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White Visions, Black Experience: Rethinking (Urban) Development in South Africa

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WHITE VISIONS, BLACK EXPERIENCE: RETHINKING (URBAN) DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

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I. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to (1) present a critique of the Eurocentricism, globalism and economism of urban development in South Africa, and (2) propose an alternative cultural approach to the South African city. I argue that the Eurocentrism of South African urban development reflects the world views and biases of the country's predominantly white urban experts. These may not even be malevolent biases since many of these experts would most probably describe themselves as progressive leftists or liberals. But in reality people, all people, tend to privilege their own cultural histories, assumptions and ideas as their point of departure- where you stand depends on where you sit. This would not be so much of a problem if these cultural assumptions were not the basis of material decisions about urban priorities and resource allocation. Those who define the culture define the material priorities of a society. As Raymond Williams noted in Marxism and Literature culture is the signifying system through which necessarily a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored.

Because they dominate the urban development profession, white planners in South Africa have not only privileged their own cultural spaces but in some cases also distorted and devalued those spaces with which they are not familiar- the black townships. Here is how David Dewar,a respected urban academic, and I am sure a good man, described the townships in a prestigious local journal:

> Rather than being Arcadian retreats, the townships have very little growing in them. The public spaces are inhospitable, dangerous, and frequently serve

> as dumping grounds for rubbish. Atmospheric pollution is severe. Large amounts of residual land, awaiting new or expanded facilities that in all probability will never materialize, destroy all sense of human scale and there is no tradition of making positive urban spaces. Finally because of the high degree of planning and control, the settlements are inevitably sterile, monotonous and boring, despite attempts to provide variety through design techniques such as convoluted road configurations.

Not only is the author probably a good man but his words probably come out of his own disgust at the physical disfigurement that apartheid has wrought in the black community. But his ignorance about black cultural life shows how high the cost of good intentions can sometimes be. The aim of this paper is thus to dispel some of these stereotypes and show indeed that people live there, and their lives are not as "sterile, monotonous and boring" as is so often assumed by our urban experts- that there is indeed a tradition of making positive urban spaces in the townships.

The Eurocentrism (and the concomitant de-valuing of township life) of urban development is further tied to externally oriented themes of globalization in discussions of the South African city. City managers are obsessed with producing "world class cities" that can compete with London and New York. As Steven Friedman puts it:

> "Municipal managers recently announced at a meeting that they were determined to turn their city into one which was "world class." When asked why, they explained, inevitably, that only world class cities were globally competitive. But what is a world class city and why would it be necessarily pleasant to live in one. If most city residents were canvassed they would probably say that they would live in a world class city if that meant crime was low, water and electricity reached everyone on time, the pavements were clean and there were usable public facilities. These goals

> are not what the apostles of the world class have in mind. Usually they advocate complicated plans which have virtually no plans of working... and which make it almost inevitable that no attention will be given to the basics which worry citizens. And all of this will be justified by the need to conform with the global impulse."[1]

These urban managers and their coterie of consultants, most of them white, are more familiar with the cultural themes and lifestyles of London, and New York than they are with Soweto. Anxious to prove their own expertise the few black urban experts in the mix are too happy to be part of this "knowledge-ideas-complex"- even if they do not set the terms of the debate. As Steve Biko would have noted, whites still do the talking while blacks do the listening. As a result what we get are nothing more than white visions of our cities- visions that have nothing to do with the cultural aspirations of the people of Soweto or Alex or Gugulethu or Mdantsane.

An important corollary to the Eurocentrism and the globalism is an economism that is as old as Adam Smith and new as Ronald Reagan. It is an urban economism firmly based on the notion that our welfare will improve through "the invisible hand" or the "trickle down" effects of increased foreign investment in our cities. The empirical fallaciousness of this reasoning is widely documented - booming downtowns with failing neighborhoods and growing inequities.[2] But just as the Eurocentrism is undergirded by denigration of black townships and the globalist paradigm by a neglect of locally generated visions, the economism is informed by a condescending view of black aspirations. Essentially, this is the notion that the

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[1]Business Day, Friedman's critique is obviously an improvement on the globalism but it still suffers from a focus on service delivery which I find problematic. See discussion below.

[2]See Bill Goldsmith and Edward Blakely's Separate Cities

totality of black aspirations can be met within a service delivery framework. And yet, in my view the concept of service delivery is potentially one of the most disempowering concepts in our development discourse.It encourages a perception of communities as clients and bearers of interests and not citizens who actively participate in shaping the culture, and therefore the priorities of our cities. And as Stephen Elkin correctly argues the idea of city government is to provide the political and institutional space for the citizenry to formulate what way of life it wishes to have. Local government does not have a mere instrumentalist function of providing goods and services. It has intrinsically formative functions such increasing the political efficacy of the urban citizenry: "The question of the...public interest gets posed locally...Citizens then will extend their expectations to national political leaders."[3] (1987:157). This political cultural approach is conspicuous by its absence in South African urban discourse- displaced of course by the exclusive focus on economic growth and service delivery. And even within that narrow economistic paradigm one cannot escape the patronizing division of labor: investors, business leaders, planners and consultants are the real and active citizens while communities are nothing more than passive consumers and fictitious citizens or what Partha Chattarjee calls "empirical objects of government policy, not citizens who

[3] Stephen Elkin: City and Regime in the American Republic, University of Chicago 1987, 157

participate in the sovereignty of the state."[4] And as Cornel West puts it: "people, especially poor and degraded people, are also hungry for meaning, identity and self worth."[5]

It is, however, important to point out that the economistic and materialistic assumptions of development thinking are also deeply rooted in the political tradition of the ANC. Immediately after the announcement of the Reconstruction and Development Programme a professor (and friend) at Cornell University, Martin Bernal,teased me about "how much you guys have leapfrogged back into the 1950's, completely bypassing the 1970's." Bernal was commenting on the near absence of cultural themes in the process of post-apartheid reconstruction and pointing to its consistence with the broader materialism of the ANC alliance.

The point of this introduction has beeen to unpack the biases that inform urban development in South Africa. Now I proceed to a history of the cultural themes of community self-reliance and self-determination in black community development. These themes, I argue, can in turn become the basis for alternative "generative metaphors" for our cities.[6] Steve Biko once described culture as "the society's composite answer to the varied problems of life."[7] As such development is a process of collective collaboration and self-

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[4] For a discussion of this incipient bifurcation in India see Partha Chartajee, Wages of Freedom: Fifty Years of the Indian Nation-State, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1998, p16

[5] Cornel West, Race Matters,

[6] For a discussion of this concept see Rob Mier, Social Justice and Economic Development.

[7] Biko S, I Write What I Like, 96

determination- an interpretation consistent with conceptions of democracy going back to people such as Jean-Jac Rousseau and John Stuart Mill. I will specifically discuss the development programmes initiated by the Black Community Programmes (BCP) in the 1970's as an example of community driven initiatives to find composite answers to the varid problems of black community life- in its political, cultural and economic dimensions. This is preceded by a discussion of the historiography of black politics- if only to underlie the fact that just as concepts of service delivery and economism are a logical progression from the ideology of the ANC, these cultural themes are also a logical progression from the politics of black consciousness. This raises the interesting question: with the political demise of black consciousness organizations what are the chances that these cultural themes ideas will enter the development debates. After all, ideas always need the backing of effective advocates. My hypothesis, which I shall return to in the conclusion, is that black consciousness is not dead- only its traditional organizational carriers are. The embrace of black consciousness/Africanist themes by the Mbeki regime and growing scholarship on the African city may provide the spaces for the exploration of cultural analyses of the South African city.

II.Political Historiography:

Black politics under apartheid can be divided into roughly five ten-year cycles. The first cycle took place immediately after the general elections that brought the National Party to power in 1948. The National Party victory triggered a new

militancy in the ANC- replacing the rather patrician and cautious pre-1948 politics of people like Dr AB Xuma. Coming out of the newly formed ANC Youth League (formed in 1944) were people like Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Joe Matthews. The Youth Leaguers drafted the 1949 Programme of Action to outline a programme of defiant mass action that lasted throughout the 1950's. Although black people had protested white rule prior to 1948 (including the 1946 miners strike) the Defiance Campaign was the most succesful organized resistance the ANC was ever to initiate.[8] Some of the hallmarks of the struggles of the 1950's included the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955; the protest march on Pretoria by 20,000 women against the extension of passes to women, and the 1956 Treason Trial. The ANC was banned in 1960.

The second cycle began in 1959 with a breakaway by Africanists from within the ANC who felt that the organization had been compromised by the dominance of non-Africans in its midst. The breakaway group felt that by adopting the Freedom Charter, a document which stated that the land belonged to both blacks and whites, the ANC had lost its claim as the custodian of African nationalism. On April 6 1959 this group formally constituted itself into the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) under the leadership of Robert Sobukwe. Seeking to take the initiative from the ANC, the PAC led a countrywide anti-pass campaign, culminating in the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960. The PAC was also banned in 1960.

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[8]Lodge 1983

Despite its limited existence the PAC had left its mark on the political terrain and laid the grounds for the third cycle- the era of black consciousness and the main focus of this paper.

Black consciousness was born out of a similar dissatisfaction with the role of whites within the liberation movement. It was initiated by Steve Biko and other black students at the University of Natal who felt patronized and ill-understood by white students in the multi-racial National Union of South African Students(NUSAS). In 1968 Biko and his peers formed a blacks-only students organization, the South African Students Organization (SASO). Particularly instructive for the present discussion is the role of the students in setting up new political and community based development organizations. They argued that this was the only way that black people could ensure a correct definition and the fullest representation of their interests".[9] As founder-member of the movement Barney Pityana put it: " It is essential for the black students to strive to elevate the level of consciousness of the black community by promoting awareness, pride and capabilities."[10] Although the idea of self-help was not new in the black community- dating as far back as the 1880's when Kimberly's Coloured and African workers on the diamond mines formed mutual benefit and improvement societies.[11] But it was only with the emergence of the black consciousness movement that we begin to see what Iris

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[9] ibid.

[10] Fatton, op.cit. p68

[11] Jack and Ray Simon...

Young calls "politicized self-help."[12] While in prior times self-help was either disconnected or seen as a poor second cousin to the political project - black consciousness was really the first movement to put development at the centre of the liberation agenda.

III. THE BLACK PEOPLE'S CONVENTION

Sensitive to being seen as mere ivory-tower intellectuals Steve Biko and his peers initiated community-wide organizations in the arts, education, culture, the economy and politics. At a conference held in Pietermaritzburg in mid-August 1971 under the theme of 'Development of the African Community' the students resolved to establish an organization that would devote itself to representing African opinion on a political basis and to promoting community development programmes on education, the economy and the cultural aspects of community life. Amongst the attendees at this meeting were Drake Koka, Steve Biko, Ellen Kuzwayo and, yes, Gatsha Buthelezi. A follow-up conference was called in December of that year when further debate took place on the development of the new organization with Drake Koka, a trade unionist, elected first chairman. Formation of the Black People's Convention (BPC) was announced on 14 January 1972. Between January and July 1972 Drake Koka and his committee consulted with several organizations throughout the country on the role to be played by the new organization. The BPC adopted its constitution at a conference held on 8-10 July 1972. The

[12]Iris Young, Justice and the Politics of Difference, Princeton University Press, 199..

organizers of the new movement set up several commissions to address issues of general planning and organization, urban and rural politics, economic development,black education, community work programmes, financial and legal affairs, and black communalism.[13]

By 1973 the BPC had 4000 members in 41 branches across the country[14]. However, it might be mistaken to emphasize political membership in any attempt to understand black consciousness. According to Nolutshungu " Movement- emphasising sentiment and spontaneity and a diversity of ideological outlook- comes nearer to an apt description of both the popular mood and of the place of the organization with relation to it."[15] Nolutshungu further argues that despite their student and middle class status it was not the leadership's objective class position that mattered but whether their political aims were disposed to advance the interest of a black middle class in opposition to that of the working people. In testimony to their commitment to the liberation struggle these students had by July 1976 "conjured a strong wind that poorly served the black middle class while increasing the number of those who sought a radical dissolution of the entire economic and social order."[16] However, even though the movement called on black people to stop participating in

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[13]Black Review 1974/75.The interim executive committee comprised of Messrs A. Mayatula (President);the late Mthuli ka Shezi (Vice-President);Drake Koka (Secretary-General); Saths Cooper (Public Relations Officer) and A.Dlamini (National Organizer). Cooper and Koka were banned in March 1973, and Cooper was subsequently first accused in the SASO/BPC Trial that saw him spending six years on Robbern Island with eight other BPC activists.

[14]Quoted in Fatton p102

[15]Nolutshungu op.cit. p149

[16]ibid.p162

apartheid-created homeland and local governments, Steve Biko never stopped asking the rhetorical question: "Pull out and do what? There is a lot of community development that needs to be done in the community."

THE BLACK COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Having been instrumental in establishing the political organization the students started community development projects in line with the SASO constitution- which stated that the community projects were aimed at heightening the sense of awareness and encouraging students to become involved in the political, social, and economic development of the people. The students conducted literacy campaigns throughout the country. They built schools in places like Umtata and Alice in the Eastern Cape, and in the squatter settlement of Winterveld in the Transvaal. They also organized home education schemes for adults who wanted to obtain higher educational certificates. Largely a reflection of both the dire needs in the community and the fact that the student leadership was mainly in medical school, SASO initiated community health projects such as the building of clinics and volunteer work at already established clinics. The Black Community Programs was established to oversee the growing number of projects and hired Steve Biko as one of its full-time fieldworkers.

The projects grew to include the now famous Zanempilo Health Clinic, nine kilometres outside of King William's Town in the Eastern Cape. The clinic served the two large rural

settlements of Zinyoka Valley and Balasi. The centre is a historic place in many ways. While it served the instrumental purpose of providing health services, it also served as the secret headquarters of the black consciousness movement. This is where Biko would meet international guests and supporters of the movement. It was also a place of fun where the young activists held their parties, and some of the activists actually lived there. I recently visited the clinic with Steve Biko's friend Peter Jones, who also lived at the centre. Not only were the local people happy to see Jones back but they also talked about how they used to walk distances for the medical services at the clinic. The director of the clinic, Mamphela Ramphele, was later banished by the government to remote areas in the Northern Transvaal province where she established even more clinics.[17] But Zanempilo is still continuing its services albeit now as a clinic of the Eastern Cape government. But for the people of Zinyoka and Balasi it is more than just a clinic- it is part of their civic memory reminding them of what was and what still can be.

The BCP also provided township-based day-care centres so that members of poor families could either go to school or seek jobs. The organization established home industries to encourage entrepeneurship in communities. The industries produced mostly leather garments:belts,purses,handbags and upholstery. Women who would ordinarily remain unemployed came together to acquire sewing skills.

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[17]Ramphele is now the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town.

The Zimile Trust Fund was also set up to provide financial assistance to former political prisoners and their families. The fund, for example, provided educational scholarships for the children of the prisoners. One of the BCP's signal achievement was the establishment of the Ginsberg Bursary Fund in Biko's hometown. The fund paid for the education of most of the community's first university graduates including current members of parliament and lawyers. It was later expanded by people such as Nohle Mohapi, wife of BCP administrator Mapetla Mohapi, and now continues as the Zingisa Bursary Fund.

The Research and Publications department of the BCP published books such as Creativity and Development and journals such as Black Review, Black Perspectives, and Essays in Black Theology- the BCP worked very closely with the black church in both its political and development programs. The BCP also spawned other intellectual endeavors in the community including the establishment of the Institute for Black Research - which was formed to train researchers and stimulate writing in the black community, undertake surveys on community issues and compile, publish and distribute books, monographs, journals. The Institute of Black Studies provided a forum for discussion in the community.[18] In 1975 the mandate of the research and development department was broadened to include the establishment of resource centres throughout the country.

Other notable contributions of the BCP include the formation of the Black Workers Project- which ran a workers

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[18] Black Review 1975/6

libary in downtown Johannesburg. BWP played a crucial role in the revival of trade union activism in the 1970's.[19]

Although Mamphela Ramphele has written critically about the patriarchal tendencies within the movement,[20] the black consciousness movement played a critical role in the re-emergence of women-based political and developmental activity within the community. For instance,over 200 women from 58 townships throughout the country met in Durban in 1975 and committed themselves to working together to attain self-reliance and independence as black women. The meeting founded the Black Women's Federation of South Africa. The organization's constitution stated that the organization would " determine and draw up programmes with a view to heightening the social, cultural, economic and political awareness of black communities and thereby establish self-reliant communities."[21] During its first meeting the Federation resolved to motivate member organizations to undertake projects of self-help to meet the needs of deprived communities.

A 1975 Black Community Programmes publication argued that in evaluating the projects it was necessary to look beyond structures created to the level of consciousness attained by the communities- the BCP also ran regular leadership development programmes. The purpose of the industries had been not only to provide gainful employment to destitute people but also to train

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[19] ibid.

[20] Barney Pityana, Mamphela Ramphele, Malusi Mpumlwana and Lindy Wilson, Bounds of Possibility

[21] ibid.

them in certain basic production and management skills. These skills have been transferred to the post-apartheid era., Barney Pityana, one of Biko's closest comrades describes the long-term impact of this developmental activity thus:

> During Biko's time many black people were trained and had experience of leadership, planning, strategising and mobilising... one can hardly find a notable leader in South Africa today who was in his or her twenties in the early 1970's, who has not been through the Black Consciousness mill, whether in church, the trade-union movement, progressive professional· organizations and other community associations...

This political consciousness raising and community development work had a prefigurative impact on subsequent political and development thinking in the community. A widely-held view is that June 16 1976 is the greatest testimony to the work of the movement. On that day young township students defied the apartheid government and marched against the enforcement of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in their schools. The police responded by shooting and killing hundreds. But as Dan O'Meara correctly points out this event was seen less as a massacre than a proud and defiant turning point in the struggle against apartheid:

> " Those who died were seen not as victims of apartheid but as heroes in the struggle to overthrow it..Soweto showed that significant numbers of urban black South Africans no longer perceived themselves as the passive victims of white power, but rather as the active makers of their own history...It was a key catalyst of the psychological liberation

which the black consciousness movement had worked so hard to produce."[22]

In 1977 the government cracked down on the movement- bringing to an end one of the most dynamic cycles of the liberation struggle. First, BCP administrator Mapetla Mohapi was killed by the Kei Road security police in August 1976. This was followed by the murder of Steve Biko in September 1977. All the organizations that Biko and his peers had created and all of the country's major black newspapers were banned, and journalists such as Percy Qoboza,Thami Mazwai, Zwelakhe Sisulu, Aggrey Klaaste were jailed.

V Mass Mobilization and the Age of Reform

The international outcry following June 16 1976, the death of Steve Biko in police custody, increasing militancy in the townships, and intensified worker struggles paved the way for what I describe as the fourth cycle of black politics, say between 1978 and 1987. On the one hand the outcry over the government's brutality, and an internal change in National Party leadership following the Info Scandal, pushed the government towards a period of political reform spanning the entire first half of the 1980's.

In a widely publicized address in the opening of parliament in 1978, the then Prime Minister PW Botha delivered the famous "adapt or die" speech to the white population. Exhorting whites to support his reform measures to ensure their

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[22]op. cit 180- 181

long-term survival, Botha proceeded to make constitutional reforms that changed the face of apartheid or at least the petty apartheid that prohibited racial mixing at restaurants and inter-racial sex and marriage. Coloureds and Indians were invited as junior partners in the tricameral parliament of 1983. This was accompanied by attempts to coopt urban Africans into the government's reformist agenda. Hence the government introduced the idea of black local authorities in 1982 to give some institutional semblance to its tepid acknowledgement of the permanence of urban blacks in the townships, and not just as people who were to be relocated to the homelands. In addition, the government adopted a development strategy that came to be euphemistically known as WHAM- winning the hearts and minds of black South Africans. The government poured millions of rands in upgrading township infrastructure and openly encouraging the creation of a black middle class. However, none of these strategies - the removal of petty apartheid, the creation of black local authorities, the WHAM strategy and the African embourgeoisment- could really stop the tide of change.

Civic organizations, formed after the 1977 bannings, intensified their mobilization against the black local authorities in particular. They used consumer boycotts, work stayaways, and rent and bond boycotts to back both local demands for integrated cities and the national call for a new dispensation. In 1989 I played a role in brokering the now celebrated turnaround in the small town of Stutterheim in the Eastern Cape. In Stutterheim, as in an increasing number of

Eastern Cape towns, civic organizations became de facto members of the city administration. At one point civic organizations filled the gap and occupied office space in more than fifty black municipalities in the Eastern Cape.[23]

VI. The Return of ANC Non-Racialism

By the mid-1980's black consciousness had dwindled and the ANC had re-occupied the centre state of black politics. Non-racialism was re-affirmed as the central principle of the liberation struggle.The ANC-aligned multi-racial United Democratic Front became the major anti-apartheid alliance of the 1980's. An important development for the purpose of this discussion is that the cycle of civic mobilization gradually gave way to an increasingly professionalized and technical development stage. Even though civic mobilization had often been used to back up technical suggestions, it was only a matter of time before a separation between the two occured. The rise of the technical element was accompanied if not brought about by the increasingly influential role played by white service organizations such as Planact in Johannesburg, Built Environment Support Group in Durban, and Corplan in East London. Founded by white academics, these organizations became the "think-tanks" of the urban social movement throughout the late 1980's and early 1990's. Planact's Mark Swilling and Billy Cobbett advised the Soweto Civic Association and Andrew Boraine the Alexander Civic Association in negotiations for a new system of local government

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[23] Weekly Mail August 1993

in Johannesburg. With time their organizations became more specialized in areas such as housing and local economic development. Not only had these professionals carved a niche for themselves- providing progressive technical alternatives to the government- but they also prefigured their role in the post-liberation local government dispensation. They became the new administrators, advisors and consultants at both national and local levels of government.

While the service organizations provided a desperately needed service, and oftentimes at the invitation of communities, their technical focus meant that urban discourse never went beyond service delivery and economic issues such as the "one city, one tax base" campaign. As I suggested in the introduction the materialist bias was itself a function of both the social origins of the experts and the broader ideological orientation of the ANC-aligned social movements of the 1980's.

Thus far I have outlined a political historiography of five stages and how they gave rise to certain ways of thinking about development in the black community: 1)ANC mass defiance between 1949 and 1959;(2) the PAC influence starting in 1959; (3) the birth of black consciousness movement in 1968; (4) the civic mobilization which started in 1978 (5) and the technical, developmental politics that started around 1986 and prefigured the new government. I have suggested that these phases lasted for more or less ten years before they gave way to new directions in the liberation struggle. These new directions were either the result of internal disagreements within the political

movement or followed clampdowns on the movement. Most impressive throughout this period, however, is the self-renewing quality of the liberation movement. I suggest that what sustained the movements is what the development economist Albert Hirschman described as the Principle of Conservation and Mutation of Social Energy:

> " The social energies that are aroused during the course of a social movement do not disappear when that movement does but are kept in storage and become available to fuel later and sometimes different social movements. In a real sense, the original movement must therefore be credited with whatever advances or successes were achieved by those subsequent movements: no longer can it be considered a failure."[24]

VII. Urban Policy Directions in the Age of the African Renaissance: Towards an Urban Cultural Framework

South Africa is now entering its sixth tenth year cycle under the leadership of President Thabo Mbeki. Thus far Mbeki's greatest political innovation has been the redefinition of black politics fusing the historical divide, at least philosophically, between the ANC's materialism and the cultural themes of black consciousness and Pan Africanism. Looked at carefully the concep of the African Renaissance is a mix of a cultural emphasis on values and a technocratic emphasis on service delivery and economic management.

Adressing a group of SADCC local government ministers in Johannesburg Mbeki called for the creation of humane cities in South Africa. He spoke of the need for Africans to take greater

[24] Albert Hirschman, Grassroots Experiences in Latin America, 1984

responsibilites for their cities and stop depending on international experts to tell them what they ought to know. The language of the humane city is therefore consistent with the language of the caring society that he has used in his speeches. But Mbeki also often talks about creating a winning nation and the government sees cities as vehicles for global competitiveness. The problem, here as elsewhere in the world, is that business interests disproportionately shape and influence urban policy. One way of mitigating this imbalance is to institutionalize the participation of community residents in policy formulation. Instead of forever depending on foreign consultants for visions of our cities we need to go back and learn from the community organizing experiences of people like Ellen Khuzwayo, Tom Manthata, Ish Mkhabela and Aggrey Klaaste - and many of the indigenous leaders who go on as unsung heroes and heroines of their communities throughout South Africa. We need a new urban history that captures experiences such as the Black Community Programme. The importance of the history of social movements is the base it affords for locally inspired ideas or generative metaphors.If the aim is to get the majority of the city to buy into processes of urban planning then we ought to go out to the neighborhoods of Soweto and Alex to find out what people's perceptions of the city are, and how those perceptions relate to the rest of the city. And if we have to look at the international experience we should examine the progressive urban experiences of cities such as Chicago under Harold Washington or Boston under Ray Flynn. Those cases demonstrate that progressive urban planning can be about giving voice to the people and not just a

marketing exercise for selling cities to the highest international bidders.[25]

[25]For a discussion of progressive cities see Pierre Clavel's, The Progressive City, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick and his Harold Washington and the Neighborhoods, Temple University Press, 1991. See also my doctoral dissertation on "Harold Washington and the Cultural Transformation of Local Government in Chicago", Cornell University 1997.