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Contested public spaces: a Lefebvrian analysis of Mary Fitzgerald Square

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CONTESTED PUBLIC SPACES: A LEFEBVRIAN ANALYSIS OF MARY FITZGERALD SQUARE

A degree submitted for the requirements of Masters of Arts in Geography

By

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this work is my own original production. No portion of it has been submitted anywhere for another qualification or award. All data sources used in this dissertation are acknowledged and appropriately cited in the text, as well as in the list of references.

Ernestina Seanokeng Nkooe

_____

30 April 2015

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ABSTRACT

Mary Fitzgerald Square is an iconic public space in Newtown, Johannesburg. In spite of its iconic status, prolific social history and commercial role in the city, there is very little that is known about it and its users. In 2009 and 2010 I undertook an ethnographic exploration of the public space using Henri Lefebvre's (1974/1991) conceptual *spatial triad*, the *Right to the City* and *Elements of Rhythmanalysis* frameworks. Through informal interviews, unstructured participant observation and exploration of archived newspaper articles, public space governance by-laws, published urban literature and research, I managed to situate this public space in urban geographical discourse as contested public space. By means of conceptual analysis, this research found Mary Fitzgerald Square to be an important public space that is dominated by neoliberal politics that create struggle for inhabitants to use it meaningfully in the context of everyday life. The proliferation of neoliberal relations of urban governance have led to a situation whereby the public space is subjected to private management practices that encourage its elitist uses and thus prioritizing its commercial exchange-value over its use-value. This process as the research uncovered, undermines the public space's use-value and consequently leads to a subliminal marginalization of ordinary inhabitants who require and desire it for their varied practices in the context of everyday life.

Urban management strategies like human surveillance, Public Open Space by-Laws, architecture and planning design, public-private partnerships, and the removal of the television monitor, discourage creative African youths, skateboarders, the urban poor and elderly in the city from appropriating Mary Fitzgerald Square. Inhabitants using Mary Fitzgerald Square manage to do so by overriding and transgressing existing spatial prohibitions by conducting their social practices in the contested space outside official policing times. Other inhabitants, through play and creative expression, have devised alternative means to challenge their marginalization in and uses of the public space in spite of existing by-laws, changing architecture, and visible human surveillance including law-enforcement that are conceived in an effort to deter their social uses of it. This research proposes a return to Mary Fitzgerald Square that warrants a critical discourse analysis of the public space in an effort to gain a better and deeper understanding of inhabitants' everyday life experiences and their political situation in the current city *through* the public space. This should enable a sound critique of the production of Mary Fitzgerald Square in the African metropolis where the abstract struggle between private interests and public need for the public space materializes.

Key words: *Mary Fitzgerald Square, Henri Lefebvre, Johannesburg, Geography, South Africa.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
BIDs	Business improvement districts
CBDA	Central Business District Association
CIDs	City improvement districts
CoJ	City of Johannesburg
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Union
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
JDA	Johannesburg development agency
LED	Light emitting diode
LED	Local economic development
LOC	Local organizing committee
PVA	Public viewing area

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I dedicate this dissertation to the Holy *Spirit*.
Thank You.

I also dedicate this work to my father, Stephen Modise Nkooe
'*Ntate*'
(24 June 1953 – 11/22 December 2002)

CHAPTER 1
PUBLIC SPACE: AN INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

I lived in Johannesburg city as a university student in Braamfontein since 2004. When I was not in lecture halls and locked up in my room doing assignments and/or studying for examinations, I hung out in the city's streets, day and night and I enjoyed it. Other times I spent in Newtown at Horror Café most Thursday evenings, Ko' Spotong and The Market Theatre some other nights, and in Mary Fitzgerald Square on occasion of a public event. Never in my life had I imagined that someday I will be confronted with the scientific challenge of conceptualizing the city's ordinary and iconic 'public spaces' using Lefebvre's spatial concepts in urban Africa. Every city is public space and it is made up of public spaces. This research is particularly focused on public spaces like streets, squares and parks in cities because it from them that social marginalization and political exclusions is observed and analysed (Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Kohn, 2004).

Marginalization from public space often occurs through economic policies that prioritize private, elitist interests that favour abstract space of capital than the social space that capital generally occupies in society (Cybriwsky, 1999; Mitchell, 2003). In some instances people who live in capitalist cities as members of the urban society (Lefebvre, 1962/1995), revolt in public spaces about such political matters of everyday life. An appropriate example to use is the 2011 Occupy Wall Street events that were inspired by the unhappiness of the majority of inhabitants against the minority few, to literally occupy Zukoti Park and related public spaces in New York City (Chomsky, 2012). An interesting presentation emerges with public space. It is common for urban public spaces to be used like this, as a tool for power, for social resistance of domination and re-enforcement of social domination.

In case-studies from North-America, Asia and Europe, it is standard knowledge that urban public spaces are struggle spaces for simultaneous exclusion and inclusion of different sectors of urban society according to race, gender and class (Mitchell, 2003). Across such well-documented urban geographical regions it is reported that public space dynamics are much more complicated than that because from them the homeless, the poor, the youth, children, the diaspora African, women and street vendors suffer marginalization and exclusion in public spaces on a scale that warrants attention (Anjaria, 2006; Crawford, 1995; Crossa, 2009; Dee, 2008; Mitchell, 1995).

Often in such widely documented urban experiences of public space, the 'history' of these socially contested public spaces is often marginalised. In other words, when in society did public space become 'contested' and how (the means) become important, but also important is the geographical context of the urban society through which such historical questions are raised. Beyond the geographical and intellectual borders of western scholarship, historical elements of different public space uses and users are hardly ever scripted, particularly from historically marginal urban spaces of Africa for example (Harrison, 2006). To the dominant West, in geography and philosophy (thinking) and Africa spatial history and the history of urban space is perceived as unimportant and apolitical as a result. The intellectual consequence of such practice is the production of insufficient conceptualization, and inappropriate analyses of Africa's urban public spaces outside their historical context and political construction.

Harrison (2006) and Mbembe (2001) note that in the global division of labour where the production of knowledge and its mental space are concerned, it is important to take into consideration the knowledge producer's geographical space: from where they are, where they are writing from, and their social and *hence* political identity in relations of knowledge production about and of urban Africa and its distinct historical processes and structures. Within the context of Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial concepts, 'time' is added onto the list, as a significant element that must also and should be taken into account.

1.2 Problem statement

South African cities are products of centuries of colonial policy and practice informing the society's history of racial segregation in space (Lemanski, 2004; Lemon, 1991; Spocter, 2005). Within the context of this South African research much has been said and explored about the social impacts of colonial and apartheid segregation in urban spaces, the privatization of public space and production of private public spaces and their private management including their consequences for democratic practice and governance (Dirsuweit, 1999, 2002; Kirby, 2008; Landman, 2002, 2004; Seekings, 2007). The city of Johannesburg is a unique city in Africa that is revered as the country's and the continent's most prominent capital (Rogerson, 2000). However, there is little that is ethnographically known and conceptually explored about the capital society's public space in the twenty-first century.

Existing research overlooks the social history and political (democratic) significance of Johannesburg city's squares, and focuses instead on their economic and aesthetic viability in within a wider urban framework of a global neocapitalist strategy championed by the neoliberal agenda (Beall, 2002; City of Johannesburg, 2007; Peyroux, 2008). Itzkin's (2008) master's research on the colonial history and political production of twenty-first century Ghandi Square in Johannesburg is a very good reference and foundation for this research on and about Mary Fitzgerald Square. By tracing the history of this uniquely South *African* public space, Itzkin uncovered and mapped out the hidden politics of capital power and race involved in the production of this public space in a geo-historical context defined significantly by colonial segregation. However, unlike Itzkin's study, this Lefebvrian research is not so interested in biographical discourse of the Newtown public space. This study is more interested in the everyday dynamics, life rhythms and politics of inhabitants acting and interacting in this particular square. Itzkin (2008) impressively mapped out the square's *ongoing* politics, management opportunities and neoliberal governance challenges, which are at constant odds with the democratic values that the *neo*-colonial society is aiming to advance.

Since Itzkin's study, researchers have shied away from researching the city's squares and their multifaceted relationship with present day inhabitants who desire them for their own social practices and 'democratic' expression. Mary Fitzgerald Square is a public space in Johannesburg city's Newtown Precinct. It has successfully contributed towards the political transformation of the city's economic and social relationships through the course of time (Brink, 1994; Dirsuweit, 1999; Johannesburg, 1989). In spite of its domination by the city's politicians, planners, architects, capitalists and academics of colonial times, the square continues to display an enormous capacity to inject a culture of urbanity and sense of belonging through embracing its racial and political differences. As a political social space, Mary Fitzgerald Square has evaded theoretical analysis with regard to its social production and political uses in everyday life in the *neo*-colonial society of organized spectacles and abstract politics.

1.3 Research aim

Most urban society's physical spaces like squares, streets and parks were directly produced and experienced first-hand by inhabitants living in the city *before* they became conceptual spaces of knowledge specialists and artists of scientific bend (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). From the well-theorized political urban context of Johannesburg in South Africa, this research *aims*

- To offer a conceptual analysis of Mary Fitzgerald Square using Lefebvrian concepts.

With this aim in mind, I intend to interrogate the production of Mary Fitzgerald Square by looking into its history. Doing so in contemporary context enables the process of identifying the public space's current political users and uses in Newtown, Johannesburg. Through this conceptual exercise, it is envisaged that the both the square and Lefebvre's conceptual theories of space, would bring light to social practice about the *use*-value of public space and spatial thinking *for* everyday life and its analysis.

1.4 Research setting: social background and geographical context

Mary Fitzgerald Square is a public space in Johannesburg city's Newtown Precinct, found in the south of the African continent. Conceived as an 'iconic' public space because of its once vibrant history of political and economic resistance against racial segregation, Mary Fitzgerald Square is today most celebrated for its role as a physical platform for hosting the city's organized private and public events (City of Johannesburg, 2007; www.newtown.co.za). Covering a surface area of 11 312m^2 (roughly 1 hectare) the public square is lived (experienced) by inhabitants and conceived scientifically and politically as part of iconic public spaces that have "strong symbolic, cultural or heritage significance" making them "key tourism destinations…new geographical anchor points to the urban form and fabric of the inner city" (City of Johannesburg, 2007, p. 18). Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown is an anchor of urban life in Johannesburg. It is a public space that once was a critical spatial location for the formation and transformation of urban life in the colonial production of Johannesburg (Brink, 1994; Hunter, 2009).

Today, after centuries of racial segregation, the iconic Mary Fitzgerald Square is part of a cohort of privately managed public spaces in Johannesburg. This spatial condition

prompted Lemanski (2004) to argue that a 'new' apartheid of class rather than race taints the democratic society's urban landscape. From the year 2000 onwards, Mary Fitzgerald Square has been firmly re-established in the city of Johannesburg as a 'spectacle space' or quasi-public space due to its organized uses that encourage its commercial value (Ercan, 2007).

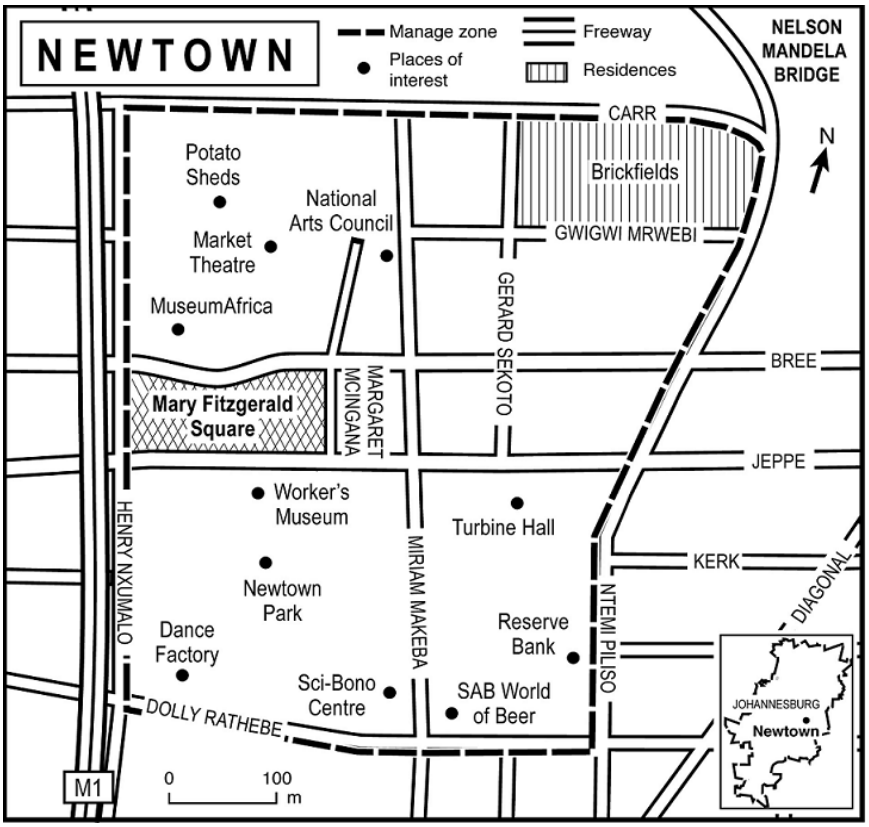


Figure 1. Map 1: Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown, Johannesburg.

Although its history of social use, conflict and struggle within the broader urban landscape of Johannesburg and Newtown has been documented at a general level by scholars (Dirsuweit, 1999; Gaule, 2005; Mlangeni, 2009), no ethnographic research has been conducted about inhabitants' everyday life experiences and their social practices in the neo-colonial urban space, since colonial times. Nor, up to this point, has any urban research been conducted on the representational space itself, and its political significance for the political transformation of social relationships that define contemporary urban society. Surrounded by Jeppe Street, Bree Street, Henry Nxumalo Street and Margaret Mcingana Street, Mary Fitzgerald Square is a public space, often used for organized social and political events both public and private. Some of the

organized social events include the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz, Jo'burg Arts Alive, Africa Day, and International Nelson Mandela Day (www.newtonw.co.za).

Organized political events include planned gatherings of different political parties and organizations like the African National Congress (ANC) and the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU). The square is used as a representational space of political rallies in addition to it being a meeting place for the labour federation members prior to their marching in the city streets. On many occasions the day to day activities of ordinary inhabitants, youth in particular, remain concealed behind this calendar of events and bureaucratic organization in the public space in present day Johannesburg. This situation tends to increase and exacerbate the social invisibility of present day users. Hence their use of Mary Fitzgerald Square and the social practices in it are hidden, not only from urban theory, but also from the mechanisms of everyday democratic politics and relations of producing urban life.

1.5 Significance of research

Since the demise of apartheid and all explicit forms of racial segregation in the production of South Africa's cities, urban research and governance practice has focused on advancing economic policies of the city (Rogerson, 1996a, 1996b; Bremner, 2000; City of Johannesburg, 2007) *rather* than on the social practices of their inhabitants and the critical role they play in the democratic production and usage of the city's public spaces (Simone, 2005). The significance of this research is threefold. First, on theoretical and methodological grounds, this research bridges the existing gap between [Lefebvrian] theory and ethnographic method in human geography. Second, in terms of Mary Fitzgerald Square, this research fills the knowledge gap that currently exists in urban literature about the social-spatial origins of the celebrated public space and its politics in historical terms, thus bridging the gap between this space's segregated history and its democratic present.

Third and lastly, on a broader scale of the political world economy, this research contributes to a prolific yet marginal body of work on 'squares', in an effort to expose power relations that encroach upon the creative and political capacity of inhabitants to express themselves socially and to articulate their grievances democratically. Current theoretical discourse falls short in engaging social issues facing contemporary

generations of Africans in a historically segregated, spatially fragmented and capital dominated Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown, Johannesburg. This dissertation is a contribution towards a conceptual thinking of South African democracy on concrete spatial terms, using alternative methods that challenge the current status quo of historical and apolitical analyses dominating this urban African society.

1.6 Research method: setting the theoretical context

In research, scientific knowledge is acquired and constructed through a method, or certain technique (Harvey & Myers, 1995). It is important for any research to use appropriate methods for their respective subject matter if research findings are to be accepted as legitimate. Method entails processes through which concealed social arrangements or relationships of power, within the spatial or geographical context of the subjects informing research, are revealed (Descartes, 1912/1965). In terms of the method for revealing concealed arrangements in space, Lefebvre's (1974/1991) conceptual triad is used as the conceptual tool for analysing the different ways through which the public space is 'ordered' in everyday urban life. This Lefebvrian exploration is a human-physical geography that is rooted in the Qualitative paradigm of humanities researchers. In Lefebvrian terms, the Quantitative paradigm speaks to representations of space or the Logos. The Logos is strictly methodological and on the classical positivist side of things. Its aim is to make inventories, classify and arrange cultivated knowledge in space by pressing it "into service of power" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 392).

In the historical context of Johannesburg, this type of rational, analytic and technocratic knowledge was used in service of colonialism and apartheid to dominate, manipulate, systematize, and thereby generalize everything and everyone in dominated space (Merrifield, 1995). It was this highly specialized form of abstract knowledge that gave colonizing classes legitimacy over the colonized southern Africans and enabling them to maintain their privileged position of power over earlier Africans whose 'ethnic methods' differ significantly from the Cartesian methods of the enlightened ones. The spatial or concrete manifestation of methods used and conceived by the Logos is constantly being refined through arranged forces in space. These forces are of the kind that 'aspire' to dominate and control space, for example, business (money economy) and the State, social institutions and bureaucratic apparatus, such as whole cities, and new governance structures, as have emerged in our geo-political southern African

space. The methodological space and logic of the Quantitave paradigm, ‘crushes’ lived sensory knowledge, whose source is *in* history, in the history of *a* people, and each of their individual (ethnic) relationships (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). It is for this reason that Lefebvre prioritizes Eros knowledge over Logos methodologies, stating that ethnologists, anthropologists and psychoanalysts should serve the Eros or sensory knowledge since they are students of representational space, ‘whether they are aware of it or not’ (Ibid).

Qualitative paradigm on the other hand, is the least dominant method in contrast to its Quantitative counterpart. It is embedded in ‘interpretive’ philosophy that concerns itself with the generation of knowledge that is based on the perspectives and ‘lived experiences’ of the people informing the study from their ‘historical’ and social contexts (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005). Within this methodological domain, the researcher is influenced by the research due to their social identification and personal involvement with the subject matter informing the enquiry. The interpretive approach of the Qualitative realm enables a comparative analysis of similar and dissimilar ‘processes’ and phenomena, tending towards the development of practical exchanges related to ‘changes’ in human social relationships in ‘specific’ geographical spaces or material settings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

1.6.1 Ethnography in qualitative spatial research

Ethnography is an unorthodox research method of ancient Greeks, “with a capacious historical past that necessarily includes philosophical, political, spiritual and aesthetic elements” developed from a master discourse of colonization (Clair, 2003, p. 3). It is a form of qualitative enquiry often compared to or contrasted with life history or discourse analysis (Hammersley, 2006). To ‘do’ ethnography as Simon & Dippo (1986, p. 195) note, is to actually “engage a process of knowledge production”. Ethnography works well with subjective and objective approaches to field-work in terms of data generation, collection and analysis, depending on the ethnographer’s preferences and objectives of study. Lefebvre’s (1992/2004) conceptual theory of rhythm enters this discourse on method as a compatible framework for ethnography because of its three shared principles with ethnography.

The two conceptual and practical methods are interested in three interrelated elements that make them unique: the physical *space* of research, over a specific period of *time* that is *energy* or practice oriented. Everywhere space, time and expenditure of energy interact, there is 'rhythm' (Lefebvre, 1992/2004). Writing is rhythmic process that demands disciplined concentration and mental energy. Writing an ethnography as part of an academic exercise is for Lefebvre (1992/2004) an energy intensive activity that involves reading, writing and analysis – each aspect with its own rhythms that are "created by habit, which is to say by a more or less harmonious compromise between the repetitive, the cyclical and that which supervenes them" (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 75). Similarly with ethnography, the ethnographic student engages a non-linear and repetitive creative process of writing and rewriting, reading and re-reading, thinking and rethinking (Barrett, 2007). Much like Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis, ethnography is a philosophical method that requires commitment through long-term exposure and consumption.

To some researchers it is simply a method that can be used as and when appropriate (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). For Hammersley (2006), ethnography falls outside the boundaries of a clear and systematic taxonomy. For Atkinson, Okada and Talmy (2011), ethnography is a type of discourse analysis used by different researchers to distinguish between produced research that counters the problem of replicating research by not producing generalizable results (Nurani, 2008). The 'ethno' in ethnography implies an ethnic group that is distinguished from a racial group. Graphy in this regard entails a form and *style of writing* that is also distinguished from ethnology, which entails a science of a particular race group (Lefebvre, 1992/2004; Scott & Marshall, 2009). In essence, ethnography is an artistic or creative form of expressing a given society's daily realities, routines and relationships through the active social practice of writing about their lived experiences from their point of view in their respective geographical area(s), through direct observation over a given period (Brodkey, 1987; Clair, 2003; LeCompte, 1982).

Ethnography is a textually rich method of conducting social research that is more established in anthropology and sociology. Writing field-notes in ethnographic fieldwork is another element that Wolfinger (2002) feels strongly about because it is an underused technique in data collection compared with participant observation. What

rhythm and ethnography have in common is their prioritization of the ‘political’ issues and sensory knowledge of the research participants as key informants in the practical field because they are and have been marginalized in philosophy by knowledge practitioners and positivist methods of the West (Conquergood, 1991; Lefebvre, 1974/1991). It is through the living human body that we perceive the social, physical and mental world around us in the same way that we are in turn perceived by others in it. Without the human body that breathes, sleeps, walks, thinks, creates and so forth, perception, observation and ultimate production of written research, is impossible to achieve (Descartes, 1912/1965). Lefebvre (1974/1991) agrees with Descartes’ philosophical understanding of the body as an assemblage of ‘things’ that are much more than the sum of their thought.

Lefebvre perceives the bio-physical body of a human as a bundle of organs, comparable to a bundle of other things unrelated to each other, in a reality ravaged by representations and discourses “which are only exacerbated by ‘modern society’ with its ideologies and contradictions" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 204). Inhabitants’ bodies in space, along with that of the inquisitive researcher as research tool, are central to the production of ethnographic knowledge and research. As a critical research method, ethnography raises attention to the material expression of power over the living human body, as a site for the production of lived experiences. In theoretical terms, ethnography is understood as “an interrelated set of concepts and research practices, constructed for the purposes of producing a particular articulation of knowledge” (Simon & Dippo, 1986, p. 196).

What is often legitimized and made available within an individual’s own sense of knowledge (sensory or scientific), is not arbitrary in terms of the way particular practices are produced through this domain. It is, therefore, important that this *neo*-colonial ethnographic exploration contends with the challenge of “understanding, materially and historically”, the body as non-arbitrary (Simon & Dippo, 1989, p. 197). Indeed the focus on spatiality and history, as critical ethnographers suggests, is a requirement, because the production and reproduction of social forms can never be understood, in terms of their intentions, as a consequence of what people do. This political project on Mary Fitzgerald Square is a conceptual presentation and

representation of disabling forms of unethical regulation, and unequal distribution of the public space for representational use by inhabitants in the context of everyday life.

1.6.2 Spatial ethnography and public space

Henry Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *The Production of Space*, prioritizes inhabitants' lived space and urban politics in capitalist and democratic societies because they are dominated. Ethnography, therefore, is a fitting match for 'grounding' Lefebvre's unitary spatial triad 'concretely' in space. Interestingly, both practical and theoretical research methods, occupy marginal spaces in human geography research and thought to some extent. The two conceptual and empirical methods are not as popular with, and/or popularly used by many human and physical geographers, in relation to conventional positivism that dominates the geographical knowledge society's 'scientific' landscape. The few human geographers that enlist ethnography, do so in isolation from Lefebvre, while the very few that take on Lefebvre, do so outside of ethnography to the detriment of the discipline of geography (Herbert, 2000; Megoran, 2006; Merrifield, 1995; Molotch, 1993; Mosse, 2006).

Combining these two unorthodox methods of thinking about space in general, and researching public space in particular by empirical means, is important for overcoming methodological separation between geography and ethnography *from* Henri Lefebvre's creative philosophies and spatial methods. In other words, through geography both Henri Lefebvre and ethnography are united where they are currently separated and absent if not lacking, as Herbert (2000) and Megoran (2006) note. This union is made concrete through method since Lefebvre was a conceptual methodologist concerned with everyday life and the changing world, in the same way ethnography is a conceptual method that builds from the everyday world experiences of people.

At the practical, operational level ethnography coupled with Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis in geography "defines the field of the visible as well as the boundary of the invisible, revealing the foundation on which relations and events are judged as important and unimportant" by focusing on "ordered sets of social practices; what a particular group of people, concretely situated in time and space, constitute as their pattern of everyday life" (Simon & Dippo, 1986, p. 197).

Both methods are practical, theoretical, political, critical, social, analytical discourses subject and open to change, driven to unity and inspired by diversity. This research is ethnographic because it satisfies the outlined criteria. This research is interested in exploration of a single public space – Mary Fitzgerald Square, using unstructured forms of data (no questionnaires) collected from the public space in 2009 and 2010. This ethnographic narrative is generated within a Lefebvrian framework that does not conform to the Quantitative logic of systematized or statistical representation of findings that would encourage generalization of findings to be replicated elsewhere (Nurani, 2008). With ethnography and Lefebvre it is virtually impossible to replicate any research because of the type of data, and changes in space and society that the two work with.

Within the context of urban public space, it is not a general ethnography that this study experiments with. Rather, it is a 'spatial' ethnography that I lean towards, despite continual reference made to ethnography as a lacking method in human geography. The 'spatial' in this ethnography is special because it affirms very strongly this research's Lefebvrian construct. As a branch in the ethnographic tree, spatial ethnography is a relatively undeveloped field in ethnography that concerns itself with urban public space.

According to Chari & Gidwani (2005) spatial ethnography is interested in everyday public life in everyday public spaces like streets, squares and parks, and the different meanings everyday inhabitants assign these representations of space through their heterogeneous spatial practices in them. Spatial ethnography is therefore more specific to urban politics and lived experiences of inhabitants in contested capitalist spaces. With Lefebvre's marginally conceptualized 'rhythm', as conceptual and ethnographically sound method *in* geography[1], *spatial* ethnography presents itself as the right method to respond to this Lefebvrian discourse.

1.6.3 Data collection techniques

Participant observation is the core feature of ethnography. It is a complex process that anchors both ethnography and its 'Lefebvrian' human vessel in the actual societal space informing theoretical research. Alternatively referred to as 'field-work', participant

[1] Tim Edensor (2010) is acknowledged in this section for his contribution towards the introduction of Lefebvre's Rhythm in Geography, see Geographies of Rhythm: Nature, Place, Mobilities and Bodies

observation is a practical exercise through which field (social) data are collected. It is also the means by which a researcher gains access to the researched field as they develop their ethnographic competence (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Participant observation requires the physical presence of explorers, for a period of time, in the researched space (Conquergood, 1991). This is so because ethnographic participant observation is dependent on the individual capacity of the ethnographer as a key instrument of/for data collection and later, analysis. In this manner, the field explorer draws significantly from their body as a sensory tool, along with the bodies of his or her informants in the perceived social space of inquiry (Lefebvre, 1992/2004). During this period of participant observation an intensive process known as 'immersion' begins to manifest.

Immersion emerges through participant observation of the researcher in the lives and physical space of the researched. It guarantees the researcher's political right of entry into the social space of the researched and their spatial practices (Conquergood, 1991). The rhythm analyst, like the ethnographer, uses his or her biophysical senses to observe and participate in lived activities of inhabitants as they unfold in the field-space. Like the ethnographer, the rhythm analyst is prone to be more sensitive to social-calendar times as well as natural times like seasons and days, to people's moods and the atmosphere surrounding them. Lefebvre's (1992/2004) rhythm analyst, which is what I am leaning towards via ethnography, is an individual with undefined expertize and social qualities. Through the use of a digital camera and voice recorder, I was able to pay more attention to inhabitants' moods, what they said and how they said it later on in analysis. The deployment of audio and visual tools in ethnography is common practice in ethnography (Schwartz, 1989).

1.6.4 Ethical considerations in ethnographic research

South Africa's human rights-oriented constitution makes explicit the political right of *all* inhabitants to not be subjected to *any* scientific experimentation without their *informed* consent (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). During the early months of fieldwork in 2009, I introduced myself to inhabitants in the field and made explicit my research agenda. I had no survey or semi-structured questionnaire; only curious social questions that were dependent on who the inhabitant was, before probing their spatial imagination about the perceived public space. To borrow from Herbert's

(2000) ethnographic terminology, I was 'forthright' with inhabitants informing this research about Mary Fitzgerald Square. I was careful to act in a respectful manner towards inhabitants and thereby respected their constitutional right to be justly informed about the research, before partaking in it, as well as their ethnographic right to be treated with respect and dignity. I informed inhabitants of *their* use-value in the production of this conceptual project informed by their everyday life experiences in the city.

The fact that inhabitants' role in the field is primary, and that their lived experiences are prioritized in theoretical context, informing them of their social role in the study, gave them a sense of importance and the recognition that they mattered in urban society just as they were. It is not often that research about the precinct incorporates the subjective views and social experiences of everyday people of Newtown or Mary Fitzgerald Square. Where the situation allowed, and whenever it was possible, inhabitants granted me permission to take photographs of them in spatial practice. This social practice of photography was not problematic because Newtown is a tourist space. The precinct's users are familiar with the sight of strangers trotting the material landscape, with audio and visual instruments, to capture whatever data they desire, based on the nature of events drawing them to the site. My walking around the architectural field with digital audio and visual devices was not an unusual activity, nor was it hurtful or exploitative towards inhabitants.

1.7 Key terminology[2]

Abstract space: refers to a measurable space; often the realm of architects and urbanists. It is a powerful, paper space of drawings, codes, signs and knowledge that is divorced from the level of the 'lived' in a dual sense. This space abstracts from the lived in its understandings of it, and then projects that understanding back, into the lived level. As Lefebvre clearly notes, the plans of the architects and urbanists do not rest innocently on paper – on the ground it is the bulldozer that realizes these plans (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Democracy: refers to a political idea and contested practice conceived in fifth century Greece. At that time, the concept simply meant 'rule by or of the citizens' (the *demos*). Ancient Greek democracy was defined by its exclusion of women, a large class of slaves and illiterates as well as homosexual men. The *demos* acted as a collective social body rather than isolated individuals. This degree of collective decision-making could only work in that historical context as long the citizen body remained small and homogeneous: comprising only of white males who were literate, wealthy and

[2] For matters of space in the dissertation, definitions of key terminology are single-spaced.

heterosexual. In city-states of a few thousand privileged citizens (distinct from inhabitants), the era of ancient Greek democracy lasted for about two hundred years. Contemporary models of democracy differ from early Greek democracy. Representative democracy of seventeenth century England became the norm around the world. Within this democracy, citizens elect politicians who promise to represent their interests in broader debates and decisions, which are generally articulated in a central national forum, such as congress or parliament. In social practice, politicians typically belong to political parties that focus on general policies rather than responding to citizens on an issue by issue basis.

Twentieth century democracies have shown that citizens' interests are best expressed by small parties, however, government can best work in a political arrangement where there are two or three parties as is the case in Britain and the United States of America. Conditions for democracy include: free and fair elections, a genuine choice between candidates and policies, real parliamentary power, separation of powers, civil rights for all citizens and rule of law. In modern democracies in the West, there is little consensus about just how much of the people's voice can or should be in a constitutional democracy. In a world where politicians easily ignore massive public opinion and the majority, social movements like Occupy in the United States and Europe, as well as anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggles of the twentieth century, challenged twenty-first century democracy in which all human beings are treated fairly and with dignity (Scott & Marshall, 2009).

Everyday life: refers to all things that are familiar to us without being understood. According to Lefebvre, everyday life designates the entry of daily life and practice into modernity, therefore suggesting the ordinary more than the repetition of the 'every day'. The concept of everyday life refers to everything that remains once formal work is removed from the picture. Play for example, is part of everyday life and it informs the daily experiences and social practices of the player or inhabitant as a work of art and an artist. Everyday life is a creative process that is written and re-written continuously. It is a text to be re-read and re written like ethnography. It is the point of contact and conflict between desire and need, the serious and the frivolous, nature and culture, the public and the private. Everyday life concerns itself with a level in contemporary society defined by the gap between the everyday experiences of inhabitants, the State, technology and high culture. It forms the intersection between the non-dominated sector of reality (perceived space) and the dominated sector (lived space). It also involves the political transformation of animate and inanimate objects into appropriated goods or commodities (Elden, 2004; Lefebvre, 1947/1991).

Inhabitant: refers to any human being who resides in an urban area within the philosophical and political context of Lefebvre's (1996) *Right to the City*. This concept does not regard the urban dweller's legal status, political affiliation, race, gender, class or nationality as a basis for discrimination or inclusion to the urban society, its public spaces and public sphere. In its broadest sense, the inhabitant is any individual or group in a given urban society that is politically marginalized, socially excluded and disenfranchised due to various factors including race, sex, history, gender, class, age, religion, educational levels and social activities. The inhabitant is also a poetic entity that is vast, complex, constantly shifting and changing within the urban society where it resides. This is the everyday person or group of people, who should have a 'right to the

city' but often do not for historical and political reasons (Lefebvre, 1968/1996; UNESCO UN-HABITAT, 2005).

Neoliberalism: refers to an ideology and belief that open, competitive and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for economic development. In technical terms, neoliberalism is a set of doctrines regarding the appropriate framework for economic regulation. Since the 1980s, the term has been appropriated by scholars and anti-neoliberal activists to describe organizational, political and ideological reorganization of such "free market" doctrines in specific historical and geographical contexts. The imposition of a neoliberal framework is an uneven social and geographical process which has not established a useful framework for stable economic development, political regulation and social cohesion. Neoliberal projects are in fact deeply contradictory in so far as they tend to undermine many economic, institutional and geographical preconditions for economic and social revitalization. Neoliberalism harbours pervasively dysfunctional social consequences by virtue of its inherent anti-social character. This ideological and free market driven process imposes what it deems "appropriate" policy choices for societies; constraining inhabitants' democratic participation in political life and everyday decision-making, by using strategies that diffuse dissent and oppositional mobilization, while glossing over the socially regressive outcomes that are frequent by-products of such initiatives (Brenner & Theodore, 2005; Gunder, 2010; Scott & Marshall, 2009).

***Neo*-colonialism:** refers to the economic situation of many former colonies after 'political' independence has been secured. *Neo*-colonialists interpret this phenomenon as a budget-saving *and* humanitarian act on the part of historically colonizing Europe, which keeps its monopolistic control over the economic production and marketing of goods in Africa, Asia and Latin America as former colonies and hence colonial productions. Through instruments like international law, corporate property rights and standardization of European banks in former colonies, Europe and America retain their economic influence, capitalist domination and social control over their historically colonial territories that are now democratic and/or independent. This situation presents an era of new or *neo*-colonialism. In Marxist discourse this event, process and power relationship is usually termed neo-imperialism. *Neo*-colonialism is a political, subtle yet complex policy, deployed by former colonial powers over their former colonies. In some instances *neo*-colonialism is perceived in emerging countries, as the survival of the colonial system where, in spite of formal recognition of political independence, they become victims of indirect and subtle forms of domination by economic, political, social or technical means. It persists in former colonies whose political economy and policies are controlled externally by institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund through structural adjustment programmes as well as growth, employment and redistribution (GEAR) policy.

In the twenty-first century *neo*-colonialism is an adapted form of colonialism, without the explicit violence and inhumane intolerance towards its colonized subjects. This makes it more dangerous than colonialism itself. It is highly advanced with its own systems of complex networks, ideologies and practices that perpetuate domination over their former colonies for economic gain by favouring political elites in former colonies. The goal of *neo*-colonialism is the same as colonialism. Its goal is power. *Neo*-colonialism seeks to maintain former colonies in dependent positions that will allow

economic exploitation by controlling prices of primary and manufactured goods; imposing foreign exchange rates and banking systems; imposing the right to influence internal financial decisions and policy making by bribing local administration, placing civil servants in high positions. In other instances, *neo*-colonialists assist in political coups, offer technical assistance to their former colonies and continue their presence in former colonies by intervening in the education of colonized elites who promote and sustain their [colonizing western] values and thought patterns (Kieh, 2012; Scott & Marshal, 2009).

Power: refers to participation in making everyday decisions. Power is political. It is implied as a social process and physical (scientific) phenomena that is experienced differently and is expressed differently in the world. In its political dimension it involves the shaping, distributing and use of power. It is relational and belongs to everyone and no one. Power operates on people and through them. Relations of power between human beings structure how everyday life is lived and should be lived. This inherently political relationship of power also informs how power structures in the context of everyday life, are produced and reproduced in society in efforts to limit and to constrain through contestation of and redefining what one ought to be . Put differently, a political relationship based on power is defined by the capacity of an individual or group of individuals, to alter the social conduct or practices of other individuals or groups in a manner that responds to the dominant or dominating agent or group. The weight of power in political discourse is influenced by the degree of participation in decision-making processes, the scope of values that are shaped and enjoyed through control, and the people over whom this power is exercised. The arena of power is shaped by ordinary men and women acting and interacting in spaces where power is sought and contested (Lasswell & Kaplan, 1965; Scott & Marshall, 2009; Simon & Dippo, 1986).

Production: refers to the social, political and economic production of things – goods and products, but also, to the larger philosophical concept, 'the production of *oeuvres*' or creative works including knowledge, institutions and everything that constitutes society. Production also refers to the often separated material (physical) and mental (abstract) production of 'things' in space. Production is not only limited to the material production of concrete objects in space and the mental production of ideas on paper. Instead, as Lefebvre insists, our mental interaction with the world, our ordering, generalizing and abstracting, produces the world we encounter as much as the physical objects we create. This does not simply mean that humans produce reality. Humans produce how they perceive reality. In the theoretical and practical context of public space, this perception of reality is produced over time, through competing interests, ideas, visions and daily uses of a particular spatial location. As Lefebvre notes, space and time by themselves may not change, however our perceptions of them do change; – they become finer, more subtle, more profound and more differentiated. Within the context of public space, a modern analysis of production shows that society has passed from the production of economic things in space, to the production of and struggle for the actual public space itself (Elden, 2004; Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Public Space: there are many competing definition of 'public space'. For the purposes of this research, public space refers to any piece of land where people have a right and freedom to act and interact with each other at any given time. In the contested discourse

of urban society and spaces, public spaces are State-owned concrete spaces that are scientifically appropriated through planning and architectural means over time, for people to use. Examples of public space include squares, streets, and parks (Atkinson, 2003; Varna, 2009).

Rhythmanalysis: refers to a new science, a new field of knowledge that must be continuously related to *social practice*. Rhythmanalysis evokes questions of difference and repetition, interaction of space, time and expenditure of energy, as well as their composition. It involves interception between cyclical (natural) and linear (social) rhythms, frequency and measure. For Lefebvre, rhythms are historical [past] but also everyday [present and ongoing]. Rhythmanalysis is at the heart of the lived. Theoretically it calls for the thinking of 'space' and 'time' together, where often the two are kept separate and distant. Space and time, as Lefebvre argues, are indispensable coordinates of everyday life. Rhythmanalysis is an analysis that does not lose sight of the living human body—of the rhythm analyst and the human subjects of his or her interest— as producers of space in a philosophical context, where both are neglected by contemporary discourses. The foundational assignment of rhythmanalysis is to examine changes in society through time *and* space. It culminates from an interest in everyday life, coupled by a return to the analysis of *urban* landscapes that is philosophically sound and politically aware (Lefebvre, 1992/2004).

Social space: on theoretical terms, social space is not a mere thing amongst other things, nor is it a product among other products. It subsumes produced things and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity – their relative order and/or disorder. It is, for Lefebvre, the outcome or consequence of a sequence and set of operations that cannot be reduced to the rank of a simple object. As a highly complex and sophisticated space, there is nothing imagined, unreal or ideal about it. In itself social space is a consequence of past actions that can allow fresh actions to occur while suggesting others and prohibiting yet others. It is a highly contradictory space that implies a diversity of knowledge (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Space: in the context of this research space is a three-dimensional entity that is physical or concrete, mental or abstract and social *hence* political. Space is also perceived and understood as a dynamic entity produced by historically contingent social practices. A square, for example, is a concrete, mental and socially produced space that has been appropriated through scientific or abstract forms of knowledge, technology and the use of human labour to construct it. Before it became a 'square' – a conceived product – the physical space was directly lived and experienced by a group of unknown people, who brought to it their own unique social practices, generating new meanings in that specific spatial location before abstraction. Contest arises when a more powerful group of human beings 'colonise' that territorial society and its space, and transform it into something that they want and desire: this often has nothing to do with the earlier inhabitants who first lived and experienced that space. This action in space, through the course of time and history, has made and continues to make space [and any piece of urban or rural land in general] a contested, political and primary object of power struggles and critique (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Spatial triad: refers to a three-dimensional tool and abstract model for analysing and conceptualizing human life in space that humans occupy. This conceptual triad is

theoretically inspired by Karl Marx's binary dialectic, and conceptually informed and shaped by Friedrich Nietzsche's creative thinking that inspired and informed Lefebvre interest in and ultimate production of 'rhythm' as a philosophical project of everyday life. The spatial triad is a conceptual composition and representation of power and political relations governed by power in a given society where two sections of society: 'representational space' and 'representations of space' are dialectically opposed and cohesively suspended in 'spatial practice'. Each element of the trialectical model is whole, and overlaps with the other elements in an ongoing process of 'production' of space and reproduction of society in space (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Spectacle (society of): refers to a new stage in the development of capitalist urbanization. This social concept presents a strong shift towards an era, in the twenty-first century, whereby urban life is defined and significantly shaped by the politics of an image-saturated culture, driven by advertising, entertainment, television, culture industries and mass media, whilst concealing the alienating effects of capitalism. At the macro-urban level of global capital, the society of spectacle implies the production and consumption of planned mega-events like the FIFA World Cup. The budgets of potential host countries for these events are spent in the hope of economic uplift and global recognition in international tourist market economies. At the micro-level of everyday life, the ideal and reality of spectacle, is maintained through a constant circulation and bombardment of non-tourist images. The debilitating effects of capitalism as it takes full occupation of social life and space in cities, is perpetuated rather subtly via the production of local films, television programmes, newspaper stories, magazines and staged cultural events (Gotham, 2005, 2010).

1.8 Order of the Dissertation

The order of this dissertation is as follows. Following this Chapter is **Chapter 2** which is the literature review that is divided into three sections. The first section is an introduction to Henri Lefebvre and his spatial concepts that are used in the research as the conceptual framework for researching urban public space. The second section looks at four different urban case-studies conducted on squares and the different ways each square is theorized using Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad in *The Production of Space*. This is followed by a third and final section of the chapter that reviews the social production of public space from the geographical perspective and lived experiences of urban societies with a history of colonialism because it is not always well conceptualized how inhabitants in former colonies experience and produce public space. Also, urban spatial experiences and discourses from historically colonial geographical societies are significantly marginalized, discouraged and rendered inferior and developmental by Western standards.

Chapter 3 follows with a trans-historical presentation of the production of Mary Fitzgerald Square in colonial Johannesburg, South Africa. This trans-historical chapter is presented in a way that reveals the production narrative of Mary Fitzgerald Square through Lefebvre's spatial concepts that are conscious of continuity in space, and social changes through time. **Chapter 4** presents research findings based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2009 and 2010 in light of the square's nineteenth and twentieth-century history. Using the same fused conceptual formula of *The Production of Space*, this chapter presents contemporary urban life and social practices of inhabitants in twenty-first century Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown, Johannesburg. Through its findings this chapter makes the connections between the public space's interesting colonial history and its challenging *neo*-colonial politics of everyday life. **Chapter 5** is the concluding chapter of the dissertation. It discusses the highlights of the dissertation in terms of its occupation with and interest in urban public space from the perspective of urban Africa. Implications for public space research using Lefebvrian concepts built on ethnographic (lived) practice in human geography are articulated as important areas for further development and research.

CHAPTER 2
THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Public spaces are social spaces of everyday life. It is in these special spaces that social matters affecting ordinary inhabitants on a day to day basis, are observed, analysed and contested. From the *agora* of classical Athens, the *Roman Forums* and *coffee-houses*, and twentieth century *Hyde Park* in California (Camp II, 2003; Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Mitchell, 1995), these spaces have always occupied a central role in shaping the politics of Western culture and knowledge forms. This chapter presents a conceptual analysis of the way in which urban public spaces are struggled for in terms of their theoretical presentation and political representation in different societies by reviewing key literature sources and relevant case studies. Using Henri Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *The Production of Space*, I demonstrate how urban theory transforms present-day understandings of the social production of public spaces in cities and their contestations as everyday discourse of multidimensional elements at work in contradictory ways. Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* is a key literature through which different case-studies and public space literature is reviewed.

With Lefebvre's accepted hypothesis that "(social) space is a (social) product" and hence political (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 26), this chapter draws from an understanding of *The Production of Space* as an integrated mixture of complete and incomplete works that Lefebvre produced in the course of his intellectual life (Unwin, 2000). For the purposes of this research, *The Production of Space* is not a one dimensional *oeuvre* composed only of the unitary social theory expressed by the spatial triad. The text is understood as a product and production of three interrelated creative works incoherently integrated into the single discourse of The Production of Space. These interrelated and overlapping works are

- The Spatial Triad
- The Right to the City
- Elements of Rhythmanalysis

These distinct *oeuvres* have been, and continue to be, used, as individual theories across the scientific knowledge spectrum, in efforts to articulate an urban society's production processes and political uses of its shared public space (Bieler, 2009; Harvey, 2008; Mitchell, 2003; Neary and Amsler, 2012; Roy, 2005). In this review, I illustrate how these separated works are used to advance theoretical understandings of a respective

society's spatial formation, and the unique processes involved in the formation of its political discourse of everyday life on practical terms. Within this context of everyday life, I fuse the three individual works back into the unitary social theory of space, to argue Lefebvre's relevance for geographic thought today. The goal is to demonstrate how each individual work, written and conceived at different times by Lefebvre, relates to each other in urban spatial analysis, using select public space case-studies from major cities across the global world.

In the urban geographical context of this African research, Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *oeuvre* presents an opportune moment for a conceptual analysis of a public space in the continent's leading capital city, and its politics of everyday life shaping its production in the twenty-first century. This review of urban discourse emerges alongside broader, political issues and practices that championed by the elite in democratic societies and underpinned by the rhetoric of capitalism. Such dynamics operate at the planetary scale to regulate social uses of, and social life in, public spaces, to the aggravation and political marginalization of inhabitants whose 'spatial practices' are highly dependent on them.

2.2 Henri Lefebvre: a brief biography

Henry Lefebvre (1901-1991) was a French intellectual who was born in rural France, lived and worked in Paris. He is most renowned for his social and political philosophies as informed by his close reading of Karl Marx, Martin Heidegger and Friedrich Nietzsche (Elden, 2004). He was a historian in his own right, a radical urban activist and university lecturer whose works on rural life and the production of urban space, the State, colonization, technology and capital amongst others, contributed immensely to a variety of spatial and social disciplines (Elden, 2004; Goonewardena, Kipfer, Milgrom & Schmid, 2008; Elden & Moore, 2004). His academic prowess notwithstanding; Lefebvre led a fulfilled social and somewhat tumultuous spiritual life. In the context of social life, he was temporarily led away from the rigid world of academia and thrust into a creative one composed of literature, poetry, music, visual art, films, radio and women: all in pursuit of his life's passions.

On one occasion he worked as a taxi driver in Paris following a minor car accident, before returning forcefully, to the mental realm and political space of knowledge

production and contestation after World War II (Elden, 2004). As a scholar, Lefebvre broke philosophical barriers that enabled him to advance his predecessor, Karl Marx, mostly because of his deep engagement with the work of Friedrich Nietzsche[3]. Lefebvre's advancement of Karl Marx, like Albert Einstein did Newtonian physics, does not however mean that he abandoned Marxist thinking in his scholarship. He advanced abstract Marxism and capital by spatializing it in the concrete space of everyday life as it is produced in its difference by the human body.

Lefebvre's scholarly contributions were however met with fierce resistance in his Francophone territory (Aronowitz, 2007). He became an unpopular force within academic circles to the point of marginalization in European intellectual circles mostly due to his divergent political views with the Parti Communist Français (PCF) in twentieth century Paris (Elden, 2004; Moore, 2013). These events however, culminated in to the production of his magnum opus, *The Production of Space*, for which he is most cited (Unwin, 2000).

2.3 The Spatial Triad: a theoretical framework

Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* was first published in 1974 in French as 'la production de l'espace'. Its English translation by Donald Nicholson-Smith, published in 1991, is heralded as a critical milestone in advancing Lefebvre's thinking and scholarship beyond Francophone Europe (Goonewardena et al., 2008; Merrifield, 1993). The scholarly literature begins with a detailed overview appropriately titled "Plan of the present Work", about the historical and philosophical evolution, of the *concept* and material *thing* called 'space' (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, pp. 1-11; 68-74). Traditionally the terrain of early philosophers, space, as dry solid continental landmasses, is not the creation of human kind. Rather, as Lefebvre (1974/1991) contends, it is produced by human and animals as part of created nature.

As home for humans this complex territory, along with nature that sprouted from below, above and around it, was soon mastered by the human race as the dominant species in it (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). With time and the advent of the enlightenment movement

[3] Friedrich Nietzsche's name appears extensively in Lefebvre's (1991) *The Production of Space*. Although his works like *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *Ecce Homo* have been read independently, they are not incorporated in this review and dissertation. They are however acknowledged as critical influence of Lefebvre's spatial works.

(Seidman, 2004), humanity claimed domination not only over nature and its space. It also came to dominate itself and different parts of itself at different times through spatial practice (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). Lefebvre (1992/2004) situates the 'domination-exploitation' of animals or nature by the human race as a social and spatial practice that turned against them. With the course of time as history, human success over, and mastery of, nature created its own complex of practical consequences at the global scale. Those who cultivated the earth, as Lefebvre (1992/2004) notes, treated it as a generous divinity and loved it. The living human and animal beings that inhabited it were raw materials that each society treated in its own way. Domination and mastery of nature by humans consequently led to conditions "in which *human beings* separated themselves from each other: on the one hand the masters, men worthy of this name – and on the other, the subhumans, treated like animals, and with the same methods: dominated, exploited, humiliated" (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 52; original emphasis).

This is an important point that informs the character of the reviewed literature in light of the historical context of this 'African' research. Since the advent of human society's spatial practice of dividing itself and separating itself from itself, the struggle to claim, define and redefine human produced and inhabited spaces like settlement spaces, biological spaces of sexual reproduction, along with associated labour relations of pre-historic agrarian societies, has endured (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). Prior the rise and spread of Western capitalism and enlightenment human relationships in space were neither as complex nor complicated in their respective societies. Lefebvre teaches that

> in precapitalist societies, the two interlocking levels of biological (bodily) reproduction and socio-economic production, together constituted social reproduction – that is to say, the reproduction of society as it perpetuated itself generation after generation, conflict, feud, strife, crisis and war notwithstanding…The advent of capitalism, and more particularly 'modern' neocapitalism, has rendered this [dual] state of affairs considerably more complex. Here *three* interrelated levels must be taken into account: (1) *biological reproduction* (the family); (2) the *reproduction of labour power* (the working class *per se*); and (3) the *reproduction of the social relations of production* – that is, of those relations which are constitutive of capitalism and which are increasingly (and increasingly effectively) sought and imposed as such. The role of space in this tripartite ordering of 'things' […] needs to be examined in its specificity
> (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 32; original emphasis)

What is significant in the human-capital trialectic articulated by Lefebvre above is that human production, as well as capital reproduction is historical material with defined 'spatial' or landed qualities. In their own struggle against themselves in material space, humans are therefore political beings that act and interact with each other in space to produce political spaces through language, culture, trade, and knowledge exchanges; as well as legal and political institutions like courts, schools and governments (Butler, 2009; Lefebvre, 1974/1991). It is for this reason that Lefebvre posits the hypothesis that (social) space is a (social) production and not creation because it is through this created platform that human beings extend themselves through the production of their own imagined spaces as creative and territorial creatures.

The entry of capitalism in the binary dialectic of pre-capitalist societies transformed pre-existing relationships into three dimensional relationships that intersected each other at different levels and times across different societies. Armed with this predominantly Marxist knowledge, Lefebvre sought a unitary theory that departed with the dominant tradition in Western philosophy that conceived territorial 'space' as an empty container and mathematical construct waiting to be filled with social contents (Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Watkins, 2005; Zhang, 2006).

For Lefebvre human inhabited and produced space represents itself as a decisive catalyst in the continuum of bio-physical production and social reproduction of capitalist relations. Earth space is therefore not an abstracted, distant object, but a living entity that embraces "an indefinite multitude of spaces, each one piled upon or perhaps contained within the next: geographical, economic, demographic, sociological, ecological, political, commercial, national, continental, global. Not to mention nature's (physical) space, the space of (energy) flows, and so on" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 8). Through this historical understanding of the evolution of Lefebvre's conception of space, a unitary theory emerged, situating a single geographical space in context as a three-dimensional product and production with defined concrete (physical), mental (abstract) and social (political) qualities.

Lefebvre (1974/1991) articulated these three-dimensions of space in his abstract model known as 'the spatial triad' that sought to ground his quest for a 'unitary theory' "that aims to discover or construct a theoretical unity between 'fields', which are

apprehended separately…first, the *physical* – nature, the Cosmos; secondly, the *mental*, including logical and formal abstractions; and, thirdly, the *social*" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 11). Interestingly, this unitary theory Lefebvre seeks fails to come together and remains incomplete because "the necessary critical moment does not occur" (Ibid, 11; emphasis added). This, as mentioned earlier, he presented through his 'spatial triad', an abstract model of "three elements and not two" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 39). This conceptual model informs the basis of Lefebvre's social theory and spatial understanding of social relationships of power, domination and reproduction of capital in these fluid relationships.

The spatial triad is a unitary whole of three overlapping and interrelated social elements or terminology known scientifically as 'representational space', 'spatial practice' and 'representations of space' (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). Conceptually, these scientific terms are also known as Lived Space, Perceived Space and Conceived Space respectively[4]. A discussion of what each element of the spatial triad represents, how each aspect relates to the other in the theoretical framework of space as a physical, mental and social entity through which everyday life occurs, follows.

2.3.1 Representational space

Representational space or 'space of representation' (Leary, 2013), is the social space in the spatial triad that is predominantly produced by 'inhabitants' *and/or as* users of a defined physical location through their bodies as they experience and perceive the world around them (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). It is a practical space of everyday lived experiences and hence 'lived space'. As conceptual space, it is produced through the active imagination of inhabitants who use its concrete quality for representational purposes. In the theoretical context of the spatial triad, lived (representational) space is the *dominated space* of "the body, of everyday life, of desire, of difference and of anti-Logos" (Merrifield, 1995, p. 297). It is a highly subjective, qualitative social space that is often linked to the clandestine or underground side of life "where alternative imaginations of space are made possible in a terrain of struggle", (Simonsen, 2005) in Buser, 2012, p. 284). As a tangible and directly lived space of everyday life and spontaneous social encounters, representational space is produced by its inhabitants

[4] I use these terms and concepts interchangeably throughout the course of the dissertation.

through “complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not… also to art” (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 38). In its spatial practice, lived space produces itself as ‘differential’ space of resistance or counterculture (Martin & Miller, 2003), because it follows to its own ‘logic’. As differential space, it embraces all manner of social differences and informal relationships that privilege the *use-value* of inhabitants’ spatial location, through which they act and interact in representation of themselves (Elden, 2004; Leary, 2013).

Representational space is necessarily different from the ‘scientific’ imagination that always seeks to change and appropriate its spatial and social practices in theory as well as in practice. Scientific imagination always seeks to confine representational space to its sense of uniformity and formality thus countering its inherent ‘nature’ or quality to resist imposed sets of rules of structured formality, consistency or cohesiveness (Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Merrifield, 1993). This perceivable space of inhabitants in lived space and users of lived space is an ongoing work of art or *oeuvre,* because it is alive: it speaks (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). It is an important space to observe and analyse because it is dominated, also because it is the medium through which human agency expresses itself in concrete space thus making its producers active ‘spatial beings’ (Sewell, 1992).

Through their physical occupation of and social experiences in that particular geographical area of representational practices, inhabitants produce a distinct ontological space of ‘sensory knowledge’ because “where there is space there is being” (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 22). Once this lived space is no longer produced actively by its inhabitants and users, it becomes a dominated space that its social actors experience passively as mere consumers who are displaced in the relations of producing that once lived and no longer representational space. Once its physical geography has been changed and its social landscape along with its practices have been appropriated, inhabitants and earlier users are relegated to the margins of that dominated geographical society’s space that is then produced and reproduced as contested space because of its power dynamics concealed by politics of use, displacement and representation.

2.3.2 Representations of space

Representations of space refer to the scientific or conceptual space in the spatial triad as well as in society (Watkins, 2005). It is also political space in the spatial triad as it is in

any organized society. It is the dominant space in any society because it plays a substantial role in the production of space; urban public spaces to be precise. As conceptual space, it is produced by knowledge specialists like planners, architects, engineers, philosophers, geographers and artists of scientific bent (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 38). Its political dimension makes it a particularly powerful and hence 'dominant' space in society because of the State or government's antagonistic political position and scientific knowledge at its disposal. With such authority, the State as conceived space has the power and political muscle to assign where and how planners and architects should appropriate certain locations for its own representations and spatial practices to prevail over the dominated society of inhabitants and its representational spaces of social practice.

Domination of society in space is usually achieved via the production of coded plans, maps, regulatory social policies, Law and spatial by-laws (Butler, 2009; Leary, 2013). The State in this trialectical *oeuvre*, is not an innocent space, since it has "the authority to make the rules which govern a society" (Scott & Marshall, 2009, p. 726). It has its own mode of production that is primarily concerned with organizing society in space, producing certain spaces through which to organize society and then subjecting a whole society in its political organization in space to its political practice – that is, to State power (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

The State, in this schema, is a monstrosity that is "consolidating on a world scale" as it "weighs down on society (on all societies) in full force; it plans and organizes society 'rationally', with the help of knowledge and technology, imposing analogous, if not homologous measures, irrespective of political ideology, historical background, or the class origins of those in power" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 23). As conceived space, representations of space dominates representational space because of its close ties with the "relations of production and to the 'order', which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to frontal relations" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 38). In urban reality, the spatial practice of conceived space in concrete life manifests through human operated bulldozers that radically transform perceived physical spaces of inhabitants, consequently appropriating their social practices to conform them to their own formal qualities (Elden, 2004; Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Merrifield, 1995). The dominance of this mental space of *scientific*, rather than *sensory* knowledge forms is

always resisted by lived space because the two are different and opposing spaces in the spatial triad. Conceived space is not simply a powerful and dominant space in society as it is in the triad, because of its knowledge pool, access to influential politicians and the State. It is powerful because of the omnipresent force of capital and technology which produce a highly advanced and distinct space Lefebvre (1974/1991) refers to as 'abstract space'. This advanced dimension of conceived space "dances to the tune of homogenising forces of money, commodities, capital", which opposes "the celebration of lived difference, of tradition, of *jouissance*, of sensual *differential* space" (Merrifield, 1995, p. 524; original emphasis). Through the sophistry of abstract space, in the realm of representations of space, society's spaces of representation are produced as complete and quantified 'products', rather than ongoing works of art (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Leary (2013) adds that abstract space perpetuates and further exploits State-regulated neoliberal capitalism that prioritizes *exchange-value* relations in space, with tendencies towards homogenization. Capitalism and neocapitalism produce abstract space, and through social relations of conceived space, it reproduces itself. This space, according to Lefebvre, "includes the 'world of commodities', its 'logic' and its worldwide strategies, as well as the power of money and that of the political state…founded on the vast networks of banks, business centres and major productive entities, as also on motorways, airports and information lattices" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 53). Much like the conceptual space of scientists, abstract space shares strong qualities with conceived space. Abstract space, like conceived space produced by the State, is a product of war and violence. It functions or works in society in "a highly complex way", because it is "the space of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, pp. 56-57). In spite of its high level mode of reproducing society's space, abstract space is 'political space' because it is instituted by a State, and hence institutional (Brenner & Elden, 2009).

Lefebvre contends that this space's social practices "serves those forces which make a *tabula rasa* of whatever stands in their way, of whatever threatens them – in short – of differences. These forces grind down and crush everything before them, with space performing the function of a plane, a bulldozer, or a tank" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 285). Through paper drawings, architects and urbanists work with abstract space. Their paper space, as Elden (2004) notes, is divorced from the level of lived experience and

space they are abstracting form. In their projection of their own imaginations and representations into abstracted lived space, the architect and urbanists "plan does not rest innocently on paper – on the ground it is the bulldozer that realizes these 'plans'" (Elden, 2004, p. 189). In this essence, space no longer acts as the passive geographic or geometric entity that societies sprout from. It has become instrumental – a tool for power, domination and resistance (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

From this distinction, between abstract space and conceived space in the realm of representations of space – the dominant space in any society, what is clear is the multidimensionality and complexity of each socially produced space in the three dimensional triad. The political struggle and power relations experienced between the lived space and conceived space as result of the inevitable outcome of their dialectical relationship, does not cancel either space or prohibit either to engage its practices in the concrete. Representations of space and representational space are able to co-exist in their dialectical or counter nature because they are 'harmoniously' suspended in dialectical unity in 'spatial practice', where continuity of each social space's spatial practices is guaranteed Lefebvre (1974/1991).

2.3.3 Spatial practice

This space is conceptually and practically the most sophisticated and complex space conceived by Lefebvre. Not only does it anchor the spatial triad on conceptual terms but it also renders the social production of space an intelligible process in concrete practice. Theoretically, spatial practice is the space in the triad with the least attention drawn to it and this often leads to its misconception in relation to the other two elements of the triad (Zhang, 2006). Spatial practice is interestingly three dimensional 'space' that is simultaneously third part of the spatial triad. It is in spatial practice that the binary dialectic of lived space and conceived space is maintained in a state of incoherent harmony. In each society's theoretical and practical make up, there is 'spatial practice', hence Lefebvre's (1974/1991) notion that a society's spatial practice secretes that society's space. Then, there is "spatial practice" as the third aspect of the triad. On its own it is not the culmination of lived space and conceived space; it makes them possible. Spatial practice facilitates social life. It does not create life; it facilitates it or makes its production possible (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

All spatial practice, as Lefebvre notes, is directly lived by inhabitants as users of a particular geographical location, *before* they are conceptualized "by the speculative primacy of the conceived over the lived, [which] causes practice to disappear along with life" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 34). Also referred to as perceived space, Buser (2012) describes it as the everyday space of sensory and observable phenomena, that can be seen, heard, smelled, touched and tasted. In its own right, spatial practice involves an ongoing or never ending *process* of physical, mental and social transformation. For Leary (2013, p. 7), spatial practice refers to "the physical, material city and its routine maintenance; its major redevelopment in the context of neo-capitalist and state power structures [intertwined with] routines of daily life". It is in essence a tangible, concrete space that is directly perceptible but not so readily discernible through and by the bio-physical senses (Descartes, 1912/1965; Lefebvre, 2004).

Spatial practice embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations characteristic of each social formation- representational space and representations of space. In spatial practice both human agency and structure, as social practices of lived space and conceived space respectively, are cohesively yet incoherently hinged (Purcell, 2002). It is through direct observation that a society's spatial practice is perceived. As Lefebvre notes, "the spatial practice of a society [lived *and/or* conceived] is revealed through the deciphering of its [geographical] space" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 38), by direct observation. On a wider scale, Lefebvre notes that the simultaneity of dialectical social 'events' and spatial relationships composing spatial practice, are themselves produced by and through it. For Lefebvre spatial practice brings together

> places – relationship of *local* to *global*; the representation of that relationship; actions and signs; the *trivialized spaces of everyday life*; and, in opposition to these lasts, spaces made special by symbolic means as desirable or undesirable, benevolent or malevolent, sanctioned or forbidden to particular groups…places of a purely *political* and *social* kind
> (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 289; emphasis added)

In terms of the political context of urban spaces, whose spatial practices were 'historically' lived before they were conceived by the neoliberal abstract space, Lefebvre explains that spatial practice "embodies a close association with perceived space between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, 'private' life and leisure)…that is a

paradoxical one, because it includes the most extreme separation between the places it links together" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 38). Inhabitants in this dimension are not left to the total destruction by the dominant space in society. In spatial practice, inhabitants are guaranteed a "level of *competence* and a specific level of *performance*" (Ibid, p. 33) as individual members of the State organized society.

Consider the example of homeless or street dwelling inhabitants in any urban context. For these inhabitants the conceived urban streets are not produced and designed for their representational uses (spatial practices). In their physical occupation of and social visibility in the urban streets, this dominated space in the urban society, gain some level of spatial competence that materializes in everyday life as the capacity to survive life in unpredictable and insecure circumstances (Crawford, 1995). By using conceived public space for different purposes, other than their intended function by design, the homeless inhabitants develop competence not only in the streets, but also socially. Through daily engagement - begging, or sleeping in the streets, urban wanderers are able to perform his or her duties in the respective society, in spite of the dominant order that always seeks to change and appropriate them for the sake of consistency, formality and homogeneity. This is spatial practice in its three dimensional element in light of the social politics of lived space and spatial practices of conceived space.

In terms of a society's relationship with itself, as a divided whole in the unitary triad, Lefebvre (1974/1991, p. 38) states that "the spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space". In this analytical statement, Lefebvre is only referring to the spatial practices of representational space and representations of space; not so much about spatial practice itself since it makes everything [social production and reproduction in/of space], including itself, possible. What Lefebvre therefore means about society's spatial practice is that each society produces its own space through its respective social activities, which are in turn its spatial practices, because everything that happens in life – war, death, birth, memory, history, language, thought – has a spatial aspect (Allen, 1999). How then does domination of inhabitants' spatial practices and lived experiences by conceived space occur?

Imagine a society of famers in a particular geographical space as land. These inhabitants' social practice of farming the land produces an agricultural/representational

space that is significantly informed by the spatial practice of farming. That farmed agricultural piece of land is the inhabitants' lived space. One day a government agent or capitalist walks through the territory of the farmers' representational space and sees their land as profitable for a shopping mall or high income residential complex. The agent of representations of space reports his site observation and immediately through buy in, construction plans, monetary and quasi-legal transactions are conceived. These plans to change and appropriate the perceived agricultural land-space of farming (food producing) inhabitants into something completely different, are then presented to the society of farmers for selling or surrender. Land exchange ends up taking place either way by force or by mutual consent with financial compensation to the now dispossessed farmers. Blue-prints soon follow these dynamics with well-defined engineering plans to physically transform the once agricultural perceived space. This process yields an inevitable appropriation of the social landscape, and hence generic spatial practice of that perceived space that is then inscribed or coded with signs, symbols and consumption practices of new class of inhabitants and users of the newly produced 'representational' space (Elden, 2004).

For Lefebvre, the social production of any space is a process and not 'the work of a moment'. It is a creative action takes time to materialize in full form. As social process space is produced by means of self-presentation and self-representation. Society produces space "slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 38). In spatial practice, even though a lived society's space can be politically dominated, its social practices appropriated, and its material location or representational space radically transformed, it will still be experienced but not directly lived, by misplaced inhabitants who no longer have an active role in its production or representation in space. Looking at the production process and domination politics of People's Park in Berkeley, California, Mitchell (2003) argues that a public space is made 'public' and is representational space, by virtue of its social uses by inhabitants. Only in and through use by inhabitants does planned and dominated representational space like People's Park, become truly representational. If left unused by inhabitants, Mitchell posits that the public space loses social meaning and stands in society only as a mere representation in space without a social reality.

In terms of the spatial triad, representations of space hold significant institutional power and economic influence over society, and its portion of/in spatial practice. It therefore becomes 'easy' for the dominant social order to retain power and re-enforce control over space and society. Various strategies are put in place to maintain the interests of the dominant in society. One of the primary means is to enlist the political arm of the State and through its conceived Laws, impose measures on representational space of inhabitants that criminalize their social practices in organized society (Butler, 2009; Elden, 2004). By making it illegal for the urban poor, for example, to use urban public space for their own personal, social or economic reasons, the power of conceived space is re-enforced in society but not without contest (Mitchell, 2003). Even with the State and its sophisticated Laws and plans conceived by experts, representations of space often fails to achieve absolute control and power over space through prohibitions that are always and readily transgressed by inhabitants (Crawford, 1995; Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Interestingly, inhabitants' 'outlawed' social practices are transformed by State logic, into legitimate *cause* for their physical (bodily) exclusion in designated urban public spaces, leading therefore, to their political marginalization and social exclusion from processes and relationships informing everyday life (Crawford, 1995; Mitchell, 2003). In this context Lefebvre put forward the notion that "a spatial [political] practice destroys social practice; social practice destroys itself by means of [its] spatial [everyday] practice" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 366). This presents an interesting problem regarding representational uses of conceived public space uses in cities filled with a rich diversity of inhabitants with different spatial needs, wants and desires, that conflict with those of the elitist few.

Homeless people living off begging and searching dustbins in cities for something to eat, cannot suddenly change their social practice out of fear that engaging it in urban practice, will lead to their demise, or eradication from the urban space. They engage their spatial practice in spite of imposed prohibitions, which are less life threatening than not engaging their spatial practice that guarantees their survival in harsh urban environments. It is for this reason that in spatial practice one finds the most extreme separation between the conceived places and the everyday people that these concrete spaces link together (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Figure 2 on page 38 is a representation of the dynamic interactions involved in the overlapping processes informing the production of a society's public space according to Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad. The diagram is followed by a table explaining icons in the spatial triad. What is fascinating about representational space of inhabitants in this dynamic schema is the fact that it repeatedly returns to its once directly lived spatial location, in spite of its domination and marginalization from its production. The one-way broken line from lived space to conceived space signifies inhabitants' resistance and counter-practices to their domination in space but only through social practice. The second solid line directly above the broken line of inhabitants, is also a one-way power relationship from conceived space over the discourses of lived space in spatial practice.

In their contradictory social practices both inhabitant's representational space and planers, politicians, artists and capitalists' representations of the former representational space, meet only in the concrete realm where their dialectical relationships find expression. The actual square in this regard, by virtue of it being a scientifically constructed space represents the domination of conceived space in its production as a site that once represented the imageries and spatial practices of its estranged lived space of inhabitants.

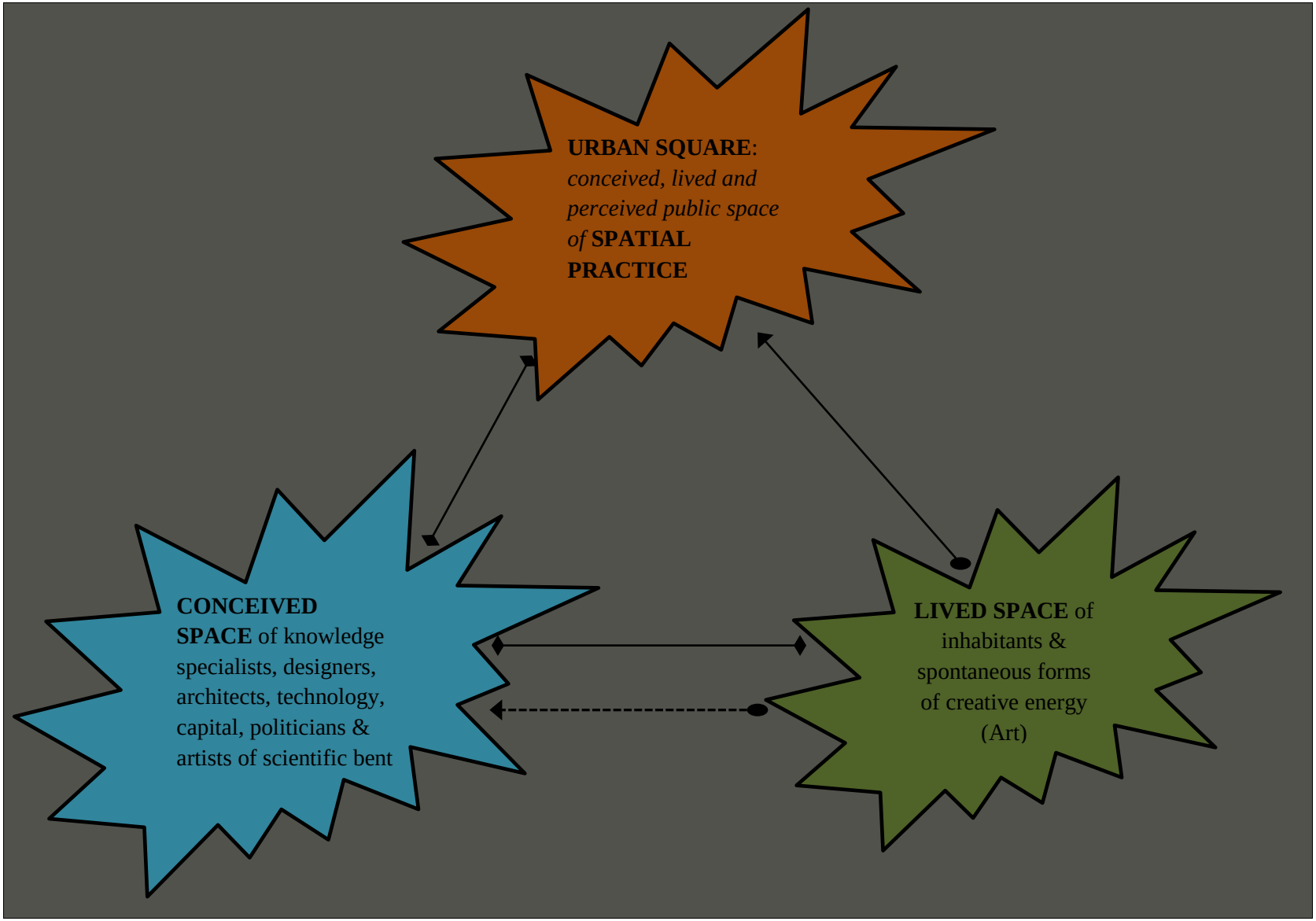


Figure 2. Lefebvre's Spatial Triad. (Source: author, 2014)

Figure 3. Table 1. Icons in Lefebvre's Spatial Triad

Icons in spatial triad	Description of elements of the spatial triad
	The dominant space in society of capitalists, politicians, scientists and artists of scientific bent. All society is subjected to its political practice
	The dominated space of inhabitants in society. This is the differential space that the dominant always seeks to change and appropriate.
	The material location of spatial practice where dialectical social practices of lived space and conceived space are expressed and experienced.
	The directly lived relationship of inhabitants with the public space, long after appropriation and changes by conceived space.
	The directly conceived relationship of planners, architects and politicians with a particular space.
	A one way power (dominance) relationship and discourse with conceived space over lived space and its society of inhabitants.
	A one way counter-power relationship with lived space towards conceived space. This power relationship is directly expressed in space via inhabitants' social practices or uses of conceived space.

Representational space inscribes itself in conceptual urban space in the form of class struggle between the poor majority and the affluent few making up the bourgeoisie in urban society. By virtue of its incoherent design and resilient spirit, representational space "…prevents abstract space from taking over the whole planet and papering over all difference" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 55). Lived space, as Lefebvre further notes,

does not need to obey any rules of consistency or cohesiveness. Their source is hidden in history – "in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual belonging to that people" (Ibid, p. 41). What is clear from Lefebvre's spatial triad is that the interrelationships between the triad's three different elements are never either simple or stable (Leary, 2009; Lefebvre, 1974/1991). What is certain though is that the conceptual and practical clash between inhabitants' representational uses of public space, and the planners and politicians' conceived *and* abstract uses of space, plays out in a cohesive yet incoherent manner in the perceived space of sensory and observable phenomena.

For any society's spatial practices to be analysed and made known to the analyst, the observer must necessarily "arrive at the **concrete** [from the abstract] *through* [practical] experience" (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 21; emphasis added). Lefebvre summarizes in succinct fashion the mechanics of the spatial triad, stating

> It is reasonable to assume that spatial practice, representations of space and representational space contribute in different ways to the production of space according to their qualities and attributes, according to the society or mode of production in question, and *according to the historical period*
> (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 46; original emphasis)

Throughout *The Production of Space* and more specifically his conception of the spatial triad, Lefebvre (1974/1991) makes clear his political stance towards the perceived space of inhabitants – that is, of representational space and sensory knowledge, over representations of space and scientific knowledge because of the latter's domination of the former. In addition, Lefebvre explicitly prioritizes the social significance of representational space because "the 'heart' as *lived* is strangely different from the heart as thought and perceived" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 40; original emphasis). In his summary of the spatial triad as a conceptual framework through which space is understood, analysed, conceptualized and contested, Lefebvre notes that the triad's core function or purpose, is to grasp the concrete by revealing the complex and competing ways by which lived space produces itself and how its spatial practices are shaped by but not conforming to, the political practices of conceived space in everyday life.

In his own words

> The perceived-conceived-lived triad (in spatial terms: spatial practice, representations of space, representational space) loses all force if it is treated as an abstract 'model'. If it cannot grasp the concrete (as distinct from the 'immediate'), then its import is severely limited, amounting to no more than that of one ideological mediation among others. That the lived, conceived and perceived realms should be interconnected, so that the 'subject', the individual member of a given social group, may move from one to another without confusion – so much is a logical necessity. Whether they constitute a coherent whole is another matter (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 40).

Of serious importance to note is the fact that the spatial triad is a unitary whole. None of its whole elements, that is, representational space, spatial practice and representations of space, cannot be and should not be considered in isolation from each other. As Lefebvre (1974/1991) noted earlier, the spatial triad is an abstract 'model' or device of 'three and not two' interrelated and overlapping elements. Lefebvre's spatial triad has been interpreted, tried and tested since the 1970s by urban theorists like David Harvey, Mark Gottdiener and Edward Soja (Leary, 2013; Unwin, 2000). McCann (1999) used the spatial triad to expose concealed dynamics of racial tension and spatial inequality in Lexington, United States of America. In his empirical study, McCann theorized an event experienced by segregated African American inhabitants, whose spatial politics were revealed by the death of a young inhabitant who was killed by a white police officer.

Through interrogating the respective elements of the spatial triad, McCann (1999) found that paying attention to the politics of conceived space was as important as looking at representational space. For McCann, the way in which inhabitants experienced their conceived representational spaces was significantly informed by ideological practices and representations of conceived space which determined their social practices and political identities in everyday life. Knott (2005) also used the spatial triad to conceive a method in the geography of religion, to research the production of religious spatial practices. In his study, Knott (2005) established the body of human beings as primary locations, if not sources of, religion and religious beliefs. For Knott, Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad revealed the human body as core representational space that gives religious elements their true meaning in society. In concrete terms, the church and mosques served as symbolic spaces that are conceived in part to regulate the body's

spatial practices in religious discourses and to also appropriate its social practices where inhabitants deviate from the set values and morals informing religious conduct.

In another field, Stockburger (2006) used Lefebvre's spatial triad to elucidate the hidden social and spatial organization of online (virtual) games and gamers as users of these abstract spaces of virtual games. For Stockburger, virtual rules informing online games were the structure produced by game designers as conceived space to gamers. The human players were lived space who engaged the spatial practice of mental space of designers through directly interacting with its designed rules from their dispersed geographical locations around the world. Stockburger (2006) concluded that the world of online games was physical, mental and social. It is physical because it requires a material location from where players are spatially grounded as they interact with the virtual rules of the game through programmed computers. It is simultaneously social because different human players are able to connect with each other through virtual devices from wherever they are around the world. Lastly, the online gaming world is abstract or mental because the built-in rules of the games that all gamers must adhere to irrespective of where they are and who they are, are all conceived.

Many fields and studies that have been undertaken to make use of Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad and found it profoundly beneficial. Watkins (2005) renders the triad to be an exceptional tool for organizational studies. In planning, Carp (2008) praises the practicality of the triad in its ability to sensitize planning students' consciousness about the perceived representational spaces they affect in practice, and through their practice beyond theory based lectures. Elsewhere Lefebvre's spatial triad has received praise for its ability to offer itself as a timely discourse for a practical contextualization and analyses of Occupy Movements and radical transformation of social science curricula and education research (Neary & Amsler, 2012; Schmidt & Babits, 2014). It is obvious that Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad of perceived-lived-conceived space is not limited by the scientific make-up of research fields.

There is no area of life and in society that the spatial triad cannot shed light on. Both Lefebvre (1974/1991) and McCann (1999) caution users to transport the triad in their contexts of research interests with great care and understanding of its mechanisms, so that it does not end up being a mere hollow 'model' that is used casually in abstraction

from the political and social aspects that inform it. In terms of Lefebvre's (1968/1996) philosophical framework of the Right to the City, how does the spatial triad relate to this work, and how does the framework in turn re-enforce the spatial triad in concrete practice? The next subsection clarifies this theoretical connection.

2.4 The city as 'public space': the Right to the City

May 1968 was a period of radical social uprising in Paris, France as well as the United States (Seidman, 2004). In France in particular, scores of discontented inhabitants made up of university students, scholars, youth, musicians, lawyers, journalists, physicians and blue collar workers, clashed with law-enforcement agents in the streets protesting against war and the domination of neoliberal capitalism over everyday life (McNamara, 2010; Mitchell, 2003; Seidman, 2004). Lefebvre responded to this political situation that he also experienced through the production of La droit á la ville' (Right to the City) in 1968, and was translated by Elizabeth Lebas and Eleonore Kofman in 1996 as 'Writings on Cities'. In *The Production of Space* Lefebvre seeks to articulate the spatial practice of capital and capitalism. In their abstract power capital and capitalism have real, practical effects that inevitably harbour negative consequences for everyday life beyond the physical realm of the built environment.

Through thorough theoretical work on urbanization and capital, Lefebvre formulated the explicitly political and urban focused philosophical framework that is replete with its own three interrelated concepts hinged on two practical principles. The Right to the City paradigm is based on an understanding that the material, geographical location of 'the city' is an *oeuvre*, to which people have a right. In urban societies where cities are produced *for* people rather than *by* them Lefebvre argues that people deserve more and *should* have more (Purcell, 2002). For Lefebvre, the Right to the City is an ideal right that is "related to objective needs, needs that any city *should be* structured towards meeting: "the need for creative activity, for the *oeuvre*, (not only products and consumable material goods), the need for information, symbolism, the imaginary and play" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 18). Theoretically, this rights-oriented framework in the city, positions itself as a superior right: "to freedom, individualization in socialization [difference], to habitat and to inhabit" (Ibid).

Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City is informed by three overlapping ideas and two interrelated principles. The first idea is that the physical space of the city is 'public' space because it is where a diverse range of social interactions and exchanges take place. Secondly, being 'public' space, the city makes demands on its heterogeneous quality since it is a material location where encounters with social differences thrive and are guaranteed. Lastly, differences in the city create struggles as different people compete over the social morphology of the city, terms of access to its public realm and the right to 'citizenship' (Brown & Kristiansen, 2009; Mitchell, 2003; UNESCO UN-HABITAT, 2005). In essence, the city itself embodies the representational aspects and conceived elements expressed by spatial practice in the spatial triad. In other words, the material, geographical city is urban spatial practice in its complexity and sophistication.

Social relationships of struggle over the material production and representations of the urban landscape, through the city itself as public space or its streets, squares and parks, are therefore inevitable. With these three overlapping ideas that correspond to the spatial triad in a vague way, Lefebvre makes an explicit assertion that the social struggle for the Right to the City, the right to the *oeuvre*, is political. The two principles informing this superior form of rights in the city are the right to appropriation and the right to participation. According to Dikeç (2002), the Right to the City is an approach to advance inhabitants' participation in the political life of capitalist cities in democratic societies. At this point it is important to note that whilst urban space is a precondition for the Right to the City, democracy on the other hand, is not. Democracy is however, important for theoretical understandings of the philosophical framework and its application and realization in democratized societies.

For Purcell (2002;2003), the Right to the City represents new urban politics of the inhabitant, rather than citizen, who must actively participate in the political life of the city through appropriation of its conceived material spaces and economic relations after their heart's desires. Harvey (2008) adds that the Right to the City is not merely a right to appropriate and change what is already there. It is an invitation to the realm of political decision-making about social matters that affect inhabitants in the course of their everyday life experiences in their respective urban holding. For Lefebvre (1968/1996), the Right to the City is a social framework that seeks to empower disenfranchised inhabitants who, in their diversity as representational space, remain

increasingly on the marginalized outskirts of decision-making and related governance processes affecting them (Harvey, 2003; Malena, 2009). For Dikeç (2002), the Right to the City framework is therefore an enabling right that ought to be defended and defined, over and over through political struggle, within the structures of urban democracy. Due to the contested nature of citizen and citizenship (Carr, Francis, Rivlin & Stone, 1991; Hobson & Lister, 2001; McEwan, 2005; Painter & Philo, 1995;), Lefebvre moved away from conventional, legal and geographically bound definitions of 'citizen' and 'citizenship' described by political and legal theory, to a single but complex construct that embraces racial, religious, cultural, sexual, educational and ethnic differences in the urban society and producing its spaces through necessary struggle for representation. Lefebvre fused the concept of citoyens (citizens) with citadin (urban dweller), to produce an 'inhabitant', who is any human being: man, woman, child and youth, rich or poor, slave or free, African or European, who dwells in or inhabits the city, irrespective of their nationality, legal status, political affiliation or historical position in that urban society (UN-HABITAT, 2005).

These inhabitants, in their diversity and complexity are representational space in society, and they deserve the right to the *oeuvre* of their choice. This is important because 'citizenship' is not a universal political construct. For a long time it was the privilege of a select, racial few with enormous gender biased towards men and boys, rather than women and girls across the racial divide until about late nineteenth and twentieth century (Hobson & Lister, 2001). In continental Africa for example, the inclusion of Africans into Western constructs of citizenship and citizen are recent occurrences that make current discourses of citizenship and citizen identities in the context of this research awkward. Through the Right to the City framework, the elusive *use*-value and *exchange*-value dynamics of public spaces become apparent. Furthermore, concealed tensions amongst and within different fractions of representational space are revealed.

In a case study investigating the social rights of Mumbai's street hawkers, Anjaria (2006) found that street hawkers' political exclusion and spatial marginalization in the city was encouraged by other inhabitants working closely with the State to remove them altogether from urban life. This political struggle for urban space informs the spatial politics of Mumbai street hawkers as marginalized inhabitants who should have a right

to participate in the everyday life of their city, and to freely appropriate its streets according to their heart's desires. This complex dynamic in urban space led Marcuse (2009) to pose the fundamental and problematic question 'who's right to which city?'

In most European and North-American cities, increasing numbers of young people, the homeless and Africans, continue to experience injustices created by capitalism on a global scale (Doherty et al., 2008; Harvey, 2008; Mitchell, 1995). Skateboarders, for example, are a dynamic group of young inhabitants who occupy lived space of the spatial triad. The spatial practice of skateboarding is consequently an instrument of skateboarding inhabitants' marginalization in processes concerning the social production of urban public spaces. This contested issue is however undamaging to their social capacity or spatial competence to appropriate the physical public spaces they desire and to socialize in urban space (Chiu, 2007, 2009; Karsten & Pel, 2000; Németh, 2006). Through their spatial practice of skateboarding, this group of inhabitants present the Right to the City as a 'lived' and practical right that is claimed through social practices. The Right to the City is therefore not an ordinary right that is freely given by authorities or dominant spaces through negotiated processes or mediated relationships. It is taken through and by practice.

Fusing this philosophical and practical framework with the conceptual spatial triad amplifies the politics of inhabitants and their diverse struggles in conceived urban spaces, to produce representational spaces, through active participation in the production of everyday life. How then does the Right to the City and the spatial triad connect with Lefebvre's (1992/2004) general theory of rhythmanalysis to aid conceptual understandings of the social production and urban politics of public space?

2.5 Rhythm and the analysis of public space

The Production of Space is replete with rhythm analytical discourse throughout its six chapters, specifically in Chapter 3: "Spatial Architectonics" and Chapter 1: "Plan of the Present Work". Lefebvre's production of and interest in 'rhythm' was first published in 1992 as *Éléments de rhythmanalyse* and was translated in 2004 by Stuart Elden and Gerald Moore as Elements of Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life. With rhythm, Lefebvre (1992/2004) sought to establish a new science, a research field of rhythm with practical consequences. With rhythm, Lefebvre puts forth the hypothesis

that everywhere that space, time and expenditure of energy interact, there is rhythm. In light of the Right to the City and the spatial triad, Lefebvre's rhythm is also informed by three interrelated concepts: those of space, time and expenditure of energy. Since space is already a given in Lefebvre's social theories, rhythm is elevated in research context by virtue of its special attention to time in space and how social relationships and spaces are changed in time. Rhythm falls back into the Right to the City by enhancing the dynamic nature of power relations in the production of public spaces in urban societies, how these are transgressed and re-enforced in specific periods in human history and in in different societies. In terms of the conceptual relationship between Lefebvre's (1992/2004) rhythm and spatial triad, rhythmanalysis could benefit our conceptual understandings of how inhabitants in urban society, are organized and reorganized through the course of time by conceived abstract space of capital, whose spatial practices are to 'empty' public squares and streets of their social practices only to fill them with its own representations.

Lefebvre's (1974/1991) caution expressed in *The Production of Space*, concerning the uses of the spatial triad for analytical purposes, are also echoed in the trialectical arrangement of elements of rhythmanalysis: space, time and expenditure of energy. For Lefebvre (1992/2004) to consider any of these three elements in isolation from the other, is to have empty abstractions without social meaning and practical sense. In terms of his interest on urban society and the concrete public spaces it acts and interacts in, Lefebvre classifies rhythm according to four categories which are

- ***Secret* rhythms**: first, physiological rhythms, but also psychological ones (recollection and memory, the said and the non-said, etc.)
- ***Public*** (therefore social) **rhythms**: calendars, fetes, ceremonies and celebrations; or those that one declares and those than one exhibits as *virtuality*, as expression (digestion, tiredness, etc.)
- ***Fictional* rhythms**: eloquence and verbal rhythms, but also elegance, gestures and learning processes. Those which are related to false secrets, or pseudo-dissimulations (short-, medium-and long-term calculations and estimations). The imaginary!
- ***Dominating-dominated* rhythms**: completely made up: everyday or long lasting, in music or in speech, aiming for an effect that is beyond themselves

  (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 18; original emphasis)

From this classification, Lefebvre presented a not so perfectly formed representation of dialectical relationship between representational space and representations of space for spatial practice. Public rhythms are inspired by organized events while fictional rhythms - of abstract calculations and homogenisation of public space - lead to a concrete materialization of capital in urban reality and the full occupation of capitalism in everyday life, society, hence the production of public rhythms concealed by the rhetoric of dominating-dominated rhythms. In Chapter 3: "Seen from the Window", Lefebvre (1992/2004) explains that, “in order to grasp and analyse rhythms, it is necessary to get outside of them, but not completely…however, to grasp a rhythm, it is necessary to have been grasped by it” (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 27). What Lefebvre is therefore implying, is that if an urban a researcher is to understand a particular society’s rhythm as distinguishable from ‘spatial practice’, it is important for the research analyst to be an outside observer, but only up to a certain point.

In order for a rhythm analyst to be in a position to analyse a society’s rhythmic practices and politics, they must give way and allow themselves to be ensconced in the dynamics of that society’s everyday lived experiences via participant observation. Lefebvre (1992/2004) further notes, a degree of “exteriority enables the analytic intellect to function…one must *let oneself go*, give oneself over, abandon oneself to its [rhythm] duration. Like in music and the learning of language…in order to *grasp* this fleeting object, which is not exactly an *object*, it is therefore necessary to situate oneself simultaneously inside and outside” (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 27; original emphasis). In so doing, we produce a textual presentation, describing the bodies of the man, the woman, the child, or the youth as pedestrians, using their energies to produce a given urban society’s space (Meyer, 2008; Pafka, 2013).

Situating public, secret, fictional and dominating-dominant rhythms in the spatial context of a square, Lefebvre richly describes the spatial practices of a distinct square in twentieth century Paris. After many hours of silent observations from his balcony and deep, poetic meditations, Lefebvre’s (1992/2004) “Seen from the Window” offers street and square level accounts of everyday life and spatial practices in the conceptual context of rhythmanalysis. Since this dissertation is particularly interested in squares, it makes sense to extract from Lefebvre’s experience of a square’s political rhythm, as seen from his apartment window

> …the crowds, the masses on the square at Beuabourg…the squares have re-found their ancient function, for a long time imperilled, of gathering, of setting the scene and staging spontaneous popular theatre…here on the square…fire eaters, jugglers, snake charmers, but also preachers and sit-in discussions. Openness and adventure next to dogmatic armour-plating. All possible games, material and spiritual. Impossible to classify, to count. Without doubt many deviant wanderers that seek, knowing not what for – themselves! But many who seek only to forget not town nor country, but their own corners. And for hours and hours they walk, find themselves back at the junctions, circle the places that are closed and enclosed. They almost never stop, eating some hot-dog or other as they walk (rapid Americanisation). On the square, they occasionally stop walking, staring straight ahead of them; they no longer know what to do. Watching, half-listening to those pitching their wares, then taking up again their unrelenting march. There on the square, there is something maritime about the rhythms.
>
> Currents traverse the masses. Streams break off, which bring or take away new participants. Some of them go towards the jaws of the monster, which gobbles them down in order to quite quickly throw them back up. The tide invades the immense square, then withdraws: flux and reflux. The agitation and the noise are so great that the residents [as inhabitants distinct from users] have complained. The fateful hour: ten o' clock in the evening, noises forbidden: so the crowd becomes silent, calm but more melancholy; oh fatal ten o'clock at night! The spectacle and murmur disappeared, sadness remains…the pseudo-fête emerges only apparently from the everyday...with a perfected organisation that reunites *everything* – advertising, culture, arts, games, propaganda, rules of work, urban life…and the police keep vigil, watch over
> (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, pp. 35-36; original emphasis)

From Lefebvre's rhythm analysis of the square, its diverse and simultaneous social practices are inherent features of its general spatial practice. In his lived experiences observing the square, Lefebvre paints a picture of the square as a physically open space that is socially accessible to inhabitants and open to all forms of users. Snake charmers and lost wanderers traversing the square with no purpose at all, and also preachers and other users who sought the square for sitting and to and have casual discussions about matters of interest to them, are some examples Lefebvre's gives about the social richness of this Parisian society's heterogeneous lived space in its element in conceived space. Inhabitants of the square as users, whom Lefebvre makes a point to distinguish from inhabitants of the city as residents occupying surrounding flats, experienced the Right to the City in their daily engagement with the square, without too much regulation and prohibitions.

From a *use*-value perspective, these inhabitants had personal as well as collective liberties to participate in daily discourses in their different capacities through appropriating the conceived space into a representational space that met their spiritual needs and social desires, despite police presence in the square. The function of the police in the square is to keep watch as Lefebvre mentions, but keep watch over who or what exactly, is not further explained. It surely could not have been to keep certain groups of inhabitants from appropriating the square because from Lefebvre's social description, the square's users were tolerant of each other and so was the urban State tolerant of each respective user. In this public space, "opposites re-find each other, recognise one another, in a reality that is at the same time more *real* and more ideal, more complicated than its elements that are already accounted for" (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 37). Perhaps their presence was to ensure that peace and harmony is maintained between different users. Slowly the invisible hand of capitalism reveals itself as facilitator of some urban experiences and social life in the public space.

Through its organization of different members of the representational public society of strangers and familiars, abstract space quickly replaces the unorganized spectacle or spatial practices of inhabitants that prevail during the day. From ten o' clock in the evening the organizing logic of abstract space of capital sets in to extract profits and reproduce itself in the process through its own spectacle composed of advertising, culture, arts, organized games and so forth. Interestingly, it is only in the rhythmic context of capital domination of the square that Lefebvre actually mentions the presence of the police. Perhaps then, they were not present in the public space to maintain peace, order and harmony amongst inhabitants. Maybe, they were deployed at the square at ten o clock at night to protect the commercial interests of abstract space since the square is more an organized consumption space at night than it is a disorganized production space during the day. Either way, this public space has a life and it reflects all things democratic, representational and capitalistic.

Taking into account the dynamics involved in the social production of space, Lefebvre's conceptual theories, in the context of this research, are fused together in their multidimensionality and presented as an interdependent cohesive three-dimensional complex, of theoretical frameworks that together constitute *The Production of Space* in its essence (see Figure 4 on next page).

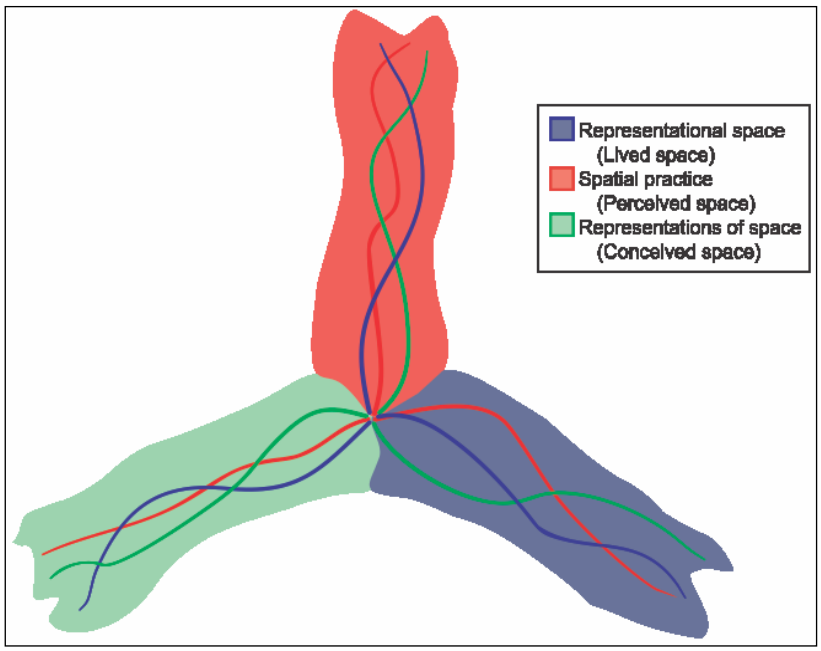


Figure 4. *The Production of Space* in three-dimensional context. (Source: author,2013)

For the purposes of this dissertation, Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *The Production of Space* in its creative Nietzcshean, Hegelian philosophy, Heidegger's metaphysics and Marxist social context, occupies the superior realm of 'spatial practice'. Everything begins with it, returns to it and 'ends' or continues through it. The Right to the City (1968/1996) is explicitly political [democratic] and inherently creative in it outlook that advocates for the inhabitants' right to appropriate conceived urban spaces through play, and to participate in decision-making processes that affects them at personal and collective levels. This conceptual framework of everyday life rightfully occupies the dominated realm of 'representational space'. In its misconceived understandings, due to its late entry into the English speaking world, r*hythmanalysis* (1992/2004) embraces 'representations of space' as a highly advanced scientific space Lefebvre sought to marry with art, poetry, music – Nietzsche in his lightest.

In the same way that Lefebvre instructs his readers and students to guard against using the spatial triad of perceived-lived-conceived space solely as an abstract model, outside its political and social contexts, so too must we shy away from considering his works, particularly *The Production of Space*, in isolation from other *ouevres* that inspired it, if appropriate contextual analyses are to be produced.

The next section is a discussion of the production of four public space and their individual social practices in light of the dissertation's aim to offer a conceptual analyses of urban public space using Lefebvre's spatial concepts.

2.6 Four squares and *The Production of Space*

Taking cue from Lefebvre's (1992/2004) rhythm analysis of a unique square in twentieth century Paris, France, as seen from his apartment window in its spatial practice of the time, it is important to note that Lefebvre's analysis is not 'historical', nor does it present the representational aspects of the conceived space as significantly dominated by representations of space. This is interesting. I came across four different urban case-studies that theorized the production of each square's politics, spatial practices and rhythmic uses using mostly Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad in *The Production of Space*. The first square is known as *Moszkva tér* or Moscow Square and it is located in post-socialist Hungary, Budapest. According to Bodnár (1998) Moscow Square's spatial practices, in historical terms, were directly lived or produced by inhabitants before the concrete space through which inhabitants' spatial practice was conceived as well defined square. What stands today as Moscow Square was a clay pit which seventeenth century inhabitants of the city appropriated through the collective social practice of brick production.

Lefebvre (1974/1991) states, a society's spatial practices secrete that society's space. In other words, the social practices of inhabitants in space produced a representational space informed by the activities or actions of those inhabitants. In the case of Moscow Square, the produced space was a brick-making space that gave rise to an additional representational space of organized labour through the brick-making factory. This production quality of the Hungarian square affirms Lefebvre's (1974/1991) notion that most, if not all spatial practices concerned with urban public space, are first lived before they are conceived. As a representational space conceived by inhabitants, the square remained a pit for a short while in the industrializing urban landscape. In its incoherent social and physical formation, the pit represented a unique "passageway through which dead souls could return to the bosom of the earth and then re-emerge and be re-born" (Ibid, p. 242). By the turn of the twentieth century, the representational space of brick-making spatial practices underwent rapid process of transformation and appropriation by the dominant space in Budapest society.

Bodnár (1998) notes that domination of the lived space's spatial and social practices were significantly changed and appropriated by the State post World War II with the surge in mega-spatial projects undertaken within the vicinity of the space. Post-War representations of the conceived representational space that was once directly lived by inhabitants, repositioned the appropriated space as an important public space because of its strategic, central location in the city's busiest traffic nodes on the other side of the river (Sik, 1999). In its monumental rhythm analysis that occurred in the late 1990s, Bodnár presents a high quality ethnographic narrative about the square since its historical production by inhabitants, and domination by conceived space. In spite of the square no longer being in the domain of inhabitants, users are not physically excluded and socially marginalized from acting and interacting in it.

From morning till late in the evening, Moscow Square, like Lefebvre's (1992/2004) analytical square in Paris, is abuzz with a diversity of inhabitants who are citizens of Budapest, others immigrants, women, men, youth, the unemployed, university students, the homeless and informal traders, all assemble in the square and actively contribute to its spatial practices via their divergent social practices in it. In addition to this rich supply of diverse mixture of users as representational space, there are chains of American franchise outlets like McDonald's, LA Gear and Burger King that add an element of organized consumption alongside disorganized or unorganized production of Moscow Square (Bodnár, 1998). The Right to the City in Moscow Square is fully at work because inhabitants have rights to the *oeuvre*, to places of encounter and exchange, to the full uses of moments, to life rhythms and time uses (Mitchell, 2003; Sik, 1999).

Of course struggles and tension amongst racially, ethnically and generationally different inhabitants, as full time occupants and users of Moscow Square are bound to happen, because cities are public space of encounters with difference that often result in struggles over the terms of access to the public realm, citizenship and material urban form itself (Lefebvre, 1968/1996). Interestingly, law-enforcement officers are also deployed in the public space to ensure that peace and harmony are maintained between different racial groups of ethnic immigrants and old and young female traders who regularly engage in small scuffles over the products they sell and other political issues.

What is particularly interesting about Moscow Square is that it still caters to its diverse inhabitants: old and new ones, homeless and university students alike. Its political spatial practice enables it to facilitate a diversity of competing social actions and interactions without them cancelling each other out. Furthermore, it maintains its representational politics as a space that offers employment opportunities to casual labourers who are always in the square, waiting for someone from early morning until evening, to offer them opportunities to earn a livelihood for a day's work. The homeless are equally accommodated by volunteer organizations situated in the square in the same space as capitalist American multinational corporations that cater predominantly to the affluent university youths who reproduce American capital and culture through their consumption of American foods, brands and clothing.

Atarim Square is situated along the coastal shoreline of Tel Aviv city, Israel. Like others before it, it speaks to Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad strongly and the Right to the City implicitly, within historical periods of the 1930s, 1960s and 1990s. What is interesting about this case study is the fact that it is theoretically articulated by professional architects. According to Hatuka and Kallus (2007) Atarim Square's spatial practices were historically lived by a small society of Jewish inhabitants who were radically excluded from the representational space by State agents from the 1930s. Produced informal representational spaces of inhabitants were significantly changed and their social practices were also appropriated rather forcefully, without their involvement in decision-making processes about conceived plans to gentrify the area; make it whiter – racially speaking. The spatial practice of conceived abstract space is to change and appropriate that which is different and homogenize it (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Through spatial domination inhabitants struggled directly with conceived space, that politicized their uses and representations in space with the entry of architecture in the material space of everyday life. What followed, from the 1930s to the 1990s, was a dialectical process of 'stitching and unstitching' (Hatuka & Kallus, 2007). In simple terms, this means there was a practical social process of putting together spatial representations and tearing them down again, only for them to be put back together anew. With Atarim Square, this dialectical process governed political relations of power and struggle between lived space and conceived for spatial practice and architectural representation of the public space. Where inhabitants 'stitched' together pieces of

representations in space that reflected who they were and what they were about, conceived space, through its 'paper space' of architects and urbanists (Elden, 2004), countered this effort through un-stitching mechanisms that undermined inhabitants' production of space. Interestingly, Hatuka and Kallus (2007) outwardly deny (not so much reject) the important role inhabitants play in the production of space. According to the architects, representational space is, and by implication inhabitants are, insignificant in the trialectical processes of producing and reproducing a functional and socially meaningful public space. As agents of the Logos, who naturally advocate for and prioritize scientific knowledge over sensory knowledge, it is understandable and at the same time unfortunate, that the architects would hold the views they hold, using Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad.

In reaction to their spatial oppression and marginalization from political processes of decision-making about matters that affect them, inhabitants rejected the architectural space of conceived representations for spatial practice. In silence, original producers of Atarim Square refrained from using the public space for their social practices (Hatuka & Kallus, 2007). They completely withdrew, physically and socially, from spending time in the square. This action strongly represented inhabitants' power in the dynamic. As the authors mention, tons of money was invested in gentrifying Atarim Square, coupled with modern plans and design elements that sought to invigorate the kinds of everyday life dynamics and consumption spatial practices envisioned by the dominant space. These conceived visions never materialized in concrete space and Atarim Square soon became a barren space that was a mere abstract representation in space that inhabitants outwardly rejected through silent withdrawal of their bodies from it.

This social situation haunts the public space because representations of space does not know what more to do with the tourist space that is not responding well to its conceived representations. This social event is particularly interesting because there are no 'right to the city' protests or mass occupation of the square by inhabitants making demands for inclusion and representation in political discourses of the public space. According to Nietzsche "the greatest events – they are not our noisiest but our stillest hours. The world revolves, not around the inventors of noises, but around the inventors of new values; it revolves around *inaudibility* (Nietzsche, 1961/1969, pp. 153-154; original emphasis). This case study presents an interesting dynamic between conceived space

and lived space in the spatial triad. Referring back to an earlier diagram on page 38, Figure 2 of the spatial triad in concrete practice of everyday life and sensory phenomena, I noted a one-way broken, power line from lived space to conceived space, and one-way solid, power line from conceived space to lived space. That representation and near non-existent social relationship of communication between the two dialectical social spaces, with unequal power, is articulated in context by Atarim Square. To date, as the architects conclude, Atarim Square maintains its challenge to representations of space, to inject it with socially acceptable and architecturally presentable political practices that inhabitants can appreciate and engage with.

What is not sinking into the realm of mental space is the inaudible yet visible resistance practice occurring in the conceived public space by its displaced inhabitants who claim their right to the *oeuvre* by rejecting the time uses, refusing to use the city spaces, denouncing their right to inhabit Atarim Square, whose architecture is the basis for its non-verbalized and non-articulated prohibition and rejection in society. The Right to the City, in this spatial drama, is turned upside down with no realized rhythm in Atarim Square, only space and time prevail with no expenditure of energy. Its social rejection and consequently non-use means however that Atarim Square has no solid base for urban life since its use-value, interestingly held hostage by inhabitants, is "the bedrock *of* urban life" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 19; emphasis added). Its spatial practice in essence, is informed by social practice of physical absence and social rejection.

Tahrir Square is a conceived representational space situated in Cairo, Egypt. It gained global popularity via social networks like Facebook and YouTube, and related technology like television, as platforms for broadcasting mass social uprisings of 2011 (Paraskevas, 2011; Salama, 2013). An interesting fact about Tahrir Square is the fact that its spatial practices were first conceived before they were directly lived. The representation was produced as a mature open green land that facilitated heavy human and vehicular traffic between two sections of urban Cairo. It was "designed and produced through labour, technology and institutions", however "the meaning of the space, and the space itself [was] adapted and transformed as it [was] *perceived* and *lived* by social actors and groups" (Elden, 2004, p. 191; original emphasis). Tahrir Square was not a public space of inhabitants in Egypt. The mosque had a more public function

compared to it because by law, a congregation of more than five people in the heavily policed square was illegal (Salama, 2013).

Before inhabitants transgressed the forbidden square and appropriated its conceived spatial practices of low social and representational uses, mosques were primary spaces for the articulation of inhabitants' opinions and decision-making. In 1919 the underused public square, with its twenty-three streets connecting to it and at least two bridges leading to it, was taken by the masses in revolt against colonial British occupation in North African region (Said, 2014). Since then, Tahrir Square was inscribed in the political imaginations of everyday inhabitants as a formal 'representational' space through which State domination could be resisted and ultimately overthrown (Paraskevas, 2011). Egyptian inhabitants never produced Tahrir Square as public space of leisure or casual social practices.

According to Salama (2013) benches, cafés, or restaurants lining the square's sidewalks, were inscribed in its green design to deter, rather than encourage its public uses by inhabitants. Through the course of time this social vacancy in the square changed with inhabitants' dissatisfaction with the dominant space in society. The 2011 revolution reignited the political significance of the iconic square *for* inhabitants. It enabled their active participation in decision-making processes and matters of urban political life like never before. The square's open Parisian design (at roughly 4.6 hectares), along with its downtown location and proximity to the Nile River, government buildings and capital spaces like the museums, hotels and shopping centres, made it suitable for politics of dissent (Said, 2014; Salama, 2013).

Scores of disgruntled inhabitants fearlessly occupied the square. During this revolutionary period, and more specifically at night, ordinary inhabitants, for the first time since the square's inception, claimed the Right to the City; to full uses of urban space, by physically occupying Tahrir Square. Overnight the square "was gradually transformed into a city within the city. In three days, camping areas, media rooms, medical facilities, gateways, stages, restrooms, food and beverages carts, newspaper booths, and arts exhibitions were established in the square" (Salama, 2013, p. 133). Through this collective effort, Tahrir Square became a symbolic site for the expression

of utopia, a place of community engagement, collective projects, social discourses and most importantly, freedom of speech and expression (Ibid).

The right to participate in urban life, and to appropriate space through physical occupation of public space, produced within this protest discourse "renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses, enabling the full and complete *usage* of…moments and places" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 19). Where Tahrir Square once was the preserve of the elite and political few in Egypt, inhabitants, through social practice of protect action, transformed it into a representational space of political and social importance after centuries of marginalization from it.

Tahrir Square affirms Lefebvre's (1974/1991) notion that the user's space is lived – not represented or conceived. It is a concrete and subjective one that transcends its conceptualisation and abstraction in society. It "bears the stamp of the conflict between an inevitable, if long and difficult, maturation process…it is in this space that the 'private' realm asserts itself, albeit more or less vigorously, and always in a conflictual way, against the public one" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 362). The social relations informing the production Tahrir Square as representational space in twenty-first century Cairo, are those of struggle; not between different fractions of inhabitants for citizenship and access to the public realm but, between conceived space and lived space at the macro-level of national political practice.

Tahrir Square made possible inhabitants' demands for democracy against dictatorial leadership that lasted for decades in the twentieth century. It is for this important reason that inhabitants chose to assemble in the city's iconic and spacious conceived space that made a history of political change possible. More than that, it helped to make the invisible in society visible at the global scale, mostly because it has many open access points that lead to it. Salama (2013) notes, at the level of everyday life, the 2011 revolutions of Tahrir Square, inspired an interesting collage of local and global influences that helped shape inhabitants' mental images about the public space.

Technology played a significant role in organizing and mobilizing protestors across Cairo and beyond its geographical borders to Spain (Dhaliwal, 2012). Ultimately, it was the physical occupation and social visibility of inhabitants in the concrete public space

of Cairo that made all the difference societies (Salama, 2013). Tahrir Square, despite its legal prohibitions and political practice of conceived space to dominate its discourses of everyday life, its lived space will always return to reclaim it through struggle even if it cost them their very lives.

Tiananmen Square is an old and monumental public space found in the capital city of Beijing, China, with a social history spanning more than five hundred years. Before it became conceived in spatial practice as a well-defined, Cartesian or architecturally designed 'square', it was once lived and produced by inhabitants in social practice (Lee, 2009). Centuries prior to its production in space as representational space, Tiananmen Square was an unnamed and unused perceived space carved out in the grand design of Tianan Gate; a forbidden zone for Beijing inhabitants (Hershkovitz, 1993). The space from which this square emerged as representation in space was from the beginning, dominated by virtue of it being under the authority of the emperor of the time, who prohibited its social uses; maintaining it as an 'empty' physical abstraction devoid of the energies of inhabitants' bodies.

As noted by Lefebvre (1974/1991), prohibition is the ultimate foundation of social space. This dominant and uncontested social order that sought to maintain its rule of Law over the perceived space, was radically disrupted and transgressed at the turn of the twentieth century. During this historical period of political warfare in the Asian region dominated by Germany, masses of inhabitants composed of university students, intellectuals and the working classes, descended the forbidden perceived space of no use, and no name, to express their collective dissatisfaction with their representations of space – the Chinese State, post-war. The perceived space of unidentifiable and prohibited social practices was realized as the most appropriate, to use for demonstration against the terms of the Treaty of Versailles (Lee, 2009) because of its enormous surface area of roughly 440 000m^2 and its politically strategic location in the city.

Since it was primarily within the exclusive confines of Tianan Gate, with which the ordinary public had no real meaningful social relationship, Tiananmen Square was chosen by inhabitants as an ideal, practical site to air their political issues, which they did by assembling in their masses in the perceived space. Through this organized social

action, and practice of physically occupying the unknown perceived space, inhabitants' social practice immediately produced a space of political representation or representational space, whose 'spatial practice' was informed by everyday discourses dominating the Chinese society at the time (Styhre and Engberg, 2003). The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 38). On May 4th 1919 over 100 000 inhabitants collected in the perceived-lived space in a momentous occasion that sought to not only transformed the social usage of a perceived space, but also to appropriated in a radical way, the manner in which Chinese intellectuals and their social politics thought and experienced 'public *space*'. Throughout the entire year, scores of inhabitants collected freely without mediation in the then representational space of political exchanges, social organizing and protest action.

In their physical occupation of the previously forbidden space, inhabitants injected their own energies into the perceived space that was wasting away without energy. In essence, what was produced through political action as everyday discourse, informing and producing the representational space, was a 'rhythm'. Everywhere space, time and expenditure of energy interact, there is rhythm (Lefebvre, 1992/2004). Without the interaction of the three in social practice, before they are separated in theoretical realms, space loses its social reality, and becomes a mere abstraction (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

In Beijing however, the prevailing status quo of conceived space that sought to keep the perceived space or inhabitants as lived space, from engaging it as 'spatial practice', was overturned by inhabitants' agency, to defiantly fill the empty container with their bodies. From this political social process the representational space was appropriated from an unknown spatial location that everyday publics had no relationship with, to one that made its producers symbolic objects, as they overlaid their bodies and deployed their energies in its physical element. Lee (2009) solicited Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *The Production of Space* from the perspective of political geography, to unearth the social production of China's notorious and iconic public space, Tiananmen Square.

Using the spatial triad, Lee evaluates political relations of production that led Beijing's inhabitants to gather in a previously forbidden spatial location in front of Tianan Gate, in protest rhythm against the State's action to forcefully occupy another territory elsewhere. The turn of the twentieth century was a particularly significant period for the

radicalisation of a physical space, from a mere perceived space, to a political space of protest action as a form of resistance to power, during the 1919 May Fourth events (Hershkovitz, 1993; Lee, 2009). In 1989 the historical site whose social practice was produced from, and through direct physical (bodily) engagement that transformed that which was periodically perceived in abstraction to have a concrete reality as lived or representational space of inhabitants. Tiananmen Square returned to the political landscape, where social relationships between the dominant and the dominated in society took yet another historic turn. This spatial practice inscribed the representational space in the minds and imaginations of Beijing society as a prime and politically strategic site for contesting its government's unethical practice over the provinces of China.

Decades following the historic May 4th social event that enabled and inspired the production of a representational space by local residents, new generations of students and scholars descended on the iconic site in 1986, which was then appropriated as a formal (abstract) public space of dissent, no longer perceived unknown ground (absolute) (Mitchell, 2003). At the time, the perceived representational space was physically transformed into a designed square called Tiananmen Square, meaning 'Square of Heavenly Peace' (Hershkovitz, 1993; Lee, 2009). In lived social practice there was nothing heavenly about the square. Instead, it was a space of and for war. It was as Lefebvre in Elden (2004) notes, the object of struggle during the 1980s in Beijing, China. Where its spatial practices were informed by broader national issues that it helped facilitate in 1919, the mid-1980s social practice carried with the same spirit of protest action, was about the symbolic representation of the actual space itself.

Indeed, as Lefebvre (1974/1991) notes, there is a politics of space because space is political. Inhabitants as lived space of the 1980s physically occupied the conceived square, not only with their bodies, but also with their objects of representation, to erect, in an effort to inscribe and architecturally appropriate, or redefine the State controlled public space in their image. As Lefebvre's spatial triad reveals, the spatial practices of representations of space is to change and appropriate social practices of representational spaces indefinitely.

With their plastic tents and Goddess of Democracy statue, inhabitants injected the square with public space specific politics only to be met with brute force by the Chinese State as it tore down inhabitants representations in retaliation (Lee, 2009; Thornton, 2010). This practice by the State re-enforces Lefebvre's (1974/1991) notion that society in general is subjected to the dominant political practice. According to Hershkovitz (1993) this symbolic act by students to redefine public space as inhabitants, or rather, active producers of post-May 4th Tiananmen Square, was directly opposing the hegemonic power of the Chinese State at the level of everyday life, by erecting their own representations in State controlled public space. To correct this 'disorder' and dissent from below, the State, with its military force, descended on the square, and through its own contradictory rhetoric, it erected its own representations, which it called 'the monument of democracy', in the space, to serve as a powerful, symbolic reminder to the inhabitants of its authority and intolerance to difference and dissent.

The struggle between Beijing youths, as representational space, and their State, for the struggle to produce Tiananmen Square's symbolic representation via architectural or artistic means like sculpted *ouevres*, led to increased domination of the actual public space itself, and radical appropriation of its spatial practices in the twenty-first century. The Square that was once an iconic site for political action and social resistance by lived space, against the political practices of its conceived space during the twentieth century, is today the consumption space of organized spectacles. Organized spectacles as Overton (2010) notes are instrumental events in the production of most public spaces, because they entail global economic and cultural processes that affect social relationships in space (Amin, 2008). These events however, have serious repercussions for inhabitants because of their inevitable politics of displacement.

The Beijing government has subjected Tiananmen Square to series' of organized parades that inform its current spatial practices. These parades, as Thornton (2010) notes, are in the form of celebratory events that are organized in the Chinese calendar, ironically, to celebrate the spirit of May 4th movement, alongside other public holidays in the Chinese society. These high-profile events strategically prohibit inhabitants from appropriating the square because they usually take up to three months rehearsal period on the public space. In this light, Thornton (2010) argues, that in terms of the social production of the 'heavenly' square, spectacle relations actually counter everyday life

from permeating dominated space, because in their sustained occupation with commodified events, the political meaning and representation of the square for inhabitants, is corroded. Production and consumption of public space are two intricately tied processes that cannot be divorced from each other in space. As Overton (2010) notes, social production of space would lose all meaning if the produced product was not consumed, since consumption is in itself a kind of production (ongoing process). In the same manner, there is "no consumption without meaning, no consumption without space", because "meaning emerges from consumption" (Styhre & Engberg, 2003, p. 121). While consumption in this spatial context induces passivity in public space, Lefebvre redirects thought to prioritize 'production' as an active act over 'consumption', as a passive act in the production of space.

While Lefebvre acknowledges this cohesive binary process about 'space', he does however contend that "though a *product* to be used, to be consumed, [public space] is also a *means of production*" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 85; original emphasis). Thornton (2010) concludes with the remark that Tiananmen Square is a political space of exclusion because it favours the social practices and cultural ideals of those in power, rather than those who inhabit it, as part of their everyday lived experiences in the post-socialist society. Each of these squares presented a unique, conceptual challenge to each of Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial concepts used together and in isolation from each other. Each square has its own representational politics and distinct spatial practices that constantly change and are changed in respective urban societies through time. All have an ongoing dialectical relationship that has theoretical as well as practical consequences for the societies that inhabit them and those that think about them. Lefebvre summarizes the politics of these squares on general terms, stating

> differences endure or arise on the margins of the homogenized realm, either in the form of resistances or in the form of externalities…this social life is transposed onto the level of urban morphology, but it only survives inasmuch as it fights in self-defence and goes on to attack in the course of class struggle in its modern forms. *Appropriation* of a remarkably high order is to be found here. The spontaneous architecture and planning […] prove greatly superior to the organization of space by specialists who effectively translate the social order into a territorial reality with or without direct orders from economic and political authorities. The result – on the ground – is an extraordinary *spatial duality*
> (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, pp. 373-374; original emphasis)

Interestingly, these square case-studies challenge Amin's (2008) notion that squares have lost their primacy as critical and traditional sites of civic inculcation and political expression. On the contrary, twenty-first century urban societies are *not*, as Amin would have us believe, "far removed from the times when a city's central public spaces were a prime cultural and political site" (Amin, 2008, p. 5). With the increasing role of abstract space of organised 'mega-events', of capital, of globalization and privatization in the production of urban public spaces that encroaches on the liberties of social life in democratic societies around the world (Gotham, 2005; Harvey, 2003; Low, 2006; D. Mitchell, 2003; J. Mitchell, 2001; Roche, 2003), we have entered a phase where "[urban public] space is becoming the principal stake of goal-directed actions and struggles" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 410).

Urban public space is therefore *not* an object of secondary importance, as Amin argues. Rather it is the *primary* object that brings all things political, capitalist, social, spiritual, moral and ethical together on a world scale and at every possible level. Tahrir Square is the only public space used in this study that is geographically located on the same African continent as this research's public space that is situated south of the continent. It too, a product of British colonization and production of Parisian tastes via Haussmann, it is important to turn discussion towards the global production of urban public space in colonized societies, and more specifically in urban South Africa within the fused Lefebvrian framework. What kind of square does this 'new' or *neo*-colonial society have? How and when was it produced? Who produced it and what are its politics now? Before attending to these spatial questions a contextual discussion on the production of space in urban societies with a colonial history is presented.

2.7 Public space in urban societies with a colonial history

Public spaces in democratic urban societies are often not conceptualized within their historical geographical contexts. It is not always well documented what these representational or lived spaces were *before* they became physically engineered and socially experienced, as representations of space. More so, urban experiences of Western societies continue to dominate conceptual and analytical knowledge forms concerning spatial formations and social processes informing urban life in former colonies outside their history as colonial productions (Gottdiener, 1985). This

knowledge pattern prevented twentieth century theorists from understanding urban patterns and associated relations of social production as unique formations whose economic and political structures differ from those of historically colonising Europe (Yeoh, 1996).

Over the last century, the Los Angeles school of urbanism and the Chicago school of thought, dominated production of conceptual urban knowledge, systems and theories about spatial patterns experienced beyond North American borders (Abbott, 2002; Dear, 2002, 2003). However, as Dear (2003) and Molotch (2002) argue, it does not matter which School claims authority over the production of distinct urban knowledges, because cities – colonized and colonizing – are *always* changing and therefore, 'new' ways of looking at the them will always be required. In the case of Singapore, Yeoh (1996) notes that the urban society produced from colonization of Singaporeans by European powers is a 'plural' one.

A plural society is segregated and politically arranged, or hierarchized in its colonized geographical location, according to racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious differences (Scott & Marshall, 2009). The plural society is a by-product of State conditions in developing country contexts like Asia and Africa, as world regions that are significantly appropriated and impacted by colonial domination in their histories. In a colonized plural society, biological and social human qualities like skin colour or race, ethnicity, gender and class become instruments of subjugating the dominated society of conceived 'natives' to the political requirement of colonialists (Seidman, 2004). In these relations of power, the dominated society of ethnic inhabitants who are generally racially different from their colonizers, occupy particular positions in the colonized society's division of labour.

In this colonized society and arrangement in dominated space, different sections of the plural society are separated, arranged differently and treated differently in the same political unit (Yeoh, 1996). What is important about this political arrangement and production of urban public or representational space, is that it was only in the marketplace where racially segregated inhabitants met, acted and interacted with each other to exchange goods, services, ideas, information, culture and so forth without any political intervention. Yeoh describes the situation involving a plural urban society in

colonial context as a legitimate society in its own right that contradicted the political desires of the dominant space in Singapore. According to Yeoh, in a colonized or colonial society the social arrangement in space of inhabitants by the dominant space is such that

> Different sections of the community live side by side, but separately, within the same political unit. Each group holds its own religion, its own culture and languages, its own ideas and ways. As individuals they meet, but only in the marketplace, in buying and selling…even in the economic sphere there is a division of labour along racial lines. Natives, Chinese, Indians and Europeans all have different functions, and within each major group, subsections have particular occupations
> (Yeoh, 1996, p. 2)

Three important elements need to be considered when conceptualizing the social relations of producing urban public space in colonized contexts; these are (1) the *social*; (2) *morphology* and (3) the *functional*. These overlapping elements coincide with Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad of representational space, spatial practice and representations of space whereby the social occupies the representational space, morphology occupies representations of space, and the functional occupies spatial practice. Lefebvre's representational space is the dominated space in the spatial triad that is different from the representations of space that always seeks to change and appropriate it in spatial practice.

Yeoh's (1996) 'social' element is representational, because it embraces the plural society that is composed of different human qualities like ethnicity, religion, sex, class and culture of the colonized inhabitants. In the social element, dominated inhabitants are forced to assimilate into the social realities and political constructs of their colonizers and immigrant colonialists. In this social order, colonizers and original inhabitants of the colonized land through which an urban society is produced, co-exist, however separately in the production of that society's space.

Morphology is a highly conceptual and mental (abstract) space of knowledge, of power, of capital, of politicians, of technology and art (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). It is forceful and often violent (Seidman, 2004). For Yeoh, this element of space, in a colonized situation, is representational of the colonizing ruling elite that have political power to radically

change and appropriate the social and spatial practices of the subjugated inhabitants for their own interests. Through morphology and assimilation of the social, a 'dominating-dominated' power relation of master-slave is infused in the relationships of social production in the colonized geo-political context, thus creating a complex structure of dependency between colonizer and colonized, even long after the political relationship has ended (Seidman, 2004; Yeoh, 1996). In terms of the spatial triad, this level of dependency is not conceivable between representational space and representations of space in their social struggles for space and practice, in and through space.

Within this morphological aspect, as is the case with representations of space, with its conceived and abstract distinctions, there is an intermediate multiracial group that acts with colonizers in the interests of the colonized, to mediate or broker uneven power dynamics within the dominated social and geographical context (Yeoh, 1996). This group derives its political power of influence from external interracial unions, or through immigration, and they try to balance the scales of power for the subjugated society at the mercy of a violent abstract space of colonialists (Sartre, 1956/2001). Functionality is the third element that occupies a colonized society's spatial practice. Lefebvre (1974/1991, p. 38) notes that spatial practice embodies a "close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, 'private' life and leisure)". Within this realm of functionality, the master-slave dynamic is incoherent and at the same time cohesive, because it includes the most extreme forms of social and physical separation amongst inhabitants of the colonized land and the colonialists within the same political unit.

According to Yeoh (1996), functionality *fashions* the colonised society's general spatial practice that is significantly informed by the political practices of the morphological element. With regard to the political economy of colonization, functionality produces dual patterns of economic structures, as well as social and political systems reflecting formalized practices of colonialists, versus informal ones, subsumed but not completely destroyed, through domination. This duality in the social and physical formation of urban spaces in colonized geographies is often the defining feature informing the morphology of cities in the so called global South (Lemanski, 2007). Colonial economic activities, land-use patterns, culture and architectural styles are imposed over the

colonized society, in an effort to segregate pre-colonial space and social practices into colonial ones, distinguishable through their 'private' and 'public' functions, which serve to maintain domination (Dirsuweit, 2009; Yeoh, 1996). Speaking against these forms of power over a colonized society, an unknown Japanese philosopher remarked:

> Your streets, squares and boulevards have ridiculous names which have nothing to do with them, nor with the people and things around them-lots of names of generals and battles. Your cities have smashed any reasonable conception of space to pieces. The grid on which they are based, and the way you have elaborated upon it, are the best that the West can manage in this area, but it is a poor best. It is based merely on a set of transformations- on a structure. It took one of your greatest researchers to discover the fact that complex spaces in the form of trellises or semi-trellises are superior in practice to simplified spaces planned out in a branched or rectilinear manner. *Work on a hypothesis of a discourse once theoretical* and *practical, a discourse of the everyday which also transcends everyday life*, a *discourse mental and social*, *architectural* and *urbanistic*. Something like the discourse of your forebears- and I am talking about the ancient Greeks, not the Gauls. Such a discourse does not *signify* the city: it is the urban discourse itself. True, it partakes of the absolute. But why shouldn't it? It is a living discourse- unlike your lethal use of signs. You say you can 'decode' your system. Well, we do better than that: we create ours
> (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 156; emphasis added)

The above quote is loaded with power that challenges the dominant elite in historical context of dominated Asian region. This intellectual expression, as agency, contests the material structures that the dominant erected over the dominated society's space. The philosopher signals the mind to the politics of, and about, produced public spaces, conceived by the dominant colonialist and bearing colonial names, which have nothing to do with the inhabitants around them, and everything to do with political identities of the dominant. His understanding of conceived colonial cities responds to Lefebvre's (1974/1991) inferences about representations of space as a dominant space, which has in its capacity the power to 'smash' pre-colonial inhabitants' imaginations of space, and public space for that matter.

What is interesting is the mention of the colonizing representations of space's use of a specialized and great researcher's skill, to decipher the dominated society's space and social practices, in an effort to claim mastery over them and their representations of space and representational systems. Knowledge in this regard became a powerful instrument of oppression in service of advancing colonial domination through its own

State, and its political mode of producing urban space (Brenner & Elden, 2009; Elden, 2004; Sartre (1956/2001; Seidman, 2004). In its ignorance of living discourses of everyday life of colonized inhabitants in practical and theoretical terms, the Japanese philosopher went on to challenge representations of space, to undertake the taken for granted discourses of the colonized, rather than to bombard them with meaningless representational spaces, as representation of their power.

By rejecting the dominant status quo in the colonized Asian context, the philosopher prioritized his own dominated space and elevated the marginalized politics of inhabitants to those of the dominant. In stating that as original inhabitants of the colonized geography they, as the Japanese people, do much better than decode systems in space, rather, they 'create' their own. This declaration is particularly empowering and powerful. It has political will to defend, at the intellectual level, the creative force in representational spaces, its social practices, right to human dignity and ontological privilege, in a controversial context where such inherent and God given liberties are crushed in the concrete through various abstract strategies and political means, by the powerful few (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

This power relationship of colonizer and colonized, plays out in material landscapes and is sustained mostly due to the arrogance of the former, perceiving itself in a higher position and brighter light, "bringing social progress and freedom to the Orient" whom, if left on their own, will only "drift into stagnation, endless civil conflicts, and despotism" (Seidman, 2004, p. 269). Seidman contends that this hegemony of colonial thought and practice prevailed in colonized societies of Asia, Latin America and Africa, because often, colonialists never see colonized inhabitants as people or humans (Sartre, 1956/2001). To them, colonized people or natives in their gendered, ethnic and generational differences, are 'childlike', 'feminine', 'despotic', 'immature', and in need of rational moral guidance by the West, to civilize them (Seidman, 2004). Indeed, the social and mental attitudes of colonialists towards the colonized can be said to be universal, although its spatial manifestations differ considerably from context to context.

In light of pre-colonial, Hanoi Drummond (2000) notes that the multi-ethnic society had its own three dimensional spaces before it was dominated by a more powerful European

space, seeking its natural wealth. Representational spaces in the Hanoian context were in the form of communally shared public spaces, whose uses were aligned with the political practices of its own representations of space that awarded different members of the village society unequal access to appropriate them for personal and social reasons. The Council of Notables was the dominant space in pre-colonial Hanoi, and it aligned the society's spatial practices with its own imaginations and desired order. Once colonization as a global event reached the geographical context of Hanoi, it swallowed Hanoi's established semi-public and sacred spaces by destroying them, physically and appropriating some into commercial spaces (Kürten, 2008). French colonialists dramatically altered the social, morphological and functional elements of the pre-colonial society of inhabitants, along with their representations of space, with the introduction of planning strategies that categorized everyday life into private and public spaces, where there previously was none.

Many centuries later, in the post-colonial city of Hanoi and its streets, contemporary Hanoians, as Drummond (2000) and Kürten (2008) note, continue their social and representational struggles for public spaces in the post-socialist context. As representational space, their experiences of struggle for public space plays out through 'counter-practices' that enable them to claim their human right to participate in the production of everyday life, by appropriating streets which were conceived through colonial mechanisms, to their general exclusion. Today, as Kürten notes, inhabitants of Hanoi continue to suffer the consequences of historical loss of their communal public spaces, however dominated they were at their lived-perceived-conceived level pre-colonization. In Hanoi, inhabitants continue to battle with historical private and public distinctions of public spaces imposed by the colonizing European power. Inhabitants maintain in their social, political and ontological difference, to use these conceived instruments of marginalization to meet their needs. Some of their social practices informing their representational uses of streets include, cooking and eating on the city's streets and pavements, doing laundry, celebrating a wedding and mourning the death of a loved one (Kürten, 2008).

In response to these counter-practices, the post-socialist State frequently comes down to the street level of inhabitants with armed forces, to remove inhabitants from the streets, and also, to impose by-laws that prohibit certain spatial practices of everyday life from

being conducted and lived on privately managed streets (Drummond, 2000). These case studies, or classical examples of the social relationships and spatial formations involved in the production of public space in societies with a colonial history, are important for understanding continuity of domination of inhabitants in present day societies of urban Asia and Africa, in an increasingly democratizing global context. Through Singapore and Hanoi, *neo*-colonized South Africa can take noteworthy lessons from these 'giants' that continue today to struggle with, and attempt to live beyond, their respective colonial histories and the spatial consequences of such a global calamity in their development and reconstruction.

It is clear that colonized societies, perceived through Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad and Yeoh's (1996) three interrelated organizing elements explicating how such societies are produced and the spatial patterns that emerge following this power dynamic, are unique. They do not follow the developmental growth patterns of their colonizing masters. Instead, they follow their own growth patterns which can be conceptualized and articulated in their richness within, and through, theoretical and practical discourses that prioritize [their] everyday life in its full creative and representational power in dominated space. The discussion now turns to the production of urban public space in South Africa, as a recent democratic society with a complex history of, and lengthy relationship with, colonialism.

2.8 The colonial production of 'public space' in South Africa

South Africa is a contested landscape located in the southern most region of the African continent. It is a country of diverse races and ethnicities that has changed its social and physical landscapes dramatically over the course of time, particularly with the advent of colonialism. This geographical context is no different to Singapore and Hanoi, because they share the same colonial history. However, what makes this society unique, is the fact that it is in Africa and about discourses of southern Africans in relation to colonization by Europeans of Dutch and British descent. Written history places domination of the southern African region by European forces around the seventeenth century (Davies, 1981; Sparks, 2003). Territorial expansion of colonizing European settlers in-landwards from the Cape occurred in the nineteenth century. The social aspect of this predominantly African landscape, inhabited by Batswana, Basotho and Nguni societies, was rapidly destroyed by colonialists through religious means, using

the Bible, Christianity and missionaries from the colonizing core, who were sent to uplift ethnic masses from darkness, and bring them into the civilized light (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1986; Ziltener & Künzler, 2013).

Perceived through the eyes and mind of the colonialist, southern Africa was an unknown territory "the real Africa, the black man's Africa, which though ancient in itself, with its own vital civilizations that flourished and faded with the passing of centuries" (Sparks, 2003, p. 1). This region on the African continent, was for a long time a closed book to colonizing whites, thus making it a special place, because it is "the last of the earth's great landmasses to be penetrated by [colonial] outsiders" (Ibid).

European colonization of southern Africans was directly influenced and sustained by a variety of mechanisms, including scientific exploration about the unknown, religion in the form western Christianity, and imperialism (Haag, 2011; Khapoya, 2012). Expropriation of land for colonial infrastructural developments and human settlements was marked by explosions of wars, strife, imprisonment, killings and the eventual construction, by destruction, of heterogeneous African people as nameless, faceless, non-human terrorists (Korr & Close, 2008). To be assimilated into the colonial society following racial domination, was not peaceful. In fact Ziltener and Künzler (2013) note that geographical societies with a long historical relationship with colonialism, suffered extreme forms of brutality, violence, exploitation and religious conversion. South Africa's colonial history spans over three centuries, from 1652 to 1994, and so it is worthwhile to articulate its colonial narrative and experiences from a geographical perspective.

From the time of its domination by its settler colonialists of Dutch-Afrikaner and British descent, the African society's story and history has been written and reconstructed by the society's generations of scientists, historians, archaeologists, anthropologists, and artists of colonial bent, who advanced the colonial mission over the society (Parks, 2003; Settles, 1996).

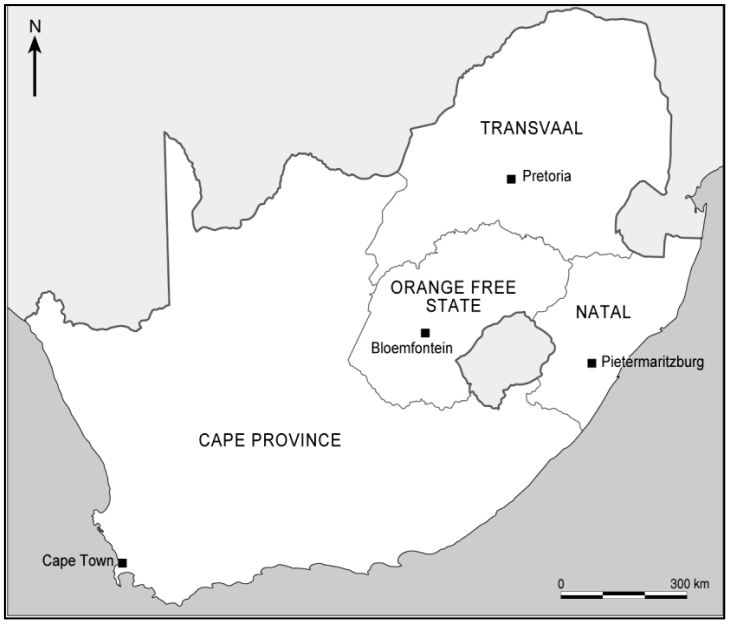


Figure 5. Map 2: The political geography of colonial South Africa. (Source: Loraine Innes, 2011)

In their own birth and ancestral land, pre-colonial Africans of South Africa, were effectively denied 'citizenship' in the conventional European senses, and as they were not citizens, they were deliberately marginalized by *de facto* spatial practices and *de jure* urban politics, that sought to create an exclusively white country in Africa, in spite of its visibly present African inhabitants (Lemon, 1991; Plaatje, 1916/1982; Sparks, 2003; Ziltener & Künzler, 2013).

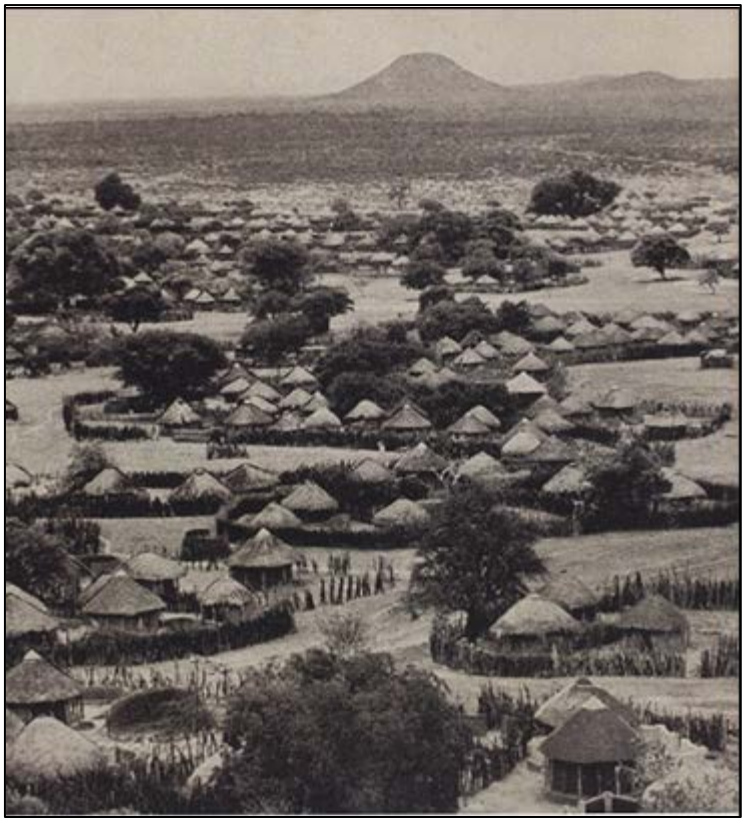


Figure 6. Pre-colonial space of ancient African society of Batswana. (Source: Reneé van de Wiel, 2012)

The image displayed above is a representation of life and space in pre-colonial southern Africa, for communities of Batswana, before they were assimilated into the capitalist politics and spaces of their colonial masters from Europe. In this image, the housing structures and their organization in space represents conceived space. The architecture of rondavel houses with their thatched rooftops, are symbolic of conceptual capacity of earlier inhabitants to design their living spaces, and to arrange them in space in a manner that does not easily distinguish between what is lived, and what is conceived, in communally perceived space. Furthermore, Plaatje (1916/1982) notes that housing establishments, along with their architecture and planning in these pre-colonial or ancient southern Africa, were produced by the collective efforts of Batswana men and women for themselves and with little room for gender based discrimination where construction *work* was concerned.

Both men and women worked together in the physical construction and material design of their homes with their homogeneous architecture or representation. So, women in pre-colonial society of Batswana were not marginalized from and passive in the production of space in everyday life unlike the women of pre-colonial Hanoi, Vietnam.

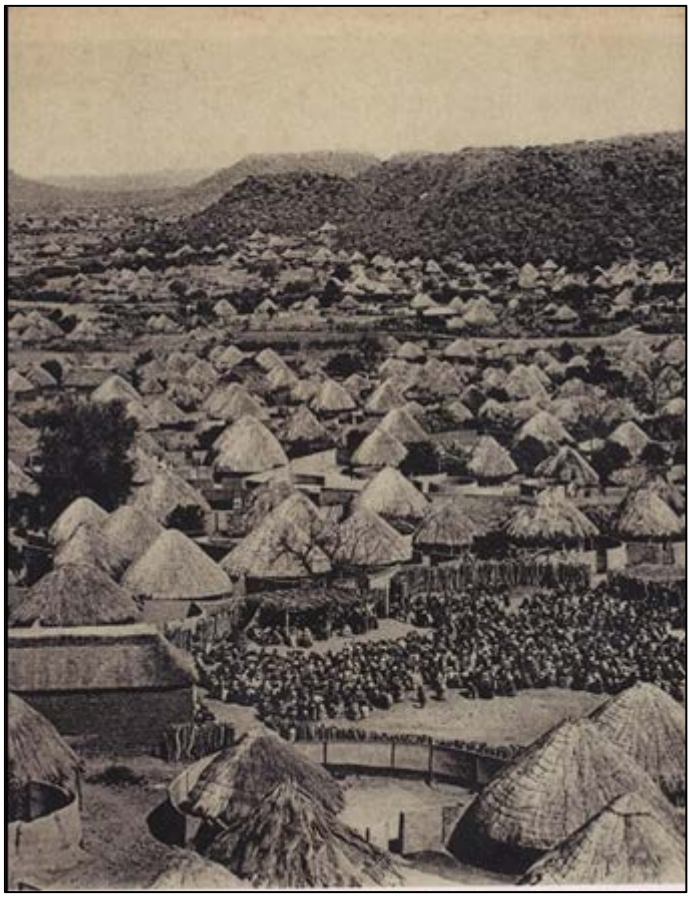


Figure 7. Pre-colonial representational uses of space in everyday life. (Source: Reneé van de Wiel, 2012)

The image presented above, is a reflection of everyday life in pre-colonial southern Africa where Batswana inhabited the land and produced their own spaces and bodies. As can be seen from the image, the society's representational use of its own version of 'public space' responded to their needs and desires. Furthermore, the perceived, and conceived representational space of inhabitants, as can be seen in figure 7 above, was part the village itself. The village society's built or produced concrete spaces whose architecture blended well with the surrounding natural landscape without altering it dramatically as the architectural spaces produced in the colonized geography by colonial settlers of European descent (Johannesburg, 1986). The loss of this physical geography and social space of Africans was indeed inspired by the abstract space of capitalism that used technology and specialist knowledge to advance colonialism and colonization of this historic space. In the context of his rural birthplace and its material appropriation by means of abstract space, Lefebvre explains:

> the countryside disappears, and this in a double-way: by industrialisation of agricultural production and *the disappearance of peasants* (and therefore of the

> village) on the one hand, on the other by the ruination of the earth and destruction of nature
> (Elden, 2004, p. 133; emphasis added)

Under capitalism cloaked in colonialism, colonized peasants disappear as inhabitants of the dominated land, along with their representations in space; for example, the village space and its representational aspects of everyday social practices, material life and nature (Harvey, 2003; Lefebvre, 1974/1991). Today, there are no existing villages of Batswana in their historical essence and representation. Batswana today, in their colonial divisions as people in South Africa and Botswana, no longer plan, design, build and organise their living spaces as representations in space. They have been completely assimilated in the architectural, political, scientific, linguistic, educational and cultural practices and relationships of their colonizing masters who influence their representational uses of spaces in ways that reflect their [colonizers'] identities and human qualities, rather than their own, as a unique, yet dispossessed people inhabiting present day countries.

Unlike the Japanese inhabitants, Africans of the southern region, and Batswana in particular, no longer create their own systems. They build on and create from established systems of the colonial order as successfully colonized peoples who are assimilated into European cultures, life styles, labour systems and political discourses. By 1910 the White Supremacist State formalized itself over the colonized landscape and its diverse ethnic groups. The Union of South Africa was formed. It was however a Union between the colonising British and Dutch settlers whose common interest was to produce a white South Africa where Africans did not exist (Lemon, 1991). It was therefore no surprise that colonial urban spaces and the dominant governments that supported and encouraged their racist and exploitative production in space, did not resemble the political identities or the cultural tastes of colonised ethnics in their diversity (Rogerson, 1996b). Colonial governments in context presented themselves as frameworks of power where decisions were made in such a way that guaranteed the interests of racially distinct minorities of certain classes or fractions of classes imposed on colonised society (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

The physical infrastructure, for example, roads and railways, were important representations in space, necessary for the "exertion of colonial authority…conceived

only to colonial economic and political needs" (Ziltener & Künzler, 2013, p. 301). Rodney (1972 cited in Ziltener & Künzler,2013) further notes that all means of telecommunication in the colonies were not constructed during those times so that "Africans could visit their friends" nor were they laid down to facilitate ease of movements internally. Instead

> All roads and railways led down to the sea. They were built to extract gold or manganese or coffee or cotton. They were built to make business possible for the timber companies, trading companies and agricultural concession firms, and for white settlers. Any catering to African interests was purely coincidental (Rodney, 1972, p. 228 cited in Ziltener & Künzler, 2013, p. 301)

As the dominant space in society the colonial State set itself high above the perceived 'primitive' space of Batswana and eliminated it, by "crushing it in the process", by changing and appropriating its social, physical and mental dimensions (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 281). Living in Union South Africa, Plaatje bemoaned the unjust social conditions and political legal practices created by colonial State law over the social and physical landscapes of colonized Africans in a manner that dramatically changed the course of their everyday life in irreversible and irreparable ways. Plaatje lamented

> What have our people done to these colonists, we asked, that is so utterly unforgiveable, that this law should be passed as an unavoidable reprisal? Have we not delved in their mines, and are not a quarter of a million of us still labouring for them in the depths of the earth in such circumstances for the most niggardly pittance? Are not thousands of us still offering up our lives and our limbs in order that South Africa should satisfy the white man's greed, delivering £50 000 000 worth of minerals every year? Have we not quarried stones, mixed, moulded and carried mortar which built the cities of South Africa? Have we not likewise prepared the material for building the railways?
> (Plaatje, 1916/1982, p. 126)

Union South Africa represented a time of radical management of ethnic inhabitants using *de jure* mechanisms. For example, the Land Act of 1913 was implemented in social and spatial practice by the colonial State to dispossess, displace and legally confine all ethnic groups of South Africa to roughly thirteen percent of the vast land surface area, in the interest of White rule (Plaatje, 1916/1982). Through this complex process, Union South Africa conceived cities like Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg as colonial productions and segregated 'public spaces', where matters of national interest were contested and violent struggles were experienced and

concentrated. During this time period political concerns in colonial society were to advance the interest of conventional white citizens, albeit to the exclusion of their female counterparts (Naidoo & Kongolo, 2004). The general society African, Indian, White, Chinese and Coloured inhabitants were therefore forced to lead separate lives, to get education, jobs, raise family, socialise, eat and play separately in different spaces within the same political unit (Coles, 1993; Moultrie, 2001; Ziltener & Künzler, 2013). By 1912 the Urban Areas Bill was put in place to monitor and regulate inhabitants' bodily movements in space, and by 1922 influx control measures were introduced to colonial cities by the Stallard Commission (Lemon, 1991) as absorptive spaces, for quantified ethnic labour. This conceived law specific to the produced 'urban' areas of South Africa was rhythm specific. Everywhere that space, time and expenditure of energy interact there is rhythm (Lefebvre, 1992/2004).

In light of their spatial dispossession and social isolation, if not alienation from each other and the rest of the settler society along with Indian and Chinese imports, African inhabitants were allowed a fraction of their social time to be spent in urban spaces, *not* for leisure, play or private reasons, but in service of white inhabitants at the domestic level. Once their chores were done for the day or week, they were then required by the State's colonial Law to vacate the perceived-lived and conceived urban environments (Lemon, 1991). In this political and historic context, Africans had no right to any colonial city according to the dominant Laws and by-laws of the times. However, since cities are necessarily heterogeneous spaces where differences are encountered and produced, this dominant order for an African free urban public space was contested in practice by inhabitants who occupied these racial enclaves (see Chapter 3).

The Natives (Urban Areas) Land Act of 1923 was established to encourage the production of spatially segregated townships for urban Africans to live, far away from white spaces (Christopher, 1987). By 1937, influx control measures increased their hold over rhythmic practices and processes of Africans. Where they had previously been self-sufficient – prior to the emergence of the abstract capitalist space economy that disrupted and consequently destroyed their communal lives – African inhabitants were denied physical access to colonial urban spaces as well as the social privileges to life opportunities they came with. After World War II their time spent in urban space was reduced from fourteen days to a mere three days (Lemon, 1991). By 1948 colonial

South Africa had established itself well over and above the country's agrarian African society, which at this time had lost its heterogeneous ethnic identities, cultures and ways of doing things and interacting with the world around them as Batswana, Basotho, amaZulu, amaXhosa and so forth. During this period the politics of the colonial land took a different turn, when the British colonists separated themselves from 'local' affairs and the Van Riebeeck generation known as the 'Afrikaner volk' assumed State power, advancing Union South Africa (Vestergaard, 2001).

In an effort to distinguish itself from its English colonizing counterpart in southern African space, the National Party government of the volk continued the political practice of segregation and proceeded to institutionalize an ideological regime known as 'apartheid' in 1948 (Lemon, 1991; Lemon & Clifford, 2005). By the 1950s racially segregated housing settlements, places of work, cities, schools, public spaces like beaches, church, private life and sexual affairs, were subjected to apartheid practices (Landman, 2004; Mbembe, 2004; Visser, 2003). The Group Areas Acts of 1950s and 1960s for example, were pillars of apartheid in urban South Africa (Lemon, 1991; Maylam, 1995). Escalating violence in most established colonial cities during apartheid, coincided with the formulation and production of the United Nations' *Declaration of Human Rights*, that the apartheid government refused to adopt (see Papenfus, 2010). With mounting pressure inside and outside the segregated boundaries of Afrikaner South Africa, against the unjust treatment of the land's 'defenceless and dispossessed' African majority by colonial settlers of Dutch origin, the apartheid regime was brought down locally through global efforts (Christopher, 2001; Rogerson, 2000).

By the turn of the 1990s negotiation talks between the National Party apartheid government and the African National Congress politicians were underway to give Africans the same human rights, life opportunities and political representation in a land in which they were 'alienated' (Barrell, 1992). A decision was reached between African political party representatives and their apartheid counterparts, to release those imprisoned and exiled during the armed struggles that shaped the segregated country and its urban areas (Papenfus, 2010). In addition, the racially governed society was to adopt a majority rule type of democracy in which all inhabitants could exercise their political right to vote for representation in white South Africa (Ramutsindela, 2001).

It was only in 1994, after lengthy periods of racial domination by European colonialists who naturalised themselves through time, that the land's dispossessed, marginalized, politically excluded, economically disempowered and dehumanised Africans were 'free' to *be* in South Africa. That is, they were free to belong to the negotiated geopolitical community, to go wherever they wanted, to live in cities, work and study like everyone else, without prejudice, after three centuries of painful existence and the destruction of their own histories, identities, languages and other unknown social practices.

2.9 From colonial urban experiences to democratic cities

The colonial production and democratic opening of South Africa's cities since 1994 has had practical social consequences and space-specific challenges for the historically segregated society. Through its spatial practice of dispossession through colonial State and Law, a new class of spatially and economically affluent white inhabitants in South Africa was created (Coles, 1993). At the same time, this wealth creation produced a poor and under privileged class of Africans where there had previously been none (Plaatje, 1916/1982). It is for this reason that in democratic or racially desegregated South Africa, the majority of the society's inhabitants who are Africans will always occupy the social status of the poor, marginalized and unemployed (Parnell, 2005). While the 'new' South Africa is extensively modernist in terms of its Constitutional idea of the nation-state that is interested in the promotion of human rights and democracy (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2004), South Africa's cities continue to dominate crucial roles as material spaces where political life and constructions of lived experiences are contested and expressed.

Today, these cities serve as practical examples and mirrors of historically experienced social segregation, racism and outright denial of inhabitants' rights to mix and interact with each other. What may have appeared to the world as a peaceful transition from an oppressive, disempowering and dispossessing racist regime, to an all-embracing, 'non-racial and non-sexist' democratic regime, was in fact anything but peaceful (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; Spinks, 2001). When a wave of radical political change swept through the mid-1980s and early 1990s, historically segregated inhabitants were forced to face each other in cities, workplaces, churches, beaches and schools, where they had been kept apart for generations by colonizing

States *before* the majority government of the ANC stepped into power. The rupture in the racial state of affairs translated in the physical decline of Cape Town and Johannesburg urban centres, along with the richness and vitality of urban life in these centres as white inhabitants and capital, emigrated outwards to the northern suburbs (Scheuermaier, 2006; Visser & Kotze, 2008). This spatial event was a social response by historically fortressed citizens to changes in the political practices of the country, resulting in the full occupation of Johannesburg city by African inhabitants (Dirsuweit & Wafer, 2006).

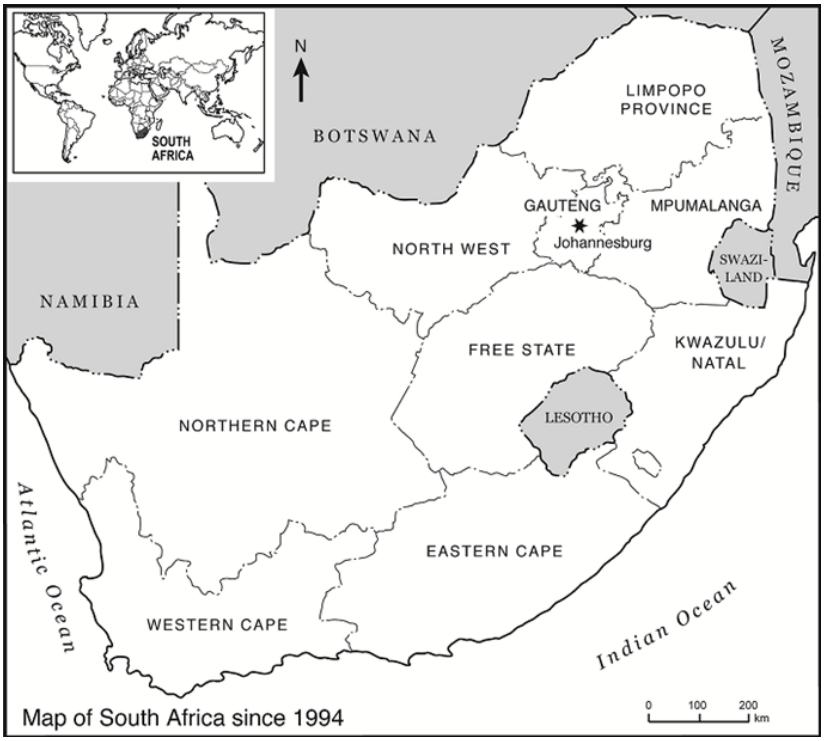


Figure 8. Map 3: The political geography of *neo*-colonial South Africa.

The map above is a representation of present day South Africa, with its demarcated Provinces having 'new' geographical names as of 1994. In terms of the country's dominant urban centres, not all inhabitants were pleased with this desegregated outcome, and with good reason. For the most part during the 1980s, apartheid cities were characterised by violent crimes that threatened the ontological security of white inhabitants, prompting their retreat from public spaces into their own private-public spaces of gated communities (Dirsuweit, 2002, 2007; Scheuermaier, 2006). For the first time since their colonial production, South African cities were politically open to all inhabitants and so they became democratic spaces where they were once exclusionary and marginalizing in racial and gendered terms. This does not mean that their physical

representation in space as products of colonial planning and architecture changed, or were transformed in social practice.

In an effort to remedy this socially insecure condition that prevailed nationally and exclusively in urban cores, where Africans had no human right to live, to work, to play, to study and to socialise freely with dignity, the democratic State embarked on a capitalist spree of hosting a mega sporting-event from 1995 to 2010 for the sake of nation building and social cohesion (Andranovich, Burbank & Heying, 2001; Cornelissen, 2004, 2009; Pillay & Bass, 2008). In spite of its good efforts to bring historically divided people in a fragmented landscape together under one State, the ANC-led representations of space inherited much more than a mammoth of colonial and apartheid legacies over its twenty-one years in power. Having to deal with a scrambled egg, it had no part in scrambling, the ANC government now bears the sole responsibility of unscrambling the majority of all social ills and spatial deficiencies that significantly overlap democratic times and spaces. This state of affairs has earned the African representations of space a negative reputation as a 'failing government' in a newly democratised South Africa; too quick to discard its strong history and legacy of colonialism and apartheid from its everyday life, as something that must quickly be forgotten for the sake of globalization, abstract democratization politics and neo-capitalism (Dirsuweit & Wafer, 2006; Lefebvre, 1962/1995; Mashele & Qobo, 2014; Sithole, 2014).

With regard to urban research, Lemon (1991) and Maylam (1995), provide a broader scope for work conducted by predominantly White and male historians, anthropologists, geographers, planners, architects, musicologists, sociologist and writers, about the production of apartheid cities in South Africa. For Maylam, two traditions influence the social production of urban research. The first tradition is policy-oriented, and it focuses on the capacity of the central and local State to exercise control over the produced African underclass in cities. The second approach focuses on lived social experiences of 'urban dwellers' and their struggles for urban life. The first tradition dominates current discourses (Rogerson, 1993), because the bulk of research conducted in, and about, apartheid cities, was focused on aiding the apartheid State to better manage 'black' inhabitants in light of the conceived "urban policy, as it affected black people" (Maylam, 1995, p. 21). This urban human geographical project responds to Lemon's

(1991) vision for *neo*-colonial representations of everyday life experiences of present-day inhabitants in these historically rich and architecturally changing urban spaces.

What Lemanski (2004), appropriately terms the politics of 'new apartheid': segregation is no longer exclusively racial, but class based. This dissertation perceives this 'new' or *neo*-apartheid as a fresh take on *colonization* of space by abstract space of capital/spectacles that does not care if one is ethnic and poor, or white and affluent. Present-day discrimination is neither race-based or class influenced, although it does perpetuate colonial and apartheid class divisions that are now part and parcel of South Africa's social landscape and political reality. Cities, whether colonial or colonizing, are physical expressions of human development, scientific advancements and political expression (Harvey, 2008; Wells, 2007). It is in urban spaces like Athens of ancient Greece, present day Paris or New York, for example, that democracy is developed and democratic practices are contested (Low, 2006). In the context of *neo*-colonial[5] South African cities, democracy and democratic practice experienced in New York City, for example (Low, 2006), is rarely contested on spatial terms through direct methods of observation that are conceptually theoretical *and* empirical.

With the re-entry onto the global political arena of financial markets, technological systems and rapid 'spectacularization' of social life in cities, South Africa quickly embraced the neoliberal policies of private governance, that privilege the rights of elitist private property owners and developers, over the public society's rights (Mitchell, 2003; Sithole, 2014). In this neoliberal arena, that is firmly rooted in the 1996 Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy or GEAR, private economic interests take precedence. In physical space of conceived cities these apolitical and ahistorical private relations of producing space, are known as business or city improvement districts: BIDs or CIDs, and they are accepted without much contest, in spite of their unequal power relationship with governing States and their non-democratic function in the formation and production of urban public spaces (Clough &Vanderbeck, 2006; Fogelson, 2001; Hoyt & Gopal-Agge, 2007; Mitchell, 2001; Murray, 2010).

[5] The term neo-colonialism is used here as conceived by Kwame Nkrumah (1965). It signifies the last stage of European imperialism whereby the historically colonial State that is subjected to it is independent or democratic however, its economic and political policies are directed from outside. Democratic South Africa with its adopted GEAR policies, mega-event strategies, neoliberal agendas for urban governance fits the profile of a neo-colonial society. This concept however, will be further developed and deconstructed in other works due to lack of space and time in the master's research.

At the local level improvement districts are contested by very few researchers, who agree that such models of, and for, urban governance, in a unique geo-political context like South Africa, are not yet appropriate and their country-wide proliferation and zero resistance from society does very little to sensitize politicians and inhabitants to their inappropriateness (Atkinson, 2008; Lemanski, 2007; Lemanski & Saff, 2010; Low, 2006; Peyroux, 2006, 2007, 2008). Despite these global economic relationships and lived political realities of South Africa, not much is done to at the scientific level, by 'old' geographers, to remedy the democratic situation by supporting an emerging generation of human geographers in their construction of new urban narratives, which are a reflection of the inhabitants who live in democratic cities (Lemon, 1991). Instead, the preoccupation with geographers of apartheid times is ensuring that produced policy-oriented research is written to a wider audience following harsh rejection, and experienced hostile reception at international conferences, because of apartheid (Mather, 2007; Rogerson, 1990). The fall of apartheid however, did enable some geographers to engage the spatial urban context and its representational politics of democratic inhabitants, who are overlooked by apartheid planners in the production of apartheid cities (Kotze, 2003).

Looking at the historical city's public spaces, like sporting venues and parks, Kotze argued that these public facilities or spaces excluded handicapped inhabitants from participating in everyday life of the city and appropriating its material structures. Not only that, Kotze found that this group of inhabitants is marginalized in the legal realm as well, because laws that protect physically impaired inhabitants are not yet existent in the democratic context, in the manner that they are implemented in colonizing European and American contexts. Kotze argued that in the democratic urban context, planners should be more sensitive towards the production of public spaces that are representational for all inhabitants to appropriate, according to their social and physical needs.

Farther afield is a non-governmental organisation or NGO by the name of Isandla Institute, in *neo*-colonial Cape Town. This research institute has committed its human and financial resources to advocate for inhabitants' right to the city in the Lefebvrian sense, in addressing informality in its rightful historical context, and finding alternative

ways of dealing with urban development in the neoliberal city, as a representational space in which inhabitants should occupy a central role (Görgens & van Donk, 2012; www.isandla.org.za). The advent of the FIFA World Cup hosted by South Africa in 2010 encouraged a variety of urban and public space specific research (see HSRC Press, 2009). Within this *neo*-colonial and explicitly capitalist context of the mega sporting-event, South Africa's fragmented cities were seen, experienced and approached with new eyes and minds directed at the cities' most marginalized and under researched arenas of quotidian life experiences, where "interaction, communication and identification amongst people of different backgrounds" occurs (Haferburg, Golka & Selter, 2009, p. 188). Host cities were expected to make use of their socially neglected and theoretically distant public spaces, like certain parks, squares and even streets, as official sites where inhabitants, as spectators, could gather and consume the cultural event through a space specific social concept, known as public viewing areas or PVAs.

PVAs were introduced by the elitist organisation FIFA during the 2002 and 2006 world cups in Korea/Japan and Germany, as a means of extending the spectacle's atmosphere to those inhabitants in host societies too poor to afford tickets to watch the games live in expensive stadia. Within the context of the mega spatial and capitalist event PVAs "represented (temporary) interventions into public space, restricting its normal use, defining and activating new links or hampering the usual connections" (Haferburg et al., 2009, p. 185). Clearly the soccer (or football) world cup of 2010 brought about new experiences and conceptualizations of public spaces in different host cities, where there had previously been none.

It is from within such a complex myriad of contested historical events, political changes and production of *neo*-colonial mega-events in present-day South Africa, that the public space informing this research is conceptualized. The square chosen for this research played a critical role, not only in the production of *urban* South Africa. It also played a historic role in hosting the PVA for inner city in 2010.

2.10 Conclusion

Public spaces are important social spaces for the production and facilitation of everyday life in, and across, democratic urban societies. Their conceptualization in their respective geographical, historical and political contexts, is equally as important as understanding

their social politics in the formation of diverse urban experiences in capitalist cities. This chapter prioritized the colonial history and *neo*-colonial discourses of dominated inhabitants, and their political relationship with oppression, marginalization and exclusion in space through violent and subtle means. Through these societies' spatial experiences and theorized narratives, the divide between historically colonizing and *neo*-colonial powers is brought a little closer in increasingly globalizing yet distant urban world contexts. By looking at different scales and public spaces around their world in light of their histories, theory is able to discern distinctions between local and global discourses, African and Eurocentric representations, as different represent *this* local society's global history of colonialism and apartheid, in an effort to contextualize the urban society's spatial politics in their rightful framework of everyday life in capitalist South Africa.

CHAPTER 3

MARY FITZGERALD SQUARE: A HISTORY OF PRODUCTION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is trans-historical. It seeks to achieve the difficult task of situating Mary Fitzgerald Square in theoretical space as a contested space. The idea is to present the production of Mary Fitzgerald Square in colonial Johannesburg, and its sustained role in transcending the dominant political forces that operate over the urban space and social formation in the *neo*-colonial city. More importantly, the idea is to illustrate the spatial manifestation of social struggle for the Square since its inception, by generations of urban dwellers. Using Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad, rhythmanalysis and the Right to the City, this chapter interrogates the colonial production of Newtown's Mary Fitzgerald Square in Johannesburg, South Africa. The chapter is laid out in a manner that seeks to lay out the spatial evolution of the public space in the city through the course of time.

Mary Fitzgerald Square's evolution was significantly informed by a radical spirit of togetherness and ideas about social equality dominating the dominated and segregated urban landscape and society. On conceptual terms this chapter seeks to establish Mary Fitzgerald Square as a public space whose spatial practices were directly lived in colonial times before they were conceived in the *neo*-colonial African society where everyday life happens and power is contested. This chapter draws from archived newspaper articles and related published literature that focuses on the history of Mary Fitzgerald Square with Newtown and Johannesburg occupying the background context influencing and influenced by social practices affecting the public space even still today.

3.2 Colonial birth of representational space (1886 -1899)

In place of what is today known as Johannesburg city, was an open veld with no sophisticated networks of roads, traffic lights, official and retail buildings, signages, automobiles, high populations, industry or architecture; no 'urban' culture or social space. The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand ridge in 1886, led to an explosion of mining activities which attracted a variety of inhabitants from near and far (Bremner, 2000; Johannesburg, 1986). Mining, therefore, became the dominant spatial practice in the colonized area with social and economic consequences. Inhabitants flocked to the mining area from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and concentrated on the colonized southern African territory formerly known as Randjeslaagte (Brink, 1994).

African inhabitants naturally dominated the forming urban society's colonial landscape. In addition, colonial inhabitants of British and Dutch descent from Europe, along with migrant Americans, imported Indian and Chinese inhabitants from Asia dominated the social fabric of the landscape (Brink, 1994; Harris, 2010). In this colonial society of different races men, women and children of different backgrounds gathered in perceived spaces close to Randjeslaagte, where they occupied the land and lived next to each other. In this instance, inhabitants rightfully occupied a space where many from beyond the borders of the country and continent rushed to the gold filled Witwatersrand. In this modern urban formation, southern Africans, within the regional context of gold mining practices, were targets of the brute force of colonialism that played out in various ways over a period of at least one hundred years.

Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City reminds us that in such a capitalist world system, the conventional 'citizen' is no longer thought of due to technical limitations in the context of cities. Instead we think of the inhabitant and the perceived spaces they appropriate and hence produce through their actions and imaginations (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). An inhabitant is any living person who dwells in an urban environment and engages its social complex every day without any limitations imposed by their nationality, political association, class and membership or lack thereof. In colonial Johannesburg for example, the citizen was not an African man, woman or child. Instead citizens were white men, children and women irrespective of where they were born. However, the white woman, by virtue of her physiology as a female, was denied political representation and certain social rights that the white male counterpart, until around the late 1920s and early 1930s (Hunter, 2009; http://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/white-women-achieve-suffrage-south-africa).

This political and legal construct was racially beneficial to colonialists but not to the colonized ethnic men and women of the southern African geography, including the Indian, Chinese and Coloured races. Africans in particular had no legal, spatial or social rights to citizenship, political identity or property ownership in the colonial system. Lefebvre's social-spatial discourse assumes the contested ontological position that prioritizes the politics of the dominated lived space in society through a critique of that society's conceived space in time or spatial practice (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). It is, therefore, only fitting for the research that the urban politics of African inhabitants, are

given primacy because of the general society's five hundred year history of racial domination by European representations of space (Plaatje, 1916/1982).

As a society whose political few, like the late Solomon Plaatje and Nelson Mandela,[6] are conscious of their powerlessness in relation to the colonizing European force, this dissertation aims to re-enforce Plaatje's (1916/1982, p. xi) view; presenting the diverse African personality "as deserving justice, humanity and dignity" in the twenty-first century. It is imperative for this to be done because to a large extent it is still not known how Africans perceive, live and imagine themselves in the world as representational subjects, assimilated into the colonial and *neo*-colonial structures and systems of modernity that inform their everyday lived experiences of public space in Johannesburg. As a people stripped of their land and therefore any human and animal resources available to them for production and reproduction, the mere physical presence of Africans in the informal 'urban' formation, challenged the colonial mind and social practice of the dominating European representations of space.

In earlier Johannesburg, multiracial slums 'naturally' defined the perceived spaces of present day Braamfontein and Newtown as open veld farm spaces situated in close proximity to each other, very like they still are today. Some inhabitants portrayed negative attitudes towards produced racial slums as representational space and, more significantly, the visible presence of Africans in these colonial slums in the formalising city through media reports in colonial times (*Rand Daily Mail*, 11/01/1927; *Rand Daily Mail*, 21/03/1928). On the ground multiracial inhabitants had no issues living and working side by side despite racial prejudices that dominated the general history and geography of the 'local[7]' context at a national scale (Lemon, 1991).

[6] In a BBC DVD documentary of Nelson Mandela titled "Mandela: The Living Legend" produced in 2013, the late president of Democratic South Africa can be heard in his own words declaring political powerlessness in the face of his human power to influence humanity. This he could achieve by appealing to humanity's heart and spiritual consciousness in a democratising South African country and continent of the terrestrial world dominated by human intelligence or agency.

[7] The word 'local' is used to denote the geographical proximity of Johannesburg as a major city and research space in South Africa's Gauteng Province, however, there is nothing 'local' about the metropolis but everything worldly or global about it as a product and production despite its spatial location of origin with respect to southern Africans (see for example works by Achille Mbembe, Sarah Nuttall and Charles van Onselen on Johannesburg's political formation and identity)

Unlike in Yeoh's (1996) plural society, where racially different inhabitants of colonial Singapore only interacted in a designated marketplace as representational space, in Johannesburg African, European, Indian, Chinese, Malay and Coloured inhabitants fraternized with each other in these slums and shared their technical skills, like brick-production, amongst each other as a unified working class (Brink, 1994). With regard to the production of this society's public space, it was the inhabitants' livestock: cattle, oxen and horses with their wagons that originally produced a distinct public space that differed significantly from the broader representational formation that occurred in space (see Figure 9). The spatial practices of inhabitants' livestock were soon changed and appropriated by representations of space whose spatial practice is to change and appropriate that which is different from it in space.



Figure 9. Inhabitants, wagons and live animals in colonized 'urban' space. (Source: MuseumAfrica)

In less than a decade following the discovery of gold, the practical consequences of which led to radical, physical transformation of the perceived farm lands with their corrugated shacks and tents, into specialist spaces of a modernist political economy (Johannesburg, 1986). Within this perceived space of exploding and unmediated social practices, about seven thousand inhabitants, one thousand two hundred horses and four hundred and fifty wagons, produced slum representational spaces perceived as "poverty point" and "fly in the honey pot" (Brink, 1994, p. 12, Gaule, 2005). This heterogeneous element in colonial Johannesburg, at a time when racial segregation dominated the living conditions of every inhabitant, presents interesting contradictions about present day Newtown. In its informal state, it contradicted elitist desires and political aspirations

of colonialists for white South African cities despite their geographical location in Africa. Historical newspaper reports from *The Rand Daily Mail* of 1928 served as tools through which to articulate public opinion of some white inhabitants with respect to the issue of racial mixing in a twentieth century urban space. One writer in particular vilifies the production of Johannesburg's mixed race slums as cause for the city's preoccupation with and construction of Africans as human transporters of insanitary diseases in the landscape of the forming urban society. As the writer expressed

> Rapid has been the growth of beauty from bare veld, but quite as rapid the spread of squalor and crowded discomfort. White, coloured, native (African), Indian and Chinese are huddled together in airless hovels in the centre of a vast open land that is crying out for population. There is in Johannesburg a very real danger of the moral degradation and physical degeneracy that comes of insanitary town life
> (*The Rand Daily Mail*, 30/01/1928)

The mention of vast open land crying out for population implies, in Lefebvrian terms, an understanding and perception of the colonized urban land space as an 'empty' space in need of filling with conceived content. Filling up such a space entailed emptying it first of its 'primitive' African representations of space and in space, and refilling it with architectural features, political identities, social and economic institutions and the cultural tastes of Europeans; as was the case with Hanoians in Vietnam under French rule (Drummond, 2000; Kürten, 2008). Interestingly, nowhere in the history of either Newtown or Johannesburg are the multiracial slums of the historical mining town 'celebrated' for their ability to transform a significant piece of perceived land space through social-spatial practice, into something of an urban wonder where previously there had been none. Lefebvre (1974/1991) suggests that spatial practice or daily activities, conducted by members of a society in a particular spatial location in a particular time period, secretes or produces that society's space.

At the same time, a society's social practice destroys itself through and/or is destroyed by [its] spatial practice. In the case of Mary Fitzgerald Square's social practices, it is the dominant political practice that has destroyed this space's diverse social practices and lived experiences of inhabitants in colonial times; this trend continues today as Chapter 4 later reveals. Whilst on the dominated farms, conveniently situated in close proximity to each other, and mining camps of Randjeslaagte, Ferreirastown and Fordsburg, agro-

pastoral inhabitants who could not be absorbed into the formal mining economy realized opportunities for livelihood and income security in the perceived space they occupied (Brink, 1994). The farm land, bought initially for Afrikaner burghers or citizens, contained clay deposits which inhabitants sought to cultivate. From the clay filled ground tons of bricks were produced for the industrial mining town by inhabitants who literally assigned the ill-perceived slums a use-value in the material town and through the social practice of brick-making created opportunities for the extraction of the space's *exchange*-value as determined by these autonomous inhabitants. A society's spatial practice secretes that society's space (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). Brick production implied a supply and demand of bricks in Johannesburg. This economic practice also meant the creation of job opportunities, knowledge and technical skills transference between politicized white and African inhabitants in segregated Johannesburg.

In the colonial setting the social practice of brick making rapidly transformed the image of the so called "dwellings of despair in the heart of Johannesburg" (*The Rand Daily Mail*, 30/01/1928) into an *oeuvre* called Brickfields, along with its original wagon site (Brink, 1994). Brickfields was the name given to the collective geography of inner city slums like the Coolie, the Kaffir and the Malay Locations which together composed the present day Newtown precinct. Consequently, this society's physical and economically transformational spatial practice, which drew out a multiplicity of inhabitants together in space, ironically encouraged its own destruction. It did not matter the economic capacity and practicality of the heterogeneous lived space in the racially homogeneous conceived core. The social contradiction created in space, by the representational space of Brickfields, had to be taken care of literally by the dominant space in society that was the colonial State.

For late nineteenth century African inhabitants living in Brickfields, this meant countless attacks including forced evictions facilitated and enforced in practice by colonial Law, and urban specific by-laws which made this society's lived experiences and social opportunities in the city difficult (Parnell, 1991; Parnell and Pirie, 1991). In some instances it was a criminal offence for any landlord in material urban formations around the country to accommodate Africans as rent paying tenants under the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1924 (*Daily News*, 28/10/41). In Brickfields, the social practice of brick-production was soon a criminal activity to engage in on State-owned land and

consequently trading licences were imposed on inhabitants of the area. For those inhabitants not directly involved with the socio-economic business of brickmaking in the political representational space, State law required them to vacate the fields voluntarily or by force (Brink, 1994). This political practice in colonial society sought to curb any opportunities available for Africans to prosper. For example, within the spatial-historical context of the Natives Land Act of 1913, Africans were not allowed to own any livestock or land property where their livestock could graze and drink water, or to perform agricultural practices because they were, naturally, effective farmers than their European counterparts (Maylam, 1995; Sparks, 2003). Solomon Plaatje enlightens us to the fact that under such law in South Africa, Africans could not thrive; not in Brickfields or anywhere else.

Coupling the Natives Land Act with the Urban Areas Act led to the physical destruction of Brickfields. Africans were in a position where they had to relinquish all their oxen and cows to the white 'Baas', who had all rights and de facto entitlement to their ancestral land (Plaatje, 1916/1982). Not only that, as Plaatje further enlightens, Africans also had to surrender their family units to work as labourers for the Baas for a wage of two pounds per family. Failure to comply meant the renting African had four days to leave the farm. The consequences of such political social practice, left many African families fragmented, spatially excluded from the forming urban cores and physically stranded in their own land. Everything that defined who they were was illegal or delegitimized along with every geographical area they sought to occupy. Violation of the Land and Urban Areas Acts were grounds for a steep fine, imprisonment or death for Africans caught transgressing spatial laws in their colonized territory. One colonial officer shared his personal views about the Land Act situation with Solomon Plaatje while patrolling the landscape for Kaffirs

> Some of the poor creatures I knew to be fairly comfortable, if not rich, and they enjoyed the possession of their stock, living in many instances just like the Dutchmen. Many of these are now being forced to leave their homes. Cycling along this road you will meet several of them in search of new homes, and if ever there was a fool's errand, it is that of a Kaffir trying to find a new home for his stock and family just now
> (Plaatje, 1916/1982, p. 86)

In addition, it became a criminal offence for white women in particular to interact in their own social capacity with urban Africans. In a newspaper article titled "white women at native dances: remarkable revelations, contraventions of city by-laws" the writer laments the activities of white female inhabitants and their legally prohibited engagement with leisure spaces of Africans in colonial Johannesburg. According to colonial urban by-law

> "No white female shall be employed or be in any place of public entertainment or in any house, part of which is licenced as a place of public entertainment, for coloured persons, Asiatics or natives"
> (*The Star*, 25/06/1935)

These racially inspired attitudes, inherited from periods of slavery, persistently produced in their own right and through their own social practices, multiracial slums that were contradictory public spaces in the urban colony. This blatant abuse of power in the colonial urban society fought against the personal interests and social identities of all inhabitants in their racial, geographical and gendered diversity, leading Moultrie (2001) to assert that segregation politics affected *all* inhabitants in South Africa. While this may be true, it is important to note that segregation politics did not affect 'all' inhabitants equally across each geopolitical context in the country. The hard realities of such racist attitudes embedded in society by a powerful few, resulted in the brutal treatment and unnecessarily violent apprehension of African inhabitants' biophysical bodies, minds, spiritual consciousness and constructions of everyday life.

Only a handful of newspapers of the colonial order reported on and exposed the inhumane suffering and unprovoked loss of African life at the hands of white male inhabitants, who were fined minimal pounds for their acts of hatred towards life forms contained in so called 'black bodies' (*Cape Times*, 07/08/1935; *The Star*, 02/09/1941). Solomon Plaatje's (1916/1982) political text titled *Native Life in South Africa,* was originally published in 1916 and is perhaps the most under cited ethnographic source of historical data about southern Africans' spatial struggles that still haunt and define them today. Set within the ideological context of the Native's Land Act of 1913, this key text gives detailed and heart breaking accounts of what everyday life entailed for millions of landless and spatially suspended inhabitants in the continent under intense racism and disenfranchisement.

For African women, colonial law and urban by-laws were unforgiving. African women suffered horribly in the urban settlements of South Africa and Johannesburg in particular. They were generally perceived as ugly, noisy, unkempt drunkards, who sang and danced all day, while their dirty half-naked children ran underfoot in crowded gutters (*The Rand Daily Mail*, 20/12/1924). Their function and role in colonized urban society and space, was to bring a male Kaffir to work for the white family (Plaatje, 1916/1982). What I find interesting is the audacity of historic Europeans, to construct African women as unattractive, 'non-beings' who were well below the ranks of animals yet, they still went ahead and tore open their private bodies through forced miscegenation, particularly in the colonial Cape (Davies, 1981; Sartre, 2001; Sparks, 2003).

African women, men and their children were deliberately left to die by the power of the conceived abstract space of colonialism that was endorsed by its colonizing State. Plaatje (1916/1982) gives a moving account of a young African family, which he encountered on his ethnographic exploration of everyday life of Africans in Union South Africa and the practical consequences of State domination over their ability to reproduce themselves in space like they did *before* racial domination. Plaatje encountered an evicted young family trekking from nowhere to nowhere with their sick infant, who tragically died during the migration. The grieving couple, as Plaatje recorded, buried their beautiful darling in a stolen grave hurriedly, in the middle of the night with mourning and mounting fear of getting caught doing it, for they no longer had *de facto* or *de jure* rights and entitlement to any lands to farm, live on and be buried in.

Under the socio-political reality of the Natives Land Act of 1913 "little children, whose only crime [was] that God did not make them white, [were]…denied that right (to a proper burial) in their ancestral home" (Plaatje, 19/161982, p. 90). This historically lived ethno-political experience by Plaatje is truly disturbing. It is a clear presentation and sincere reflection of the everyday life experiences of Africans under colonial rule. Plaatje goes on further to express the suffering and ignored politics and rhythm of African inhabitants particularly in 1913 South Africa. He asks from a spiritually conscious point of view, inspired by the Merchant of Venice, appealing to the human

heart and mental conscience of colonists engaged in dehumanizing acts of violence against Africans in Union South Africa

> Hath not a Kaffir eyes? Hath not a Kaffir hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Is he not fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same summer and winter as a white Afrikander? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not take revenge?
> (Plaatje, 1916/1982, p. 116)

The depth and enormous scope of the psychological, spiritual and social trauma experienced by these late inhabitants in their struggle for their God-given land, inherent rights to their bodies, the natural environment to thrive on and to live from generation to generation, is inconceivable. The South African or Anglo-Boer War broke out in 1899 between the British and Afrikaner-Dutch (Brink, 1994; Johannesburg, 1986; Plaatje, 1916/1982; Vestergaard, 2001). African men participated in the war, assisting Britain to claim victory over the Dutch-Boers, with the expectation and understanding that their inhumane treatment would be reconciled for the better, but that was not to be the case (Plaatje, 1916/1982). Although Brickfields' racial slum was performing well economically, placing it third largest industry after mining and farming, health fears amongst colonialists was enough to destroy it completely (Goldberg, 1993).

The representational space of Brickfields, along with the plural society that secreted it through its spatial practices, was changed and appropriated through ruptures of violent events resulting in forced State evictions of nearly three thousand inhabitants of African and Asian descent, as well the destruction of produced African and Indian locations by fire (Brink, 1994; Dirsuweit, 1999; Maylam, 1995; Parnell & Pirie, 1991; *The Rand Daily Mail*, 01/11/1925). By 1902 the old Transvaal of the Dutch and former home of African inhabitants, pre-domination and urbanization, was captured by British forces. After an eight year period that led to the geographical formation and political institutionalization of Union of South Africa, the conquered land "ceased to be the home of any of her native children, *whose skins are dyed with a pigment that does not conform* with the regulation hue" Plaatje (1916/1982, p. 83; emphasis added).

The case of African South Africans in this historical urban space, expresses Lefebvre's (1974/1991) notion that the production of any society's space is a political process hinged on a dialectical 'antagonist-protagonist' relationship between that which is dominated and that which dominates it in spatial practice over time. To appreciate this historical production of urban public space, Lefebvre draws attention to the inherent differences between lived space and conceived space, whereby representational (lived) space, by its own design, does not conform to the logical formations and carefully thought experiences of representations of space in spatial practice (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). As Lefebvre often notes, a heart or life lived is different from a heart or life that is perceived or conceived (imagined). It is within this historical context that Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City becomes useful as it leads us to understand that this philosophical and conceptual right, which is *urban* focused and space oriented, is not a right to be freely given. It is taken in different ways as a sign of power by those who are left out of (or brought in to) the city they inhabit because of their biological (racial) appearance, social difference and place of birth (geography).

As a socially produced physical and representational space Brickfields along with its wagon site, were material representations of the concrete nature of power struggles between colonialists and southern Africans who had nowhere else to *be* on the planet (or in the world) *but* the southern region on the African continent for the production and formation of an urban society in colonized space (Plaatje, 1916/1982). The formation of this society's globally renowned Johannesburg occurred in spite of the fact that colonized Africans had no physical right to the colonial urban space and the social, political and economic life opportunities it had to offer. It is therefore important for the twenty-first century urban context, to take cognisance of the historical aspect and multidimensionality of the lived experiences of earlier Africans if the contemporary urban space is to be articulated and analysed in its rightful context through the lens of continuity and change.

Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad is powerful because it unearthed these hidden spatial histories and revealed them as social constructs that are part of a sophisticated web of political organization of colonized space, the human bodies occupying those spaces and how they changed and were changed during pre-colonial and Union South

Africa by the abstract space of colonialism in the formation and transformation of present-day Newtown, Johannesburg.

3.3 From lived space to conceived space (1899- 1910)

It is sad that South Africa's major cities like Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban are conceived products and productions of racial segregation. These capital cities stand as material representations of early European societies' loathing of the country's original inhabitants; juxtaposed with their desire to take everything away from these inhabitants, including their very breath, and remodel them into formalised labour systems and apolitical relationships of their white imagination (Davies, 1981). This is the raw power of this multi-complex concrete abstract space that is Johannesburg and Newtown, and their practical consequences for African inhabitants past and present. Nowhere in the geographical history of South Africa have racial policies, urban planning mechanisms and practices, so violently manifested 'against' Africans than in the Transvaal or Johannesburg as it is known today (Lemon, 1991; Plaatje, 1916/1982). For Africans such concrete spaces were conceived, not for their pleasure and appropriation, but for their exploitation as domestic and/or industrial peasants—cheap labour—in dominated context (Lemon, 1991; Rogerson, 1996a).

The torching of the 'Coolie' (Indian), 'Kaffir' (African) and Malay (Asiatics) Locations described by Brink (1994), enables this Lefebvrian research to locate the historical moment when the urban society first engaged the spatial practice of gentrification. This spatial process continues across South Africa's cities today, as part of their global identity, deliberately pursued by urban managers, developers and capitalists (Dawson, 2011; Winkler, 2009). The ability of conceived space to bring about radical social and spatial changes in Brickfields, to the extent that that which was physically perceived and directly experienced by inhabitants was aligned with what was conceived is revealing of the space's true and concrete power. A spatial trait usually associated with representations of space.

Lefebvre's (1974/1991) representations of space or conceived space, is 'dominant' in any society. As conceptual space of the Logos this social space's practice seeks the anti-Logos in society in order to change and appropriate it in a manner that desires the full elimination of *inherent* racial, cultural, social, physical, political, architectural and

mental differences posed by anti-Logos (Elden, 2004; Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Merrifield, 1995). In the case of Brickfield's polyrhythmic ensemble of multiracial and multi-ethnic Locations as representational space produced by inhabitants and their livestock, Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad provides a visual mental aid into how colonial 'domination', as a mega-political event or geographical phenomenon, occurred in the production of Johannesburg, and its un-intended consequences for different inhabitants. With this dissertation the aim is to show how these dominant-dominating rhythms (Lefebvre, 1992/2004) change and continue to *be changed* in different ways through the passage of time in the public space of political concern: Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown, Johannesburg. Under colonial Law and by-laws further division amongst the working class inhabitants of Brickfields was imposed, which facilitated the production of the contemporary city and its contested public spaces. Butler's (2009) critical legal geography describes the modern State's critical role in the production of urban space through its political or instrumental use to maintain the desired social order.

It is important to understand the process of planning and legal mechanisms in producing desired spaces, and above all assigning their dominant uses through conceived prohibitions imposed on the colonial society's lived space, using the law as an apparatus of the State. Twentieth century laws like the Natives Land Act of 1913 and the Urban Areas Act of 1924, are only some examples of how the State and its planners, scientists, social engineers, law-makers and architects, impacted on the social-spatial fabric of Brickfields Locations by producing, after destruction and forced evictions, a new township in the same vicinity interestingly called Burghersdorp or Citizens' Town, in a context where the citizen was everyone but the African (Brink, 1994).

Burghersdorp was a representational space produced for the exclusive enjoyment of the colonialist State and its White inhabitants. It was a material representation of the racial order and desires of the colonizing State for a white Johannesburg (Brink, 1994; Lemon, 1991; Parnell & Pirie, 1991). Generally all Africans inhabiting the physical spaces of the Locations making up Brickfields, had no social, political, physical (ethical) right to be in the colonial city because they were not 'citizens' according to the dominant representations of space. These conditions have persisted since the advent of African slavery, despite this lived society's geographical origins as inhabitants and descendants of the continent.

At the national level, Africans had no right to freedom of movement across the dominated landscape and this denial was enshrined in the implementation and practice of the Pass Law. While on his cycling expedition, Plaatje (1916/1982) encountered a colonial law enforcer on horseback, and he was immediately struck by the thought that he had no 'pass' and may therefore be liable to imprisonment for trespassing on colonized territory in the land of his birth and ancestors. Fortunately for him the Dutch officer had no ill-intentions and turned out to not be a life threat. According to Plaatje, the only people or races who had any rights to geographical movements within the Transvaal (Johannesburg), Orange 'Free' State and Bechuanaland (Botswana *via* Bophuthatswana or North-West) were the Dutch, the English, Jews, Germans and other foreigners, but not Africans.

The Pass Law, according to Plaatje (1916/1982) was initially set to facilitate the movement of livestock over sparsely populated areas, to ensure that herders of oxen and horses for example, were in legal possession of the livestock they were herding. For Africans, this law mutated and together with influx control measures, it was used to monitor and facilitate the movements of Africans between urban areas and other spaces, thus placing them at a huge spatial disadvantage under difficult and inexplicable social conditions. Some inhabitants found themselves used or partaking in corrupt exchanges, like transporting stolen horses and cattle from one place to another, using fake permits generated for them by "white-horse thieves" (Plaatje, 1916/1982, p. 85).

As a people with virtually no other alternatives to securing what little remained of their livelihoods and independence (autonomy) honestly and legally, it is not surprising that whilst living the under already degrading circumstances and the inhuman conditions to which they were subjected, that some inhabitants took these criminal opportunities. Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City is political. It enables an analysis of the relationship between the State and its citizens, within the framework of the struggle for urban life. For Lefebvre (1968/1996), the city is not a mere product and production of modernity through industrial processes for capital accumulation. The city is an *oeuvre*; a living, creative work of art, constantly remade and brought to life by its inhabitants (; Butler, 2009; Harvey, 2003; Mitchell, 2003). The explicit denial of Africans from fully participating in the creative space of colonial *oeuvre* constituted an outright denial of

the right to the city, to renewed forms of life, to play and sexuality, to different encounters and a degree of self-management or autogestion in space (Elden, 2004; Mitchell, 2003). On one hand, the conceived space fed off the pressure from the majority few in the white colonial settlement; who had the right to political representation and had a voice in the decision-making of everyday life matters concerning the segregated development and destruction of Brickfields' multiracial slums, amidst health scares (*Forward*, 25/02/1944; Parnell, 1991; *The Rand Daily Mail*, 21/03/1928). On the other hand, conceived space ignored the voices of some white inhabitants living in Brickfields in their plea with the colonizing State to reconsider its physical infrastructural projects, which threatened their social fabric and economic livelihood (Brink, 1994). What is interesting is that whilst Africans did not have any political and social right in the colonial urban society because they lacked 'citizenship' and were not conceived as de jure 'citizens', that situation did not prohibit them from physically occupying the denied urban landscape.

No colonial law and urban by-law conceived by the 'White Supremacist State' as Mbembe (2004) notes, could effectively keep Africans away and out of the perceived, lived and conceived urban space of the European colonialists in South Africa. This situation presents Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City as a social and spatial right that is taken or claimed in urban societies, by inhabitants who are without the political power and political will to effect changes due to their dominated status (Malena, 2009; Marcuse, 2009; Purcell, 2002). Africans had no representation and space to exercise their fundamental rights to actively participate in discourses of everyday political life, and to socially appropriate such discourses in space through their own practices. Through the Natives Land Act of 1913, Africans were excluded from having political voice and representation in colonial Parliament. They were awarded no seats in Parliament and geographically restricted to a mere thirteen percent of the country's total land surface area (Lemon, 1991; Plaatje, 1916/1982).

It is in Plaatje's (1916/1982) ethnographic text and political discourse, that the voices, feelings and opinions of African children, youths, men and women living in the Locations and working in the mining camps of the old Transvaal, are heard and accurately reflected. It is therefore not surprising that the colonial society and its dominant representations of space, made decisions for and about Africans that were not

always in their best interests. This situation left a diverse and quantified group of inhabitants to the unforgiving and ever so hateful Law and by-laws of 'racial extermination' Plaatje (1916/1982), conceived by the two European forces fighting for control and dominance over this African society's mineral rich space. Towards the late 1880s and early 1890s, Johannesburg city council sent its medical officials to investigate living conditions in Brickfields, whose informal architecture and planning was described as "slop-sodden and filth-bestrewn" (Brink, 1994, p. 19). In addition, Ghandi's testimonial about the human conditions of the Locations, as a potential breeding ground for bubonic plague, re-enforced the council's action to change and appropriate this lived society's space (Brink, 2008; Itzkin, 2000; Maylam, 1995).

Through violent struggles between local State and citizens regarding the Locations and the right to urban life for some and not others, Brickfields was lost and consequently erased from the urban core. It was replaced by a conceived township called Burghersdorp or citizens' town, initially planned exclusively for white citizens to inhabit. The South African War of 1899-1902, set the scene for further change and appropriation of the physical and social geography of Burghersdorp, with its Malay Location where mixed race inhabitants continued to dwell (Parnell, 1991). Three years prior to the war, an 'accidental' dynamite explosion ripped through the heart of the Malay Location and Burghersdorp, claiming the lives of its inhabitants and their constructed spaces (Brink, 1994, 2008; Parnell, 1991). Plaatje (1916/1982) also notes the spatial catastrophes experienced in British occupied South Africa and Johannesburg in particular. Reflecting on experiences of 1913 Johannesburg Plaatje wrote

> There were also railway accidents and aviation disasters, causing damage to life and property. There were commercial troubles due to the Johannesburg strike in July, and this effect of the strike indicates the influence exercised by the 'golden city' over South African commerce
> (Plaatje, 1916/1982, p. 121)

These spatial events opened up space for yet another cycle of physical transformation through the production of a new perceived representational space that was supposed to be lived as it was conceived. As Brink (1994) notes, the aftermath of the explosion, followed by the war, resulted in forced evictions, predominantly of Africans, from within the urban centre to the organized peripheries in the south western townships,

including Klipspruit. The law in general and the urban by-laws in particular are important to look into because they set the time and are indicators of social historical progress and transformation in space. The colonial law of racial segregation and its related urban by-laws, did not only affect how urban spaces in nineteenth and early twentieth century Johannesburg were produced and experienced, despite their failure, they also set the time as well. For African inhabitants, the influx control measures of 1945, through Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, Natives Land Act and Urban Areas Acts, were synonymous with periods of segregation and dehumanization in space (Lemon, 1991).

3.4 Political public space of inhabitants (1910 -1940)

By 1897 Johannesburg was given municipal status and in 1928 it was awarded city status (Johannesburg, 1986). In 1887 the formalizing urban space of Johannesburg had a distinct public space further up the road from the Brickfields-Burghersdorp-Newtown precinct, known as the Market Square. This conceived representation in space was instrumental in mediating social interaction between inhabitants and the colonial urban form; by means of their agro-market activities that appropriated the conceived space into a functional representational space of unmediated social encounters and exchanges (*The Star*, 11/11/1918; www.newtown.co.za/heritage/history). For a long time Market Square was the industrial city's only open public space that was unhampered by any spatial conditions until late into the century. Conversations between the State and local municipality of Johannesburg about the *use*-value of the Town Hall's Market Square consequently led to its appropriation and migration of its users to Burghersdorp (*The Rand Daily Mail*, 03/04/1903). The destruction of Brickfields led to the production of a racially exclusive representational space known as Burghersdorp.

According to Brink (1994), the construction of the planned town resulted in the production of a marshy piece of land awaiting appropriation. The Market Square's inhabitants realized the *use*-value of the perceived space for their agro-food practices. With their bodies they occupied the vacant land in the middle of the new town and through their spatial practices they secreted a unique public space, which they transformed into a marketplace. This physical act of creating meaning in a perceived space through social practice was as Lefebvre (1974/1991) calls it, a *process*. It was a process because in order for the representational space to emerge a special place was

required to achieve form through self-presentation and self-representation. A society's spatial practice secretes that society's space. By the late 1890s the Market Square had been aptly appropriated and its agro-spatial practices relocated to the open marshy plane which would be known as the market garden. For a short period the market garden was a thriving representational public space in a colonial city.

By the end of the Anglo-Boer War in 1902, Johannesburg city, and the rest of the country, was declared a British colony. That change in power within conceived space, altered the space, time and expenditure of energy or rhythm of the market garden as directly lived space (Brink, 1994). On the site of the market garden, conceived plans to erect an enclosed market space in the material landscape of Burghersdorp, went ahead in practice using the embroidery mechanisms of architecture. In this space, inhabitants could conduct all agro-related practices. The Edwardian style concrete structure was called the Market Building, and all market spatial practices, which previously in the British colony had been conducted out in the public open space, were hidden from the public eye, controlled and regulated from within.

According to The *Rand Daily Mail* of 26/07/1912 the removal, from its original holding, of the fruit and vegetables market garden's practices to a 'convenient spot' inside the engineered architectural piece, was welcomed by agricultural producers and consumers. This process left the original site of the old market garden 'vacant' for appropriation through occupation by a radical energy of political activism and strike/protest action that charged and changed the economic landscape of the Union of South Africa. Between 1902 and 1910, the old market garden regained its use-rhythm as a site for the remaining wagon pulling oxen in the twentieth century urban environment (see Figure 10 next page). This spatial practice by inhabitants, to use the former garden site as a parking lot for their working herd, secreted the livestock's space. This appropriation of space by living oxen and dead wagons produced a second representational space in perceived geographical space of conceived Burghersdorp, appropriately known as the wagon site (Brink, 1994).

Following the dynamite explosion, the war and consequently the construction of Burghersdorp, a population census of the affected area was conducted which revealed the undeniable multiracial character of the perceived, lived and conceived capital city.

This situation re-enforces Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City that grasps cities as human spaces created out of and produced by difference that manifests in social space as political and contradictory struggle between exclusion and inclusion for representation. In tarnished Burghersdorp and remaining Malay Location, it was found that out of a population of nine hundred and sixteen inhabitants roughly three hundred and forty eight were of Dutch-Boer descent. These were followed by 274 Africans, 145 Cape Malays, 70 Europeans, 67 Indians and about 12 Chinese, revealing the indisputable character of colonial Johannesburg as a city "born without clear racial boundaries" despite committed racial policies, politics and planning mechanisms to make it a homogeneous entity exclusive to whites (Brink, 1994, 2008, p. 2; Mbembe, 2004).



Figure 10. Architectural representation in dominated lived space and society. (Source: MuseumAfrica)

The commencement of the white Union government proved to be a tumultuous period for urban industry, particularly mining. During this time period in the colonized space Mary Fitzgerald, a young Irish female, migrated to South Africa's Cape Town in 1900, and in 1902 relocated from the Cape inland to Johannesburg (Hunter, 2009). For eight years this inhabitant was employed as a secretary for the union of mineworkers. Through her work experience she was touched by the frequent deaths of underground miners from phthisis and felt enraged by the capitalist mine owner's indifference to the human condition (Brink, 1994; Hunter, 2009). In this urban setting Mary's right to the colonial city was guaranteed by her European identity. Through the usage of the former market garden space that what was called 'Aaron's Ground' (Brink, 1994), Mary challenged the dominant political practice of mining activities upon which the economy and wealth producing Johannesburg is produced (Hunter, 2009).

Through the perceived space of the former market garden, that is Aaron's Ground, Mary made good representational use of the space. Through her political activism and organization in the lived space of Aaron's Ground, Mary produced a political public space through which working class inhabitants from the mining industry protested capitalism and their right to fair working conditions as organized labour (Brink, 1994).

In their unmediated organizing as lived space on Aaron's Ground, working class inhabitants were empowered and sensitized about their 'right to the city', which challenged them to demand equal and fair wages, safe and healthy working conditions, and some degree of control over what happened in these formal exchanges and relations of capital power: just as Lefebvre imagined it in his lifetime in twentieth century France. Aaron's Ground soon became the ideal and practical site for trade union meetings; labour organizing; tram and mineworkers strikes from early 1910s to about the 1940s (see Figure 11).



Figure 11. Mary Fitzgerald in Aaron's Ground. (Source: MuseumAfrica and www.joburg.org.za)

Once again Plaatje (1916/1982) mentions these specific uprisings which he places in serious political context of capitalist indifference that Mary Fitzgerald fought against. Plaatje noted

> In that sad upheaval in the labour world many innocent people lost their lives and property, and unfortunately, as is always the case, besides adding largely to the taxpayers' burdens, it seriously affected the people who had nothing to do with the strike
> (Plaatje, 1916/1982, p. 121)

This representational space signified the birth of a public space with a defined political quality that embraced Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City. In keeping true to the Eurocentric spirit of Lefebvre's political right of inhabitants in the city, Mary Fitzgerald used Aaron's Ground as a representational tool for social organizing against the social practices of gold mining capitalists in the colonized urban space. With the passage of time the historically informal or representational space that Johannesburg was transformed into a defined concrete space of planning and architecture, informed by segregation policies enshrined in colonial law and by-laws of the times. In 1928 as mentioned earlier, the rapidly industrializing colonial enclave was pronounced a city and not long after that, the political space of Aaron's Ground was effectively transformed from naked earth or absolute space, to a Cartesian abstract space of mathematics, engineering, town planning and architectural sciences (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

It is said that urban squares are special public spaces because they open the eyes and minds of many to the divergent meanings and seemingly endless possibilities of town planning to urban life (*The Star*, 01/03/1919). With its physical change and literal appropriation by conceived space as part of its spatial practice, Aaron's Ground no longer existed as an absolute representational space in society. It was instantaneously made 'concrete' by engineering means and therefore transformed into a conceived space that is a concrete 'abstract' in space (Stanek, 2008). From the 1930s onwards, a motion was put forward to appropriate the toponymy of Aaron's Ground *square* and Mary Fitzgerald's name was proposed due to her historical role in appropriating the class relations of the political economy of the city. After much deliberation, the square that was overlaid on Aaron's Ground and the former market garden was re-named "Mary Fitzgerald Square" in 1986, to honour the Irish inhabitant's contribution to improving everyday working conditions of inhabitants (Brink, 1994; Hunter, 2009).

It is unfortunate in history that Mary Fitzgerald and Solomon Plaatje never met. Both were fighting against the same enemy (capital and capitalism) in the same geographical society that was deliberately segregated by politics and the political in everyday life. They fought the same war from two different sides. For Plaatje, the struggle was explicitly political (ethnological, social-racial) and spatial beyond the realm of the

urban society. For Fitzgerald, the struggle was purely economic, inherently 'urban' and therefore political on Right to the City terms. Both were radical in their own right, trained journalists and wrote about things that mattered to them and were affected by at the personal level in the same political unit (Brink, 1994; Hunter, 2009; Plaatje, 1916/1982). Since 1986 the iconic square and its equally iconic city have become passively experienced public space which makes symbolic use of its inhabitants (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

Mary Fitzgerald Square was officially renamed a year after the formation of then apartheid society's multi (non) racial labour federation, known as Congress of South African Trade Union or COSATU (www.cosatu.org.za). Today COSATU maintains its bureaucratically organized uses of Mary Fitzgerald Square symbolically, as a meeting point for organized labour rallies for its working class members across the political economic landscape of the democratic country. This revelation brings us closer to understanding Lefebvre's (1974/1991) unitary theory of space as a three dimensional production process and political tool for human agency and action in 'historical' time. Since the year 2000, Mary Fitzgerald Square has been officially declared "public space" by former African National Party and democratic South African president Thabo Mbeki (www.joburg.org.za). Since then the public space has gone on to experience an explosion of organized public and private activities and commercial spectacles uncharacteristic to the nineteenth and twentieth century urban space of colonial and apartheid production.

3.5 From colonial segregation to *neo*-colonial domination (1948 -)

Once Johannesburg and its Newtown core formalized and became fully conceived representational spaces for social practice, all manner of informal activities informing everyday life in colonial context were diminished. Lefebvre, for example, informs us that spatial practice, like all social practice, is directly lived before it becomes conceived or conceptualized. As a consequence, the speculative primacy of the conceived space over the lived, causes social practice to disappear along with life doing "little justice to the 'unconscious' level of lived experience" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 34). Within the industrialized perceived-conceived-lived streets of the urbanized society, certain social practices and forms of life were vanquished permanently from appropriating the narrowly designed public spaces and contributing to various forms of life. Such life

forms include those of free oxen and horses that laboured alongside their human counterparts in the market places of the colonial *oeuvre.*

Despite the fact that oxen, sheep, mules and horses added an interesting element to the spectacle of early urban life, they caused serious practical challenges to the everyday motorist and pedestrian in the city. Traffic delays, accidents and the unpredictable behaviour and responses of livestock to the changing natural landscape, were particularly problematic (*Rand Daily Mail*, 18/09/1924). In one instance a disgruntled citizen questioned why natives were allowed the right to herd and drive mule carts in the city "raw from *their* kraal", despite their abilities to man the mobile objects through the urban space (*The Star*, 05/02/1924). In today's city, the struggle is not about ill-disciplined African cart herders. We have and drive cars now and taxis in the same narrowly planned urban environment that is only architecturally, technologically and politically different. Somehow the urban landscape does not seem to have capacity to run out of space for more objects; more cars, more trains, more buses, more bicycles, more people paying more money to drive and park in the expensive city.

In an effort to deal with the socio-spatial struggle for urban life between herds of cattle, sheep and horses, which could not be sold (back) to Africans of the region, and inhabitants, the city council decided to launch a meat abattoir in Newtown's stock market, whereby all remaining livestock in the city were slaughtered for human consumption (Brink, 1994). Livestock was not the only form of life and type of social practice devoured by the urbanizing society's conceived spatial practice. Johannesburg's long narrow streets that cut each other at right angles were rife with cheap flower traders in their racial diversity, who added a much needed element of colour and refreshingly beautiful sights to the naked eye. With the passage of time this society's lived practice was subsumed by conceived space and later declared an illegal activity according to the urban by-laws (*The Star,* 03/09/1931). Some citizens declared their unhappiness about the unjust situation by conceived space to criminalize such a beautiful thing that enlivened the city. The Department of Justice was prompted to launch a formal investigation into the matter (*The Star*, 21/08/1928; *The Star*, 08/09/1931).

From the Union period of 1910 to around the 1940s, Lemon (1991) notes a transitional period in power and a new arrangement in what Lefebvre (1974/1991) refers to as 'political practice' between the dominant British and Dutch-Boer or Afrikaner in the colonized African space. By 1948 South Africa's racial domination coupled with spatial exclusion of Africans and segregation amongst the different racial classes, took on a different form with the Afrikaner National Party assuming political power to govern. At this stage the Afrikaner statesmen accelerated and deepened racism in the country and racist attitudes, particularly towards the country's African inhabitants, by using American forms of apartheid planning (Landman, 2004). This political practice was to settle an old score with Africans for fighting against the Dutch-Boer in the South African War of 1899-1902 instead of supporting them (Plaatje, 1916/1982).

On his cycling expedition to capture African suffering within the constitutional context of the 1913 Natives Land Act, Solomon Plaatje encountered a representative of colonial law on horseback and asked his opinion on the political condition. The colonial agent of Dutch descent said that he knew Kaffirs [Africans] were inferior beings but they still had rights. After the Anglo-Boer War however, Africans deserved every bad treatment for their political role in securing British victory over them [Dutch-Boers] in white South Africa

> I think that it must serve them right. They [Africans] had no business to hanker after British rule, to cheat and plot with the enemies of *their* Republic for the overthrow of *their* Government. Why did they not assist the forces of *their* Republic during the war instead of supplying the English with scouts and intelligence?
> (Plaatje, 1916/1982, p. 86; emphasis added)

It is interesting to note from the quotation above, that in Union South Africa the Dutch-Boers felt that the political loyalties of Africans should have been given to them; yet they have similarly dominated and dispossessed them of their land, labour and humanity since 1652 (Sparks, 2003). Equally interesting is the fact that even with the colonial laws of the Union, Africans were prohibited from organizing and representing themselves politically, yet they were expected to give their allegiance and military support to the Kruger government that did not want their assistance in the war (Plaatje, 1916/1982). This view would later manifest further down the post-colonial road leading to negotiated state power between the Afrikaner National Party and the British

representations of space, in order to maintain political rule over a changing African population.

Different educational systems, cultural institutions, public spaces, churches, public transport and housing settlements for different races were the new political order, erected on the thick foundations of their colonizing ancestors (Karlsson, 2004). During this time, the Group Areas Acts of the 1950s and 1960s formed the cornerstone of apartheid as the next conceived space of brutal and violent practices against Africans as lived space and the broader society it interacted with. Sparks (2003, p. xvii) best describes this state of affairs as a self-centredness on the part of the colonialists in South Africa, who have been blinded for generations by their own created illusion of "a white country in Africa, that it belongs to them by right and to no others".

Under the apartheid law Lemon (1991) states that the Group Areas Acts zoned different races in urban spaces and kept them from knowing and/or understanding each other as people. This is very important for the post-apartheid society to consider, because such extended psychological division steeped in fear and dehumanizing constructions, do not retract that easily from people's hearts, minds and spirited souls. By the 1970s, conceived Newtown, Johannesburg and inner city Cape Town underwent radical political and social unrest, followed by a rapid degeneration of the physical spatial environment (Gaule, 2005; Visser & Kotze, 2008). At this time private capital in the form of property owners, retailers, planners and architects, pooled together and formed the Central Business District Association (CBDA), was making plans to keep the white urban space segregated amidst continued political preoccupation with the "black component" in the modern colonial and apartheid city (*The Star*, 30/04/1979). After nearly sixty years of service to the urban society, the Market Building and the livestock abattoir in Burghersdorp closed their doors in 1974. These were relocated to bigger sites. The electricity department followed after the implosion of the city's cooling towers (Brink, 1994).

In 1975 anti-apartheid artists and activists Mannie Manim and Barney Simon, quickly rescued the architectural structure and concealed representational space of the Market Building and transformed parts of it into a theatre, while the produce part of it was occupied by Africana Museum or MuseumAfrica as it is currently known (Dirsuweit,

1999; Gaule, 2005; www.newtown.co.za/heritage/history). In an official letter from the director of the Market Theatre Foundation, Mannie Manim and chairman Murray McLean, they express their multiracial interest in appropriating the octagonal section of the building, previously dedicated to the Indian citrus market, in an effort to fill it with new artistic social practices of live performances, to serve Johannesburg's heterogeneous mix of people (*The Market Theatre Foundation*, 02/12/1975).

The Market Theatre opened its doors with a mix of creative inhabitants, gifted in the performing and visual arts, like crafts, live music and acting. These inhabitants presented the apartheid city with new and challenging lived experiences, like art and artists rather than livestock, agriculture and protest action. This had a positive effect because it led to the production of a new town in the place where derelict Burghersdorp and historical Brickfields. Artistic inhabitants introduced a new social fabric and rhythm into the degenerate urban spatial location that explicitly embraced the "sensory space of art, the body, everyday life, desire and difference often linked to the clandestine or underground side of life where alternative imaginations of space [were] made possible through a terrain of struggle" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991; Merrifield, 1995; Simonsen, 2005 cited in Buser, 2012, p. 284).

During this historical period in Johannesburg, the artist, the municipality planners, architects and politicians, collaborated to form and experience a new place that had risen from the ashes of the old, which they named Newtown (Brink, 1994). This geographical precinct was perceived and conceived as it was imagined, to be lived and appropriated by all the inhabitants in the city, regardless of their racial profile. Through the Market Theatre, Newtown came alive, with all sorts of possibilities signalling to the Theatre's developers the need to put Mary Fitzgerald Square's old market garden and Aaron's Ground public space, to good social use. This took it beyond a mere parking lot for the industrial city's cars as seen in Figures 12, 13 & 14 on next pages.



Figure 12. Mary Fitzgerald Square in the 1980s: a representational space for cars (Source: MuseumAfrica)

The image above represent a fully conceived urban environment during the apartheid and colonial industrial era, when the Square had no use for inhabitants other than to act as a representational space for their material possessions, cars. This social and political practice continues to characterize the contested public space today. Cities, according to Wells (2007), are contested economic and political spaces of power, expressions of struggle and social change, and are therefore subject to ongoing physical and architectural changes. Newtown's political landscape is no different. Figure 13 on the next page shows Newtown in the 1970s, with its iconic cooling towers, electricity department and a livestock and agricultural market. Looming political changes in the power dynamics informing the late apartheid society of the 1980s and early 1990s began to manifest and changed the concrete landscape with it.

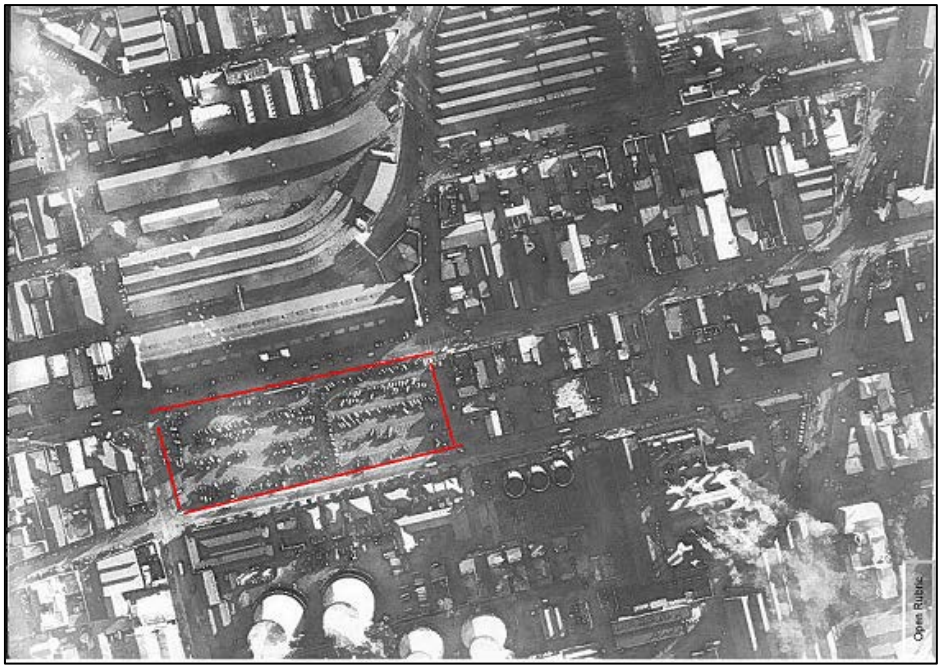


Figure 13. Cars in public space: 1970s spatial practice of Mary Fitzgerald Square. (Source: Brink, 1994)



Figure 14. Appropriating 1980s urban reality by transforming its lived spaces. (Source: Brink,1994)

In the 1980s image, shown, a different urban space appears in its stages of appropriation and change. This is the function of conceived space over the perceived and lived

apartheid city. Mary Fitzgerald Square is seen in the image as a different representation in space that has yet to undergo transformation by planning mechanisms. Interestingly, this type of appropriation is the Square's under documented spatial practice as the city's experimental site *for* planners and architects, rather than a public space *of* inhabitants. Towards the top right corner in the image, there is a visibly 'empty' patch of land or perceived space, where the old Locations of colonial times are under re-construction. The cooling towers, observed in Figure 13 shown earlier, have been destroyed and removed from the material landscape of the 1980s, thus making way for new representations to define the character of the physical and industrial space of inhabitants.

In place of the old Locations, is a new lived space, reflecting significant political changes in the history of segregated South Africa and Johannesburg in particular. A new space a new space has since 1994 been produced in place of the informal and racially mixed slum known as Brickfields (see Figure 15).



Figure 15. Satellite image of Mary Fitzgerald Square in Newtown. (Source: Google Earth, 2012)

This spatial project affirms Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City as a concrete (spatial) discourse that is significantly political and vested in everyday life. Roughly two decades have passed since African inhabitants of South Africa gained political rights as legitimate 'citizens' in the country and its urban spaces since colonial domination of the 1600s. Within this short intense period, the new and democratic State of the African National Congress or ANC Party government has embarked on a spatial quest to address spatial inequalities experienced by historically dispossessed Africans in the present age beginning strongly in urban spaces through provision of housing where previously there was none for African inhabitants in the city. The situation affirms Lefebvre's (1974/1991) understanding of space as a political tool through which all social struggles emanate and all human differences can be negotiated.

Since the 1970s and 1980s social changes in the political landscape have taken hold and are evident in the material urban space of sensory and observable phenomena. New gated residential complexes for African inhabitants have also been stitched onto the material landscape. In the place of the cooling towers, a park has been produced through conceived means for social uses, and the old workers compound has been appropriated into a workers' museum. The democratic turn of 1994, witnessed the political appropriation of Newtown's street names from those of colonial and apartheid politicians and heroes, to African ones celebrating the creative activism of these artists in the fight against racial oppression (Mlangeni, 2009).

In the re-arrangement of urban space, Brickfields has found its way back to the contemporary scene as a housing establishment for historically estranged Africans. Built as a democratic representation of space, Brickfields has returned to Newtown, but only as a name from colonial times, amongst other buildings given African names such as *Phumlani* Gardens and *Legae La Rona*[8] in the *neo*-colonial urban geography (see Figure 16 on next page).

[8] Phumlani is an isiZulu word meaning 'rest' in English and Legae La Rona is Setswana for 'our home'



Figure 16. High rise gated establishments for African inhabitants in Newtown. (Source: author, 2009)

These structural or residential transformations of the urban landscape post-1994, affirms the true identity of Johannesburg as a distinctly public and social space that embraces racial, political and historical differences despite its segregatory production, via its planning and architecture in space in neo-colonial times (Bond, 1992; Johannesburg, 1986). An interesting signal towards democracy can be seen in the change of tone and representation of Africans, celebrated for their creativity and artistic competence, as people; no longer as 'natives' or 'kaffirs' (Plaatje, 1916/1982; *The Citizen* 22/08/1983; *The Star*, 03/03/1982; *The Star*, 13/02/1988).

In scientific spaces another newspaper ran the story of an African female's achievement in obtaining a master's degree in town and regional planning from the University of Cape Town (*The Star*, 09/11/1981), while the iconic Ellen Kuzwayo[9] was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of the Witwatersrand at the age of seventy-three (*The Star*, 09/04/1987). These academic achievements celebrated only what Africans in general and African women in particular have been capable of but unable to live their capabilities out because all spaces and avenues for healthy learning, good quality education, professional and social development as well as wealth creation, were deliberately closed for a very long time.

In terms of changes in the political order business concerning public space, the few that existed in Johannesburg like The Market Square, Von Brandis Square, Plein Square and Union Ground were destroyed by the local municipality by building on them (*Rand*

[9] Ellen Kuzwayo was a women's rights activist and president of the African National Congress Youth League in the 1960s.

Daily Mail, 03/03/1903). Given the narrow spatial planning of colonial Johannesburg, its constant population growth and declining number of good open squares, a renowned architect in the same newspaper article lamented "it is a shame that Johannesburg has no open spaces. The city has no lungs. As it grows up, and buildings become taller and taller, the lack of open spaces will not allow any ventilation, and no refreshing winds will sweep through the streets". Indeed, a lack of open public spaces like squares in the sprawling city, has significant consequences for the climate and everyday weather patterns, which in the long term may not be conducive to or healthy for human life.

Today in a *neo*-colonial Johannesburg, Mary Fitzgerald Square stands alone as a celebrated open public space that is unoccupied and unused by inhabitants who are subordinated to and marginalized by the political practice of neoliberalism that prevents it from breathing 'new' life and fresh air into the congested and concentrated urban space African inhabitants in general suffered the law in space for a very long time until recently. What challenges are faced by twenty-first century inhabitants of Newtown's Mary Fitzgerald Square in 'democratic' South Africa and neoliberal Johannesburg? Since the year 2000 the Square and its architectural precinct was declared 'public space' by former president Thabo Mbeki, setting the stage for organized spectacles which have, since 1999, devalued the *use*-value of the representational space by elevating its *exchange*-value as a form of bureaucratic mediation, control and accumulation of capital (Dirsuweit, 1999; Lefebvre, 1962/1995; www.newtown.co.za).

Since 2009 this research on Mary Fitzgerald Square has experienced interesting moments of power expression and resistance from the urban society's new generation of African inhabitants, who perceive the public space as a platform for creative expression which current urban by-laws prohibit (see Chapter 4). These historical continuities of prohibition, appropriation and resistance continue to reveal themselves perpetually and differently in democratic time and space. With regards to physical changes in Newtown, those are still ongoing and some organized forums for resistance and negotiation continue on cyberspace at http://www.heritageportal.co.za/, rather than in the actual material space as was the case in the time of Mary Fitzgerald and Brickfields inhabitants.



Figure 17. Mary Fitzgerald Square: re-defined topography and architecture. (Source: author, 2013)

The images above were taken in 2013 and they reveal radical architectural and topographical changes to Mary Fitzgerald Square since the beginning of this research in 2009. On the right hand picture are construction crates at work building an organized public space of bureaucratic consumption known as The Junction Mall right behind the iconic MuseumAfrica building. With Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial concepts of *The Production of Space*, a timely analysis of architectural and planning developments in the city could potentially be mapped. This could go a long way for social and democratic planning of Johannesburg's public image to the world through its public spaces and how it facilitates the use and exchange values of such spaces for inhabitants who live, work, play, study and hustle in the city. As the city and general South African society tries to model itself and public space after its colonial and *neo*-colonial European and American masters, it is increasingly important, today more than ever, to focus on local dynamics in relation to global ones where everyday life matters, including the production and appropriation of spatial locations where such issues of everyday life, find material expression and assign their own meaning.

Central as it has been in the city, Mary Fitzgerald Square is a commercially popular public space that is privately managed and bureaucratically governed. It is also a marginalized space in theoretical discourse on urban spaces in Johannesburg. Through an application of Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial concepts gaps and opportunities begin to slowly manifest for a more nuanced analysis of the social meaning of citizenship in the Right to the City context for urban Africa and African inhabitants living in urban spaces. As new generations of Africans flock to cities and occupy public spaces *against*

their construction in modern society as ill-disciplined, childish and violent criminals (Dawson, 2009; Diouf, 2003;), what does Mary Fitzgerald Square reveal about the social practices of its African youth in Newtown, Johannesburg and their struggle to occupy and appropriate the public space democratically? What abstract prohibitions experienced in the old orders are perpetuated in the urban space by the contemporary dominant order, and how are these spatial prohibitions resisted by inhabitants? What, if any, are the consequences of such continuities on the quality and possibilities of genuine social practices, including historically informed theoretical research in the city and its public space—Mary Fitzgerald Square—whose declining use-value suffers asphyxiation from its commercial or exchange value?

3.6 Conclusion

I was not there in space and time to experience the extreme forms of spatial inequality and human injustices that previous Africans, including Solomon Plaatje, were subjected to in colonial Newtown, Johannesburg and its uncharacteristic Mary Fitzgerald Square. These abstract qualities and powers of conceived space produced the colonial urban society as critical space of contest through its systematic denial of African inhabitants' human right to life, and to live in prosperity in the geographically dominated and contested political unit that present day South Africa is.

I am however here in the same historically resistant urban space and geographical society where political identities, social relations and 'spatial' experiences of Africans are produced under more equitable conditions, made possible by the country's adoption of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, informing our democratic constitution effective as of 27 April 1994 (Papenfus, 2010; Ramutsindela, 2001). Today South Africa's production of rural and urban spaces embrace racial inclusivity and representational politics at the social level, which has helped reconcile European mental perceptions of Africans as 'humans' and legitimate 'citizens' of South Africa (Ramirez, Soysal & Shanahan,1997; Papenfus, 2010).

Today I spend most of my life studying, working and playing (living) in creative Johannesburg as a young Motswana female from an unknown village in the 'Northwest Province', formerly known as Bophuthatswana of South Africa. I am able to conduct most of my social practices in Johannesburg's urban space without any legal disabilities

or other forms of spatial prohibitions, due to my race, ethnicity and gender, designed to keep me from flourishing as an individual and contributing to society. This in itself is testament of the sharp turn around this perceived-conceived-lived country with its 'millions of mute and subdued Africans' (Plaatje, 1916/1982; Sparks, 2003) has made in the last two decades with regards to accepting Africans on an equal basis as part and parcel of this richly contested territory.

I was not there in colonial Brickfields, Burghersdorp and apartheid Newtown when a plural society's representational spaces like the first and second wagon sites, the market garden, Aaron's Ground and to some extent Mary Fitzgerald Square, were subsequently destroyed rather than liberated, because of their contradictory social practices which countered the political desires of the colonial order and apartheid State for a whites only city (Lemon, 1991). I was however there at Mary Fitzgerald Square in 2009 and 2010 as the twenty-year old democratic country and its historically anti-African tourist cities celebrated the spirit of global (European) capitalism in hosting the FIFA world cup. Such a mega-sporting event, un-divorced from institutional realities of conducting this geographical research, would not have been possible if South Africa's colonial law and apartheid politics of elongated racial-spatial domination and political struggles persisted.

CHAPTER 4
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

Mary Fitzgerald Square is a public space in *neo*-colonial Johannesburg, South Africa. Despite its commercial uses and success as the most sought after public venue for in the city for hosting a variety of organized private and public events, there is little that is known about the square's politics in the everyday city. Using Lefebvre's (1974/1991) spatial triad of representational space, spatial practice and representations of space, this chapter is a conceptual analysis of twenty-first century Mary Fitzgerald Square. In particular, it is an analysis that privileges the square's representational politics of inhabitants, their [ongoing] domination and marginalization from it by representations of space, and their [inhabitants] estranged relationship to its spatial practice. Most importantly, the chapter addresses Lefebvre's *use*-value and *exchange*-value dynamic in the political organization of and struggle for Mary Fitzgerald Square between lived space and conceived space in the democratic context. Through Lefebvrian concepts, ethnographic data and the urban society's Public Open Space By-Laws, this chapter puts in analytical context the contested nature of Mary Fitzgerald Square.

The structure of this chapter is as follows: first, a discussion of the political context of how the public space is governed is presented in detail. Second, empirical findings highlighting the square's social reality, users and uses in the context of everyday life between 2009 and 2010 follow the discussion on governance. Third, a description of the square's political spatial practice and its imagined uses by young African inhabitants follows. Fourth, a small discussion on the practical impacts of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in the production of Mary Fitzgerald Square enters discourse, leading to concluding remarks about the contested uses, users and representations of the public space in democratic times for the *neo*-colonial society.

4.2 Mary Fitzgerald Square: urban policy and practice

Mary Fitzgerald Square is a 'privately' managed public space in Newtown, Johannesburg. To the naked eye it is a dead public space that is devoid of spontaneous social activities. For most of the time in the first six months of 2009, the square had no inhabitants acting and interacting in it. This condition, unknown at the time, resulted as a practical consequence of the City of Johannesburg's (CoJ) spatial strategies that are especially conceived to keep inhabitants from spontaneous gatherings, playing games and skateboarding in public spaces. In its political practice, the CoJ prioritizes elitist

interests and commercial [*exchange*] uses of the square over its everyday, representational *use*-value in society. *Exchange*-value and *use*-value elements assume a dialectical character in practice (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). *Use*-value is the appropriation of public space by inhabitants without financial exchanges, and hence no financial gain for the CoJ. *Exchange*-value implies that the public space is 'private property', a commodified tool used for the reproduction of capital facilitated by the CoJ.

Much like the square, Newtown Precinct is a strategic spectacle space of tourism that serves the interests of the ruling elite and wealthy in society (Dirsuweit and Schattauer, 2004). It nourishes the economic tastes of middle and upper class inhabitants who, as I later reveal, comply with abstract by-laws to no contest in order to use the public space in Newtown for their own social pleasures. Mary Fitzgerald Square and Newtown are therefore classical examples of what Lefebvre (1962/1995) calls societies of bureaucratically controlled consumption of space. In this over regulated political context, ordinary inhabitants are side-lined from relations of production and transformed by conceived space into passive consumers and distant spectators *in* public space, rather than active producers *of* public space (Goheen, 1998). Mary Fitzgerald Square is a State-owned public space. Like most streets, squares and parks in the city of Johannesburg, it is governed by the municipality's "Public Open Space By-Laws" of 2003/4. These by-laws are legally binding and administrative text that determines the kinds of social practices that can be allowed and the kind that are prohibited in the city's public spaces.

Public Open Space By-Laws of the city are conceived within the context of neoliberal and ecological approaches that treat all public spaces in the African city, as 'private property' rather than 'public space'. Mary Fitzgerald Square is a social space produced *for* inhabitants rather than *by* them. The local government's spatial by-laws begin by outlining its constitutional powers and legal rights over the uses and functions of public spaces. According to the Public Open Space By-Laws, the CoJ has legitimate rights to enter into business relationships with any organ of State, local community or [private] organization (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4). What informs this drive towards public-private partnerships in the context of Mary Fitzgerald Square, is the understanding that such arrangements are necessary for the 'development and effective management' of public space in Johannesburg.

Private-public partnerships are pursued by the CoJ so that human activities in the conceived public space can be better regulated (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4). Through this legally binding framework, the CoJ maintains its desired order and dominance by aligning what is perceived and lived with its conceived practices. In practice, this implies determining who is granted physical access to Mary Fitzgerald Square on any given day, and who is denied social access to appropriate the representation in space. In this regard, the Right to the City, which is essentially about citizenship and belonging in the city, is a privileged right within the domain of conceived space.

The politics of public space are revealed through its social uses. Lefebvre (1974/1991) describes this imposition or dominance of the CoJ in urban society as 'political' because through its ownership of the square, it is able to liberate the actions of some inhabitants in society, whilst prohibiting the actions of [different] others in the same context. Conceived space appropriates social practices of ordinary inhabitants and determines not only 'who' can be, and 'what' can happen in public space. It also determines 'when' and 'how' social practices happen.

The private management of public space through improvement districts is not a new phenomenon that is exclusive only to South African cities (Carmona, 2010; Peyroux, 2006). As non-democratic representations of space, City Improvement Districts or CIDs, play a fundamental role in the production of many public spaces in Johannesburg (www.urbangenesis.co.za). I approached the CoJ's urban planner to gain a better understanding of how the local State perceives and conceives Mary Fitzgerald Square. According to the planner, there is an organizing principle embedded in the By-Laws that the CoJ adheres to concerning the use of public space in the context of everyday life. This organizing principle however, is disconnected from and stands in contradiction with observed lived experiences on the ground. The planner provided context for public-private partnerships

> It makes sense to enter into a management agreement with the surrounding private sector stakeholders, providing that the affiliation is… very carefully managed, and does not become an exclusionary mechanism or a space that excludes certain groups of people. So, when entering into management agreements with the private

> sector, the City needs to ensure that this does not mean that the private sector is allowed to move people off that land. That's the difficulty. The City's mandate to make sure that they don't give up control over that because if it's left completely to the private sector to decide, you would get a situation where they [private partners] have the right to move people off the land
> (urban planner, interview, 2009)

What the planner alluded to is important because it signals discrepancies between what planners and politicians think or conceive about the public space, and what is actually lived or experienced by inhabitants in public space. In Johannesburg, CIDs are standard and socially accepted urban practice. They continue to proliferate, unchallenged, within the urban geography (see Figure 18. Map 4 next page). In Johannesburg, CIDs are rarely critiqued for their negative social impact on everyday life; particularly in the political context of a relatively young democratic society recovering from deep apartheid and colonialism (Peyroux, 2006). Whoever controls space controls society (Lemanski & Saff, 2010). Mary Fitzgerald Square is controlled by the CoJ through Public Open Space By-Laws. These By-Laws outline the social conduct of users in public spaces, as well as the bureaucratic conditions through which inhabitants can use public spaces.

Chapters 2 and 3 of the By-Laws express the conditions to which local government can "restrict access to any public open space or to any part of public open space for a specified period of time" (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p. 9). According to the governance policy text, the CoJ can restrict public access to Mary Fitzgerald Square for however long it takes in an effort to

- reduce vandalism and the destruction of property
- improve the administration of a public open space
- develop a public open space
- enable a special event which has been permitted in terms of section 22, to proceed; or
- undertake any activity which the Council reasonably considers necessary or appropriate to achieve the purposes of these By-Laws
  (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p.9)

The 'specified period of time' outlined by the CoJ By-Laws, is not specified. What is known from lived experience is that Mary Fitzgerald Square is deliberately assigned a passive role perpetuating its Cartesian stereotype, as a real life empty (abstract) container, because it is kept vacant from all representational life forms that seek it for its use-value rather than exchange-value. This political practice is a form of implicit

political domination since the CoJ is the only party in the trialectical schema, with sole authority over Mary Fitzgerald Square.

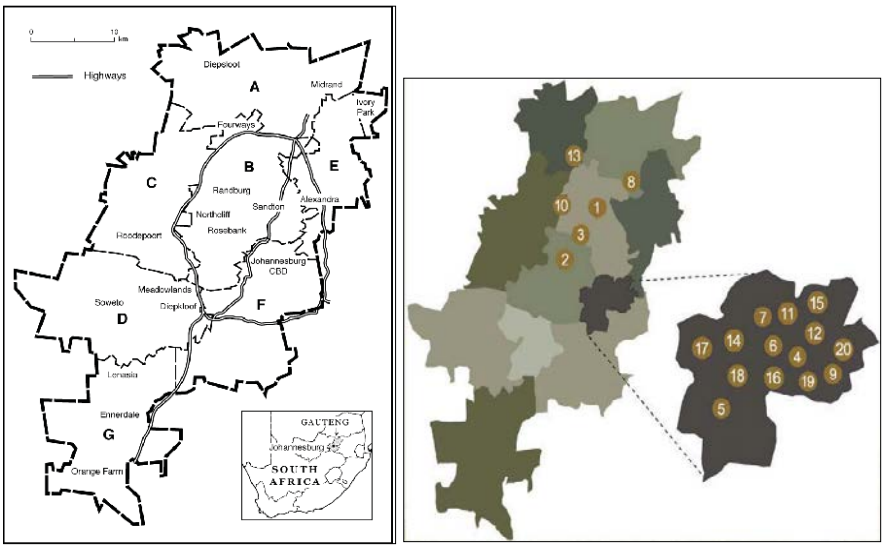


Figure 18. Map 4: The spatial distributionof CIDs in Johannesburg. (Source: Peyroux, 2006)

This political domination over urban society in public space is what Phasha (2012) refers to as 'spatial dictatorship'. As the dominant space in society, the CoJ perceives Mary Fitzgerald Square through private and capitalist eyes that informs its understanding as a public space that is in need of 'protection' from representational uses by skateboarders, the homeless and youth. Restricting public access to public space implies restrictions on inhabitants' democratic right *in* the society's space. As a consequence this domination of Mary Fitzgerald Square through Public Open Space By-Laws and public-private partnerships, undermine inhabitants' Constitutional rights to 'spatial expression' and to reproduce themselves in space. The right to [spatial] expression is a political right that recognizes inhabitants' social right to exercise their spatial competence [human agency] through creative and artistic processes, which are integrated with the right to life (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Public access to the abstract square is and can be restricted for however long is deemed necessary, to 'develop' public space (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4). This ideological practice is quite confusing because, how can one close off social access to a public space in an effort to develop a culture of collective use for that public space? In many ways the CoJ influences the square's daily rhythms of everyday life *for* its users rather than *with* their co-operation as per participatory governance rules and principles

(Malena, 2009). The CoJ's spatial by-laws insist on this contradictory notion, stating that public spaces "must be managed and where appropriate, *developed in the interests of the whole community*" to "enable local communities, *particularly the historically disadvantaged communities*, and the public *to improve and enrich their quality of life*" (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p. 6-7; emphasis added). As I show later, this is an internal conflict and contradiction embedded in the urban policy which carries profound impacts on social practices on the ground. In 2009 I probed the CoJ planner about participatory governance where conceived space works together with the lived space to make sound and democratic decisions about matters that affect both parties in daily life. The planner was evasive and slow to say that there is no formal and/or recognizable relationship between the CoJ and its ordinary inhabitants[10]. In its political capacity the CoJ, together with its private associates, makes decisions unilaterally without allowing inhabitants to air their views democratically.

As the Public Open Space By-Laws states, the CoJ makes public space decisions behind closed doors on behalf of inhabitants about how and when the square can be used, and for what purposes. In its dominant role that affects the everyday uses of Mary Fitzgerald Square, the CoJ implements policy measures that favour the square's *exchange*-value over its *use*-value in urban spatial practice. Private users in the exchange realm of the public space are perceived as important because their social uses of the square are underpinned by monetary exchanges with the CoJ. The degree of power held by the CoJ, to manipulate the square's *use* and *exchange* values, re-enforces the CoJ's political spatial practice which is, to change and appropriate that which expresses itself differently from its own spatial imagination. Based on the current spatial policy environment of no consultation with the affected public in decision-making – where everyday uses of public space in Johannesburg are concerned – it is evident that the CoJ is more interested in enhancing the profit generating capacity of Mary Fitzgerald Square, than in elevating its use-value as a material site for social cohesion.

What was once a free, physically accessible and socially accommodating public space, during periods of institutional urban segregation, is now engineered towards maximising profit in ways that undermine social use in spite of its physical openness in

[10] At this point in the research I had lived in Braamfontein, Johannesburg for at least six years. During that period I had not seen or heard of any meeting between the CoJ and inhabitants about everyday matters including uses and regulation of public spaces.

Newtown Precinct. This situation in space is re-enforced in spatial practice by the CoJ prioritizing the square's financial value. According to the CoJ, focusing on the financial feasibility of the square is "critical if the city is to meet the long-term demands for capital [not human] infrastructure" (City of Johannesburg, 2011, p. 35). Chapter 2, section 7 of the Public Open Space By-Laws outlines the criteria prospective users of the city's square must adhere to when 'applying' to the CoJ for permission to use the square in the context of its *exchange*-value.

Mary Fitzgerald Square is organized around a 12-month programme. Within this calendar, institutions and people wishing to use the square for private reasons must apply for a date of intended use, which the CoJ then either approves or declines. For organized public events like Nelson Mandela Day, New Year's Eve and Africa Day, these social events are automatically inscribed in the space's calendar between the months of July, December and May respectively. Private members of the public, civil society and organized labour movements like COSATU for example, must pay undisclosed fees for their right to use Mary Fitzgerald Square exclusively. Inhabitants must therefore pay

- A prescribed fee to use recreational or other facilities which the Council provides within any public open space
- A prescribed fee for entrance to any public open space which is significantly more expensive to maintain than other public open spaces
- A prescribed fee for the right to undertake a special event
- A prescribed fee for the right to exclusively use municipal property for a specific period
- A deposit prior to undertaking a prohibited activity permitted by the Council
- An annual or monthly fee for the right to use urban agricultural public open space to the exclusion of any other person
- A prescribed fee for processing applications for permits or letters of permission under these By-laws
  (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p. 8)

From the criteria outlined above by the CoJ's By-Laws, it is evident that for the commercial use of the square, there is discrimination in society amongst inhabitants with money to buy the right to use public space, and those without. This urban practice echoes Lemanski's (2004) notion of a 'new' or *neo*-apartheid in South Africa's democratic cities, where class rather than race is the new basis for segregating society in public space . Lefebvre's (1968/1996) Right to the City is a practical right to urban life,

to inhabit places of encounter and exchange. In Johannesburg, it is a right that is up for sale to the few in society than can afford it. Even COSATU has to go through the bureaucratic process of application to use Mary Fitzgerald Square and also pay prescribed fees to the CoJ to enable its members to use the square for representational reasons (trade union spokesperson, interview, 2012). In their organized context, public events like the Nelson Mandela Day, Africa Day and New Year's Eve celebrations are, however, free events that inhabitants can enjoy at the square without paying any fee. These public rhythms usually last no longer than a few hours in the square and they usually occur during the day, from morning to evening, in specific months of the year.

In the context of private and more exclusive events, like Jo'burg Arts Alive and the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz for example, members of the public are obliged to pay a fee in the form of a purchased ticket, if they wish to partake in these social spatial events. In contrast to use-value events, exchange-value events occur frequently in the square than *use*-value events. Security is usually tight when private events and users occupy the public space. *Exchange*-value events are so exclusive that whenever they are hosted, a big white tent with no openings would usually be erected in the square. Generally, exchange-value events last several days in the square, to the exclusion of ordinary members of the urban society, who traverse the public space everyday as their spatial practice in the city. The agenda to prioritize the square's exchange-value by leasing it to private users and uses was confirmed by the then events manager of Mary Fitzgerald Square. In his words

> Most of the time we deal with private events, but we call them 'commercial bookings'. The promoter comes to me to book a venue and I show them what the procedure is…usually they have to go to the City for clearance, where issues of safety and security are cleared
> (events manager, interview, 2009)

Out of social interest I asked what the events manager liked most about Mary Fitzgerald Square, he replied

> You don't have to like anything about it. You just have to make sure that whatever happens on the space works…you just have to make sure that each and every person that comes to the square is going to be safe and secure. That is where the process of involving the City comes in
> (events manager, interview, 2009)

Safety and security in public space are critical issues that are not unique to Mary Fitzgerald Square. According to Doherty et al. (2008), these dynamics are always prioritized by statutory authorities, who perceive state regulation as a convenience of management practices. Consequently, these managerial and State-facilitated interventions in public space deter real potential for active citizenship, cohesion and public education (Németh, 2009). To maintain the role of Mary Fitzgerald Square as a profit generating public space, rather than one with a real social value, the CoJ's Public Open Space By-Laws prohibit all social and spontaneous forms of creative play and socializing in the square. Section 13 Chapter 3 of the by-laws, specifically outlines unorganized play as a criminal offence that is prohibited in public space. According to sub-section (f) under 'prohibited use', no inhabitant may within a public open space, like Mary Fitzgerald Square, "play an active game, except in an area designated for that purpose on a sport playing field or on a golf course" (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p. 11).

Unauthorised social interaction is explicitly prohibited by the spatial policy. Prohibited conduct, according to the by-laws, refers to any activity or behaviour that the CoJ prohibits "from being undertaken in a public open space, either completely or without permission" (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p. 5). Any person or group of people undertaking an activity or found behaving in a manner that is in conflict with the dominant order, is perceived by the policy as committing an offence. As is the case in New York City, inhabitants caught in violation of this public space by-law, are liable to financial charges and possible jail time (Németh, 2006). Playing unauthorized games of any sort in Mary Fitzgerald Square will result in financial fines of anything from R500.00 to R2000.00 (www.joburg.org.za/bylaws/fines/PublicOpenSpace[11]).

Following the financial penalty, perceived deviants are promised time behind bars for "a period not exceeding six months […] or in default of payment, to imprisonment not exceeding one day, for every day during the continuance of [such] offence after a written notice has been issued by the Council and served on the person concerned requiring discontinuance of such offence" (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p. 16). From the by-laws, inhabitants are supposed to receive written warnings for violating the

[11] This urban political practice to heavily fine undesired inhabitants or threaten their liberties with imprisonment is common and contested practice in most advanced democratic societies especially where skateboarders and the homeless are concerned. See Németh (2006) and Crawford (1995) for examples.

CoJ's political order for a play-free Mary Fitzgerald Square, before being sent to jail and/or fined. Is this policy practice advancing or constraining democracy to take hold in the historical city of Johannesburg? I asked the CoJ planner about the disciplinary measures outlined in the By-Laws to punish inhabitants who transgress these spatial by-laws. In her professional experience, the planner responded

> No, I am certainly not aware of rules like that. I know that there's certain basic rules about gathering, public gathering, like if you would like to stage a protest or you would like to have a big open air meeting. There's certain rules you need to follow about that. But not that I know of, in terms of regulating people's movement […] People have to be careful with that because that would be very close to being quite an unjust system because it can be abused
> (urban planner, interview, 2009)

It was interesting to see the disjuncture between how the planner conceived social relationships in the production and reproduction of public space, and what actually transpires in perceived public space as result of these uncontested Public Open Space By-Laws that implicitly dominate the square's spatial practices so blatantly. As representations of space, the planner was not the only party oblivious to these policy measures that are at work every day in the social production and reproduction of Mary Fitzgerald Square. Inhabitants, as representational space, were and continue to be, in the dark about these by-laws that significantly affect them in practice. Rather than asking inhabitants about their general knowledge or lack thereof, about the do's and don'ts of the square, I probed them instead about their perceptions of the square, and their lived experiences of it through use. One inhabitant, who was traversing the square for the first time, likened the public space to a home environment that is free. According to the young inhabitant, Mary Fitzgerald Square

> Accommodates everyone and it makes me feel at home. You can behave like you're at home here because at home you do what you want at any time
> (new user, interview, 2009)

At a different time, I encountered a media student traversing the public space. The student shared the same sentiments expressed by the earlier inhabitant, about the perceived homeliness of the square. Based on the inhabitant's perception, Mary Fitzgerald Square is a

> Lovely space! It's beautiful, free and we're having fun! You can sit around and do whatever so long as you don't pee or throw things on the ground. Jo'burg is a free city man!
> (media student, interview, 2010)

What the two inhabitants allude to is the notion that the public space is accommodating to everyone. In theoretical terms, what inhabitants actually experienced or perceived in the public space was Lefebvre's (1974/1991) 'illusion of transparency' at work. The illusion of transparency goes hand in hand with the realistic illusion. The former has the power to present an over regulated space like Mary Fitzgerald Square, as a concrete space that is 'free' of traps and secrets, like its unknown by-laws of prohibition. It also gives a vast open public space like Mary Fitzgerald Square, a luminous character that gives the impression that it permits and encourages social action to reign freely without any concealed agendas. The two inhabitants actually perceived and experienced the illusion of transparency, which is a false condition in space, because the square is nothing like home, and individuals do not have the same liberties that they may have in private spaces of the home, in the square. The Public Open Space By-Laws supports this observed analysis.

In addition to these generally unknown and uncontested spatial by-laws regulating inhabitants' social practices in the square, the CoJ added human surveillance in the contested space as concrete measure to re-enforce the political practice of moving people 'on and away' from the public space (Worpole & Knox, 2007). The human surveillance seen in Figure 19 on the next page was employed by the CoJ's Newtown Management District. This agent of representations of space was recognizable by his blue and yellow uniform with official tags on both sides of his jacket and the front of his beanie. In my informal conversation with him in the public space, the agent informed me that his job in the square, was to ensure that people who are not supposed to be in the square were kept away, or moved from it. This finding is in sync with Itzkin's (2008) heritage research on Ghandi Square and the issue with its private management via CIDs.



Figure 19. Human surveillance in Mary Fitzgerald Square[12]. (Source: author, 2009)

Affirming that what goes on in Mary Fitzgerald Square is not unique to it despite the square's uniqueness in relation to other squares and public spaces, Itzkin notes that in Ghandi Square "security guards are highly visible but offer low-key policing, designed to make security measures palatable, with emphasis on diplomacy rather than heave-handed tactics" (Itzkin, 2008, p. 110). In Newtown's Mary Fitzgerald Square this human surveillance's function in the public space was to maintain the desired spatial order by society's conceived space, for a 'public' *free* square.



Figure 20. The realistic illusion at work where play is generally prohibited. (Source: author, 2009)

I was walking round the square one afternoon, when I noticed a group of young African inhabitants in high school uniform, traversing the empty public space. As they walked through the square they came across one of the netball/basketball poles designed in the

[12] All photographs of inhabitants in the researched public space were taken by researcher with the consent of participants.

concrete space (see Figure 20). As they approached the physical construction in the square, one of them playfully threw their small oval shaped school bag into the round hoop as though it were a ball. This unauthorized social action and playful moment in space was symbolic of a 'cry and demand' by the teenagers, for play in the forbidden public space. What was intriguing was that, in spite of the regulatory by-laws and human surveillance, this fleeting moment of stolen time in space as Lefebvre (1974/1991) calls it, was fulfilled however temporarily.

In a short period Mary Fitzgerald Square was appropriated by this group of inhabitants who turned it into a representational or 'lived' space. It is not only the Public Open Space By-Laws that inhabitants are generally clueless about. It is also the actual public space itself that they know very little about. On several mornings walking through the Precinct to work, I noticed a collection of young African inhabitants uniformly assembled at the square; chanting, stomping their feet and clapping hands. They wore red and black attire with the name "City Year" inscribed on it. Out of curiosity I observed them until I finally approached some of them to find out who they were and what they were doing at the square. I learnt that they were a group of students in Gauteng Province, who had just completed matric the year before. They had signed up as volunteers with the government for the rest of the year, as part of the leadership development and civic engagement programme (see www.cityyear.org.za).

When I asked them why they chose the square for their morning routines, I was told that they had been recently relocated to the square from another public space in the city because of their noise levels neighbouring office workers complained about. Following office complaints, Mary Fitzgerald Square was identified for them as the ideal location for conducting their early morning social practices because of its openness and absorption of sound. Since their volunteer work was affiliated with Provincial and Local governments, these inhabitants had the social right to use the square for their morning drills and were thus not perceived in contravention of the Public Open Space By-Laws by the CoJ. According to Chapter 3, Section 11 (2) of the Public Open Space By-Laws, a person is not violating the by-laws if they undertake prohibited activity

- To perform his or her obligation as an employee, agent or contractor of the Council under his or her contract with, or mandate from, the Council or to achieve the purposes of these By-laws;

- To carry out public duties as an employee, agent or contractor of an organ of State within a public open space which is subject to public utility servitude in favour of that organ of State (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4, p. 10).

In many respects this cohort of inner city 'citizens', by virtue of them being City Year volunteers, have the right to appropriate the forbidden square on condition that they are servants of the Council and its organ of State. Unlike their peers who are not in the programme, they are exempt and protected from physical expulsion, fines and possible jail time.



Figure 21. CITY YEAR volunteers in Johannesburg. (Source: author, 2009)

For some of them it was their first time being on Mary Fitzgerald Square. I asked one volunteer what they thought about the square, since they had the privilege of using it each morning for their routine drills. The young inhabitant commented powerfully,

> They [CoJ] should let us use the space more, and tell us about our [African] history because I don't know how the space affects me
> (City Year volunteer, interview, 2009)

Despite the CoJ's spatial by-laws and human surveillance measures that collude to prohibit spontaneous, playful social practices from appropriating Mary Fitzgerald Square, I did not experience incidents where monetary exchanges were required or arrests were made in the square during periods of ethnographic fieldwork. This could possibly be attributed to human surveillance and abstract by-laws that are already at work on the ground, ensuring that the legal and administrative framework for public spaces in Johannesburg is effective. This however, does not mean that there are no incidents occurring where young users are exploited and threatened by agents of

conceived space in their representational uses of public space in Newtown (Phasha, 2012). Due to regulatory policy and surveillance mechanisms, Mary Fitzgerald Square is, for the most part, an empty physical space because it is mentally and socially void (Lefebvre, 1974/1991).

In its political condition, it "facilitates the socialization of a not-yet-social realm", thus making it "merely a *representation of space*" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 190; original emphasis). For the everyday African youth, who have nowhere else to be but in the empty representations of space, how are such implicit power dynamics over the social production of Mary Fitzgerald Square contested in everyday life? In an effort to answer this question, I shifted my research focus from representations of space that dominates the square through bureaucratic and legal means, to the unknown and dominated representational space of inhabitants that desires it.

4.3 Mary Fitzgerald Square: the representational space

Lefebvre (1974/1991) clearly states that concrete space attains social reality through use and occupation by inhabitants. It may appear as a realm of objectivity, however space "exists in a social sense only for activity – for (and by virtue of) walking or riding on horseback, or travelling by car…or *some other means*" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 191; emphasis added). Chapter Three of this dissertation, revealed how Mary Fitzgerald Square's cohesive spatial practices were directly lived and secreted by brick-makers, agro-food producers and performance artists *before* they were coherently conceived. Since the early 1990s to early 2000s, the political and capital domination of Newtown's historic public space has resulted in the social loss of a collective public space (Dirsuweit, 1999). At this juncture, it is important to note that even in the midst of experienced loss and implicit domination, the representational space of collective social practices is still there.

As Lefebvre (1974/1991) notes, no space in society is completely destroyed in spatial practice. Rather, it is transformed by a social subject or inhabitant into a 'lived experience' that is "governed by determinants which may be practical (work, play) or bio-social (young people, children, women, active people) in character" (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, p. 190).

For Mary Fitzgerald Square, play and any form of active socializing is prohibited by the Public Open Space By-Laws that seek to preserve it as a pure representation in space. Once inhabitants' energies, active bodies transcend this abstraction through practical means, the perceived representation of space takes on a new form. In the context of the 2009 and 2010 public space, this new form was produced, however indirectly, by a group of multiracial inhabitants in Newtown whose social practice is skateboarding. In terms of the official CoJ by-laws, skateboarding constitutes an "active game" that is perceived by the CoJ as a nuisance, a danger to municipal property and is therefore a legally prohibited social practice in public space (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4). Skateboarders are part of a unique global society of diverse inhabitants, from teenagers to adults of different racial, social and cultural backgrounds. As representational space they are, by most urban standards, an outlawed and marginalized society of young people in most capital cities (Chiu, 2007, 2009).

In Johannesburg city, and Newtown Precinct in particular, they are continuation of the city's autonomous social-spatial practitioners. In 2012, former skateboarder Pitso Phasha conducted his auto-photography master's research with the school of urban development and planning, on Newtown's street skateboarders. In his research he mapped out the different streets that skateboarders use to skateboard and socialize with each other in the Precinct. Picking up on the spatial politics of skateboarders' social practice in designated streets, Phasha (2012) noted how this group of public space users developed their own strategies for overcoming structural barriers preventing them from practicing their craft as part of their everyday life.

Street skateboarders in have mastered law-enforcement officers' working schedules in their political practice of monitoring social activities in public space. They have devised ways of patterning their lived rhythms of skateboarding in Newtown's streets around official work hours of human surveillance in an effort to practice freely without worry (Phasha, 2012). It is unfortunate that skateboarders of Newtown are outlawed inhabitants because by of their social practice of skateboarding in Johannesburg city's streets.

In spite of the abstract and concrete limitations to practice, the representational space of skateboarders in its distinct spatial practice, continues nonetheless to resurface in the

dominated context to appropriate conceived space into meaningful locations of diverse and unscripted lived experiences. In the context of Mary Fitzgerald Square, I encountered skateboarders at different times and days of different weeks, in surrounding streets of Newtown (see Figure 22). At times, some skateboarders would be chilling on pavements chatting, with their representational tools of appropriation in their hands or on their laps, sometimes somewhere below their feet or erect alongside their legs while they remained standing and not in practice.



Figure 22. In spatial practice: a skateboarder on Miriam Makeba Street. (Source: author, 2010)

I grew curious about the skateboarders' physical and social absence in Newtown's largest open public space: Mary Fitzgerald Square. Why was this group of inhabitants not appropriating the square into a social space of their lived experiences (in spite of the by-laws and the human surveillance)? They were everywhere in Newtown except in the square. I temporarily left the square for the streets in an effort to gain insight and understanding to this perceived dynamic. In an effort to get to the bottom of know why they were not using Mary Fitzgerald Square, I first had to learn, from them, what inspired them to spatial practice in different locations across the city. Within a second talking to one skateboarder, my skateboarding jargon was quickly corrected by skateboarder1 in his response to the question "how do you chose your skateboarding locations?"

He responded

> Well, we call the location '*the spot*' and not 'locations

I found this interesting and accurate in terms of the global culture of this skateboarding society. As I found out in skateboarding literature, skateboarders generally refer to conceived spaces they practice in, as 'spots' (Karsten & Pel, 2000). Interestingly, through historical archives, I also found that referring to the Johannesburg's public spaces as "spots", was not necessarily a terminology used by twenty-first century skateboarders. In a 1919 publication of *The Star* newspaper of 03 March, the writer occasionally used the word 'spot' to describe certain locations in the forming colonial city under construction.

> **researcher**: Okay. So, what do you look for in a 'spot'?
>
> **skateboarder1**: if you're a street skater you use grinds and pavements. In a skate park you find a ramp and those things but street skating is much more creative than skate park skateboarding because, it [skate park skateboarding] is too safe (interview, 2009)

What is clear from the quote above is that skateboarders are self-managing, creative and free-spirited inhabitants, whose social practice is a portal to self-exploration and sense of liberty. Since skateboarders are banished from occupying and appropriating public spaces by by-laws, these conceived mechanisms constrain the practicality of public space for these young people who necessarily learn sociability in the streets (Malone, 2002; Cattell, Dines, Gesler & Curtis, 2008). This situation however, does not disrupt processes of urban public life because it is in the streets and through their uses that celebration and contention of identities and cultures is reflected (Goheen, 1998). In this regulated context, I then asked the skateboarders what motivated them to engage this social activity in the city and the inhabitant responded

> I come here [to Newtown] because of Wandile and Sam[13]. These guys skate here and they are my role models. Maybe one day I can be like them and hopefully beat them
> (skateboarder1, interview, 2009)

What motivates this skateboarder to appropriate conceived space is these two individuals who, as I later found out, are well-known figures and apparent role models in the skateboarding community. Personal motivation, as Karsten & Pel (2000) note, is an important factor that informs the social identities of skateboarders. This group of

[13] Wandile and Sam are popular and influential skateboarders in Johannesburg city

young people is not always acknowledged in their political relevance as citizens who, like every other member of society, deserve the right to be seen, heard and treated with dignity (Malone, 2002; Németh, 2006). After becoming familiar with the skateboarders of Newtown, I began to ask them individually, within different groups at different times of the day in the field: “why don’t you skate in Mary Fitzgerald Square?” Interestingly, I received a uniform response from them, detailing the design element of the square as a factor in their disinterest in appropriating it. Taking cue from his peers, skatebaorder1 explained

> I don’t skate in the square because it is not smooth and our boards have smaller wheels. We like to skate in front of the library there [pointing towards MuseumAfrica], but they always chase us away, because of the tourists
>
> **researcher**: Why is that?
>
> Maybe we can hurt some of them? Because...when you do flips and tricks it can get dangerous
> (skateboarder1, interview, 2009)

Despite regulatory by-laws and human surveillance which they have learnt to evade (Phasha, 2012), the square’s physical design, presented a practical limitation that skateboarders could not overcome by any means.



Figure 23. Performing a trick with a skateboard on a pavement. (Source: author, 2010)

This design limitation is part of an urban strategy generally known as ‘deterrence by design’. According to Doherty et al. (2008), the design strategy is a deliberate mechanism adopted by urban managers to construct public spaces that purposefully

discourage certain groups of inhabitants from appropriating conceived public spaces into meaningful spaces of lived experiences. Politically, this strategy serves the interests of the elite and dominant in urban societies. By conceiving public spaces for their exchange-value, this strategy undermines the use-value of public space and deepens discrimination amongst social groups with and without financial muscle in capitalist societies (Holland, Clark, Katz & Peace, 2007; Van Deusen, 2002). I returned to the world of skateboarders in the first half of 2010, only to find their bodied energies still lacking in the square. I was more determined to find out why this creative society of inhabitants and spatial practitioners avoided the deceptively open square.

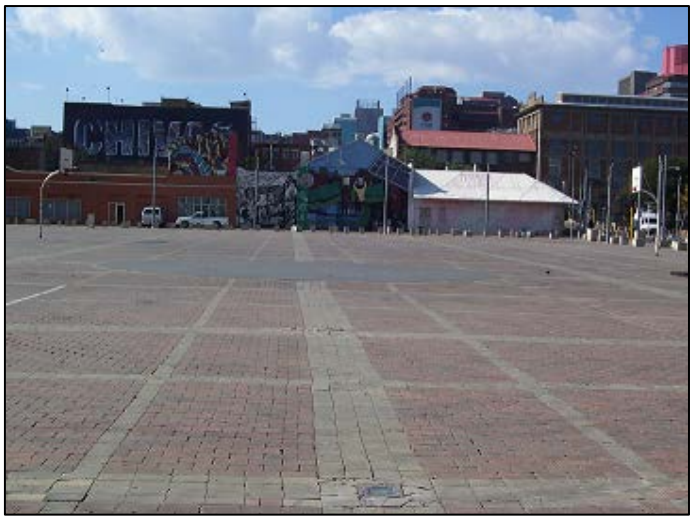


Figure 24. Skateboarding deterrence by design. (Source: author, 2009)

To my surprise, the 2010 skateboarding group expressed the same sentiments their counterparts expressed a year earlier. Skateboarder 2 explained his disuse of the square; in addition, he expanded on his political views of the CoJ as an abstract space that significantly affects the quality of his life experiences in the city's public space. According to the skateboarder

> The square is too bumpy to skate on because our wheels are so small. We've never really been kicked out [of Newtown] until now, so we're hoping that this is just a phase. I think people feel a bit safer if they see skaters. We're not here to do anything but skate. I think the City does not understand skating...they just think we're being a nuisance because we use streets and other things that people [in general] don't normally use
> (skateboarder 2, interview, 2010)

It is not an urban wide phenomenon to have skateboarders strategically marginalized from appropriating public spaces for their own social needs and desires. In Seattle Washington, the local city government, endorsed skateboarders' social-spatial practices in the formation and appropriation of public spaces into everyday spaces of lived experiences. In addition, conceived space has encouraged this lived space of creative and playful social beings, to participate in the development of liveable and vibrant urban public spaces (www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/skatepark). This is essentially democracy and participatory urban governance at its finest and most practical. The Seattle case study affirms Lefebvre's (1974/1991) notion that everything, including democracy and representational politics, must necessarily undergo trial by space. Johannesburg skateboarders in Newtown however, are far from realizing this democratic reality and possibility. In a city that perceives and constructs them as nuisances, in need of heavy regulation in public space, these inhabitants are written out of the democratic contract as legitimate citizens who deserve the right to social practice in the urban society's public spaces through the Public Open Space By-Laws.

Phasha (2012) appeals therefore, to city managers and planners, to transcend their own abstract representations of the city by coming down to street level to work together with the city's diverse and creative youth, in devising visions that are truly representational of the democratic urban African society. Human beings, as Lefebvre (1974/1991) notes, act and situate themselves in public space as active participants; in spite of their marginalization from and/or domination in space. This notion applies to Newtown's marginalized skateboarders. A few feet away from Mary Fitzgerald Square, a potential spot was earmarked for appropriation. Skateboarder 2 divulged their plans to appropriate a conceived spot on the margins of the square. He explained

> Next to Kaya FM[14] (national radio station), there's like, a space...pretty smooth for skating. Some of the skaters were thinking...if we could fund, or if they were to let us build over there, we would fund building up a box over there for skating
>
> **researcher**: And where will you get funding from?
>
> **Skateboarder 2**: maybe from skate sponsors?

[14] Kaya FM has since 2010 vacated the Market Precinct in Newtown for the northern suburbs of Parktown on Jan Smuts Avenue.

researcher: So, how will it work? Will the sponsors talk to the City?

skateboarder 2: I don't know. I think the sponsors would maybe rely on us to talk to the City or JDA [Johannesburg Development Agency]...We are going to have to do it ourselves. I'm willing to do it myself. Once we approach JDA, then, we can approach sponsors

researcher: Do you think that Kaya FM will allow you guys to be there in that space?

Skateboarder 2: I don't know. I think it's part of JDA property but, it's right under the bridge [M1 South], and I don't think anyone...no one walks there actually

researcher: And what if the City says it's too dangerous for you guys under the bridge?

Skateboarder 2: It's understandable that the City might use our own safety to stop us skating, but it's like stopping someone from playing soccer! You can easily hurt yourself playing soccer. Maybe, if they start arresting us, then I think I will stop using the city. My perception of life has changed because I am a skater
(interview, 2010)

Skateboarders in Newtown, Johannesburg share similar difficulties experienced by skateboarders in Philadelphia's Love Park for example. In Love Park, a skateboarding company offered the city of Philadelphia $1 million to allow skateboarders to continue their creative social practice that transformed the image of the park into a global symbol of skating and socializing (Németh, 2006). The city refused the offer because it was adamant about not wanting skateboards and skateboarders appropriating the park in spite of their actions being significantly beneficial for the urban society and its local economy. Even if Newtown skateboarders in Johannesburg were to raise money and acquire deals with sponsors, it is highly unlikely that the CoJ would accept that offer because it already has its mind made up about skateboarding and skateboarders before knowing it and understanding them.

Skateboarder2's remarks, that 'maybe if they start arresting them then he will no longer use the city', screams a lack of democratic representation and social insecurity suffered by these inhabitants in Johannesburg's public spaces. As Simone (2005) notes, it is in public spaces that everyday issues of citizenship, identity formation and belonging in

the urban society are contested, refined and negotiated. In the case of Newtown's public space users, such struggles are silently perpetuated without much contest or negotiation between conceived space and lived space in perceived spaces. As young people in the city, skateboarders' human rights are inherently violated on the basis of the by-laws, human surveillance and design mechanisms that act to undermine their capacity to learn, socialize and develop through appropriation of public space. Young people's democratic rights in the city are implicitly undermined everyday by the dominant space that always seeks to change and appropriate their representations in space and representational uses of space. Skateboarders therefore, do not enjoy the following social privileges and constitutional liberties promised in the national society's celebrated Constitution

- freedom of movement: article 21
- freedom of expression: article 16 (1)
- freedom to impart ideas or receive information: article 16 (b)
- freedom to artistic creativity: article 16 (c)
- freedom to participate in the cultural life of their choice: article 30 (1)
- freedom to enjoy their culture anywhere in the Republic without being deprived of citizenship: articles 21 (3) and 31 (1)
  (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996)

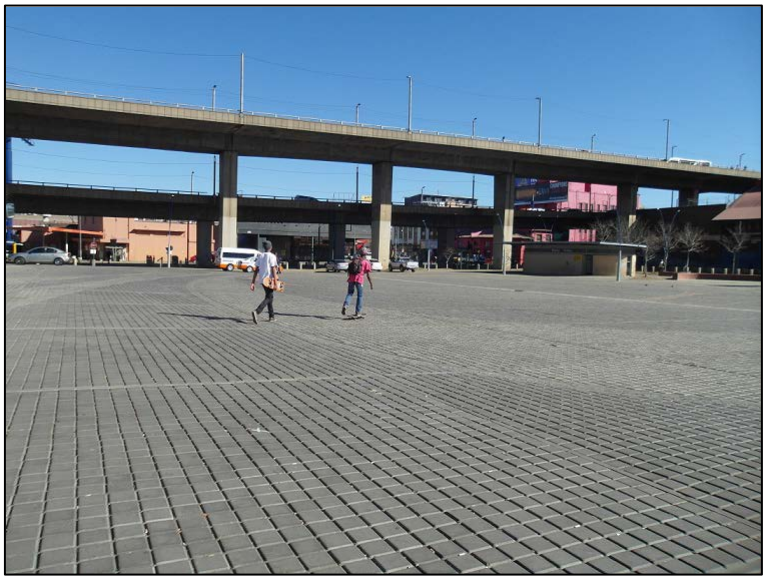


Figure 25. Appropriation of a policed public space. (Source: author, 2013)

In post-2010 public space[15], I encountered a group of inhabitants I never imagined seeing at the square. Like skateboarders, this group was also creative and in the moment of making representational use of a public space that was denied to them. The group was made up of African youths, who are involved in the business of fashion. They were tightly squeezed together near the outskirts of the square facing Jeppe Street (see Figure 26). It was a Saturday morning when I encountered them as they prepared for a photo shoot with their own models, make-up personnel and camera man, in an effort to promote their clothing line to their market. The group's clothing line is called 'Dark Dindie', and it is co-owned by the two female inhabitants seen in Figure 26 below wearing a green top and bright red pants respectively.



Figure 26. Representational use of Mary Fitzgerald Square. (Source: author, 2013)

In my conversation with them they mentioned that they like to use the square regularly because it offers them a good urban vibe that goes with their clothing designs. However, their social uses of Mary Fitzgerald Square have not made for pleasant experience because they always have to negotiate their representational time on the square, with law-enforcement officers. I found it interesting when the co-owners of the clothing line remarked "and we thought this is public space!" Even this spontaneous and harmless representational rhythm in Mary Fitzgerald Square is unwelcome in a city of very few open squares, with over four million inhabitants, the majority of whom are the youth who are unemployed (City of Johannesburg, 2011; statssa.gov.za).

[15] This additional information is included in the dissertation because its data was gathered and analysed in 2013 *for* the International Geographical Union conference on 'contested spaces'. The paper from the 2013 field-work is included in conference proceedings edited by Kotze, Donaldson & Visser (2014).

Young people in Johannesburg are not perceived as persons of interest in city plans. According to the city's 2040 political strategy, identified priority groups for assistance and support with planned economic development and social empowerment are "women, children, people with disabilities, migrants and refugees" (City of Johannesburg, 2011, p. 35). Where young people are mentioned, as is the case with the Public Open Space By-Laws, they are conceived as incapable of doing anything by themselves, dependent and therefore in need constant adult supervision to plan and manage for them what they cannot because they are only a nuisance in the city. Youth are not perceived as critical components of the urban infrastructure that makes the city work, liveable and dynamic (Simone, 2004). Through Mary Fitzgerald Square, all these misconceived political representations are challenged and actually rejected by the youth's diverse social practices that reveal their character as competent, autonomous and industrious human beings than can make a difference in their quality of life, as well the social and economic health of the city.

The presence of skateboarders and fashion designers in the public space is continuation of the rich yet frail historical legacy and quality of Mary Fitzgerald Square, as a material landscape where 'work' is found, and creative ideas are expressed by those who are and live in the contested city. These representational spaces play a critical role in understanding the social politics of Mary Fitzgerald Square in their democratic context. These inhabitants are nothing like the deviants and irresponsible 'children' that current urban visions and spatial by-laws set them out to be. They are heterogeneous individuals, creative, and mobile inscribed with an aptitude for self-organising (*autonomous*) and self-management (*autogestion*) in space (Elden, 2004).

Marginalization of their lived experiences, discourses of everyday life in public space and representational politics in the city itself, is still ongoing without much contest, to the detriment of the urban society's opportunity to test the strength of its new found democracy in space through practice, and to advance it socially through inclusive discourses and formulation of representational policy. It is however not only the youth that suffers this exclusion from exercising their right to social practice in Newtown's iconic public space. General publics in their racial and class differences, suffer near absolute domination in and marginalization from Mary Fitzgerald Square due mostly to its politics of exchange which the CoJ prioritizes over its qualities of use.

4.4 Spatial practice of Mary Fitzgerald Square

Compared to most squares around the world, Mary Fitzgerald Square does not boast any grand architectural features that make it a memorable space for social experiences. What it used to have, from 2002 to June 2009, was a 55m^2 light emitting diode (LED) television screen (see Figure 27). The screen animated the square at all times, particularly in the evenings, as it provided much needed lighting in the dark Precinct. Elsewhere, the social value of urban public screens in public spaces has been explored. Studies show that these technological tools are critical in the creation of vibrant social experiences in busy urban environments (Jin, Takahasi, & Tanaka, 2006; Struppek, 2006). In addition, these screens have a political value in terms of their role in facilitating spatial programming and mediating interaction between inhabitants and the surrounding landscape (Krajina, 2009; Satchell, Foth, Hearn & Schroeter, 2008). In addition, LED monitors are cost-effective technology that is financially sustainable Jin et al. (2006). Mary Fitzgerald Square enjoyed this technological device that has never been explored for its social (use) value and political practicality in the urban African society. It was removed from the designed space in June 2009 without protest from the public or explanation to the general society.



Figure 27. Mary Fitzgerald Square with LED television monitor. (Source: www.newtown.co.za)

According to a Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) informant, the screen's removal from the square was the outcome of a business relationship that went sour between the CoJ affiliated agency, and the monitor provider. The dispute between the two representations of space held 'practical consequences' for inhabitants' spatial practices in Mary Fitzgerald Square. The spatial practices of a society secrete that

society's space (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). What inhabitants did in their everyday life concerning the square produced and informed the character of the square as 'public space', in spite of Public Open Space By-Laws, human surveillance and design elements involved in its bureaucratic politics of production. Before the screen's removal from the public space, I was in regular contact and consultation with the CoJ's World Cup Unit advisor, about the LOC's plans to transform the square into a spectacular public viewing area or PVA. This Unit was specifically designed for the 2010 FIFA World Cup. It disintegrated soon after 11 July 2010.

The Confederation Cup or CONFED CUP of 2009 was supposed to provide the host city with a good opportunity to monitor and evaluate how the square, and most importantly, how local inhabitants, would respond to the PVA initiative. This, according to the agent, would give the Unit a good indication of what worked and what needed improving in the public space, before the main event of 2010. On the eve of the CONFED CUP kick-off, I made my way to Mary Fitzgerald Square where a small crowd of inhabitants were assembled. They were treated to an organized music spectacle with DJs and local artists performing on the erected stage. This was an impromptu public event that was staged in an effort to encourage inhabitants to support the global cultural initiative of the PVA. Inhabitants in attendance were requested to come to the square the next day, to watch the CONFED CUP on the $55m^2$ LED screen *together* in the public space.

The next morning I made my way to the square and I was immediately taken by surprise upon arrival. Newtown was strangely quiet that morning and more strangely, the square was desolate. The only people that were there that morning was myself, and one other guy sitting on the concrete furniture lining the margins of the square (see Figure 28 next page). He was waiting in silent confusion like I was. He constantly checked his cell phone to see if he was on time or did not get the times for the kick-off mixed up. The other inhabitant, who can be seen vaguely on the same image carrying a black plastic bag, was simply walking through the square like normal; seemingly oblivious to the invisible drama that was unfolding.

What made matters worse, was the shocking absence of the LED screen from the square! The advance technological tool that existed in the city for a period of nearly

seven years and taken for granted was no more. There was nothing but air and deafening silence in the public space which was exacerbated by the screen's visible absence. No communication of any kind was displayed on site to inhabitants about the unexpected and unfortunate turn of events. The decision to remove the urban screen from the square without warning, affected the daily routines of inhabitants on practical terms. At the time of the screen's removal, I came across Mlangeni's (2009) branding study for local economic development (LED) initiatives in Newtown. Like Phasha's (2012) street skateboarding study, Mlangeni's study was not interested in the ethnographies of Mary Fitzgerald Square. It did however make an important reference to the square's contested state in the broader urban context of everyday life. Informed by a non-ethnographic review of the public space, Mlangeni contended that the square's LED screen was an economic waste because it served the interests of one or two security guards (human surveillance) than the general society of inhabitants for most of the time.



Figure 28. Failed PVA dress rehearsal. (Source: author, 2009)

Mlangeni's (2009) study was correct in its qualitative analysis of the square as an empty public space however, in terms of its apolitical interpretation of the spatial situation observed from a distance, it failed to accurately assess the use-value of the screen for inhabitants, leading it to disengage the politics of the public space more concretely. Consequently, Mlangeni concluded and recommended that the screen should be removed from the material landscape since it did not serve the interests or meet the needs of the surrounding community in and around Newtown. Closer observation, however, revealed that the LED screen was actually a draw card to the public space for

most inhabitants who used it outside working hours of human surveillance. One elderly inhabitant explained

> Indaba [the thing is], there used to be that big screen neh? And we used to come and just sit [at the square] when bored with your own television. Come and sit and watch [the monitor]. I don't know what happened [to the screen] it disappeared! It's full at night and you can't sit watching people go up and down…it looks like you're crazy but you not
> (elderly inhabitant, interview, 2010)

From the elderly inhabitant's remarks, it is evident that the space-based technological tool had a significant use value for him. The urban screen informed his spatial practice in Mary Fitzgerald Square. Through the television monitor the inhabitant appropriated the public space by virtue of his presence in the square to watch the programmes aired. According to Holland et al. (2007) elderly inhabitants are marginalized from most urban public spaces particularly after dark, because of security concerns and a general lack of interesting activities available to them in public space. In Mary Fitzgerald Square however, this notion proved inadequate since the elderly inhabitant was secure in his representational uses of the square at night, whilst the screen provided entertainment for him to fix his gaze on in a space where there is nothing else for him to do in the public space. The screen motivated the elderly inhabitant to leave the comfort and security of his home so that he could have an opportunity to interact with the city's public realm thereby contributing in his own way to the production and reproduction of urban life.

Without the screen in public space, the inhabitant no longer had reason to occupy the square. There is nothing anymore to capture his mind and he cannot afford to look like a mentally unstable elderly person at night, hanging around a dark square by himself at night. The elderly user continued

> There used to be err, what you call? Some artists, yes…singing on the big screen, now gone! Gone with the wind and we don't complain
>
> **researcher**: Why not?
>
> We don't even know our, what you call? Ward councillors. Do you know? [asking the young man with him who shook his head 'no']. We don't know. We only see the posters when there is this thing…what you call? Local elections! You'll see posters soon. I don't even know who it is, where he stays, you understand? Nothing!

(elderly inhabitant, interview, 2010)

The elderly inhabitant's expression reveals a declining political will, or increasing disenfranchisement on the part of inhabitants to actively participate in urban politics and everyday decision-making that affects their lives. The young man also contributed to the discussion and added that ever since the screen was removed from the space, he no longer uses the square as much. For him, the PVA experience during the World Cup period was not much of an improvement on his practical experiences of the public space.

> There is a difference [with the 2009 square] but it is not a big deal, it is not a big deal. It [Mary Fitzgerald Square] is just a space where people come to watch soccer [in 2010]. I can't come here because there is a basketball pole and I don't play basketball so…it does not really meet my needs. I still need my knees
> (unemployed graduate, interview, 2010)

While some inhabitants felt that the PVA initiative did very little to improve their social relationship and daily uses of Mary Fitzgerald Square, others expressed the desire to retain the PVA experience in the city, for relevance to everyday people. I encountered two World Cup volunteers in the square during the FIFA World Cup. They were playing around with each other on the flanks of the square using a small tennis ball (see Figure 29 next page). From the perspective of everyday life, I asked the two inhabitants what their thoughts on the square were, in spite of the FIFA rhythm that dominated it. The first volunteer exclaimed that Mary Fitzgerald Square was

> Just another space! When it's not used it's an open space, so you don't even think about it. You only notice it if there are activities. There has to be more activities so that everybody can know that this place is the place to be! Right now we only go to that side [pointing across the square to Bassline in Newtown Park]. We can't use this space because there's nothing happening most of the time
> (World Cup volunteer 1, interview, 2010)

The quote above is important because it summarizes ordinary inhabitants' everyday realities and unknown lived experiences of the square succinctly. It also speaks truth to observations and analyses made about the conceived social emptiness that pervades the public space for most of the time.



Figure 29. Two World Cup volunteers at Mary Fitzgerald Square. (Source: author, 2010)

Even when there are no planned public or private events, the square is deliberately kept free of inhabitant's bodies through spatial by-laws and human surveillance targeting their social practices in public space. Inhabitants are aware of the square but see the square because they see it and it is there. However, due to their physical exclusion and social marginalization through prohibitions that allow for nothing spontaneous to happen in the public space, users generally shy away from the square and therefore experience it as passive space physically, mentally and socially. In this regard the abstract space transforms its inhabitants into passive users who overlay its physical plane only as symbolic objects (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). The volunteer's peer echoed his sentiments about the over regulated public space and its deterrent representation to everyday users who seek it for its use-value

> **World Cup volunteer 2**: Normally we go to that side, Bassline. We don't come this side because there's not much activity happening this side
>
> **researcher**: what do you mean when you say, "not much activity"?
>
> **World Cup volunteer 2**: I mean (big) screens like this! Whenever there are matches or something which can make people interested in this space, *so that people can benefit*. There are lots of mama's [female food vendors] who are here, even people who are selling crafts, you see? They can benefit from this crowd. I think if they can just keep the screen here, then maybe let this be an ongoing thing, you see? Not just after the World Cup everything disappears (interview, 2010; emphasis added)

There is no doubt about inhabitants' 'cry and demand' for Mary Fitzgerald Square in the social democratic urban context of Johannesburg. Before democracy, people did not have this 'cry and demand' for the representational uses of the space. Ironically, the politics of those times were such that interracial mixing and social interactions, particularly of Africans, in the urban space and the broader society, were illegal. In those times such social practices by heterogeneous members of the colonial society in Newtown's public spaces resulted in death for some, loss of property for others and loss of important social bonds for everyone as Chapter 3 loosely expressed. Today, in a non-racial and non-sexist urban South Africa, Africans in their gendered and generational differences are prohibited from acting and interacting with each other in the historical city's only remaining open square by the neoliberal State. The World Cup volunteer imagined the square's potential representational uses on a practical level, for those who inhabit the city

> I think the PVA initiative is okay. I think if they [the CoJ] can use it for our local, domestic soccer, it will be fine because not everybody can afford to go to stadiums. So, if they have PVAs in and around Johannesburg, I think it will be cool
> (World Cup volunteer 2, interview, 2010)

At this point, it should be clear that the cultural practice of television watching in Mary Fitzgerald Square was not a new phenomenon that was introduced in the society by the FIFA event. In its unorganized context of everyday life, the square always had public viewing practice; as the elderly inhabitant and even Mlangeni's (2009) study revealed. What the FIFA World Cup did was to enhance the value of the spatial practice and revive an already existing rhythm that had, sadly diminished in totality from the public space a year prior. Even though the CoJ does not know and appreciate Mary Fitzgerald Square's use-value along with the television screen it came with, it is hoped that conceived space would at least come to an understanding of this fact someday. Furthermore, in order for the CoJ to realize democracy in practice not as a principle, it must rethink and re-evaluate its tight grip over the spatial practices of Mary Fitzgerald Square if it is to become *the* "World Class African City of the Future—a vibrant, equitable African city, strengthened through its diversity; a city that provides real quality of life" (City of Johannesburg, 2011, p. 35).

The CoJ's Public Open Space By-Laws, its discriminatory surveillance and design strategies must be tailored for the current society and times. This can only be achieved once the CoJ tasks itself with knowing, learning and understanding who its inhabitants are, what they want and what they can contribute, where they act and prefer to interact, as well as how they desire and imagine themselves in the city via their uses of public space. The fact that a small population of adult politicians, policy-makers, academics and its artists [of scientific bent] make and take important decisions about public spaces that they themselves do not use, helps very little. Decision-makers do not live in the city nor do they use the city's public spaces like Mary Fitzgerald Square and Newtown streets on a day to day basis like most inhabitants do. With this condition prevailing, it becomes easier for politicians as technocrats to implement top-down policies and strategies without consulting inhabitants; often with the arrogant attitude that claims to "know what people want" (Hicks & Buccus, 2009, p. 216).

From conversations with inhabitants it is evident that political players and decision-makers are not sensitive to the representational needs of inhabitants. Moreover, they act against the spatial needs of inhabitants through the one-sided spatial by-laws; human surveillance; private partnerships and, urban designs and visionary documents that deter current users from public space for conceived ones of their own imagination. The elderly inhabitant mentioned earlier that they do not know the city councillor or where he stays. This is the case because they [urban politicians] are not public people. They are not interested in the everyday man, woman and child inhabiting the city nor are they interested in everyday matters of participatory governance in the production of public space for redress in Johannesburg (Malena, 2009). It is only through an organized public event like the Nelson Mandela Day (see Figure 30 next page) that the society's politicians become visible to inhabitants in Mary Fitzgerald Square.

On this particular day, 18 July 2009, the urban society celebrated the launch of the late Statesman. Former acting president Kgalema Motlanthe addressed assembled crowds that day, with a speech that had nothing to do with people's everyday problems, challenges and opportunities in that political context. Politicians only avail themselves

to inhabitants in time for elections and re-elections[16]. Through this inadequate use of public space, politicians use the abstract space for insincere social dialogue between themselves and the society they claim to serve.

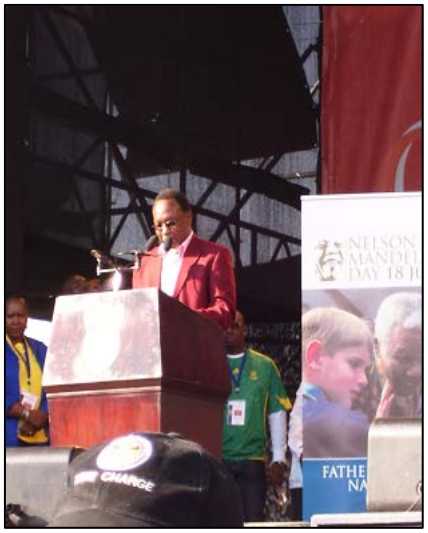


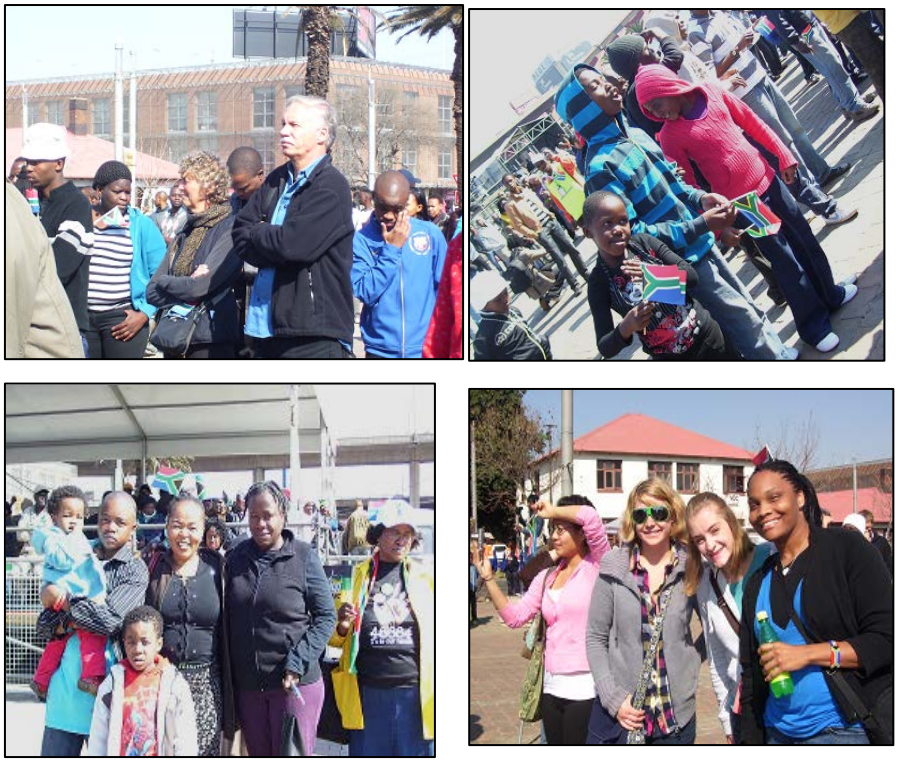
Figure 30. Kgalema Motlanthe delivers a speech in Mary Fitzgerald Square. (Source: author, 2009)

In its Growth and Development Strategy, the CoJ claims to recognize its own short falls where matters of community involvement and public participation in decision-making are concerned. Based on this, the CoJ promises to induce inhabitants' participation by improving the way "it communicates with citizens" by focusing "more on innovative mechanisms through which citizens and communities can participate more effectively and meaningfully" in the promotion of sound democratic governance (City of Johannesburg, 2011, p. 35). All this can indeed be achieved if everyday life is given the right to engage its social practice in public space and, if the innovative tool that once was at the site is returned to be used anew, for daily programming and transparent communication with the 'resilient and adaptive society' that makes this imagined city and its lived society possible. The reality is that the right to political participation in everyday decision-making via public space, is integral to the advancement of democracy.

In urban South Africa, as Mary Fitzgerald Square's contemporary spatial practice reveals, the voices of the people are muted and channels for transparency in

[16] This statement is drawn from conversations with inhabitants during fieldwork, as well as from my own experiences having lived in Johannesburg city from 2004 to 2011.

communication are closed off (Hicks & Buccus, 2009). On occasion of an organized public event, the oddly inactive and socially vacant public space springs to life, as multiple identities, ordinarily not seen on the site, become visible (see Figure 31 on next page). The marginal position of urban youth is clear in the CoJ's discriminatory Public *Open Space By-Laws* of 2003/3, *Joburg 2040* in City of Johannesburg (2011) and *Gauteng City-Region 2055* visionary frameworks. In these official documents, young people are perceived as a 'problem' and a challenge. This is further compounded by the fact young people are not included in urban discussions concerning their political, social and economic futures in the city.



Figures 31. Organized social interaction in Mary Fitzgerald Square. (Source: author, 2009)

Young people are perceived as children who must be directed to certain job opportunities through regulated and bureaucratic public-private forums, instead of being allowed to self-organize in the city's rich and capable public spaces. Interestingly, the CoJ promises to "work to build an enabling environment, through which citizens can support themselves and each other, creating change and greater inclusivity through direct actions of individuals, communities, organisations, alongside the City" (City of Johannesburg, 2011, p. 34). Johannesburg city is filled with youth who are more than competent, skilled in their respective crafts. All they need, like those inhabitants of

Moscow Square, a platform like Mary Fitzgerald Square and a politically enabling policy environment, to enrich themselves through their social-spatial practices democratically, in ways that are socially and economically sound.

It is rather unfortunate that one only gets to see a glimpse of Johannesburg city's rich cultures and people gathered in the square through organized public spectacles. Johannesburg city is South Africa's smallest urban landscape, geographically speaking. It is also the country's most densely populated and highly congested urban hub with over four million inhabitants (City of Johannesburg, 2011; www.joburg.org.za). With its very narrow streets and agglomeration of high rise buildings, inescapably squeezed next to each other, there are not many open public spaces remaining today that inhabitants can use to escape harsh realities of urban life, to get some fresh air, to meet or watch other people, even to get new perspectives. There are none such spaces in Johannesburg. Today, Mary Fitzgerald Square stands as the city's only open public space, with enough room to relieve stressed inhabitants of the daily pressures that come with school, work, unemployment and a volatile global, labour-market economy.

It is shocking to say the least, that Mary Fitzgerald Square is kept from its true purpose of sustaining and facilitating cannot accommodate its present day inhabitants on a day to day basis like it did for its former inhabitants in the segregated urban society. Mary Fitzgerald Square does not function nor operate like post-socialist Moscow Square or its urban counterpart north of Africa known as Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt. It is completely useless. It does not have any realized social, economic, cultural and political benefits to the majority of its inhabitants who have become more than complacent and passive in making real democratic demands for it.

4.5 Mary Fitzgerald Square and the 2010 FIFA World Cup

From 11 June to 11 July 2010, South Africa's urban public spaces were temporarily transformed into extra-ordinary PVAs for the high profile mega-event, the FIFA World Cup. By this time Johannesburg's Newtown Precinct had been declared a heritage site because of its commodified 'representational' history (Shand, 2010). In this period, Newtown was endowed with colourful information boards stitched onto its physical landscape. Each board was visual representation of particular locations and displayed brief histories of each geographical point. Mary Fitzgerald Square was not exempt from

this list of identified heritage sites. The spatial developments were particularly interesting because for the first time since 2009, Mary Fitzgerald Square had a visible sign post with its name inscribed onto it in bright colours for all to see (see Figure 32). Inhabitants however revealed something peculiar. In the political context of social marginalization and physical exclusion, inhabitants were unfamiliar with the Irish name of the square.



Figure 32. A symbolic representation of Mary Fitzgerald Square. (Source: author, 2010)

In spite of their vast social and political differences, inhabitants were asked the same question to conclude interviews. 'Do you know the name of the square?' The answers varied and were interesting. Skateboarders, the media student and the unemployed graduate, knew what the name of the abstract space is. It was not the same for everyone else. Others struggled to pronounce the name even after I articulated it to them, revealing a deep element of 'alienation' in and from the public space (Elden, 2004). I came across a young urban professional traversing the square one evening. In our conversation, he was confident in his relationship with the alien square. Mary Fitzgerald Square was to him

> …part of my house. As you walking here it's my neighbourhood so I won't neglect it for anything. I'll be passing here every time. You can look at it, it's quite, nice and the people are here. It *should* be like this. We need this music and then it should play every Friday…bring our kids and make it special
> (young urban professional, interview, 2010; emphasis added)

> **researcher**: One last question before you go. You mentioned the Market Theatre, Capello's and all these other spaces in the precinct. Can you tell me the name of this square?

young urban professional: Which one?

researcher: This one… (pointing my finger to the ground on which we both stood)

young urban professional: uhhm… (*thinking*) I don't know! (*laughs*)

researcher: Part of the kitchen isn't it? (I asked sarcastically, going back to his description of the public space as part of his house)

young urban professional: It's like you're always in the kitchen but you don't know where the spoon is!
(interview, 2010)

The elder inhabitant I spoke to earlier provided comments to the toponymy question to which he exclaimed

> Something Fitzpatrick Patrick! What's it called? This was the Market before. It sold vegetables not like now. But most people they call it Market Theatre. Everybody I know they say meet 'meneer' [Afrikaans for mister] Market Theatre, then they know. If you gonna say they must meet…what you call it? Gerald what? That's another story
> (elderly inhabitant, interview, 2010)

I found it interesting that inhabitants had no idea 'what' the name of the quotidian space is, let alone 'who' it is named after. Who can blame them when they do not even have a sense of ownership, control or general say over the public space? To add to the matter, there is no record of Mary Fitzgerald in historical papers archives in the Cullen Library at Wits University. It is only in historical, literary pieces like Frances Hunter's (2009) *Mary 'Pickhandle' Fitzgerald*: *Rediscovering A Lost Icon* and *Johannesburg*: *One Hundred Years* (1986), that one finds footprints of the late radical in text. Three things come to mind as to why inhabitants do not know the name of Mary Fitzgerald Square.

First, the majority of inhabitants do not know the name of the square because they have no direct physical, social and mental relationship with it. Through the by-laws, human surveillance, design measures and organized exchange and use-value uses of the public space, inhabitants are far removed from the material and social landscape every day. Therefore, it makes sense why its name is lost to them. Second, that the square's name

bears the stamp of an Irish (European) female in Africa, and a female inhabitant who is relatively unknown in the city's spatial and general history books that are equally unknown to Africans adds to this dynamic. To borrow from the Japanese philosopher's expression in Lefebvre (1974/1991), Mary Fitzgerald Square is a public space that bears a name that has no meaning to the people who live around it. In 2012 I had an opportunity to converse with COSATU's spokesperson about Mary Fitzgerald Square. Before I had an opportunity to ask about political meaning and significance of the square to the trade union, the spokesperson quickly declared that they will oppose any proposals put forward for a name change to Mary Fitzgerald Square. I was surprised by this considering the fact that I did not mention or suggest such an action to him in conversation. Nor did I think about it for the research, following inhabitants' negative responses to the general question about their estranged public space's name.

Third and most importantly, there is no real political uses of the square by politicians to communicate with inhabitants about everyday matters that concern them. Not to mention that these representations of space are doing everything possible to discourage inhabitants from using the square to and for practice, to exchange ideas and disseminate information that could lead to practical democratic uses of space with potential to enforce cohesion and bridge generational gaps in the urban society. There is no doubt that the FIFA World Cup of 2010 brought to light serious issues that have been lurking in the dark about Mary Fitzgerald Square. In addition to the revealing the square's name matters and politics in African context, the global capital event brought to the fore interesting contradictory dynamics in the privately organized management of the public space between June and July 2010.

For starters, the fact the square was open to inhabitants to physically occupy as social space for a period of twenty-eight consecutive days, was historic. In the context of the world cup FIFA was the *alpha* abstract space of the capital to which the CoJ was subordinated to its political practice. FIFA World Cup was also with its own prohibitions in a Mary Fitzgerald Square it temporarily occupied through the PVA initiative for the duration of the tournament (see 2010 FIFA Regulation by-laws at http://www.joburg-archive.co.za/bylaws/2010_bylaws.pdfwww.joburg.org.za). Some of the prohibitions were explicit and not concealed from inhabitants like it is with the Public Open Space By-Laws. Inhabitants were not allowed to bring their own

refreshments and camp chairs for seating (see Figure 33 next page), in an effort to maximise commercial spending power by the capitalist organization and its multinational corporation partners like Coca-Cola and Budweiser for example.



Figure 33. Prohibitions in spectacle space. (Source: author, 2010)

To claim its spatial territory, the *alpha* abstract space erected a symbolic representation of its presence and capital interest in the public space in the form of a giant lego-like artefact constructed in the square using Coca-Cola crates (see Figure 34). This creative work made Mary Fitzgerald Square attractive and interesting as it towered above the M1 South highway with its two 'fingers' pointed to the sky.

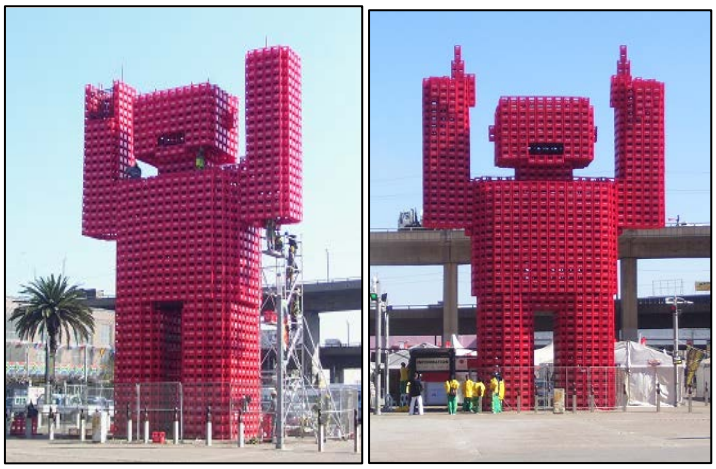


Figure 34. Celebrating the spirit of capitalism. (Source: author, 2010)

In spite of all this spatial dictatorship by FIFA inhabitants flocked to Mary Fitzgerald Square for a chance to experience something that they would never experience like that again and that was, to be in the public space. As a PVA, Mary Fitzgerald Square was designed with a single entry and exit point. In the first two weeks of the soccer

tournament the square was swarming with heavy duty security, law-enforcement and different types of surveillance. There were readily recognizable public and private law-enforcement agents in official vans, private cars, ambulances, walking on foot, and some on horseback. There were also 'City Researchers' walking about in their orange and black vests. CoJ volunteers, seen in figure 34 in their green and yellow attire, were everywhere especially at the entry and exit point as they clicked away on hand-held gadgets at human bodies coming in and leaving the square. On days when there were no games being played or aired on the television, the square was open to inhabitants.

On one of those 'no match' days, I met a family of African inhabitants occupying the margins of the square on Jeppe Street. I asked one of the elderly women why they were at the square during that time and her response was

> I'm not much of a soccer fan but I came here with my children to have fun and to relax
> (mother, interview 2010)

We continued our conversation when our interview rhythm was interrupted by two men we did not know. The two stood in between us and posed without a word like frozen human statues. For the first time in the field, I was displaced from my role as 'researcher' in public space by events. We were all stunned by this unexpected occurrence that caused silence to fall on us but only for a few seconds. Myself and the family broke in awkward laughter at the unknown human statues because we realized that the two posed no threat or danger to us.

I regained composure and proceeded with our spatial conversation until the human statues 'came to life' because the word "public space" was mentioned in conversation. The two men began to talk to us. They explained that they were Salvation Army activists who were in the public space during the world cup because there are important issues affecting everyday citizens in the city that require spaces like these for them to use in order to reach people and raise their awareness They added that the FIFA World Cup provided good opportunities for them, via the PVAs, to spread their messages and to alert inhabitants to pertinent issues and public spaces, in the extra-ordinary context of the world cup, allowed them to do so.

The FIFA world cup, in its unintended social impact via Mary Fitzgerald Square, created an opportune moment for a civil society organization like the Salvation Army, to have access to the public realm in an effort to make representational use of the square for public good. This lived experience revealed Mary Fitzgerald Square as a practical bridge between inhabitants in the city and civil society organizations that 'could' lead towards the formation of a new democratic order and engaged political life that could change ordinary social relationships in the capitalist environment into extra-ordinary movements in the city. One inhabitant explained why he came to Mary Fitzgerald Square during the world cup season

> I came here to ease my mind. That side [downtown] is too crowded, so here you can just chill and relax, there's no problem. I'm here to relax, watch the game and meet people, you know? I'm not really a soccer fan but since the World Cup has started, I'm starting to enjoy soccer, you see? Now, I can say that I'm a soccer fan…yeah, sometimes watching the game in places where there is lot of people, you enjoy the vibe and you are feeling the soccer. I have never been to the stadium so I don't know how it's like to be in a place where it's crowded. But since the World Cup started I came here, watched the soccer World Cup. It's packed and everyone is here, everyone is united, different kinds of people you meet them so, that is what I'm enjoying the most about coming (Interview, Shopping Mall Employee, 2010)

From his descriptive expression, it became clear that the social richness of the square, which the capitalist event exposed, was the pull factor. Ordinary people would not come to Mary Fitzgerald Square on any given day because 'nothing ever happens there'. During the FIFA World Cup of 2010, inhabitants found the rich diversity of strangers from everywhere more appealing than the actual soccer that was used as an instrument to pool people together for the PVA project. For a society like South Africa, with its inexplicably deep wounds inflicted through centuries, and decades of inhumane treatment by colonizing Europeans towards Africans, there is no telling what the possibilities of a social (use) order of public space could do to amend political hurts of a divided society, struggling to come to terms with its own contested history.

In the spirit of unity, Mary Fitzgerald Square, under the capitalist rhythm and influence of FIFA, embraced all manner of inhabitants who generally would not have representation in the urban society via the public space. As well as skateboarders and all active youth, the homeless inhabitants of Johannesburg are also prohibited from public

space (Public Open Space By-Laws, 2003/4). By virtue of their homelessness, it is necessary that they sleep, bathe and urinate in public space. This group of inhabitants were barely considered as representational space in the exploration of the square's everyday politics.

One day walking around on site, I noticed two middle-aged male inhabitants lying side by side on the flanks of the square on Bree Street. Both men were dirty as they slept under the cool shade of some of the trees lining the square's margins. One of the men was African and the other was white. A few feet away from them were law-enforcement officers who did not look disturbed by their physical and visible social presence during the global spectacle. It became clear to me that the two men did not come there for the soccer, like most inhabitants explained; they came there for the square itself. To sleep in it as part of their spatial practice during an opportune period that might never return. I approached one female law-enforcement officer who was on horseback, to try to establish some truth to this analysis. The officer spoke from a security point of view before coming down to the social reality at hand in the public space

> Everything is okay here. We are here to make sure that you all feel safe and that everything runs smoothly. This World Cup is for everybody, especially the homeless people because they don't have TVs
> (Law-enforcement officer, interview, 2010)

Towards the end of the FIFA spectacle, inhabitants were denied access to Mary Fitzgerald Square. It was closed without warning for a period of two consecutive days. Inhabitants with their families and children were turned away one by one from the square by security personnel stationed at the sites only entry and exit point (see Figure 35 on next page).



Figure 35. Negotiating access to organized spectacle space. (Source: author, 2010)

During this period no one, except for CoJ officials working within the Precinct's barricaded square, was granted access. It was for the first time in fieldwork that I was denied access to Mary Fitzgerald Square and that distressed me. When I asked why the square was sealed off the security personnel explained that they were instructed to keep people out by the private branding company tasked with managing the square on behalf of the CoJ, for maintenance purposes. Frustrated by this turn of events I wondered how inhabitants dealt with this sporadic closure of the square on a day to day basis.



Figure 36. Inhabitants walk past the enclosed spectacle space. (Source: author, 2010)

I asked a variety of inhabitants passing by the square how they felt about the fact that they could not walk through the square as usual going to and from their various locations, in and around the city. To my surprse I learnt that inhabitants were not fazed by this irregularity because it is what they are exposed to on a regular basis. Whether the square is hosting a private or public event, they always experience this inconvenience, which does not concern or alarm them. I asked the young urban

professional mentioned earlier about this state of affairs and he responded casually, stating

> I come from this direction [pointing to the M1 South], because I couldn't drive through because of this 2010 thing. So I had to take a taxi off there and walk to my home…such inconvenience
> (young urban professional, interview, 2010)

Similarly another inhabitant mentioned earlier explained

> No, we are not frustrated. We understand. It's already over. When is the 11th? Sunday? Monday? We will be walking again in the same route
> (unemployed graduate, interview, 2010)

Newtown's Mary Fitzgerald Square was not the only public space during the FIFA World Cup that marginalized the everyday social practices of inhabitants. In the urban context of Durban's eThekwini municipality, Roberts (2010) notes how social movements were denied their democratic right to spatial practice in the host city's streets.

Roberts puts forth the notion that Durban's capitalist vision of repositioning itself via the world cup as South Africa's sporting playground, did not take into consideration its inhabitants when assigning public resources for the benefit of the capitalist spectacle. Given the high-profile nature of the FIFA World Cup, Roberts insists that everyday politics, in the post-apartheid city, were repressed and deliberately kept out of the news to protect the interests of the global tourists from abroad. Public resources, meant to support peaceful protests of social movements, were instead redirected towards the exclusive venture that dominated the society's representations of space and representational space unequally.

Of course the eThekwini municipality's spatial by-laws and special courts throughout the country's major host cities were critical in maintaining the dominant social order imposed by the seasonal alpha abstract space in the production and appropriation of streets in Durban during the world cup. Mary Fitzgerald Square unlike like Durban streets during the World Cup season was fairly accessible and socially accommodating. However, unlike Durban streets, Mary Fitzgerald Square did not have to contend with social movements since they are very organized in terms of their representational uses of it in Johannesburg. The lack of social planning that Roberts (2010) describes in

Durban's streets was interestingly evident in Mary Fitzgerald Square particularly on the first day of kick-off. This says something about the political power of FIFA organization to dominated any country and for South Africa, as Africa's first host, these gaps in 'social' planning discourse and practice, offer something for the local society to think about and consider in planning democratic public spaces in neoliberal times.

4.6 Conclusion

Mary Fitzgerald Square is a South African public space in Newtown, Johannesburg. Since its iconic inception by multiracial inhabitants, this public space has gone through a diversity and plethora of transformation. Transformation in this space is an ongoing process that is at once physical (architectural and planning) and social (users and uses) according to Lefebvre's (1974/1991) three-dimensional The *Production of Space*. In terms of the spatial triad in particular, this chapter has laid out the constant interaction and contradictory relationship of power between the inhabitants of the public space who desire it for its *use*-value, and the dominant elite and political classes who prioritize its *exchange*-value over its *use*-value in urban spatial practice. However, what is still missing from the spatial analysis is the dimension of political transformation of the square through everyday social uses that permit inhabitants' social practices and related rhythms to produce and reproduce the square in ways that are in sync with democratic times. Neoliberal strategies in the recently democratized context work to some degree, against the realization of the Right to the City in urban life and society that is fundamentally, a 'spatial' *right* and one that is public space specific.

CHAPTER 5
PUBLIC SPACE: A CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this dissertation was to establish a public space—*Mary Fitzgerald Square*—in theoretical discourse as a contested social space whose spatial practices were first lived *before* they were conceived. This analysis was achieved through conceptual means following sustained reading Henri Lefebvre (1901-1991), and ongoing revision of the ethnographic project. This chapter is an outline of the dissertation's findings and other highlights based on the literature reviewed, data collected and conceptual analysis of data generated from the ontological/spatial perspective of everyday life and lived experiences. Theoretical implications are discussed, regarding the production of public space research in contemporary South Africa, using ethnographic techniques in geography to explore these spaces, exploit their potential and understand their power. Areas for further development and research in the social production and critical analysis of present day urban landscapes in South Africa are brought forward, followed by final conclusions.

5.2 The contested production of urban public space

The different ways in which urban public spaces are produced and reproduced by different members of societies through time, are not always well-known or readily understood (Elden, 2004; Lefebvre, 1974/1991). The political history of contestations informing the social production and spatial practices of individual public spaces in their respective urban geographical societies is also not known. Often it is mainly the social realities and political experiences of Euro-American contexts that dominate theoretical analysis of public space, to the marginalization of African discourses (Parnell & Robinson, 2012; Yeoh, 1996). Looking at the social production of Mary Fitzgerald Square between 2009 and 2010, interesting discoveries, which challenge existing knowledge concerning the production of squares, were made. Iconic and well-established public spaces like Tiananmen Square, Tahrir Square, Atarim Square and Moscow Square were reviewed and theorized using Henri Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *The Production of Space*.

In its political philosophy, the representational space and politics of inhabitants in the triadic schema of these squares were embraced and which embraces and prioritized. What these four squares revealed, was that each square is unique in its social history of production; their politics of uses as well as the different strategies deployed by conceived space in each social context to prohibit inhabitants from appropriating them were also

unique. What was essentially the same or similar across the four squares, was each space's conceived space to maintain control and power over respective inhabitants' everyday life and, the resilient spirit of inhabitants to counter such domination in society.

This research on Mary Fitzgerald Square, uncovered the unique and fragmented, historical production and current uses of the concrete square in *neo*-colonial Johannesburg. The square's diverse spatial practices were directly lived by multiracial inhabitants in the colonized urban society, *before* they were conceived by the colonizing State. A quick conceptual reminder about the overlapping elements of the spatial triad: representational space, or lived space, is the social space produced by those who dwell in the city and use its concrete structures for social practices (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). On the one hand is the inhabitants' representational space, which is the dominated space in society; the space that the imagination always seeks to change and appropriate and hence, it is passively experienced. On the other hand, representations of space is the conceptual space of scientists, designers, planners, architects, politicians, philosophers and artists of a scientific bent. It is the dominant space in the triad that subjects society to its political practice.

Spatial practice is where the dialectical binary of conceived space and lived space are hinged. It is in spatial practice that inhabitants' spatial performance and competence are guaranteed. Equally so, it is in this dimension that cohesion and continuity of relations of production and reproduction in each social formation is experienced without necessarily being coherent (Lefebvre, 1974/1991). Through this globally renowned three-dimensional scheme, Mary Fitzgerald Square's social history of colonial production and *neo*-colonial politics of [capitalist] uses and everyday users, were explored and analysed within the discursive discourses of the aforementioned squares, as contested public spaces.

5.3 Recapping research aim

The aim of this research was to present a conceptual analysis of Mary Fitzgerald Square using Lefebvre's (1974/1991) concepts in *The Production of Space*. Chapter 3 of this dissertation interrogated the social production of Mary Fitzgerald Square in historical terms. Through a variety of sources, particularly archived materials, I managed to situate the under explored and intensely exceptional South African public space in theoretical, if not geo-historical context as a contested public space. Through its history Lefebvre

revealed that Mary Fitzgerald Square is much more than just a revolutionary site for radical socio-political changes. It is also an exploratory and experimental space for conceptual scientists who consistently alter and modify its presentation and representational content in urban society through time.

Chapter 4 identified the square's present-day users and uses in light of its colonial or historic users and uses. In *neo*-colonial Newtown, Johannesburg, Mary Fitzgerald Square's inhabitants are a mixture of Africans in their generational and creative differences in social practice between skateboarders and fashion designers. Contrasting them with their colonial counterparts, these inhabitants struggle not simply for the Right to the City, but for the right to Mary Fitzgerald Square as a gateway into and of the City. Contemporary laws and urban by-laws deny these inhabitants their human right to express themselves and reproduce themselves creatively in urban space. Where old generations and social practices of brick-makers, agro-food buyers and sellers and live, performing artists have died and disappeared in the public space altogether, new ones have re-emerged albeit under uncomfortable circumstances and undemocratically organized relationships.

Mary Fitzgerald Square, like Ghandi Square is a public space of practical and political experiences. These spaces, much like others elsewhere, are concrete productions in space that are contested not only through theoretical or conceptual means. They are also contested in practice through social action, occupation and revolutionary interactions. Mary Fitzgerald Square is perfectly positioned from a *neo*-colonial South African perspective, to act and be the gateway into everyday life experiences and living conditions of twenty-first century southern Africans in Johannesburg. The democratic generation of African youth for example, is not searching for its rhythm, as Diouf (2003) notes. Rather, they are searching for a space to unleash their rhythm in the hopes of creating a new world order and life histories written and narrated by them in a geographical society in which their African rhythm has been denied for a long time, and for a long time still to come, remains dominated.

5.4 Mary Fitzgerald Square: a Lefebvrian discussion

On the part of conceived space, it emerged that local government uses 'uncontested' Public Open Space By-Laws of 2003/4 to subdue inhabitants to its political practice. In addition, human surveillance measures, in the form of security guards and metro police are

often deployed in Mary Fitzgerald Square to re-enforce the principles of by-laws for a 'public-free' public space more concretely. Furthermore, the design element of the square, along with the bureaucratic organization of its social uses via public and private events, contributes significantly to the square's exclusionary politics that prohibit unorganized relationships and spontaneous experiences of everyday life to appropriate the square. These abstract tools of domination of public space have advanced significantly and are less forceful when compared to their colonial formation. Equally advanced is the creative society of inhabitants, who resist and manage to overcome and bypass the structural limitations and legal prohibitions, imposed on their representational uses of the public space.

Current users of Mary Fitzgerald Square like skateboarders, fashion designers, the elderly inhabitant and urban volunteers amongst others, struggle every day to appropriate the public space. Different barriers, mentioned earlier, are deliberately put in place to ensure that undesired spontaneous activities, particularly those of the youth, are kept at bay. These findings interestingly present Mary Fitzgerald Square as a contradictory and dominated representational space because it was more inclusive of inhabitants spatial practices during colonial periods, than it is today in a democratic society. Domination however, is not absolute in the square, in the same way as it has not been absolute in the colonized urban society. What is clear however is that Johannesburg is a functioning capitalist city whose public spaces are produced to service the interest of the elite in society, at the cost of the majority inhabitants who depend on them. In their own disorganized ways, inhabitants overcome spatial prohibitions differently. While others contest these power dynamics of marginalization by actively engaging forbidden social practices in public space, others simply wait patiently for moments of marginalization to pass, before they can either walk through or watch television in the square again.

On many levels Mary Fitzgerald Square is similar to the four squares reviewed in the literature chapter. In many respects also, it is different from these squares. At the conceptual level, Mary Fitzgerald Square is a conceived space whose lived space is dominated in political urban practice. It is also an architectural space or representational space for and of architects and planners. It therefore fits to call it a conceptual space with practical consequences. The consequences of architecture are not, however, socially experienced in Mary Fitzgerald Square as they were in Atarim Square for example. The

design element in the latter square caused significant numbers of inhabitants to socially reject the produced product by refraining from acting and interacting in it: refusing to produce and appropriate it (Hatuka & Kallus, 2007). Mary Fitzgerald Square, however, design is used to deter certain groups of society from appropriating it by targeting their respective spatial practices through policing of the square by human surveillance and spatial by-laws. Where the architecture changed, and changed for the good, these prohibition practices by the dominant space in society: the neoliberal agenda of the CoJ which includes the commodification of public space prevails. Mary Fitzgerald Square shares interesting production features with Moscow Square.

For one, both squares are productions of brick-making inhabitants (Bodnár, 1998; Brink, 1994). Two, both are spatially located within close proximity to public transportation nodes and three, both have experienced name changes at slow rates. Differences between the two are also quite interesting. First, both are located in two different part of the world: the one is in *post*-socialist Russia and the other *neo*-colonial South Africa. In size they also differ remarkably. Most profoundly, they differ in their social use [spatial practice] in the political context of everyday life. Where Mary Fitzgerald Square embraced all manner of things and people during colonial times, it has ceased to do so in the present society. Moscow Square, perceived as chaotic in its own light, embraces diversity of social practices round the clock. There are multinational franchises that are well-established in Moscow Square's grand design and people from all walks of life continue to come and go, as and when they please in the public space; a sign of public life and a healthy one that embraces rhythm and the Right to the City in its triadic organization and production in the post-socialist society. With regards to Tahrir Square, the most important and special thing about it is that it is in Africa.

Despite its theoretical conception falling outside of Africa and linking with other squares in Europe (Dhaliwal, 2012), there are some things it shares in common with Mary Fitzgerald Square and something it does not. For one, both are in the same continent. Mary Fitzgerald Square is south of the African continent while Tahrir Square is north of the African continent. Their differences are also architectural. Where Mary Fitzgerald Square was produced as an organic representational space by inhabitants that evolved into a well-defined conceived space, Tahrir Square was conceived from its origins as a mature representation in space boasting nineteenth century Parisian style design. In the twenty-

first century, Tahrir Square evolved into a revolutionary space of mass political dissent in Egypt whilst for Mary Fitzgerald Square this usage of organized space is but a feint historical memory of its lost twentieth century spatial practices of revolutionary actions and exchanges.

Where Mary Fitzgerald Square is used for any kind of political activity, such as the marches of COSATU, it is still bound by capital. Far from the unplanned revolutionary potential that Tahrir represents, Mary Fitzgerald Square is hired and permission is sought from the CoJ for political events and marches. Does this conceived intervention in political dissent represent the ideals of open democratic demonstration in public space? Much like twenty-first century Mary Fitzgerald Square its inhabitants no longer have a direct role in its relations of social production and reproduction because of the extent to which capitalism has infiltrated its production. Relations of neoliberal capitalism were also visibly experienced in Atarim Square but they did not deter inhabitants from occupying the public space. In Tiananmen Square organized spectacles, their hosting and rehearsal, occupy the social reality and *use*-value of the public space so much so that it is produced for inhabitants to passively consume than to actively produce (Overton, 2010; Thornton, 2010). Likewise with Mary Fitzgerald Square, organized mega-events, public and private spectacles, dominate the spatial practices of the public space in the twenty-first century because of the extent and domination of abstract space over this African society's representational space.

It is not known what by-laws and other spatial strategies dominant spaces in each of the four case-studies deploy to maintain their domination of concrete space and re-enforce their power over society in that space. What is known however is that inhabitants in these respective contexts: Beijing, China; Tel Aviv, Israel; Cairo, Egypt and Budapest, Russia, suffer public space yet through their own power and conscious political will, overcome and transgress their own spatial domination. In Mary Fitzgerald Square, any kind of representational activity is quickly nipped in the bud. Capital speaks in this context, everyday inhabitants do not. The few in society with the capacity to bring about radical changes in the social uses and political functioning of the square: skateboarders and creative youth are deliberately prohibited from using the public space. There is, in the case of Mary Fitzgerald Square, political will to appropriate this dominated representation in

space but no power to activate such a will. Lefebvre sums the spatial practice of Mary twenty-first century Fitzgerald Square, stating

> The oddness of this space, then, is that it is at once homogeneous and compartmentalized. It is also simultaneously limpid and deceptive, in short it is fraudulent. Falsely true – 'sincere', so to speak; not the object of a false consciousness, but rather the locus and medium of the generation (or production) of false consciousness…In this space, things, acts and situations are forever replaced by representations…This homogenizing and fractured space is broken down in highly complex fashion into models of sectors…presented as the product of objective analyses
> (Lefebvre, 1974/1991, pp. 310-311)

Neo-colonial Johannesburg, public space, no longer caters to the needs, desires and aspirations of the everyday man, woman, child and youth living in the city. Through its proliferating private-public partnerships that dominate its political practices, the CoJ has reserved Mary Fitzgerald Square's *use*-value for its middle and upper class inhabitants, to the marginalization of its predominantly African youth, the city's poor and elderly. Given its lengthy relationship with segregation and fighting against racial segregation in the city, the democratic society's inhabitants, as representational space, have lost the fight, but not completely.

What is clear about Mary Fitzgerald Square's political state in the twenty-first century is that is a *non*-democratic public space that is extremely contradictory. The Square was more democratic during periods of legalized colonization and institutionalized apartheid. During periods of colonial segregation, inhabitants had more right [freedom] to appropriate the perceived space's spatial practices according to their heart's desires and social needs. Also, inhabitants were as they active participants in the unmediated production of urban life and the social reproduction of its material landscapes than their contemporaries who have the potential, but without the political will, to claim the square for their own representational and democratic uses.

5.5 Implications of Lefebvrian methods in public space research.

In the literature review I addressed some of the issues that are generally well-known about Henri Lefebvre's vast scholarly works—their difficulty and sophistication (Merrifield, 1995; Unwin, 2000; Zhang, 2006). To fully understand Lefebvre's theoretical premise requires a wide reading, not only of Lefebvre's select works that are

translated into the English language (Elden, 2004), but also an engaged reading of Lefebvre's theoretical influences like Martin Heidegger, Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as a closer mental engagement with Solomon Plaatje's texts. This discovery emerged slowly with the autonomous learning process as a significant implication of conducting theoretical research on a concrete public space, using Lefebvre's mental constructs in a *neo*-colonial South African city context.

At present there is no scripted technique or method to reading and/or understanding Lefebvre theoretically or methodologically Schmid et al. (2014). Whilst it is understandable that Lefebvre's (1974/1991) The Production of Space, is exclusively a thinking tool rather than a methodological approach, this research contended differently. Currently there is no known methodological relationship between Lefebvre and ethnography in geography. Where one finds an ethnographically wired geographer like Steven Herbert and Nick Megoran for example, they are without an identifiable or specific conceptual apparatus like the one offered in Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *spatial triad* and/or *Elements of Rhythmanalysis*. In other cases, where one finds a wealth of geographers who are Lefebvrians like Stuart Elden, and Andy Merrifield, they are typically more abstract than grounded on the solid concrete reality of everyday life.

This dissertation has sought to bring together Henry Lefebvre and ethnography as two complementary 'fields' that are interrelated yet unevenly explored together, in geographical research and practice in the production of social knowledge about public spaces where conceptual and practical elements are simultaneously involved. Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* offers itself as the perfect conceptual framework for ethnography and ethnography in turn offers itself to Lefebvrian research as a practical method by which abstract theory and tools take root in a concrete and geographically defined social reality. This is the implication of this study's theoretical exploration of Mary Fitzgerald Square because it challenges the existing social-knowledge divide between Lefebvrian and ethnographic human geographers by bringing these separate yet overlapping 'worlds' together.

Furthermore, this research challenges parochial understandings of the production and conceptualization of public spaces, predominantly through canonical urban knowledge of European and North American scholars, by positioning itself in alternative light as a

spatial discourse informed by an unknown African mind. In this way contested public spaces of and in *neo*-colonial South African cities, have the opportunity to be researched and explored through methods and conceptual tools, which are globally competitive and well adapted to the society's everyday politics.

5.6 Areas for further development and research

In its own capacity this research has made significant contributions towards the vast body of urban literature and conceptual research concerned with the production of and political struggles for public spaces by inhabitants. However, its contributions are informed by a surface understanding of ethnographic practice in public space research, and an elementary application of Henri Lefebvre's (1974/1991) conceptual tool(s) in *neo*-colonial Mary Fitzgerald Square. Lefebvre's (2004) inconceivable vision for a fully realized rhythm analyst entrenched in *The Production of Space*, positions this mysterious "professional" as a kind of lab analyst, who documents and compares graphs, frequencies and various curves. He or she as a practitioner of sorts, also has a genuine social concern and interest in his or her clients in the field. This calls for serious attention if Lefebvre's works are to have any realistic meaning, development goals and social impact on the lives of the societies they are called to serve.

Lefebvre explains that the 'future' rhythm-analyst, however they define themselves along and within Lefebvre's blue-print of the envisioned analyst,

> …will first have to educate himself (to break himself in or accept *training*), to work very hard therefore, to modify his perception and conception of the world, of time and of the environment. His emotions will consequently also be modified, in a coherent (in accordance with his concepts) and non-pathological way. Just as he borrows and receives from his **whole** body and all his senses, so he receives *data* [données] from all the sciences: psychology, sociology, ethnology, biology and even physics and mathematics. He must recognize **representations** by their curves, phases, periods and recurrences. In relation to the instruments with which specialists supply him, he pursues an *interdisciplinary* approach. Without omitting the spatial and places, of course, he makes himself more sensitive to times than to spaces
> (Lefebvre, 1992/2004, p. 22; original emphasis)

What the descriptive and instructional construct from Lefebvre actually entails, in the context of the research, is an ongoing project, process and series of interdisciplinary collaborations. The realization for practice, being endless possibilities for the production

of original *qualitative* research, generated without possibilities of replication from within and beyond South Africa's distinct urban and rural landscapes.

5.7 Conclusion

Squares are political spaces where important and mundane issues of everyday life are expressed and contested. While it is true that we do not know always know how well other people experience these daily spaces, it is also true that the history of these public spaces is not always known. Often, a society's spatial history is marginalized in contemporary urban discourses. It is also inappropriately analysed outside of its history and consequently rendered insignificant to incorporate in discourse to a large extent. Through Lefebvre's (1974/1991) *The Production of Space*, this research shed light on the spatial histories of different societies, and the way each society - contrasted with the other in the theoretical context of the 'spatial triad'- revealed unknown power dynamics in the political process of producing public space. Through the use of Eurocentric concepts and methods to produce a context specific analysis of how Africans – living in *neo*-colonial Johannesburg – experience Mary Fitzgerald Square, this research aimed to situate this iconic public space in theoretical discourse as contested.

While social situations, and their theoretical interpretation and construction, differ from square to square, Lefebvre's unitary social theory made it clear that urban research must focus on inhabitants and their spaces of practice in capitalist societies, today more than ever. Practical matters of political interest and social like 'citizenship' and 'democracy' for example, are theoretical constructs that need to be understood not solely through the abstract lens of neoliberal and *neo*-colonial discourses. It is by means of participant observation into the everyday life discourses of ordinary inhabitants acting and interacting in squares, that these global and constructs take on new life and different meaning altogether. Extra-ordinary meanings and alternative 'representations' that challenge well-established theoretical constructs, emerge when these contested spatial concepts are considered within their rightful historical framework, and social reality, informed by everyday life and lived experiences of those who embody them.

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Appendix: Interview List

- A City-Year Volunteer (2009)
- A Law enforcement officer on a big black horse (2010)
- A media student (2009)
- A mother (2010)
- A new user (2009)
- An artist (2009)
- An elderly inhabitant (2010)
- An events manager for Mary Fitzgerald Square (2009)
- An unemployed graduate (2010)
- An urban planner (2009)
- Skateboarders (2009 and 2010)
- Spokesperson for COSATU (2012)
- Two World Cup Volunteers (2010)