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Socio-spatial exclusions and the urbanisation of injustice: a case study in northern Johannesburg

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Socio-spatial Exclusions and the Urbanisation of Injustice:

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The dissertation employs insights from critical race theory and the environmental justice literature, questioning the sustainability of dominant state policies concerning development of informal settlements.

The work explores spatialized and racialised forms of class and their normalisation in South Africa. Discussion of the rise and redefinition of urban segregation in South Africa notes racialised exclusions have not disappeared with the end of apartheid. Economic supremacy of 'white' populations reproduces 'white' control – with dirt, crime and disorder constitutive of the pathological spaces of the 'other'.

Second part examines the role of environmental ideas in reproducing 'white' spaces of privilege and 'black' spaces of degradation. Discussing neo-liberal development, sustainable development and ecological justice in South Africa – the dissertation shows service delivery and housing policy to possess similarities to apartheid projects – with weaknesses of the dominant model failing the requirements of environmental justice.

The case study which follows examines a contemporary attempt to relocate an informal settlement sited in an affluent neighbourhood through 'greenfields' housing development, revealing environments as contested, with spatial subjugation dramatic and ongoing.

Keywords

Social justice, environmental justice, environmentalism, urban development, informal settlements, social exclusion.