses.

Connected to the list above was the identification of the completion of incomplete housing units. The eighth issue identified was the fast-tracking of the delivery of title deeds to the beneficiaries of the city's housing schemes. The second last issue was initiating a pilot project to see clinics run for extended hours to improve health services throughout the city. Lastly, Mashaba saw the revitalisation of the inner city as a means of bringing people and business to the city. However, there was no discernible branding of the inner city to bring this to fruition. Previously, Johannesburg had targeted the rejuvenation of the inner city through the "Heartbeat of Africa" place brand. The lack of a distinct place brand for the inner-city was a testament to the folding back of Johannesburg's place brand.

The ten issues that Mashaba had identified as being integral in getting the city back to an efficient functioning level were mainly political, and attention was focussed on operational matters. This precluded the city from engaging in broader long-term visioning exercises. Not all place brands need to be aspirational. However, a lack of a future outlook reduces the ability of placeholders to align their expectations with the administrative and managerial processes of a city government (Ashworth *et al.,* 2015). Mashaba's place brand did not attempt to differentiate Johannesburg meaningfully and purposefully, and thus, the city lost its identity briefly.

Under Mashaba, the brand image of Johannesburg disappeared dramatically. Of all the issues that Mashaba prioritised, none of them had an international outlook. This was a setback for a city that had long wanted to stand amongst the world's leading cities. The lack of vision-setting for Johannesburg at that time meant it had little chance, to imprint its image on the international community. In addition, the place brand that Mashaba coined did not have any specific projects attached to it. In this way, it was difficult for the place brand to become spatialized. Masondo had used the Reya Vaya BRT and Tau, the Corridors of Freedom, amongst other programmes/projects, to bring effect to the "a world-class African place brand". This

previous place brand became synonymous with Johannesburg's efforts made in development terms. The lack of a spatializing programme/project attached to the "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand inevitably ensured that it would not be recognisable in the minds of the city's placeholders, not to mention the international community.

Granted, it was still early in Mashaba's mayoralty that his place brand could hold any significant place in the minds of the city's placeholders. However, the lacklustre nature with which the place brand was developed initially left much to be desired. This was even more alarming when one considers that Mashaba set out to sanitise the city of the misdeeds of Tau's administration. To an extent, then, Mashaba's place brand was a means of repurposing the city against perceived corruption by his predecessor. While this showed a willingness to drive out corruption and make the city work, the place brand failed dismally to make the case for Johannesburg to become or be a global city.

Critically, from a branding perspective, Mashaba expressed his desire to see the inner-city as a catalyst for development in the city. He stated:

> "Our vision for the inner city is to make it the inclusive, modern, and diverse heartbeat of Johannesburg. It truly has the potential to become the model for a modern, post-apartheid, South African city" (CoJ, 2017: 22).

The words "heartbeat of Johannesburg" and "modern" are particularly interesting. Firstly, "heartbeat" is a snippet of the "Heartbeat of Africa" place brand developed under the mayoralty of Isaac Mogase in the late 1990s. The identity presented by that particular place brand was that of a dynamic, vibrant Johannesburg, which would be a microcosm of a growing immigrant society mixing with South African citizens, the quintessential Afropolitan city. Secondly, "modern" is a throwback to the "a world-class African city" place brand. Previously, "modern" had referred to the adaptation of international connotations of development. The intermingling of these aspects in his place brand reverted to earlier renditions that Mashaba had dismantled. As such, there was a hint of duplication and inefficiency presented by the place brand he developed. More critically, the excerpt folded Johannesburg into South Africa and generally alienated the city from the rest of the continent and the world Thus, Mashaba's "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" and his vision for the inner-city were

myopically embedded within a defined geographical location without an international outlook. Whether intentional or not, Mashaba's desire to make Johannesburg a great city was placed in a vacuum devoid of regional and international competition.

In Africa, Johannesburg was one of the leading cities in economic terms, and its position as such was difficult to challenge (Rogerson, 2014). In September 2016, the global consumer company Mastercard released its Global Destinations Cities Index, in which Johannesburg was ranked number one for international tourists and expected expenditure of US$1, 73 billion from these individuals (Hendrick-Wong & Choong, 2016). The same index ranked Cape Town in close third and Durban in fifth place. However, in an increasingly globalising world, Johannesburg had fallen in its competitiveness compared to other global cities such as New York, London, Paris and Tokyo (Gugler & Josef, 2018). In 2015, Johannesburg was ranked 99th place, but 102nd in 2016, according to Kearney's Global Cities 2016 Report. Kearney is a global consulting firm founded in the US with offices in more than forty countries. As such, it was surprising that Mashaba's place brand did not contemplate how to turn this situation around.

Furthermore, the presence of the words "inclusive" and "diverse" in his vision for the inner city was questionable. Mashaba's mayoralty had a heavy focus on immigrants. Unsubstantiated, he blamed immigrants for many crimes and situations in the city (Mpofu, 2019). According to Skosana (2017), Mashaba exaggerated the number of undocumented immigrants living in the city by a massive 53.8 per cent, claiming that these individuals amounted to 80 per cent of the people living in Johannesburg. Undocumented immigrants made up 26.2 per cent of people living in the inner city (Pather, 2016). Notably, Mashaba's stance towards immigrants was skewed in that he targeted those of African descent. He ignored and embraced migrants from other parts of the world, particularly White ones (Hiropoulos, 2020). This represented a form of xenophobia from Mashaba. In this light, Johannesburg's new stance in branding itself was removing the gains it had made in rekindling relations with the rest of Africa in previous campaigns.

Mashaba's place brand missed the opportunity to superdiversify Johannesburg. Briefly, superdiversity refers to the diversification of immigrant populations groups and ethnic minority groups within them (Padilla *et al.,* 2015). By 2016, Johannesburg had

become the home of many migrants from the continent and the world. Vertovec (2007) points out that immigrants and minority ethnic groups come together to form other social constructs, making interactions between these individuals and recipient governments more layered if embraced positively. However, Mashaba reacted in the opposite direction and continued to alienate this group of individuals. Mashaba diminished the city's place brand equity.

Previous place brands of the city had played on the idea of Johannesburg extending "ubuntu" to its local and international placeholders. Masondo and Tau spoke at length of the idea of making Johannesburg as cosmopolitan as possible. In contrast, Mashaba concentrated on the idea that the resources and benefits of the city were the purview of only South Africans living in Johannesburg. In a way, then, Mashaba's place brand made Johannesburg a place contested on ideologies of origin and belonging. This was dangerous ground because, just a year before he took over as mayor, there had been a flaring up of xenophobic attacks in Johannesburg that left many immigrants fatally wounded (Bekker, 2015). One of the most famous instances of these attacks involved Moses Sithole, a Mozambican national (Mlotshwa, 2021).

Place brand campaigns do not necessarily reflect immigrant populations (Castaneda, 2018). They mainly concentrate on the endowments of their physical geography. To be sure, place brands seldom celebrate local placeholders. Thus, it is not surprising that most place brands exclude immigrant population groups. Cerisola and Panzera (2022) note two types of cities when considering migration. They see those cities that embrace diversity and, as a result, become superdiversified. They also see those cities that do not embrace migration as a positive outcome of development, and as such, consider it a challenge or problematic. For Johannesburg to specifically target African immigrants and label them as problematic tarnished its image. Kavaratzis *et al.* (2015) argue that there is often an oversimplification in the representation of culture and diversity in place brand campaigns and that this leads to disconnections with the place from the perspective of placeholders, particularly immigrants.

It was not the first time a place brand had disenfranchised a particular population group. Previously, informal traders had been targeted and perceived as being problematic for the "a world-class African city" place brand through the institution of "Operation Clean Sweep" in 2013 (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2016). Perceptions that anything

counter to formal urban governance processes are problematic because they negate cities from bridging the gap between their brand promises and actual performance.

The callous way Mashaba administered urban governance in the city was shocking because it removed many immigrants from the narrative of the city's place brand. As opposed to embracing these placeholders as part of the place brand, it put them at odds with it and, as such, created space for its resentment. This was problematic not only for Johannesburg but South Africa as a whole. To a substantial extent, Johannesburg had been painted as the poster child for showcasing the country's development and its embracing of migrants from the continent. The marginalisation of these placeholders in the city's place brand could have erroneously been misconstrued as the country's stance.

South African businesses have a significant presence in Africa. Following the attacks in 2015, several countries moved to the South African government to act decisively to stop the violence against their citizens. For instance, Sasol, an energy company, repatriated a significant contingent of its labour force from Mozambique for fear of their safety (McGroarty & Stevis, 2015). In Nigeria, the then-newly elected All People's Congress (APC) gave South Africa an ultimatum to stop the violence in a period of 48 hours, or it would shut down all South African businesses in that country (Patel & Essa, 2015). Similarly, immigrants in Johannesburg owned businesses there, and Mashaba's stance effectively pitted them against South Africans, a situation that could have easily been avoided.

The purging of the city also occurred in the physical sense. Looking to clean the image of the city, Mashaba launched the "A re sebetseng" initiative in 2017 (Frankson, 2018). "A re sebetseng" means "let us work" in Sesotho (Ernstson *et al.,* 2021). This initiative, scheduled for every third Saturday in a month, encouraged residents to pick up litter in their communities with the view of increasing the feeling of ownership of their areas (Petterson, 2017). This operation was like Operation Clean Sweep, which was initiated by Tau in 2013 (Benit-Gbaffou, 2016; Arias, 2019). However, the overall premise of "A re sebetseng" was to make Johannesburg one of the cleanest and greenest cities in the world. It aimed at addressing littering, illegal dumping, and the dilapidation of open spaces. Operation Clean Sweep had been seen by many as a programme to purge

the city of the informal sector and was anti-poor in its stance (Nicolson & Lekgowa, 2013).

In a way, then, “A re sebetseng” was an extension of Mashaba’s place brand because it concentrated on granular details without giving much effect to the city’s global issues. Critically, it was an attempt at fostering feelings of belonging and, by extension, became the public participation component of Mashaba’s place brand. Notably, this was an initiative rather than a project or programme. It was predicated on voluntarism and was not a capital-intensive project. This meant that it was not tied down to bigger, strategic city programmes, such as a CDS or GDS. This was problematic in as far as popularising the place brand. It meant that the place brand was placed in a vacuum and did not serve a strategic objective.

As Richelieu (2018) notes, place brands that are attached or linked to broader strategic initiatives provide a catalytic mechanism for realising those initiatives and vice-versa. This way, there is a conditioning and two-way flow between strategic initiatives and a deliberate place brand. Through this, a city’s strategic initiatives are given an identity with which placeholders can identify. In so doing, it opens the space for the uptake of the place brand. In turn, this uptake increases the opportunity for the place brand to be supported and by extension, it accrues its ambassadorship.

Entitled “Diphetogo”, Mashaba used his second SoCA, delivered on 2 May 2018, to highlight that not much had changed regarding service delivery in the city since his assumption of office as mayor. Diphetogo means change in Sesotho (Talane, 2008). He cited that the city’s electrical infrastructure backlog sat at R 17 billion, bridge rehabilitation required R 6.5 billion, and the official backlog for housing provision was growing instead of decreasing. Mashaba credited all these shortcomings of the city to his predecessors, whom he blamed for corruption. As he said, “Incidentally, the R 18 billion of fraud and corruption under investigation would have been enough to build houses for all our people on the housing list” (CoJ, 2018: 3). For this, a few of journalists accused Mashaba of not dealing with matters directly affecting the performance of the city in his 2018 SoCA (Mailovich 2018; Mabasa, 2018). In particular, they bemoaned the attention he paid to what he termed “inherited problems” from the ANC, not talking facts about the billing crisis in the city and providing figures on his accomplishments, which would corroborate his claims.

Mashaba continued on the vein of getting back to basics. He dealt with the operational issues of running the city. This left little space for him to concentrate on more long-term, visionary programmes. The “a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works” place brand lacked an element of balancing the city’s mandate to provide services, giving effect to the city’s ambition of being or wanting to be a global city. If anything, the place brand annihilated the aspirational element present in previous place brands of the city. Instead of infusing a global competitive stance into his place brand, Mashaba once again aimed a jibe at his predecessors. He said:

> “Somewhere along the way, the City Leadership became obsessed with the self-pleasing idea of the “World-class African city. This was to impress international bodies, but the problem was that our predecessors bought into their own spin. The focus became about active lifestyle programmes more than it was about providing the dignity of sanitation” (CoJ, SoCA, 2018: 24).

This showed Mashaba’s disdain for place branding campaigns in the city. Considering these as unnecessary, lofty endeavours, Mashaba’s administration relented efforts concerning branding Johannesburg. His contempt for the “a world-class African city” place brand was the death knell to the branding efforts of the city despite being in his second year of office as mayor. Considering how Johannesburg had been projected as the poster child of all things good in South Africa, Mashaba’s lack of pushing his place brand essentially negated from telling a good story about the country. As such, the city’s narrative of good governance was lost because it did not have a recognisable place brand.

Amongst his achievements since becoming mayor, Mashaba mentioned that the city had handed over title deeds to about five thousand people, highlighted the city’s efforts in maintaining road infrastructure and announced the increase of operating hours of several clinics and libraries. Considering the stature of Johannesburg in South Africa, the issues that Mashaba highlighted were simple. Nowhere in Diphetogo did Mashaba speak about projecting Johannesburg at the international level. He denounced the whole idea. He said, “Essentially, the approach of the city (referring to Johannesburg under Tau and Masondo) seemed to be about meeting the expectations of the countless international bodies on which it served, rather than delivering what people actually needed” (CoJ,SoCA, 2018: 24). The idea of internalisation completely alluded

Mashaba. There were no efforts on the part of the city to host mega-events, for instance, in his first two years of office. Hosting mega-events and participating in global forums had been monumental in catapulting Johannesburg on the global stage and projecting the city as a capable host, and being developmental. Mashaba believed that the efforts that Masondo and particularly Tau had made to make Johannesburg a global city were a waste of time and money.

As a result, Johannesburg did not host any major event during Mashaba's term of office. This signalled a willingness to differentiate Johannesburg only from other cities in South Africa. This was myopic because contemporary cities compete at the global level. The question was how Johannesburg fared compared to leading cities, such as New York, Tokyo, Paris, and London. To be sure, these cities continued their branding regiment. For instance, Salganik (2019) notes how New York continues to capture the world's imagination through slogans such as "If I can make it here (referring to New York), I can make it anywhere". Even though New York has arguably the most recognisable place brand/s, it remains committed to imprinting its image on the world and not only in the US. In comparison, Johannesburg's place brand/s pale in recognisability, but Mashaba saw it fit to take a step back in the branding processes of the city.

In his last SoCA in 2019, Mashaba once again focussed his attention on issues of service delivery. As a result, he unsurprisingly took another jibe at his predecessors, saying, "We ended the City's delusions of grandeur, delusions which saw the delivery of bicycle lanes before the delivery of toilets in our informal settlements" (CoJ, SoCA, 2019: 3). Mashaba was referring to the aspirational place brand "a world-class African city" coined under Masondo and extended by Tau. He had been very critical of this place brand stating that it was absurd that the city's residents suffered while the city gloated about being world-class. However, in a positive direction, Mashaba realised that Johannesburg was plugged into a global competition arena. He said, "Johannesburg has served as our country's economic hub, despite government, not because of it. This is changing because we must compete in an ever more competitive world and be a desirable destination to set up a business" (CoJ, SoCA, 2019: 8). This realisation is significant because "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand had folded and alienated Johannesburg from competing with other global cities, at least from a place branding perspective. His statement reaffirmed

Johannesburg's strategic location and role in South Africa and the continent. However, the place brand he coined did not change to reflect the city's desire to compete with leading global cities.

In 2019, the DA faced considerable challenges due to internal politics. These challenges stemmed from the election of Helen Zille as the party's chair of the federal council (Mailovich, 2019). Two years earlier, in a series of tweets, Zille caused anger in South Africa when she praised elements of colonialism (Corcoran, 2017). In one tweet, she wrote, "For those claiming legacy of colonialism was only negative, think of our independent judiciary, transport infrastructure, and piped water." Mashaba took exception to these as well as her election as chair of the federal council of the DA. In October of the same year, Mashaba resigned as mayor of Johannesburg (Mailovich, 2019). He had been mayor of Johannesburg for only three years. Geoff Makhubo of the ANC was elected as the new mayor of the city (Bosch, 2019). From this point, the city used the tagline "City of Johannesburg, a Government of Local Unity" (Joburg, 2019). Mashaba's and Makhubo's taglines did not gain much traction, and the "a world-class African city" place brand was still largely Johannesburg's most successful. The city reverted to this place brand.

7.4 Of gains made and lost

The change of political leadership within a city government disrupts the longevity of a place brand. In more cases than not, the disruption is negative, and the subsequent iterations of the place brand are either short-lived or non-existent. Herman Mashaba attempted to dismantle the "a world-class African city" place brand through his "a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand. The haste to change an existing place brand can be likened to a male lion's killing off of cubs when taking over a new pride. The brand architecture is destroyed, and a new form must be created within a short period.

When the governance of Johannesburg changed hands in 2016, it ushered in a different positionality on political and ideological grounds. This positionality extended to the branding of the city. While the former ANC-led government had prioritised the branding of Johannesburg, the new coalition government led by Mashaba saw it as an extravagance, something the city could do without. Mashaba had all the intentions of turning the prospects of the city around. However, he dismantled several programmes

initiated by the ANC in his mission. This is not surprising; leaders tend to want to set their agendas and legacies in the cities they have run. As part of this, Mashaba also took down the “a world-class African city” place brand from the branding drive of Johannesburg. Thus, Mashaba did not work towards legitimising the place brand from his perspective but instead attempted to erase it altogether. However, the place brand he attempted to erase stood because it was well-known and had been guarded by previous mayors. Despite this, the breakaway from the “a world-class African city” place brand presented a discontinuity the city had never seen before.

The erasure of long-standing place brands on account of quick change and rubberstamping one’s authority is problematic. Mashaba’s “A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works” was premature and ill-advised. Mashaba missed the opportunity to use the previous place brand to effectively tie his successes down to a place brand that was well-recognised worldwide, especially in Africa. Instead, he folded the aspirational nature of the previous place brand and concentrated too narrowly on the internal dynamics of Johannesburg. For a city aiming for local relevance, this is not a problem. However, for a city that wanted to play on the global stage, Mashaba’s catchphrase was unambitious. It lacked the bullishness with which previous place brands had articulated the strengths of Johannesburg in Africa and the world more generally.

That Mashaba would want to stamp his authority and cement his legacy is not at all alarming. However, the haste with which he changed the place brand of the city was undoubtedly surprising. Johannesburg was not the only city to change its guard politically in 2016. Coalition government arrangements also affected cities such as Tshwane (Pretoria) and Nelson Mandela Bay (Bradshaw & Breakfast, 2019). Like Johannesburg, these cities initiated major overhauls on issues pertaining to human resources, policies, and service delivery targets, amongst others. However, none of these cities changed their place brands. The new governments in those cities worked in a business-as-usual mode in as far as place branding was concerned.

The place brand that Mashaba introduced did not take hold at all. The place brand was not pushed as much as its predecessor had been. This was partly due to the lack of funding and resources that Mashaba set aside for place branding purposes during his tenure. The lack of resourcing his place brand can be thought of as him not having

faith in it. Place branding is not an overnight endeavour of changing slogans and hoping that it will take root. Place branding requires foresight as well as substantial amounts of follow-through (Porter, 2013).

Pfannes *et al.,* (2021) argue that sudden changes to place brands risk their histories and credibility. Not only that, but it also speaks to an inability to manage a place brand. In the case of Johannesburg, Mashaba dismantled the previous place brand, which, for all accounts, had become the face of the city. When introducing his place brand, he did not concert sufficient efforts to make it well known. Thus, he created a brand gap in the city's efforts in branding itself. Mashaba did not extend his place brand to other elements of the city, such as had been seen with the "a world-class African city" place brand. For example, under Masondo and Tau, the place brand was attached to stationery and the city's vehicles. This did not happen when Mashaba introduced his place brand. It is no wonder then that his place brand remained unknown. The indefinite nature of the city's place brand under Mashaba also threatened its equity. Like its predecessor, Mashaba's place brand applied a blanket approach in projecting Johannesburg as a city at work. However, it failed to highlight the pockets of the city that were underserviced and impoverished. In this way, the place brand compounded the spatial layering of identities in the city. The spatial layering of identities refers to the selective application of prosperous regions of a city while marginalising those not so well off (Boisen *et al.,* 2018). In Johannesburg, places such as Parktown, Sandton, and Rosebank are easy examples of how the "a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand shows the city had been hard at work in providing places where people can live, work and play. However, the same cannot be said of places such as Alexandra, Diepsloot and Ivory Park. Thus, Mashaba's place brand did little to bridge the gap between the city's rich and poor. If anything, his place brand did little to make people who had felt alienated by the "a world-class African city" place brand feel an affinity to the city.

In addition, Mashaba's stance on immigration curtailed the success of his place brand. Mashaba ostracised immigrants to the extent that his place brand made no room for this group of placeholders. This showed an intolerance of diversity and cosmopolitanism. The mentioning of cosmopolitanism is deliberate because the intolerance that Mashaba showed was primarily aimed at African immigrants and others originating from Asia from countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and

China (Moyo, 2014). However, those originating from Europe, Australia and America were spared his critique. Tewolde (2021) points out that any immigrant who lives or trades close to South African townships and informal settlements is scapegoated and targeted. Johannesburg has many impoverished townships and informal settlements (Beall *et al.,* 2000). Mashaba's sustained rhetoric against immigrants significantly added to the spatial layering of identities in Johannesburg. It otherised immigrants and created a chasm between them and locals.

Given that Johannesburg is a city that was founded on the back of the discovery of gold in 1886, it holds that no one can realistically claim the city to be their home. Johannesburg is a place of transience (Landau, 2007). As such, Mashaba would have been well advised to embrace diversity as it has made Johannesburg a leading city in South Africa and the continent.

The "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand lacked another critical element. Masondo and Tau had made it a point to spatialize the "A world-class African city" place brand. Masondo achieved this through the Re-Ya Vaya BRT, while Tau used the Corridors of Freedom and various other programmes, including Jozi@Work. The attachment of a place brand to flagship projects cannot be underestimated. As Shahabadi *et al.* (2020) point out, place branding is part of an urban governance toolkit that can sensitise placeholders to the efforts a city is making, be it infrastructure development or urban renewal. It also provides a platform for highlighting an administration's legacy.

Throughout his mayoralty, Mashaba initiated several projects that were infrastructure-intensive. However, he did not name his projects. In this way, there was a disconnection between his place brand and the city. Local placeholders and the international community saw what the city was doing as part of its mandate. However, there was nothing additional to service delivery and the turning around of the city. Put bluntly, the city lacked a face, and the place brand did not have an ambassador. Lucarelli (2015) points out that place branding is part of the new face of urban governance. It is not a stand-alone, by the way sort of endeavour. By not resourcing and spatializing his place brand, Mashaba missed the point and significance of effective and targeted place branding. Hall (2008) argues that the intangible elements of place branding are as important as the material ones. The initiation of infrastructure

projects, for instance, are essential for showing placeholders that a city is at work, but they are insufficient in creating positive vibes about them. As such, place branding plugs this gap by providing a narrative that placeholders can buy into.

Given that projects initiated by cities are expensive and undertaken over extended periods, it is only logical to supplement them with a distinct and strong place brand (Zenker & Beckmann, 2013). The lack of a distinct place brand that accompanied projects undertaken by Mashaba's administration was an oversight. They missed the opportunity to create legacies for themselves. Other than the fact that Mashaba came from the DA, which was a signficant opposition party to the ANC, the projects he initiated were not memorable and did not stand out sufficiently for one to say that he was the one who initiated them. Therefore, this once again speaks to the facelessness of Mashaba's place brand, "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works".

Additionally, and critically, Mashaba's place brand was never really attached to a long-term vision. On the contrary, the "a world-class African city" place brand that came before emerged from iGoli 2002 strategy and its subsequent iterations through iGoli 2030 and iGoli 2040. Attaching a place brand to a long-term strategy directs placeholders on where the city aims to be in the future (Vahabian *et al.,* 2021). Ashworth and Kavaratzis (2010) point out that place branding is becoming an increasingly valuable tool for charting a way for a city's development and creating a niche for itself in an ever-globalising world. When attached to a CDS, place branding becomes even more potent because it provides a platform for residents, businesses and other affected and interested parties to set and agree on the vision for the city. In this way, there is scope for legitimising the place brand from the perspective of placeholders and genuinely democratising the processes of a city government. In the case of the "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand, Mashaba missed this opportunity. The place brand was a knee-jerk reaction aimed at erasing an established one.

The final obstacle to Mashaba's place brand relates to his term of office as mayor, which lasted only three years. In his three years as mayor, Mashaba concerted considerable efforts to reform the city and fight corruption. This left little space for anything else, including promoting his place brand. In this way, the place brand stood little chance of gaining significant traction. Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) argue that the

coining of taglines and the design of logos are but a starting point for creating a place brand. Arguing against the insistence of creating logos and taglines, Govers (2013: 72) points out that place brands are…

> "…representations of place identity, building a favourable (public, private and civil society stakeholders) and external (tourists, investors, traders, migrants) image, leading to brand equity; name awareness, perceived quality and other favourable brand associations (that is, positive image and reputation) attached to a name or symbol representing a country, city or region."

Considering Govers' argument, Mashaba's place brand fell short of this requirement. In the first instance, the place brand in question was not one because the architecture of the previous one remained the same. Mashaba added, "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works."

Secondly, the adoption of his tagline was done unilaterally and so did not involve the participation of public, private and civil society. In this manner, it lacked equity as it was effectively prescribed to placeholders. On a positive note, he at least recognised the popularity of "Joburg" in his place brand. For this, Johannesburg remained recognisable and relevant. The positives stop there. The place brand was in effect for only a brief period, and as such, it was not recognisable by any stretch of the imagination. Critically, Mashaba's short stint as mayor meant that the place brand had no personality attached to it. Mashaba had not been in office long enough for people to make connections between himself and his place brand. Thus, the "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" did not generate as much fanfare as its predecessor, "A world-class African city".

7.5 Conclusion

Exploring Johannesburg's branding efforts (or rather the lack thereof) during Mashaba's mayoralty highlighted differentiated levels of appreciation for place branding in the city. While the tenure of Tau aimed at cementing the "A world-class African city" place brand initiated earlier by Masondo, Mashaba completely dismantled it with "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works". Thus, the discontinuity of a long-standing place brand was truly underway. This discontinuity pointed to different priorities when it came to running the city. Mashaba saw emphasising branding

campaigns as a waste of time and money. Instead, he shifted his attention to improving service delivery in the city. While this was admirable, Johannesburg lacked an outlet for highlighting the city's successes in its newfound purpose.

Due to pursuing a service delivery proposition, the place branding efforts within the city of Johannesburg folded. The inception of the "a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works" place brand detracted and reversed the gains made by the "a world-class African city" place brand. The failure to secure funding and resources towards this place brand certainly ensured that it would not have much purchase as time passed. There was scope for Mashaba and his administration to work under the auspices of the previous place brand. He could have tweaked that place brand to fit his objectives. However, the total erasure of the previous place brand meant that he had to start from scratch. Given the magnitude of the task of turning the city around according to his vision, his place brand was not afforded enough opportunity to ventilate, and subsequently, it failed.

Of course, Mashaba was well within his rights to change what he saw as useless or meaningless. However, given his stance on spending frugally on matters he viewed as inconsequential as place branding, Mashaba could have leveraged a well-established place brand to advance his strategic agenda of turning the city around. Instead, he made it a point to erase that place brand. The fact that he thought the Johannesburg he was taking over was not "world-class" best illustrates the impact of that place brand. Why fix what is not broken? The city did not have to be Paris, Tokyo, or New York to make the claim it did. The place brand simply focussed on Johannesburg's efforts to attain these cities' statuses. By orienting his place brand inwards, he effectively ignored the international community. The significance of local placeholders is not disputed. However, in a place like Johannesburg, where employment and economic opportunities are hard to come by, the international community could unlock the city's potential through investment.

Mashaba's place brand was also not helped by his utterances against migrants. Their exclusion made the place brand strangely non-cosmopolitan, given the large numbers of these individuals in the city. Modern, global cities such as New York, Paris and London strive because of the myriad of people within them. These cities celebrate and embrace diversity. The migrant population in Johannesburg is set to grow. The city

would be well advised to incorporate cosmopolitanism in its future place branding campaigns.

The following chapter presents the Conclusion of the thesis. The chapter revisits the questions posed earlier in the thesis and provides avenues for future research into the branding of cities from the Global South.

CHAPTER 8: MUSINGS OVER JOBURG'S PLACE BRAND

8.1 Introduction

This study highlighted the issues, challenges and opportunities brought about by branding Johannesburg (CoJ) between 1994 and 2019. Place branding has been used as the basis for the investigation of how the CoJ, among other things (but not limited to) (i) communicated its aspirations with its placeholders and the international community, (ii) transformed urban governance, (iii) co-opted residents to co-create a narrative for the future development of the city, and (iv) charted a path towards the attainment of global city status.

Therefore, the aims of this chapter are threefold. Firstly, it looks at the reasons for the emergence of CoJ's place brands. This is important in setting out an agenda for branding cities in general. Secondly, the chapter revisits the theory of place branding and how it is embraced in a Global South city. This study's findings suggest a convergence in theory and application of place branding in Johannesburg. This aligns with mainstream, strategic place branding praxis in that the CoJ exerted tremendous efforts in exploiting marketing and business-like approaches in developing its place brands. Lastly, the thesis ends by offering reflective notes on the state and future of place branding in the CoJ with the view that other cities in the Global South will strategically and purposefully engage in such processes if they are to cement their place on the global stage.

8.2. CoJ and the quest for global city status

Any attempt to brand a city must be apparent from the onset. In other words, what does the city aim to achieve through its place brand? This could be as benign as making the city more visible and attracting tourism or even as bold as charting a trajectory of making the city a world leader in terms of the global economy, a pioneer in technology, or incorporating all the above. The point is that the brand strategy and narrative must be aligned to achieve the same goal. Ambiguity or misinterpretation of either is undesirable.

Having followed the genesis and evolution of the branding efforts of the CoJ from 1994 to 2019, it is critical to recall why the city even embarked on this process in the first place. To recap, the main research question posed by this study was:

“What have been the dynamics and complexities in developing Johannesburg as a place brand between 1994 and 2019?”

This question is essential to understand the motivations for the aims and processes of branding cities, particularly those in the Global South. The question is also in line with the purpose of the study in that it:

“…provides a basis for cities to extend an arm to its residents in building inclusive spaces. It also challenges cities to take deeper introspections about what they are and what they mean to their residents, businesses, and the world more generally.”

It is argued that the dynamism of South Africa’s economic and political landscape from the mid-1990s until later inadvertently set Johannesburg up as the poster child for projecting its development and prosperity. The CoJ sought to continually innovate and reinvent itself in the face of a globalising world. As such, the brand identity of Johannesburg metamorphosed to follow the narrative of global cities such as Tokyo, Paris, London, and New York. This is not to say that other cities in South Africa were not pushing for this status. However, among the country’s major cities, Johannesburg was at the forefront of this endeavour.

The branding efforts of the CoJ are best illustrated along a timeline. Below is a table showing the various place brands that the city developed over time. The table also shows the developmental themes that the city embraced during the existence of each of its place brands.

Table 8.1: The place brands of the CoJ over time

Year	Major Political Issues	Major branding events	Place Brand
1990 - 1993	Nelson Mandela is freed from prison CODESA negotiations Possibility of civil war is foiled		Gateway to Southern Africa
1994	First Democratic Elections	• Rainbow Nation brand • Failed 2004 Olympic Bid	Economic Hub into Southern Africa
1995	RDP First Black Mayor, Isaac Mogase takes charge in November	• Genesis of the discussions for sister city with Birmingham • City logo created	
1996	Rapid Land Development and Masakhane	• Ratification of the city's two publicity associations	

Year	Major Political Issues	Major branding events	Place Brand
1997	Financial Pressures	• Created a vision for the city • Developed coat of arms and flag	• Golden Heartbeat of Africa • A city with a unique history
1998	Rationalisation of local government Initial round of IDPs	• JMTA becomes Joburg Tourism • GJTMC exhibits at the SAITEX	
1999	Preparation for second democratic elections		
2000	Amos Masondo becomes city mayor iGoli 2002 and 2010	First articulation of *African world-class city*	
2001	GJTMC becomes the City of Johannesburg (CoJ)	Logo and name change	Making the City work: it cannot be business as usual (under iGoli 2002)
2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)	Adopted *Joburg: Sensational City* in anticipation of WSSD	African world-class city is reiterated as a World-Class African City
2003	Proudly South Africa (now Brand South Africa) is born	Interbrand wins bid to rebrand the CoJ to *Joburg*	A World-Class African City
2004 - 06		Gauteng City Region Observatory given effect to in 2005	Gauteng City Region Observatory given effect to in 2005

Year	Major Political Issues	Major branding events	Place Brand
2006		• Enhancement of brand *Joburg* • Gold dot made warmer yellow	A World-Class African City
2007 – 09		Preparation for the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup	
2010	FIFA World Cup	Hosted the 2010 FIFA World Cup opening and closing ceremony	
2011 - 14	Parks Tau becomes city mayor in 2011	Not much by way of branding	
2016 – to 2019	• Herman Mashaba becomes city mayor in 2016, moving power from the ANC to the DA • Herman Mashaba resigns as mayor and Geoff Makhubo is elected new mayor of the city handing power back to the ANC	Total recall of branding in the city as this was seen as a waste of taxpayers' money	• A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works. Later, this was not used. • City of Johannesburg, a Government of Local Unity

Beginning with the "Gateway to Southern Africa" place brand, the CoJ was aware of its strategic position in Africa. However, this place brand only projected Johannesburg as a landing board into a defined space of the continent. It did not speak to the rest of Africa; thus, the city inadvertently removed itself from the continent. This is not surprising as the place brand was developed

around 1993 when the country was slowly dismantling the apparatus of apartheid. The apartheid government had done incredulous damage to the image of the country in that it had effectively closed South Africa off to the rest of the continent and the world more generally (Hammond *et al.,* 2009).

The place brand did little to reflect the status quo in South Africa at the time. Bar for the negotiations under the auspices of CODESA, which started in 1991, South Africa had narrowly avoided a civil war (Lodge, 2003). The country was divided along racial and economic lines (Maylam, 2017). As such, the place brand displayed a picture of business as usual. This would not be a problem except that Johannesburg was also greatly divided along these lines, and the inner-city had undergone massive levels of decay.

The city had sprawling, underserviced Black townships on the outskirts, while the northern suburbs were booming after significant White flight from the inner city (Simbanegavi *et al.,* 2021). From a branding perspective, the “Gateway to Southern Africa” place brand effectively hid the stark differences in Johannesburg. Moreover, its internal orientation removed the city’s desire to become a leading city worldwide. In this sense, the CoJ had not begun to imagine a future of global city status.

Following the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, the country developed the “A Rainbow Nation” brand to alert citizens and the world that change underway. This national brand took a reconciliatory stance and presented every citizen as equal (Freemantle, 2007). The CoJ took a leaf from the country’s national brand and developed the “Economic Hub into Southern Africa” place brand. This place brand merely replaced “Gateway” with “Economic Hub”. As such, it remained unchanged and inverted as before. Again, this new place brand failed to reveal the different pockets of the space economy of Johannesburg. It was still early in the transformation of Johannesburg that any place brand could have effectively spoken to these differences.

In 1995, as part of its transformation agenda, South Africa adopted and began implementing its macroeconomic policy, the RDP (Heymans, 1995). As with any other national agenda, the RDP permeated to Johannesburg. As part of this, the CoJ began to look externally to make its presence felt in the world. The city bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games. In the end, Cape Town came out as the victor. In the same year, Johannesburg began negotiations with the City of Birmingham in the United Kingdom

to establish a sister-city arrangement. Through these efforts, Johannesburg was slowly beginning to appreciate the potential benefits of being recognised globally.

There was a mutual conditioning effect of South Africa's efforts to transform its space economy and democratise its citizens with the branding of Johannesburg. The efforts made by the CoJ echoed in volumes the type of society South Africa aspired to become, a leader in Africa and the global economy. This stance was bold and ambitious. It came from below because Johannesburg and South Africa; generally, did not have much space to manoeuvre in as far as attracting huge sums of FDI. However, the CoJ was determined to project Johannesburg as the development pioneer in South Africa.

The "Economic Hub of Southern Africa" place brand existed until 1997. It was replaced by the "A city with a unique history" place brand. This place brand reminds everyone of the origins of Johannesburg: the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand in 1884 (Durand, 2012). Many place brands recall a place's point of genesis or heritage (Daldanise, 2020). Hakala *et al.* (2015) point out that city governments need to reinforce the heritage of a place in their branding narratives continually. This is critical regarding endearing placeholders to the place brand and selling the place to the international community.

Later, in 1997, the "Golden Heartbeat of Africa" replaced the "A city with a unique history" place brand. For the first time, the CoJ developed a place brand that strategically and emphatically embedded the city in Africa. This was significant because the city understood that it was beginning to play a significant role in the economic transfers of the continent. Not only that, but the place brand also made a play on "Heartbeat", denoting the Afropolitan element of the city owing to an increasing number of African immigrants in the city. Considering this, Johannesburg was opening and embracing international outlooks.

In the same year, while facing mounting financial pressures, the CoJ developed a strategic vision for the city, which led to the formulation of iGoli 2002. This vision was "Making the City work: it cannot be business as usual". iGoli 2002 was aimed to overcome the deficits that the city had endured, which had narrowly led the city to a path of bankruptcy. It concentrated on re-arranging the city institutionally to gear it towards a more entrepreneurial management style. As part of this, the CoJ began to

corporatise its services through the establishment of MoEs such as City Power, Joburg Water, Joburg Roads Agency and Pikitup to name but a few.

Through the moves contained in iGoli 2002, Johannesburg entered the arena of cities such as those found in the so-called developed world, where competition is seen as a natural progression from merely providing services (Boisen *et al.,* 2018). Many major cities in South Africa held the provision of services centrally. In other words, they did not have specific entities dealing with electricity or water provision, for instance. Instead, they had departments within the municipality for these activities. In this light, the CoJ pioneered a contemporary form of governance in South Africa. This is important when considering that a city such as Johannesburg needs to create its revenue stream in South Africa (Pieterse, 2019).

It was not until 2000 that the CoJ made explicit utterances to the aspiration of a global city. This came in the form of an “African world-class city”. This became “a world-class African city” in 2002. This was the city’s longest-standing place brand. Mayors Amos Masondo and Parks Tau gave custodianship for seventeen years until its partial dismantling in 2016. During this time, the CoJ received significant airplay and exposure. This was primarily through hosting mega-events, including the World Summit of Sustainable Development in 2002 and the FIFA Soccer World Cup in 2010. Other than hosting these events, Tau put the city on the map by being elected as Deputy Chair on the Committee of Safer Cities of the United Nations (2012 – to date), Chairperson of the South African Cities Network (2012 – to date) and Co-President of Metropolis (2014 – 2016) (Kloop *et al.,* 2019).

In August 2016, Herman Mashaba of the Democratic Alliance (DA) took over as mayor of the CoJ (Machinya, 2022). Under Mashaba, the branding efforts of the CoJ were stifled and effectively ended. Mashaba had seen branding as expensive and unnecessary. However, Mashaba did develop a place brand, “A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works” (Burke, 2016). This place brand was inverted and focussed on South Africa. Previous place brands, “Gateway to Southern Africa”, “Economic Hub of Southern Africa”, “Golden Heartbeat of Africa”, and “A world-class African city”, had made it a point to pledge some allegiance to the African continent, albeit at different degrees. The place brand developed under Mashaba did not imbue any element of

internationalisation. As such, the aspiration of acquiring global city status was neglected.

In 2019, Mashaba resigned, and ANC once again led the CoJ under the mayoralty of Jeoff Makhubu. Johannesburg then developed the "City of Johannesburg, a Government of Local Unity" slogan. This slogan was an attempt by the ANC to reaffirm that the party was fit to govern because it had lost control of a coalition government in the previous local government elections. This slogan/place brand did not garner much traction, and the city reverted to "a world-class African city", rekindling the CoJ's drive to become a global city.

Not to labour the point, but since the early 2000s, Johannesburg has been ranked as an Alpha city by the Globalization and World Cities Research Network (GaWC) (Cheruiyot *et al.,* 2018). The GaWC is a think tank that studies the dynamics that contribute to making cities global. It is based at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom and was established in 1998 (Taylor *et al.,* 2009). The GaWC has several rankings, starting with Alpha, Beta, Gamma, and Sufficiency cities (Benton-Short *et al.,* 2005). The Alpha ranking has four sub-rankings, namely, Alpha++, Alpha+, Alpha and Alpha- (Akakandelwa, 2018).

London and New York are the only cities in the world ranked Alpha++, as they are the most globally connected cities (Bashford, 2014). The cities of Beijing, Dubai, Paris, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Singapore occupy the Alpha+ ranking and show high levels of interconnectedness with the global economy (Zheng, 2020). Amsterdam, Chicago, Milan, Toronto, and Johannesburg are examples of cities occupying the Alpha ranking (Matsumoto & Domae, 2019; Crane, 2020). Johannesburg was the only city in Africa to feature as an Alpha city (Nganje, 2021). Its closest competitor was Cape Town, classified as a Beta city (Scholvin, 2015). Considering the stature of the cities that Johannesburg shares its ranking with, the efforts of the city in making it a global city have delivered dividends. This drive for global city status even compelled Rogerson (2004) to refer to Johannesburg as the most isolated world city.

8.3 Themes underlying the branding of CoJ

Briefly, then, the branding narrative of the CoJ is interwoven by five cross-cutting, recurring themes. The first of these themes was the city's desire to be part of the league of global cities. The numerous efforts for twinning or creating sister city arrangements, as outlined in Chapter 5, is a testament to the above. The city identified global-strategically located cities such as New York, Berlin, and Copenhagen as potential partners. These world cities had long since established themselves as leaders in commerce, technology, and other ventures. The CoJ's insistence on partnering with such cities was a constant feature in its branding processes.

Secondly, the CoJ expressed the need to make Johannesburg different from other cities in South Africa and Africa. Johannesburg had always considered itself different from any other city in South Africa. This belief was constructed from Johannesburg's position in relation to the rest of the country. Johannesburg was one of the most economically prosperous cities, if not the most, in South Africa. Thus, the city had long understood this position and had worked continuously to leverage it. In turn, the CoJ, even from an early stage, adopted a highly competitive attitude compared to other cities in South Africa and in Africa in general.

This competitive attitude led the CoJ to develop an identity that differentiated it from other African cities. It is important to note here, however, that the CoJ made attempts to not only endear Johannesburg to South Africans but embrace its Afropolitism as well. This meant that the CoJ did not see Johannesburg as only in South Africa but understood its developmental role for the broader African continent.

Moreover, the Afropolitanism that the city embraced led to the emergence of the third theme: the CoJ perceived Johannesburg as a centre for learning. This learning came in the form of the CoJ having numerous international trips to so-called leading cities. However, the learning referred to above was not unidirectional. The CoJ also cited how other cities, particularly Africa ones, continued to learn from it. This was important to consider, mainly when the CoJ's place brand (A world-class African city) was aspirational. It meant that the city was in a state of constant flux of re/adjusting its knowledge and institutional base. Put differently, the CoJ continued reinventing itself to be relevant to its placeholders and the international community. As such, the CoJ

did not see itself only as a site of production and consumption but also as a site for cultural exchange.

Fourth and at the heart of the continued reinvention of Johannesburg lies two fundamental considerations. The first was the city's struggle to show its residents and the international community it was in control. This is related to the efforts made by the city to dismantle the numerous, unequal local authorities that existed between 1994 and 2000. The establishment of one metropolitan city was bedevilled by constant institutional reshuffling.

This was made even more complicated when one considered the views that the more affluent authorities' views of the incoming government and its (in)ability to provide services and other amenities across the city. However, once the amalgamation project was through, the CoJ had to contend with instilling a sense of pride amongst its residents and employees. This was challenging because the city still had to deal with many outstanding issues, such as the billing crisis, inner-city development, and the unbalanced performance of its MoEs. However, the branding processes of the CoJ were underlined by the drive to attract investment. Whether through exhibitions, expos, conferences, sports mega-events, twinning or sister city arrangements, the city's branding processes were geared towards attracting investment. This attraction was common at both the local and international levels.

Lastly, the CoJ operated within a framework of intergovernmental relations (Mehta, 2003). Being a Category A municipality, the CoJ relied less on intergovernmental transfers than its Category B & C counterparts. This meant that the city had to generate revenue through novel development projects that were not necessarily initiated by the provincial or national governments. This led to a situation that required the city to innovate continuously, and it was this innovation that opened Johannesburg to investment from an international perspective.

8.4 Linking CoJ's Place Branding to Theory

In the last three decades, place branding has received considerable attention (Dinnie, 2010; Ashworth *et al.,* 2015). Having emerged from the discipline of marketing, place branding now stands as a separate, distinct field of study (Kavaratzis, 2005; Mayes, 2008). However, inquiry into place branding has been conducted in the Global North (Van Ham, 2008). As such, many of the lessons, implications and practicalities of place branding have been learnt from these settings.

In the Global South, place branding has not been mute (Anholt, 2005; Muniz Martinez, 2012; Freire, 2014). The likes of Rogerson (2006), Andehn and Zenker (2015), Sihlongonyane (2015; 2016) and Skinner (2021) have made inroads in progressing inquiry into place branding in these settings. However, the degree to which place branding has been applied has remained understudied. Moreover, the degree to which these settings have infused different approaches to place branding is unknown. This thesis investigates the dynamics that led the CoJ to apply place brand strategies. Thus, the thesis is helps illuminate the amount of adherence or deviation from contemporary understandings of place branding with Johannesburg as a case.

Overleaf is a table that (a) identifies the target audience of the CoJ's place brands, (b) describes the institutional manoeuvres of the city in gearing up for branding processes, (c) catalogues the communication platforms that the city used and (d) analyses the extent to which the place brands were co-created between the city and its placeholders. The table is followed by a discussion of each of these elements.

Table 8.2: Supplementary Questions

Starting Question	Finding	Comment
a) Who were the stakeholders of the CoJ's place brand?	vi) Investors (local and international)	The place brand message was crafted for investors. The "a world class African city" place brand was created to appeal to as wide and global an investor audience as was possible.
b) What were the institutional arrangements that the city initiates (has initiated) in its place branding processes since 1994 to 2019?	vii) Worked through Publicity Associations viii) Vision and Leadership came from the office of the mayor.	The marketing and tourism department within the city undertook branding processes.
c) How did the city communicate its place brand with external stakeholders?	ix) Radio, newspapers, website, and social media	Radio dominated as a platform through which the city disseminated its brand message. Due to expenses associated with it, television was hardly ever used for communicating the brand. Social media was on the rise of being used as it was in the hands of an ever-increasing youth population as well techno-savvy residents in the city.

Starting Question	Finding	Comment
d) To what extent was the city's place brand co-created and co-owned by its residents?	x) Residents played no role in co-creating the brand. xi) Residents only considered consumers of services.	There was no element of co-creation with residents in the crafting of the city's place brands. Residents were seen as end-users. Simultaneously however, the CoJ expected residents to act as ambassadors of the brand. There was a mismatch between the understanding of ambassador and endorser.

8.4.1 Brand audience

In short, place branding highlights the images and identities of towns, cities, regions and even countries (Ooi & Pedersen, 2010; Daldanise, 2020). However, the rapid rise of the field as a separate, distinct discipline has meant that it has adopted disparate and borrowed concepts and ideas. These ideas have been primarily cross-pollinated from marketing (Kavaratzis, 2005). Given this, the aims and processes to place branding and their results are wide-ranging. The challenge for place brand authorities is balancing creating place images and identities that are conversant with the realities of the places in question (Hankinson, 2004; Pasquinelli, 2010). This balance occurs in an environment that is in constant flux.

For the CoJ, membership in the so-called league of global cities was the goal of its branding processes. In line with Sassen (2009), Bouchon (2014) argues that the status of a global city denotes a good quality of life, efficiency, heightened levels of development and

attraction of the best talent. To a large extent, the place brands of the CoJ were oriented externally to attract FDI mainly and talent to a lesser extent. Throughout 1994 and 2019, the CoJ spent much time and effort reimagining the city as a viable investment place.

The investors mentioned above included international and domestic businesses and other organisations. The continued play on the words “Africa” and “African” in its various place brands was meant to (a) appease local businesses and (b) to claim alliance to the continent so as not to appear as alienating its context or roots. It was a grand gesture, an aspiration towards Afropolitanism and an espousal of the spirit of Ubuntu.

However, this changed when Mashaba took over as mayor. The “a Joburg that works is a South Africa that works” place brand diverged from the espousal of the ties that Johannesburg had to Africa. It heralded a withdrawal from the continent and (re)entrenched pseudo-independence that insinuated Johannesburg and South Africa, more generally, could do without affiliation to Africa. While the strength of the economy of Johannesburg and South Africa more broadly in Africa were quite strong, it was foolhardy to divorce their development from Africa. South Africa is as much a beneficiary of its alliance with its African partners as those countries draw benefits from the country.

In addition, the skewed messaging of the place brands of the city primarily towards investors effectively put other placeholders on the back burner. This was not to say that other placeholders, particularly residents, were not communicated to. However, residents were not actively engaged in the formation of the place brands of the city. Thus, residents were not necessarily co-creators of the brands but were seen as end-users. Therefore, the city’s brand strategies were a top-down, hegemony-maintaining process. Put differently, residents were on the outside looking in.

Scholars such as Kavaratzis (2012), Braun *et al.* (2013) and Zenker and Erfgen (2014) have advocated for the involvement of residents in place branding processes. This involvement, they argue, legitimises and gives credibility to place brands. When involved meaningfully, residents play a critical role in communicating about the brand and becoming its ambassadors (Uchinaka *et al.,* 2019). If anything, place branding processes in the CoJ alienated residents as they saw them as another power-setting mechanism in the city.

8.4.2 Internal arrangements of branding within the CoJ

Place branding has become one of the tools involved in matters of urban governance (Cleave *et al.,* 2017). However, a dearth of literature details the specific actions that city governments take in initiating place branding processes (Vuignier, 2017). The infiltration of place branding in urban management has created another layer of complexity to the competencies of city governments. Broadly, place branding in the public sector concentrates on creating and managing image and perceptions (Braun *et al.,* 2014). Throughout its place brands, the CoJ sought to project an image of modernism, being open to business and as a pioneer for development in Africa.

In projecting its image, the CoJ had several impediments to contend with. For instance, prior to the amalgamation exercise between 1995 and 2000, the then-transitional council of the CoJ had thirteen independent local authorities (Beall *et al.,* 2014). These authorities ranged in terms of financial muscle and dependence, with those serving the white community being wealthy in comparison to their counterparts who were serving the Black community. This created a problematic mosaic for producing a coherent and authentic place brands for the city. Even after completing the amalgamation process in 2001, these stark differences in affluence between the various areas of the city remained.

So vast were these differences that some areas in the city had long-established publicity associations. For instance, Roodepoort already had such an association before the turn to democracy. This resulted in huge imbalances regarding the spaces infused in the city's place brands, especially before the "A world-class African city" place brand. Those areas with publicity associations were more visible than those without; consequently, there was an imbalance in how different areas were serviced. Further, those with publicity associations were more likely to be frequented than those that did not and, in this way, investment into the different areas of the city was not equal. Then, Johannesburg was not only segregated socio-spatially but was also differentiated along branding lines.

After amalgamating the thirteen local authorities, the CoJ sought to establish one publicity association for the whole city. The city employed a two-pronged approach to facilitate meaningful branding. In the first instance, those areas that previously had publicity associations were maintained as sites of heritage and prestige. These areas

did not need much publicity, so their branding was more muted under this strategy. Those that had no publicity associations were aggressively branded. These areas included Black townships that had been neglected from an imaging perspective. During Masondo's and Tau's tenures as mayors, Soweto was heavily touted. Most projects piloted in townships were implemented in Soweto before being rolled to other parts of the city. In particular, the hospitality industry of Soweto was invigorated, especially towards the beginning of the FIFA Soccer World Cup in 2010.

The city also publicised the connection between Soweto and its role in the struggle for freedom in South Africa (Rogerson, 2008). This was easy in that two previous Nobel Prize winners in the form Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and former President Nelson Mandela, had resided in Soweto at different points in their lives. So, this aspect became a significant reason for including the township in the overall brand of Johannesburg.

The metamorphosis of the Johannesburg Metropolitan Tourism Association to Joburg Tourism and, more recently, to the Group Communications and Tourism department directed the branding of Johannesburg from 1994 to date. As their names suggest, these groups principally dealt with two issues related to the image of the city. Firstly, in their different guises, these associations, were tasked with creating an image for the CoJ. This included selling Johannesburg to the international community by hosting sports mega-events, conferences, and exhibitions. This task depended heavily on projecting Johannesburg as a leading African city that could hold its own amongst other global cities such as Paris, New York, and Tokyo. Secondly, the associations were tasked with promoting tourism within the city. All the groups' names have a connotation to Tourism. These groups sought to attract local, regional, and international tourists.

The city commissioned its branding campaigns to external consultants. It is worth noting that the city's marketing department worked very closely with consultants. In 2002, Interbrand was appointed to rework the logo and vision of the city. For the same campaign, then-Mayor Masondo was directly involved in fashioning the brand vision for the city. So, the branding processes of the CoJ were not merely check-box exercises but strategic tasks that were captured and embraced by the city's top brass.

The close link between the executive and an operational department such as Group Communications and Tourism spoke to a commitment to the brand and its custodianship, at least concerning the “A world-class African city” place brand was concerned. However, the strategy was top-down and did not include residents. The strategy and message of the brand were deliberated upon and, after that, delivered according to the executives’ vision for the city’s future development.

8.4.3 Communicating the brand

Communicating a place brand is a complex endeavour (Skinner, 2005). Ripoll *et al.* (2018) propose a two-way approach when communicating place brands, involving stakeholder engagement. Given the varied audiences of the brand message of the CoJ, it had to use different communication platforms to communicate. Simultaneously, the city had to come to grips with understanding the levels of sophistication of its audiences.

The city used its “imbizos” to talk and alert placeholders about issues related primarily to service delivery. So, the imbizos were not specifically aimed at talking about the place brands of the city. However, since the CoJ was a municipality, there was a close correlation between its performance in delivering services and claims it made in its place brands. Thus, its ability to deliver services reinforced the positive aspects of its brand message. In the same way, when the city was seen to be failing to provide services, its brand message was tarnished and diluted.

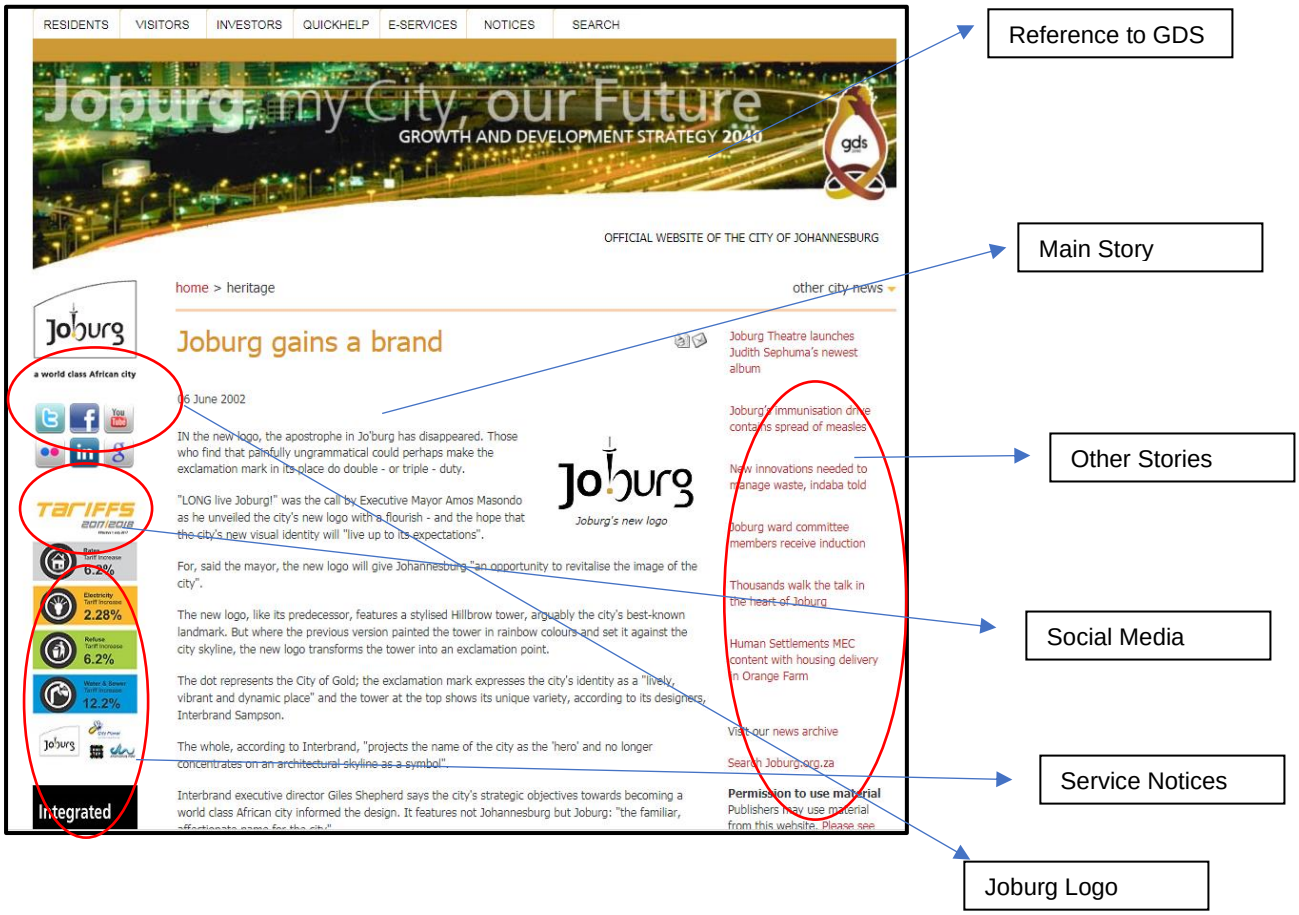
Mass media in the form of radio was also popular in communicating the city’s place brands. According to Findlay (2017), radio was still the dominant platform through which people received information, including news, current affairs, and municipal notices. At the time of writing, Johannesburg had more than twelve community radio stations, including university stations operating in places such as Alexandra, Lenasia, Midrand, Eldorado Park, and others (Nuttall, 2004). In addition to these radio stations, people in Johannesburg had access to mainstream radio stations such as *Ukhozi FM, Metro FM, Radio 702, YFM and Kaya FM* (Bosch, 2010; 2014).

The nature of communication differed between community and mainstream radio stations. Whereas community-based radio stations were primarily used for area-based issues, mainstream radio stations were mostly used for advertising and highlighting

the city's achievements. Even the MoEs in the city used mainstream radio stations. Critically, the CoJ and its MoEs made it a point to finish an announcement using the tagline "A world class African city". In 2016, the city ended its announcements or commercials with the tagline, "A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works".

Print media, especially newspapers, was also used to communicate the place brands of the city. Like radio but lesser in scale, newspapers remained a rich source of news and information for people, and the CoJ ran several campaigns in newspapers. These spanned community-based newspapers and national publications. Again, announcements were the primary type of communication that the city used. The CoJ also used newer platforms to communicate its brand. Amongst these was its website. The website dashboard is depicted overleaf:

Figure 8.1: Website dashboard of the CoJ



The website contained important information. It featured a leading story, which in most cases was a piece dedicated to the city's achievements or a response to a critical issue. The website was essential because it was live and could be updated quickly, so that it could respond to queries and comments speedily. The website also contained contact details of the various departments.

Lastly, social media proved a viable and accessible platform for communicating the place brand of the city. This included *Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Linkedin and Google+.* This made much sense for two reasons. Firstly, the city had a large youth population subscribing to social media platforms. This youth base did not consume their information through radio or other traditional platforms but was much more familiar with social media. Secondly, the city made several strides in providing free Wi-Fi. The consumption of the city's information and brand message through social media could have been seen as a return on investment. The nature of information on these platforms included notices about water interruptions, road closures, and expected

electricity outages and thus, these platforms were mostly used for service notifications to residents. Television was not cited as being used for communicating the place brands of Johannesburg.

8.4.4 CoJ's brands – top-down process

The co-creation of a place brand between city governments and local placeholders is essential in place branding processes (Hakala *et al.,* 2015). This is because these actors live and do business in places and, as a result, can layer and add texture to place brand narratives (Hanna *et al.,* 2021). Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) opine that this interface between city governments and local placeholders effectively tinges place branding processes with legitimacy and authenticity.

Further, the co-creation of place brands contributes to democratising urban governance processes (Vallaster *et al.,* 2018). Ind and Holm (in Go and Govers, 2012) argue that city governments need to open themselves up to capture as widely as possible the dialogues of local placeholders, involve affluent and poor voices and make place branding the responsibility of everyone who is touched by it. The value of this lies in the fact that city governments become all the wiser and sensitised to the needs of placeholders and, in turn, empower placeholders to participate meaningfully in matters that affect them directly.

The primary target audience of the place brands of CoJ were investors and the international community. The place brands were tailor-made to project the city as a viable place for conducting business and a tourist destination. Local placeholders were seen as end-users of the place brands. In addition, this group was also expected to promote the place brands as ambassadors. The CoJ did not extend invitations to local placeholders, alerting them of the creation of the place brands. Also, the CoJ appointed external consultants to gauge the efficacy of their place brands. Notably, Interbrand was appointed to create the logo and tagline of the city in 2002, and Switch analysed the performance of the "A world-class African city" place brand in 2006. The CoJ did not involve its local placeholders in either of such processes, thereby limiting public participation, a cornerstone of South Africa's constitutional democracy and an element the likes of Kavaratzis (2012) and Oliveira (2015) argue is a crucial element in any place branding endeavour. Over time, the place brands of the CoJ were

effectively prescribed to local placeholders, having been conceived from the lofty echelons of the city's management structures.

The city missed the opportunity to use its placeholders as co-creators of something that means a lot to them. The idea of belonging to a city and shaping it is crucial in fostering good relations between city governments and placeholders. However, CoJ reinforced the bureaucratic interface between itself and its placeholders, which has sometimes made interaction hostile. In the past, the CoJ has been taken to task regarding its place brands. A case in point is that of a resident, Steven Haywood, who took exception to the idea that the CoJ labelled itself as "a world-class African city in 2013 (Bianco, 2013). Haywood took this issue to the Advertising Standards Authority, who ultimately told the CoJ to stop using the tagline.

8.5 Rethinking Place Branding in the Global South

This study investigated place branding in a city in the Global South. Several issues remain unresolved from this investigation. This section is aimed at highlighting these issues and working towards their resolution. In the main, the issues related to the strict adherence of place branding in the Global South to that practised in the Global North. The issue here is how places of the Global South follow a template of Global North cities to create their place brands. No element of counter-hegemony against established praxis of place branding or branding from below was witnessed in the processes of branding the CoJ.

8.5.1 Imbuing Global South place brands with endemic space qualities

The place brands that the CoJ developed over time are unmistakably dualistic. Ranging from "Gateway to Southern Africa" to "a world-class African city", these place brands entertained two worlds. In the first instance, they make space to appeal to an influential, affluent international community. The place brands were geared towards the attraction of FDI and tourism. This element of the place brands represented the face of modernity in Johannesburg. As such, the place brands that were produced for Johannesburg exuded a heavy dependence on the international community. They effectively prevented Johannesburg from vociferously highlighting the city's offerings from a humanistic perspective and failed describe development from below. Put differently, the city's place brands only became a part of a mainstream discourse,

which sees nations in the Global South as willing and complicit recipients of views of development from the Global North.

Secondly, the place brands fought hard to reassure placeholders that the city had not forgotten its roots. The “Africa” and “African” captions in these place brands spoke to the indigenous, local, and rural conceptions of development arbitrarily referred to in Africa by the Global North. However, the extent to which these connections to Africa were bankable by the CoJ remained underexplored. In leveraging the African connection, the CoJ unwittingly projected the continent as a site of expropriation by the international community because it (the CoJ) made itself subservient in this partnership.

Thus, the dichotomous messaging of the place brands of the CoJ inadvertently subverted the city’s aspirations to become a global city. It meant the city would achieve this stature by getting acceptance from other established cities worldwide. Although the CoJ learned a lot from these cities regarding establishing place brands, the city was not bold enough to chart its legacy. It followed a template, which was seen as safe and fitted neatly in the mould of what is understood as development in the Global North.

Following development, as espoused by the Global North in Global South settings, is prevalent (Basu, 2004). However, the world has slowly been moving on in this regard, and former colonised countries have made great strides in decolonising their knowledge bases and how they defined development and progress (Kebede, 2004). The straddling of the CoJ’s place brands between modernity and indigenous was problematic because the city did not clearly state where it stood. There was a lack about the city, so its place brands displayed elements of sitting on the fence.

Except for the “A Joburg that works is a South Africa that works”, no other place brand effectively located Johannesburg within its physical geography. This place brand diverged from the traditions of branding Johannesburg. However, the place brand was too narrowly focussed on South Africa and did not even manage to reach out to an increasing African migrant population in Johannesburg.

Renowned place brands such as New York, London, Paris, and Tokyo do not claim their physical geography as their primary elements. A mere mention of the names of

the city conjures up images of those cities. Critically, these cities' logos and mantras have little to no reference to where they are located geographically. They often use famous buildings or monuments for their recognition. In the "A world-class African city" place brand, the CoJ also employed this tactic by inserting the Telkom Tower as a landmark for orientation in the city and a yellow dot, pointing to the history and reason for founding Johannesburg, gold. Thus, while the CoJ managed to employ popular place branding techniques as applied by other leading cities, its place brands remained ambiguous and lacked forceful direction as to where it wanted to be and how it aimed to lead other cities into the future. Elements such as Ubuntu and Afropolitanism were apt in projecting Johannesburg as a development pioneer in South Africa, Africa, and the world more generally. The CoJ's branding campaigns show an element of caving into contemporary, popular discourses of urban place branding. This is sufficient for cities that want to join a league of sorts but insufficient to claim a stake in the class of global cities.

To be fair, though, place branding exists in a space where norms and standards regarding praxis have been established. As avant-garde as any city may claim to be in pursuance of its place branding, these norms and standards effectively limit what can be achieved by these processes. As such, the CoJ, like many other aspiring cities, was hampered by its geography, economy, and politics and by the norms and standards delineating place branding processes.

8.5.2 Making place branding in the Global South more strategic

The change in leadership in city governments is inevitable. The strength of a place brand lies in its longevity. This is not to suggest that place brands should be immune to change. It is to say that change applied to place brands should be encouraged to reflect the order of things at the time. However, wholesome changes to place brands are problematic because they require a total overhaul of the processes that set them up and present an element of re-orienting placeholders to new ones.

To safeguard this from happening, it is prudent that place brands are linked to long-term development strategies of a city, such as CDSs and GDSs (Oliveira, 2015; Cleave *et al.,* 2016). Through these mechanisms, a city can envision its future decades ahead and linking this to a place brand only makes sense. However, this line of thinking assumes rationality amongst outgoing and incoming leaders. In certain

circumstances, such as that occurred in the CoJ in 2016, an incoming leader will introduce sweeping changes that influence and dramatically change the place brandscape of a city. Place brandscape means the mental image of placeholders and the international community about a certain place (Klingmann, 2010).

Place branding should be considered a strategic endeavour because it is partly a tool used to envision a desirable future for a particular city (Oliveira, 2015). As such, it must avoid being bogged down by the day-to-day operations of a city. Instead, it creates the space within which those operations can be improved in the future and, by so doing, reaffirms the need for a city to be nimble and flexible in approaching its desired end-state.

8.5.3 Co-creating place brands and democracy in the Global South

Nowhere else in the world are the scars of colonialism, imperialism, and apartheid more visible than in the Global South (Meekosha & Soldatic, 2011). In these settings, society was treated as nothing more than surplus labour and their places as plundering sites (Sommer, 2011). This occurred over a long period, and the legacy of such schemes remains stubborn and unshakable despite many countries having long gained independence.

Place branding offers avenues in which placeholders can be immersed and simultaneously emancipated in matters of urban governance. However, inquiry and advocacy for including local placeholders in place branding processes have recently received attention (Kavaratzis, 2012; Braun *et al.,* 2013; Zenker & Erfgen, 2014). This call for including placeholders has been investigated in the Global North, and so, with place branding only recently taking root in Global South settings, there is nuanced appreciation for these processes to be as inclusive as possible.

Place branding offers avenues for democratisation processes and lends a space for the expression of indigenous knowledge systems and social customs only found in the Global South such as Ubuntu. The infusion of these ideas in mainstream place branding has been missing. In the main, place branding has been conceived as an add-on strategy for commodifying urban spaces under increased neoliberalism of entrepreneurial urban governance in the Global North (Cleave *et al.,* 2017; Lucarelli, 2018).

Place branding practices in the Global South have unsurprisingly followed the template of the Global North. This is disturbing because much of what colonisation, imperialism and apartheid sought to do was to effectively disown resident societies of their land and dignity (Atuahene, 2014; Chalmers, 2020). Thus, place branding in the Global South must differ dramatically from that in the Global North. When applied in these settings, it needs to reinstall a sense of identity, belonging and place. By so doing, it stands a chance of meaningfully paving a space for people in these settings to be considered worthy in the global flow of things.

8.6 An agenda for branding cities in the Global South

Cities of the Global South are plagued by many challenges, including poverty, settlement informality and rapid population growth, to name a few. These challenges have formed the basis for the research on urbanism in the Global South (Simone, 2020). While these are essential points of investigation and require urgent attention, research focusing on Global South cities has precluded other issues and aspects of urbanism in these settings. Place branding is neglected and is one of the least researched phenomena in the Global South.

The opposite applies in the cities of the Global North. This does not imply that cities there are not beleaguered by their challenges. However, place branding in those settings is so advanced that it has become part of urban governance systems (Ginesta & San Eugenio, 2021). So advanced is place branding in these settings that Ashworth (2011) suggests that there is a much more fundamental question related to whether places should be branded to begin with as opposed to the more popular question of how to brand places.

While this suggests that cities from the Global South could learn a great deal from those of the Global North, there are limitations to what that entails where place branding is concerned. This follows antiquated lines of thinking that suggest that the Global South requires interventions to begin to re/imagine their places. This is not different from the various perspectives that the Global South cannot survive, let alone thrive, without the intervention of nations from the Global North (Odeh, 2010).

History has shown the complications arising from embedding so-called solutions from elsewhere. These solutions have resulted, amongst other things, in the displacement

of native populations in the name of modernity and land dispossession because of the introduction of neoliberal processes, to name two examples. Differentiated forms of development and the survivalist strategies these societies conjure up are viewed negatively (Hodder, 2016). What has resulted from this are disenfranchised societies at the margin of poverty.

Even with their considerable challenges, cities in the Global South have stories to tell the rest of the world (Mbinza, 2023). For these cities, both Ashworth's questions are equally important. Moreover, balancing and packaging desired aspirational place identities and dealing with the bread-and-butter issues becomes an important consideration. Thus, whereas those cities of the Global North have managed to carve out memorable place brands and taglines such as "the city of romance" (Paris) and "the city that never sleeps" (New York), these have been premised on commodification and consumption (Moro *et al.,* 2007; Johnson, 2011). From this, it is clear that cities of the Global South require a differentiated approach to their branding. At the heart of this approach lies how to equitably represent cities and share in their prosperity.

To begin advancing the theory and practice of place branding in the Global South, lessons must be drawn from the Global North. Place branding in the Global North has advanced to encompass how place branding can be linked to strategic spatial planning (Oliveira, 2016), as elements for gauging democratic processes such as public participation (Eshuis *et al.,* 2014), as increasing tools for improving urban governance (Ginesta & Eugenio, 2021) and conceiving of places beyond the attraction of tourism and FDI (Skinner, 2021). All these points and others of exploration place branding make for a richer analysis of cities as social constructs. It is no wonder that famous place brands such as New York, Paris, Tokyo, and London have stood the test of time and continue to shape place branding communication with residents and the international community.

8.7 Futures of place branding in the Global South

For Blaxter *et al.,* (2010: 12), "Will I have anything to say?" is an important consideration when undertaking research. The above question relates to how original a piece of research truly is. Given that this study is pitched at a PhD level, its originality or novelty lies in the empirical work presented herein that has not been done before. While some scholars (Bremner, 2000; Rogerson, 2006; Sihlongonyane, 2015) have

written about the place brands of the CoJ, no other work has detailed a composite presentation of the city's inner workings when preparing a brand strategy.

This thesis aimed to contribute to understanding the forces and motivations that drive cities of the Global South to embark on place branding processes. In the event, the thesis unmasked deeply rooted agendas harboured by places in the Global North that continue to subvert expressions of self in the Global South. From this, the thesis suggested several ways in which place branding in the Global South can move to be more authentic and meaningful for societies there.

In the thesis, the author hoped to make way for the investigation of "soft" issues related to development in developing countries. Much research has concentrated on the deficiencies and limitations of development in Africa, for example. The author's ultimate hope for this thesis is that it stimulates rigorous and robust conversations about the motivations and intentions of branding places in the Global South and leaves behind landmines regarding avoiding the manipulation of these processes from the Global North.

Johannesburg provided an interesting case study for the exploration of place branding. However, as seen from the abundance of literature about place branding, these processes are largely found in the Global North. Thus, there is a need for other cities, particularly those in Africa, to begin to embark on place branding endeavours to establish a platform from which these processes can be understood from a Global South perspective. Cities such as Lagos (Nigeria), Cairo (Egypt), Nairobi (Kenya), Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Bogota (Colombia), Santiago (Chile), Mumbai (India) and Jakarta (Indonesia) amongst others have great stories to tell the world. This PhD study contends that it is only possible to formulate strategic and meaningful place brands in the Global South from the perspective of places and narratives there.

In this way, place branding in the Global South can transcend the arbitrary obsession of trying to attract FDI. Instead, place branding in these settings can begin to espouse the formulation of strategic, shared visions for cities and become instruments of democracy in the Global South. From this, the Global South presents an opportunity to move place branding beyond the capitalist orientations of its processes like those found in the Global North. Indeed, there must be more to place branding than the hope of making profits that do not filter to local placeholders. If anything, place branding in

its current guise has systematically contributed to the disenfranchisement of several places where it has found its manifestation, whether in the Global North or South.

This study has established the infancy of place branding in cities of the Global South. The state of inquiry into place branding in the Global South deals primarily with (a) how place brands are established (this study is a case in point) and (b) exploring place branding as a tool for tourism attraction and foreign direct investment. This is limited. In advancing place branding in these cities, there is scope for future research to explore the concept beyond in and of itself. For this to occur, exploration of place branding in cities of the Global South needs to expand to include (a) its links to broader urban governance processes, (b) its connection and inclusion in strategic spatial planning processes such as CDSs, (c) its potential to be a tool for unshackling democratic discourses between city governments, residents and other stakeholders, and (d) the measure of the effectiveness of place branding strategies once they have been implemented.

Studies pertaining to the above are scant. Focussing on these points of exploration into place branding in the Global South is crucial to enrich its theory and practice. This will enable cities in the Global South to develop more engaging and credible place brands than those that are found currently. Through meaningful engagement with a place brand, the opportunity arises to leverage more than a place's physical and natural endowments. This includes the personality of a city, which is manifest through its residents. Few place brands celebrate their residents. Credible place brands are those that not only focus on presenting cities as sites of investment but also as platforms for adding value to residents and other placeholders. This is important because it creates a space for mutual and reciprocal benefit for cities, their communities, and businesses.

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