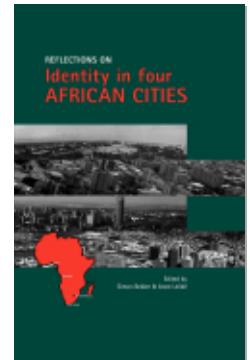Chapter 9 - Class, race and language in Cape Town and Johannesburg

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CHAPTER 9

Class, race and language in Cape Town and Johannesburg

Simon Bekker & Anne Leildé

9.1 Introduction

Over the past decade, cities in South Africa have been deeply influenced by three analytically separate processes: changing economic circumstances due in large part to globalisation, the continuing process of urbanisation and migration – a largely national issue – and, last but not least, a rapidly changing policy environment established after 1994 by the first democratic government elected on the basis of universal adult franchise. Before this date, cities were governed under an apartheid government that structured residential space and economic opportunity unequally along ascribed racial lines.

Post-apartheid national policy aims to correct inequalities flowing from this former national ideology. The urban vision of the new government is succinctly summarised in the following extract from a 1997 policy document:

> Government is … committed to ensure that its policies and programmes support
> the development of urban settlements that will be spatially and socio-economically
> integrated, free of racial and gender discrimination and segregation, enabling people
> to make residential and employment choices to pursue their ideals. (Republic of
> South Africa, 1997)

The aim of this chapter is to identify how collective identities are being constructed in Cape Town and Johannesburg and, since it is generally accepted that the manipulation of residential space and economic opportunity has a direct impact on the way in which people construct their identities, to establish whether new identities are being constructed as a result of this new policy approach (Sharp & Boonzaier, 1995; Houssay-Holzschuch, 1999; Martin, 2000; Bekker, Leilde & Puttergill, 2004; Gervais-Lambony, chapter 5 in this book). In particular, since

middle- and high-income housing developments seem to be guided by the market and low-income housing developments remain state led (Huchzermeyer 2003; Pottie 2003), it is pertinent to interrogate whether this policy approach has a differential impact on different urban populations.

We will address these aims in three steps. It is apparent that the structures of cities worldwide share an increasing number of common features (Hall & Pfeiffer, 2000). It is appropriate, then, to investigate selected international theories on urban identities to establish theoretical benchmarks against which we are able to assess our evidence. In the second place, we will also identify what South African social scientists have argued are the primary forces shaping South African cities over the past decade. Against this international and national backdrop, we will then provide qualitative data we have assembled from a series of 35 focus groups conducted in Cape Town and Johannesburg over the past five years. A list of these focus groups and details of the way they were organised is provided in appendix A. An interpretation of these research data will suggest which urban identities appear to be emerging in these cities.

At this stage, a brief explanation of the way we conceptualise social identity is useful. According to Castells, 'Identity is people's source of meaning and experience' (Castells 1997: 6). It is neither essential nor immutable but a social construction open to change as circumstances, strategies, and interactions fluctuate. It needs therefore to be situated historically and relationally, since identity is a matter of social context. An identity defines elements of similarity (the 'We') and of difference (the 'They' or the 'Other'). These elements are usually emotionally loaded: they can be based on feelings of pride and 'dignity' or of fear (Taylor, 1994). Identity therefore needs not be conflictual: it can be either open and inclusive or closed and exclusive. It is also generally accepted that individuals construct various identities for themselves. However, 'such a plurality is a source of stress and contradiction in both self-representation and social action', since these identities may be in internal tension with one another (Castells, 1997: 6). Accordingly, under specific circumstances, a primary identity (one 'that frames the others') emerges to prevail over others (Castells, 1997: 7). One way to identify the growing dominance of one identity over others is to detect and describe the identity narratives used by individuals and groups and thereby to infer which is being promoted. Identity narratives contained in the material gathered during focus group sessions have been carefully analysed with this objective in mind.

9.2 Urban identities in the United States

We will study identity construction in selected post-apartheid South African metropolitan areas against the backdrop of two theories on urban identities:

The first one – the *dual city* concept – is formulated by Mollenkopf and Castells (1991) who focus on the socio-economic restructuring that is taking place in American cities. In the case of New York, this concept refers to a changing urban social structure that is progressively polarising, fragmenting, and becoming more exclusionary, due to the restructuring of the labour market. Such a process produces the coexistence in the city of a professional and managerial elite and a growing urban 'underclass'. In addition, this process manifests itself spatially by minimising contact between these two groupings. For the upwardly mobile elite, in fact, home ownership in a middle-class suburb is widely viewed as a stage before selling and buying in a better area. Accordingly, any depreciation in the land market (through low-income housing developments, for instance) is resisted (Huchzermeyer, 2003). In effect, this process embodies the breakdown of what Castells calls the 'urban contract' (Castells, 2002b: 377)

Such a process of social and spatial polarisation has a direct impact on identity construction according to the two authors. Indeed, 'the tendency toward cultural, economic, and political polarisation in New York takes the form of a contrast between a comparatively cohesive core of professionals in the advanced corporate services and a disorganised periphery fragmented by race, ethnicity, gender…' (Mollenkopf & Castells, 1991: 406). On the one hand, economic prosperity leads to social integration promoted by shared values such as individualism, life-style choices and consumption patterns, cosmopolitanism, and increasingly an obsession with security. On the other hand, poverty encourages fragmentation and segmentation, mainly in ethnic terms, of the excluded who build 'defensive communities' that fight and compete against each other for access to work and 'to preserve the territorial basis of their social networks, a major resource for low-income communities' (Castells, 2002a: 310) In the former case, identity expresses itself through individuation, in the latter, through communalism (Castells, 2002c).

The other relevant theoretical input – the *divided city* concept – is used by Nathan Glazer, who conceives of New York as a multicultural city. According to this view, the socio-economic divide developing in this city is insufficient to capture adequately what is of meaning, of interest, and of concern to residents. While dual cities suggest horizontal divisions, divided cities suggest vertical divisions in both society and social space. These divisions, which are mainly ethnic, according to Glazer, 'play an independent role, particularly as carriers of certain values in conflict' (Glazer, 1994: 187). Indeed, divided cities refer to 'cities divided by race, ethnicity, religion rather than by economic fortune, income, wealth, even though the latter divisions are real enough … Divided cities refer to divisions that we sense to be of kind, rather than quantity … Sometimes, as we know, this kind of division is marked by a real wall, but generally the invisible wall is good enough to keep groups apart' (Glazer, 1994: 178).

These two conceptions of New York City – the one founded on elite class group solidarity and 'underclass' fragmentation, the other on cultural diversity – will guide our analysis of emergent urban identities in Cape Town and Johannesburg. First, however, we will show that, despite numerous public efforts to the contrary, most current analysts view Cape Town and Johannesburg as fast becoming dual cities. (It is appropriate to note here that Johannesburg refers to the Johannesburg Metro, excluding the Ekurhuleni Metro).

9.3 Cape Town and Johannesburg

Both metropolitan areas share a certain number of characteristics, among which a past of racial segregation imposed by former apartheid policies. Racial segregation divided Cape Town spatially between the City Bowl and two developed north-south and east-west urban spines, on the one hand, and coloured and black townships (generally known as the Cape Flats), located on the south-eastern periphery of the city, on the other. Similarly, according to Beall et al., 'during the growth decades of the 1950s and 1960s, the spatial pattern of a middle-class northern half of Johannesburg and a working-class southern half of the city was reinforced by state-imposed racial segregation and suburban expansion for the white middle class in the north' (Beall et al., 2002: 49).

Both metropolitan areas also inherited large free-standing informal settlements that grew rapidly after 1990 as African families from disadvantaged rural areas flocked to the cities. Setting itself the goal of building one million houses during its first term, the new National Government in 1994 developed a government housing subsidy for households qualifying in terms of income as the main policy instrument to achieve this ambitious goal. Consequently, large RDP housing schemes were built in the 1990s, overwhelmingly in the peripheral areas of the two metropoles (Pottie, 2003).

Profiles of Cape Town and Johannesburg
The thumbnail demographic profiles offered here are intended to highlight certain similarities and differences between the two cities. With similar population sizes in 2001 (2.9 million in Cape Town and 3.2 million in Johannesburg Metro), both cities are multicultural and multilingual as well as religiously diverse. In these terms, Johannesburg is probably the more diverse of the two. More detailed information is given in the profiles of Cape Town and Johannesburg in chapter 3. Employing South African ethnic classification, Cape Town's largest group is coloured (48%) followed by 32% black, and 19% white, while Johannesburg's majoritarian group

is black (74%) followed by 16% white, 6% coloured, and 4% Indian. Furthermore, Cape Town is dominated by three home languages which represent the three provincial official languages: Afrikaans (41%), English (28%), and isiXhosa (29%). This city, moreover, continues to reflect a strong coincidence of race and language – the black community, in particular, is 90% isiXhosa speaking. Johannesburg reflects a greater diversity of languages. African languages predominate (isiZulu, 26%, Sesotho, 11%, Setswana, 9%, and Sepedi and isiXhosa, both 8%) while English is the mother tongue of 19% of the population and Afrikaans of 8%. While the vehicular language of Johannesburg is increasingly becoming English, Afrikaans retains its position 'as medium for primary and secondary communication' in Cape Town (see chapter 10 on language identities). In addition, Cape Town and Johannesburg differ in terms of recent urbanisation flows. Internal migration toward Johannesburg is more diverse than toward Cape Town since it comprises a plurality of sending areas from both contiguous provinces as well as neighbouring and other African countries. Finally, Cape Town contains the largest Muslim community in South Africa (Mandivenga, 2000).

Policy aimed at one city, a compact city

Substantial institutional reform and policy changes have taken place in Cape Town and Johannesburg since 1994. The primary underlying aims of these changes were to integrate the city spatially and to reduce inherited inequalities. To this end, both cities now have a single-tier metropolitan authority with a single tax base. Parallel to these structural and financial changes to city government, planning strategies have been designed and implemented to foster residential densification and promote urban sustainability (known as the Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework in Cape Town and the Strategic Metropolitan Development Framework in Johannesburg).

What appears to be happening in South African cities

Despite such policy and structural changes, most analysts believe that the 'market' has replaced the 'state' as primary urban development driver in South Africa. Their views may be summarised by identifying three market-driven processes that are believed to lead toward continuing social and spatial polarisation. The first process is located within the labour market: traditional manufacturing sectors in these cities have been shrinking as the service and financial sectors strengthen. This encourages an expansion of a highly skilled labour force, while employment for blue-collar workers diminishes. As a consequence, wage differentials rise. The second process is located within the land market. The state appears unable or

unwilling to intervene in the process of land acquisition. Rising land prices in middle-class residential areas are accompanied by well-orchestrated middle-class opposition to state interference in their land market. As a consequence, most low-income housing development continues to be located in the periphery of cities where land is cheapest (Turok, 2000; Bremner, 2000). As Pottie (2003) puts it, 'In the end, the market sanctions inequality, and, as market rationality has structured housing policy in South Africa since 1994, this rationality has generated important limits to the transformative potentials of political and economic restructuring of South Africa' (Pottie, 2003: 141). The third process is 'the suburbanisation … of new economic activity' (Mabin, 2001: 10), leading to the location of private sector investment in the northern sectors of both Cape Town (Blaauwberg, as an example) and Johannesburg (the edge cities of Sandton and Midrand, for example), thereby sidestepping employment demand in the populous but poorer Cape Flats and Soweto areas of these cities. This general pattern of spatial development in these cities fuels the process of polarisation both within the labour market as well as regarding residential segregation. It is far removed from the policy ideal of the 'compact' city and signals rather the emergence of a 'dual' city. To quote Saff, 'racial segregation has been replaced by social segregation, in effect by "deracialised apartheid"' (Saff, 1998: xvii–xxii).

This identification of Cape Town and Johannesburg as dual cities has led analysts to distinguish sharply between processes of identity construction among the middle- to high-income groups and among the poor. In the former case, identities are conceptualised as deracialised where residents join together around economic interests and tend to adhere to middle-class values (Robins, 1998) and 'international norms of urban consumption and culture' (Beall et al. 2002: 7), processes that Hyslop (2000) argues began in the 1970s, from which time

> whites were willing to accept residential and school desegregation, but only if it did
> not involve a change in the class identity of their neighbourhood. (Hyslop, 2000: 40)

For the poor on the other hand, at least in the case of Cape Town, increased polarisation along racial and ethnic lines takes place in low-income areas. One reason given is competition over scarce resources between black and coloured communities (Maré, 1997), leading to the reproduction of racially based socialisation (Sharp, 1997). For instance, according to Lohnert, Oldfield, and Parnell (1998),

> the minimal impact of desegregation, plus the relative failure of state initiatives
> to ameliorate racialised poverty draws our attention to the coping strategies of
> the urban poor of Retreat and Imizamo Yethu … Many aspects of urban life have

> become so racialised that the once pejorative label coloured is now seen by some as a legitimate primary identity … The overall picture that emerges is one of increasing social polarisation within racially homogenous settlements, a vision far removed from the lofty ideals of equity and non-racialism. (Lohnert, Oldfield & Parnell, 1998: 86–92)

At a more general level, in the words of Marks and Bezzoli (2001),

> released from the grip of state control, our cities are now at the mercy of that most nebulous of conceits (*sic*) – the free market … Released from the grips of the Apartheid State, the 'free market' has been set loose on existing inequitable urban conditions, consolidating our cities into evermore divided and segregated spaces. No longer only along race but along class lines as well. (Marks & Bezzoli, 2001: 27–29)

In short, according to these analysts, middle-class identities constructed in middle-class suburbs converge around shared middle-class values; the identities of the poor constructed in segregated townships continue to fragment along inherited racial and ethnic lines.

9.4 The construction of urban identities in Cape Town and Johannesburg

Our interpretations of qualitative focus-group (FG) data have been guided by two principles: the extent to which FG narratives appear to accord with identities influenced either by the 'dual city' or by the 'divided city' concepts, and the extent to which such identities appear to emerge from the narratives as primary identities, as identities that 'frame' others. After a preliminary scan of these data, moreover, we decided to classify narratives into an 'urban middle class' and an 'urban poor' category and to analyse data in these two categories separately. This decision was based on results of the scan that revealed a wide range of similarities in both cities of narratives falling within each category and clear variance in both cities of narratives across categories. The urban middle class category is defined as comprising respondents in FGs that fall within a middle and higher income range within which residents live in suburbs and are formally employed in white collar (or established blue collar) positions; and the urban poor category is defined as comprising residents in FGs that fall within the ranks of the poor and unemployed and who reside in informal or low-cost formal accommodation. It is relevant to point out that the class categorisation of focus groups was not part of the original research design but flowed from the decision to set up focus groups on the basis of

shared residence in an urban neighbourhood.

The SA urban middle class
Similarities between Johannesburg and Cape Town
The issue of racial mixing in residential areas – such as in former white and coloured middle-class areas – was raised a number of times. Typically, the issue was discussed in terms of racial stereotypes, although sometimes stated in covert terms:

> Another thing is that you've got a lot of coloured people moving into this area ... I mean, your more affluent coloured group [and therefore] you're in a … diverse set-up … too diverse. (Panorama, white Afrikaans-speaking middle income, Cape Town)

> But even [the town of] Paarl is getting blackish, you know. If you drive through it … (Linden, white Afrikaans-speaking middle income, Johannesburg)

Nonetheless, racial issues were rarely raised as reasons to move into a neighbourhood. Rather, residential choice among middle-class residents appears to be motivated by the socio-economic status of the neighbourhood:

> I don't mind if my neighbour is black or coloured as long as we live in harmony, with the same standard. [That] I [may not] have decent people next to me, that [is] what bothers me. The colour doesn't bother me. (Oranjezicht, German-speaking middle income, Cape Town)

> Why are we all migrating to Pinelands? Investment purposes, what feels good. You have to think of a place where your children grow up … and it's sort of, how can you say, up-market. It's nothing to do with whites, [rather] something that is more up-market that you can afford … You know, we are actually moving towards class distinction whereby whatever you earn … pretty much dictates where you stay … You are starting to think along class lines, not racialistic lines anymore. (Pinelands, coloured middle income, Cape Town)

> I also think that anybody of a different colour moving into our area have uplifted themselves so therefore, you're socially able to communicate with them … there's a vast difference between him and the man who collects the rubbish. (Roodepoort 1, white English middle income, Johannesburg)

> It would be nice to live [in Bosmont] for the sense of community, but not from a

personal living point of view … [I want to live] where I can have a pool, and a nice house, and I won't have people breaking in and I can drive my car, which is a bit of a yuppie car, without somebody discriminating against you because you progress, you understand. So you actually move out of there so that you can live with people who have the same status as you … (Florida, coloured middle income, Johannesburg)

One exception pointing to residential choice being influenced by multicultural considerations was found in the new 'greenfields' residential area of Summergreens (SG):

In our environment, I never grew up with the black or white kids, I never experienced it. Like my daughter, today kids grow up with a multiracial, a multiplicity of cultures. … I call SG the new South Africa. It's the only area where there is no racial tension. We live in total harmony. SG to me is a melting pot of people … I didn't know who I was going to live next to. I didn't care who I was going to live next to … You don't want to run around [with] this business of 'whities', of coloureds anymore. This is old stuff. To me that is pre-94 stuff … Here, people choose SG for that specific reason, because we have been denied [it] as kids … we would be willing to allow our kids to grow up with all races, creeds, colours and I think people make a conscious choice. I made a conscious choice that I'm going to stay here. (Summergreens, coloured middle income, Cape Town)

These class identities appear to be constructed around shared values, a shared 'way of life' and common interests and concerns such as crime, property values, and neighbourhood tidiness. Contrary to what is often claimed regarding 'middle-class' individualism, a close-knit community or a sense of 'neighbourliness' is actively sought out by middle-class residents. These class identities also seem to accord with Castells and Molenkopf's conceptualisation of the dual city. In particular, they point to the mental map that middle-class residents carry of spatial distinctions, of places one visits and places one avoids, in their cities:

But then, Jo'burg's structure is such that you don't need to go to those [dangerous] places. It is just like any other city, it's like New York, and Cape Town, you live there but you don't need to go to Khayelitsha or Mitchell's Plain … you can bypass them … What I am trying to say is that you don't need to go and do your Saturday morning shopping in downtown Johannesburg at the moment if you don't want to. (Fleurhof, coloured middle income, Johannesburg)

If I remember Cape Town when I was a child, [i]t was a pretty picture in your mind but it's just gone. The streets are filthy, the drivers … they ride you off the street if

they can. The only nice place to go to in town is the Waterfront now. You know, when you want to say you are going to shop and you want to shop nicely and you can find underground parking. (Punts Estate, coloured middle income, Cape Town)

Differences between Cape Town and Johannesburg
While class appears to play a major role in the choice that middle-class residents are able to make regarding residence, in the case of Cape Town, choice of residential area appears also to be based on shared cultural traits.

I think the other thing [about] moving to Pinelands was that, we've lived in other areas … we found it's a safer area. Safe but not behind the [Afrikaans-speaking] 'sausage curtain' [*boereworsgordyn*] … in Pinelands, it is cosmopolitan and it's more English as well, and you see more colours. We relate more to English style than to Afrikaans style. (Pinelands, coloured middle income, Cape Town)

In the Cape Town middle-class FG narratives, there are also numerous examples of sentiments of pride and self-esteem, rooted in language, religion, and traditional practices that appear to be shared at a residential neighbourhood level. The first example is drawn from an Afrikaans-speaking FG:

A good thing about our area is the schools that are here because the Christian element is very much alive and that is very important for us. There are a lot of Christian elements. There is more [here] than in lots of other places and for us it is very important. So that is very good. (Panorama, white Afrikaans-speaking middle income, Cape Town)

In the formal area of a former black township:

I've long been wanting to move to Rondebosch but my wife wouldn't agree because in those areas, there is a lot of crime, house-breaking, people break into people's houses. Here, I know, when I'm at work, my neighbour is looking after my house. Other than the neighbours' watch (*sic*), here we have *Ubuntu*. Another reason [not to move] is that here in townships, in the Khayelitsha area, we love one another but … maybe because I'm black, the people in Rondebosch will have attitudes towards me and I will also have attitudes towards them because our cultures are not the same and I won't be able to do what I do here in Khayelitsha. As an example, Christmas time or New Year's time, I slaughter a sheep, now coming to Rondebosch, people would start looking at me. Because this is our culture, during Christmas, I have to slaughter a sheep … Here, I easily do that but there, people would stare at you. (Khayelitsha 1, African middle income, Cape Town)

In the 'Malay' quarter of Cape Town, religion rather than income status is expressed as the criterion of selection of place of residence:

> We have people who, even though they can afford to go and stay between people who are not Muslims, prefer to stay in a Muslim area. This preference is not because they are anti-white or anti-black, it is simply because they feel that the environment in which they are living is conducive to religious culture. They prefer to stay where there is a Mosque nearby and they will look for that. … In so far as residential integration is concerned, I think a lot of it is because of established customs and culture within an area and then moving [from] that, perhaps into a much more sophisticated or grander house doesn't compensate for the loss of … community spirit so you are staying in a very beautiful palace up in Constantia but you've lost track of your roots, of who your neighbour is, who was a Muslim, the Madressah down the road where the children go to school, the Mosque which you can walk to, you know those kinds of things we cherish. That just reflects our prioritisation of us being Muslims and that we are not that class conscious. (Bo-Kaap 1, Muslim middle income, Cape Town)

These preferences for cultural homogeneity at neighbourhood level in Cape Town appear to lead in some cases to claims rooted in shared language and religious belief that transcend neighbourhood boundaries and flow into the public domain at city and even at national levels.

> If you think [about] politicians trying to put their pen down [to suppress] Afrikaans as a language, I know, and I think 99% of Afrikaners know, nothing will get the Afrikaans language down. That's to say it doesn't matter what they are trying to implement or whatever law they will try and [pass], it is not going to get us down … Even if we are forced to speak English or whatever language, but we will still be Afrikaners, nothing will take that away from us. (Panorama, Afrikaans-speaking middle income, Cape Town)

> If you look at the demographics of the Cape Peninsula, I mean the Muslim community make up 23% of that total community … 23% is a quarter of the population in Cape Town and yet we don't exert the clout which a quarter of a population should be able to … Our strength is not at national level. I mean we represent what population? 1.5% of the national population, so there's going to be no impact. But we can create a situation where [we could have] a sizable impact upon city council decisions … (Bo-Kaap 1, Muslim middle income, Cape Town)

These narratives conform to Glazer's conceptualisation of the divided city since they reflect both strong cultural as well as class features. Such cultural features

may lead, as Martin (1999) has argued, to identity narratives reflecting peaceful interaction between groups thought to be different, as well as to narratives as sources of potential conflict between such groups. Examples of each type of narrative were found in the Cape Town FG material:

> One of the major changes since 1994, which I think most of us wrestle with, is the sudden emergence of a third language as a requirement for business to function … That is a major shift. And the problem is that it is not simply a matter about learning a language, it is a whole cultural thing you have to learn for which there is rather less tolerance than there should be. The fact is that Xhosa culture is different, there is a general perception that it's wrong and there is very little understanding. (Business, middle income, Cape Town)

At neighbourhood level, on the other hand, cultural heterogeneity – at least in the three examples cited – appeared to imply a degree of potential conflict:

> [This neighbourhood] is predominantly Afrikaans … there is definitely prejudice, I mean we get called 'Soutie' and … 'Laaitie' and 'rooinek' … Yes, there is definite animosity from neighbours, and purely based on the fact that we speak English … It is not like we are exactly socialising … Due to the fact that we're English in an Afrikaans suburb … you don't socialise that much with your neighbours, really. (Kraaifontein, white English-speaking lower middle income, Cape Town)

> There is a piece of land next to the tennis court. It was bought by the Muslim community and they are going to build a Mosque on it, which means that we are going to have lots of traffic in and out, which we never really had before. And they will park up (sic) all the streets, because they have wedding[s] or whatever ... And then of course, when they call people to prayer, that would be a big thing, the noise. And the school as well. So we signed a petition against it. (Punts Estate, coloured middle income, Cape Town)

> Because Long Street was Bo-Kaap, the Waterkant [neighbourhood] has become [an] affluent white yuppie area and that was where the residents of Bo-Kaap have been pushed out. They are becoming smaller and smaller because of where we are situated, this is just prime land for those people but it's not just all about the nice view and prime land, it's also for us about a way of life and a culture. This is the main problem here, people moving in and not respecting other people's ways and religion. They must respect our religion and culture, it's in our constitution. That respect is just breaking down and it shows the big differences between our community and the rest throughout Cape Town. Here we believe in our morals and values and we are trying

to maintain that. And with these outside influences coming in, it's just not on. (Bo-Kaap 2, Muslim middle income, Cape Town)

The sense of cultural 'compartmentalisation' captured in these narratives was succinctly stated in the following FG:

> Cape Town appears to be very white, that's what I think. And that's why they say we are very racist. We are very European-centric (*sic*). It's very white, unfortunately. It's so Euro-centric, it's almost like it's a separate place from South Africa in terms of its cultural mixing. Over and above race, I think it's colour, creed and religion. I think we are also very intolerant about other races as well as religions. We are very polarised here, even within our inter-denominational [congregations], we tend to be very intolerant. (Pinelands, coloured middle income, Cape Town)

In Johannesburg, in contradistinction to Cape Town, narratives about community at neighbourhood level appear to be based more on a 'shared lifestyle' than on common cultural features:

> About 50 years ago, Linden was the heartland of the old *Broederbond*. It used to be called the Afrikaner Houghton but now, it's not that, it's more a middle class type of thing. (Linden, Afrikaans-speaking middle income, Johannesburg)

> I wouldn't go for a [Bo-Kaap area in Johannesburg] like there's this [exclusive] Muslim camp. My religious beliefs don't allow me to have that … We actually thrive living amongst other races, cultures, creeds. I think that is also important, otherwise you are very one-track minded. (Bosmont, Muslim middle income, Johannesburg)

> I like Johannesburg for one thing because it is more at the centre of South Africa, it gives you the opportunity to meet other people from different provinces and that makes a city-type dynamic. (Dube, Soweto, African middle income, Johannesburg)

Cultural ties that remain important appear in Johannesburg to have been domesticated, practised by family and friends in private and not playing an important role in the choice of residential neighbourhood.

> I am definitely living here because it is central … central in relation to shops, in relation to schools, churches, petrol stations, it is just very central. And it is an established area. It is very peaceful, and it is very beautiful here. Language was not a consideration when we bought the house. Because a guy's friends come and visit you at your place, I mean your neighbours are … hallo and how is it going, and what

are you doing, are you working in the garden, yes, no, and what/what/what but one's friends do come through, I mean all our friends don't live in this area … our friends come from different neighbourhoods and areas, that come and visit us. (Roodepoort, Afrikaans-speaking middle income, Johannesburg)

Simultaneously, English appears to have been accepted as *lingua franca* in Johannesburg:

Johannesburg is a more relaxed city than Pretoria. I know about language, for instance, people don't tend to make such an issue about language [here] as they do in Pretoria. [There] you go to a shop and you speak Afrikaans, and you insist in being answered in Afrikaans. Otherwise you get upset. Whereas in Jo'burg, I tend to immediately speak English and then after five minutes I realise I'm actually speaking English to somebody who's Afrikaans speaking. You know, we switch and then eventually we don't even know what language we're speaking. (Linden, Afrikaans-speaking middle income, Johannesburg)

The SA urban poor

As in the case of middle-income FG narratives, the combined FG narratives of the poor in Johannesburg and Cape Town also appear to reveal both similarities and differences.

Similarities between Cape Town and Johannesburg

While issues relating to pride and satisfaction with selection of residential neighbourhood made up an important part of middle-income FG narratives, those of the poor in contradistinction focused on access to jobs and to housing. Selection of residential neighbourhood appears to be of little importance, possibly because the poor are able to exercise little choice over what area to live in.

I'd go anywhere else so long as it's in South Africa and there is everything you need. There's nothing here but we are compelled to stay because that's the place we got (Tembisa, African poor, Johannesburg)

When living area is in fact raised, the narratives tended to point to spatial exclusion rather than neighbourliness:

Khayelitsha is one of the townships which is not close to Cape Town. Cape Town is the nearest city but it is not so close and we have to spend a lot of money on transport to go to Cape Town. (Khayelitsha 2, African poor, Cape Town)

In addition, struggle over residential turf within a living area reflects the fragmented nature of the 'underclass':

> The community didn't come together and stand together as one … they won't stand close to fight these gangs, now the community looks and stands when they shoot, they rejoice in it … Here we don't want to support one another. If I get evicted we laugh about it, our water gets cut, the one laughs with the other, they rejoice. … It's this one block of flats, and these people will stand together. Then you will go to the next block of flats, and then instead of people [sharing] community, it differs from one block to another block. (Lavender Hill, coloured poor, Cape Town)

The dual city concept characterised the urban underclass as a set of communities competing with one another over both employment as well as over accommodation 'turf'. Lines of cleavage dividing these communities are said typically to be ethno-racial. In both Cape Town and Johannesburg, competition over jobs and scarce resources appears to have led the poor to widespread stigmatisation and scapegoating of African immigrants. They are considered to be responsible for a wide range of harmful and negative practices:

> An alien comes tomorrow from wherever he is from, this afternoon he's got a cell-phone, tonight he's got a flat, tomorrow he goes with a box of chips he will sell. Where did he [get it] … You just walk around and you see all the aliens have got cell-phones and they have got a flat. They are all over town. (Lavender Hill, coloured poor, Cape Town)

> The people from Zaire … that is the main problem, because it causes us to not get better jobs. These people occupy spaces [of] our people by selling things in Cape Town. But our people are not having a chance to sell, because Cape Town is full of these people, they are everywhere. (Khayelitsha 1, African poor, Cape Town)

> Another point to show how bad these people are, they brought fake money into South Africa. Drugs as well were brought by them into this land. Before these people arrived our life was all right. We respected each other and whenever you did something wrong we were able to reprimand you. Today we cannot [reproach them] because you are controlled by drugs and guns. Guns enter the country because of them. (Tsakane, African poor, Johannesburg)

> Foreigners come from Maputo, the Maputos are the most and also Malawi, Zimbabwe. These people accept any offer like, for example, if I am looking for a job, and the employer is offering to pay R500 and I refuse it, the foreign people, they

accept it no matter what and they work non-stop, Monday to Monday. And that way, the employers prefer these people because they are cheap. Even R10 per day is fine for them so we South Africans can't work. (Tembisa, African poor, Johannesburg)

Differences between Cape Town and Johannesburg

The primary differences in narratives among the poor in Cape Town and Johannesburg relate to the importance of a racial divide among the underclass. In Cape Town, social exclusion appears to be experienced, in both coloured and black townships, on the basis of race:

Before, they said that you don't have to pay [rent] because the government said you can have a house free because the native people in Khayelitsha, and those places there, live for free. What they pay is maybe next to nothing for the house they've got … So then all the other communities tried to live free and then they found out that it doesn't work like that. (Lavender Hill, coloured poor, Cape Town)

Look how children are struggling to get work and they have matric … For me basically, this is now precisely the opposite of what happened in the white man's time … now the black man is trying to fix what the white man did wrong. But now they are attacking each other … I have a question, we coloured, where are we? … still in the middle? (Eersterivier, coloured poor, Cape Town)

There are a lot of places where I would not go in Cape Town, because apartheid is still around. Africans who live in Cape Town don't get jobs. Our people in our society are isolated. This province is different to other provinces. Our people come from other provinces where apartheid is gone ... Gauteng is better. Here African people have problems. Here in Cape Town, only coloureds and whites get better jobs. But if you are African, it's like in apartheid a long time ago. (Khayelitsha 1, African poor, Cape Town)

There are grades in Cape Town. Colours have grades. 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd grade. Blacks are regarded as 3rd grade in Cape Town. [I]n work places … people who discriminate the most are coloureds. Coloured people of Cape Town are discriminating, especially compared to coloured people in places such as Uitenhage and Ibhayi [Port Elizabeth] … Coloured people, if you work with them, will always look at a black man as down (*sic*). They will always think they are better than you … (Joe Slovo Park 1, African poor, Cape Town)

Though race appears to be an important line of cleavage, an important boundary between 'us' and 'them' among Cape Town's underclass, there appears to be little

pride or self-esteem in this ethnic or racial identity. Rather, it is carried as an imposed identity.

> There is a problem about speaking isiXhosa in Cape Town because nothing has changed, the Boers are still in control and they speak in Afrikaans. And people who get opportunities are coloureds. So if you want a job it can happen that you [do not get it] even if you qualify for that job … because of your inability to speak Afrikaans. So those of us who come from the Eastern Cape … become disadvantaged here. So that is one of the problems that we get, that of not being able to speak Afrikaans. They say that isiXhosa speakers like to *toyi toyi.* They say we are difficult. (Joe Slovo Park 2, African poor, Cape Town)

> … but go to Nyanga, Khayelitsha, the [blacks) support one another, they support one another. Here we don't want to support one another. If I get evicted we laugh about it, our water gets cut, the one laughs with the other, they rejoice. It's not a nice thing. I never thought that one day I would suffer [like this]. (Lavender Hill, coloured poor, Cape Town)

In Johannesburg, issues of access to jobs and housing also figure prominently in most narratives of the poor but sentiments of exclusion – economic, social, and political exclusion – are interpreted in class rather than in race terms.

> Life here in Johannesburg is not so easy. The crime is too high and there are no jobs. There are too many people looking for a job … The problem of Johannesburg is because [for] everybody in the rural areas, when you need a job, you think of coming to Johannesburg but it's terrible these days because there are not those kind of jobs. … In the old days, the apartheid era, there was too much jobs (*sic*). Never mind [that] the income was less, you get little money but you have a job, you get some bread on the table at the end of the day. … For the [loss of] jobs, I blame the government of today … they do little for the people. All they do is corruption. They spend a lot of money on things that are not needed. … The government now … only hires … people who earn a lot of money … the people who are educated. We are not rich enough to go and further our education because you have to pay a lot of money for university … They don't worry about us on the ground. (Brixton, African poor, Johannesburg)

> The people we have voted into power are turning [out] to be our enemies. Someone who loves you will not make your wife and children to suffer. You know I am working but this man is my best friend and he is not working. And I don't like it if I have R10.00 in my pocket [when] he does not have it. And so [for everything to] be wonderful, let everybody get equal opportunities. Let there be work. Let them not

sing us a song that there will be jobs. And they … lie to us saying we got democracy. What is democracy if you are unemployed? What democracy do you enjoy if you are hungry? (Tsakane, African poor, Johannesburg)

The person who placed us here is a person called Vusi but he's passed away now. He was trying [to do] something good for us because he saw that we were suffering without jobs … He was a comrade, he was against government … The government has given people RDP houses, why is it taking them back saying they don't pay? Government builds houses for people who earn very little money, but yet, it turns around to take them, saying they don't pay. (Tembisa, African poor, Johannesburg)

That's one of our problems in this country, not necessarily in Alexandra alone. You see, a person will come here telling you that 'whenever you need me, I'll be there, I'll serve the community'. Immediately you give him that position and that's the start of the problem. You're no longer going to see that person. Most of our leaders, especially municipal leaders, they're operating things unprofessionally. You find some of them, they are in the shebeens and you start to ask yourself 'how can this person be like that? … he doesn't look like a person committed to my community'. (Alexandra, African poor, Johannesburg)

Even though Johannesburg is multilingual, language discrimination similar to that expressed in Cape Town's poor narratives did not figure in equivalent narratives in Johannesburg. Rather, the use of various languages and frequent code switching was noted:

We feel free here in Johannesburg, you can see it's many languages you can speak in Johannesburg … we have to learn each other's language, like it or not. The first time, it's not so easy. Most of the blacks, we sometimes use English, Afrikaans, Zulu and Sotho … (Brixton, African poor, Johannesburg)

In short, the narratives of the poor in Johannesburg appear to express widespread exclusion and put this down to an increasing divide in access to education, to the labour market, and to political influence between haves and have-nots – between classes – rather than between ethnic or racial groups.

9.5 Conclusion

Both Cape Town and Johannesburg exhibit characteristics of the 'dual city'. It is apparent from the narratives we have considered that polarisation between the

middle classes and the underclass, both in terms of labour market access and in terms of residential space, is something residents worry about. Sentiments expressing social distance and the need for residential separation between these classes suggest strongly that living in these cities – thinking of oneself as a Capetonian or a Johannesburg resident – carries very different meanings for middle class and poor residents. These meanings that range from pride in neighbourhood and self-esteem in career achievement to frustration about exclusion and anger about stigmatisation appear to be at odds with the lofty post-apartheid ideals of 'one city for all'.

Urban middle-class identities in both cities appear to be constructed around shared middle-class values that in turn are significantly related to living in neighbourhoods where notions of a close-knit community and of neighbourliness ought to be shared. In contradistinction, though the poor in both cities are trapped in racially homogeneous low-cost formal and informal residential areas, it is not the nature of this residential space but rather economic and social exclusion as well as fierce competition over local resources that shape the identities of the urban poor.

Simultaneously, significant differences emerge between such urban identities in Cape Town and in Johannesburg. In the first place, where choice of residence in better-off neighbourhoods is available, shared culture, language, and religion appear to play a significant role in the decision-making process in Cape Town. This in turn suggests that residents in middle and higher income neighbourhoods perceive themselves *at both neighbourhood and city level* to be culturally and linguistically diverse and at times deeply divided along cultural lines of cleavage. Residents of these neighbourhoods express pride and derive substantial self-esteem not only from their class positions but also from their linguistic and religious affiliations, revealing a degree of conformity with Glazer's model of a 'divided city'. Such a trend appears to be much less pronounced in Johannesburg where cultural identities are domesticated and accordingly lived out in the private domain. This divergence between the two cities, expressed in a middle-class Johannesburg narrative, is interpreted in race terms:

> It's too white, Cape Town. You're so used to seeing black people over here so … Imagine staying over there and seeing white people as your neighbours. You know, all the areas have a certain type of culture … Like if I am in Cape Town, say after six o'clock, you don't see black people, you [can] count them actually. Here in Johannesburg even [at] 10 o'clock, you still see black people. Cape Town has its own culture and Johannesburg has its own culture and you know that people with money like to cluster [by] themselves. (Soweto, African middle income, Johannesburg).

In the second place, while bonds of solidarity and of community among the urban poor appear to fragment as residents compete over access to scarce resources, the lines of fragmentation are not always the same in Cape Town and in Johannesburg. Xenophobia and stigmatisation of the foreign African is a shared narrative among the urban poor in both cities. In Johannesburg, it appears that shared sentiments of suffering at the hands of employers and of the new political elite, as well as emotionally loaded responses to competition and conflict over local turf, fashion the identities of the underclass. It is the shared experience of the divide between the haves and the have-nots that appears to be most significant in this city. In Cape Town, on the other hand, the perception – shared by different groupings of the urban poor – that there is racialised privileged access to resources such as jobs, services, and housing adds race to the dominant underclass identity in this city. This racial label, moreover, appears to be experienced more as imposed – as a stigma – than as a badge of pride.

In conclusion, race remains part and parcel of the way urban residents speak of themselves and those around them. To infer from the continuation of this racialised discourse that racial boundaries in these cities will take on more meaning among more residents may well prove to be wrong. Among the middle-class, social networks appear to be established on the basis of shared class and cultural values rather than on the basis of shared racial classification. Among the poor, though racial identification persists where access to privilege is perceived as racialised, social networks reflect fragmentation not only within racial groups but also within neighbourhoods. As Salo (2004) put it recently in reference to an underclass neighbourhood in Cape Town:

> For the outsider Manenberg appears to be a homogenous racial township, a single geographic and social unit. However, for the residents of Manenberg, socio-spatial boundaries criss-cross the apparently continuous geographic unit, dividing it into multiple small communities … Local communities may be limited to a single street, or cover a number of courts. … Eleven male gangs exist in Manenberg, each associated with its own particular turf. … [The] turf boundaries represent the physical, social and moral limitations of the local community. (Salo, 2004: 7)

In short, urban middle-class identities in Cape Town and Johannesburg reflect pride and self-esteem drawn from what was called social integration and lifestyle choices in the 'dual city' model. The underclass in these two cities, on the other hand, faced with exclusion and competition over local turf, fall back on local institutions for shared strategies for survival. These institutions, which are typically micro in scale and small in number of members, lead to identities that are rooted in local organisations rather than in racial or ethnic loyalties (Bekker

& Leidé, 2004). We conclude, then, that both cities reflect a mixture of dual and divided city attributes, that choice over residential space plays an important role in the construction of urban identities, and that the divided city attributes appear significantly stronger in Cape Town than in Johannesburg. That this may imply that race is a more salient sentiment in Cape Town than in Johannesburg, we leave to the reader to decide.

What influence have new urban policies had on the construction of these urban identities? Succinctly, it appears that those who were excluded under apartheid legislation from exercising choice over where to live and with whom to live today fall into two categories. One of these consists of upwardly mobile groups with sufficient resources now to exercise choice over where to live and with whom they prefer to live; the other grouping is the poor, who continue to experience exclusion in both a spatial as well as a class sense, and, in the case of Cape Town, in ethnic terms.

Appendix A: Focus group data

Research involved discussions with rank-and-file groupings selected on a wide range of criteria: residential area, religious affiliation, language, age, and domain of work activity. Each focus group was requested to discuss how they 'felt' about living in their local residential area – in Cape Town/Johannesburg and in South Africa. Discussions were conducted in the preferred language of each group and transcriptions were subsequently translated into English for analysis. The three research prompts and subsequent non-directive facilitation of discussion were deliberately chosen to enable groups freely to probe areas of shared interest, concern, and meaning. Since focus groups were not asked to debate specific issues, identification and discussion of themes produced evidence of shared sentiments regarding their importance.

Choice of non-directive focus group methodology was based on the hypothesis that identity is a process rather than a property. Accordingly, people's narratives, which issues they chose to discuss, and in what way, played a role in the construction of their collective identities. Furthermore, FG discussions revealed collective social representations that wouldn't have been accessible to us by using quantitative research methods such as surveys. The disadvantage of such methodology, however, revolves around issues of representivity and potential generalisation.

Research took place between 1999 and 2004. The constitution of the focus group began with the identification of a coordinator within the milieu of the focus group. This milieu coordinator was requested to approach between six and ten potential adult participants from the milieu. The coordinator was also requested to select participants with varying ages, as well as approximately equal numbers of women and men. The focus group venue was selected on the basis of a location known to the participants. Discussions ranged from 40 to 90 minutes in duration and were, in some cases, followed by face-to-face discussions with a few individual participants. Though three prompts were used, participants were not discouraged from pursuing a particular theme. Accordingly, few focus groups allocated equal discussion time to each theme.

Sketch of focus groups from which data have been drawn

Table 9.1: *Focus groups in Cape Town*

Business Focus group with a group of business people	06/08/1999
Oranjezicht (former white area) Focus group with a middle-income German-speaking community	12/08/2001
Panorama (Former white area) Focus group with a middle-income Afrikaans-speaking community	22/08/2001
Kraaifontein (Former white area) Focus group with a lower income English-speaking white group	21/04/2004
Durbanville (Former white area) Focus group with a middle-income English-speaking white group	27/04/2004
Ruyterwacht (Former white area) Focus group with a lower income Afrikaans-speaking community	06/08/2003
Pinelands (Former white area) Focus group with a middle-income coloured community	25/08/2001
Summergreens (New middle-income area) Focus group with a low- to middle-income coloured community	21/09/1999
Punts Estate (Former coloured middle-income area) Focus group with a middle-income coloured community	31/08/2001
Westridge (Mitchell's Plain) (Former coloured township) Focus group with a low- to middle-income coloured community	02/05/2003
Lavender Hill (Former coloured township) Focus group with a poor coloured community	18/08/2001
Tafelsig (Mitchell's Plain) (Former coloured township) Focus group with a poor coloured community	27/05/2003
Eerstrivier (Former coloured township) Focus group with a lower income coloured community	03/03/2004
Bo-Kaap 1 (Former Muslim area) Focus group with a middle-income Muslim community	12/09/2001
Bo-Kaap 2 (Former Muslim area) Focus group with a middle-income Muslim community	16/04/2003
Gugulethu (Former African township) Focus group with a middle-income Xhosa community	13/07/2003
Khayelitsha 1 (Former African township) Focus group with a middle-income Xhosa community	12/08/1999
Khayelitsha 2 (Former African township) Focus group with a poor Xhosa community	01/08/1999
Joe Slovo Park 1 (New low-income area) Focus group with a lower middle income Xhosa community	03/11/2001
Joe Slovo Park 2 (New low-income area) Focus group with a poor Xhosa community	04/12/2003
African foreigners CT Focus group with French-speaking African foreigners living in Cape Town	21/09/2001

Table 9.2: *Focus groups in Johannesburg*

Linden (Former white area) Focus group with a middle-income Afrikaans-speaking community	28/03/2002
Roodepoort 1 (Former white area) Focus group with a middle-income English-speaking white community	18/03/2002
Roodepoort 2 (Former white area) Focus group with a middle-income Afrikaans-speaking community	29/06/2004
North Riding (New cluster development) Focus group with a young middle-income white community (mixed languages)	11/03/2002
Fleurhof (Former coloured middle-income area) Focus group with a middle-income coloured community	24/03/2002
Bosmont (Former Muslim area) Focus group with a Muslim middle-income community	20/03/2002
Florida (Former white area) Focus group with a Muslim middle-income community	20/ 03/2002
Mayfair (Former Indian area) Focus group with a middle-income Indian community	17/03/2002
Brixton (Former white area) Focus group with African domestic workers	03/03/2002
Dube (Soweto) (Former African township) Focus group with an African middle-income community	12/03/2002
Alexandra (Former African township) Focus group with a poor African community	10/03/2002
Tembisa (Former African township) Focus group with a poor African Community	10/03/2002
Tsakane (Former African township) Focus group with a poor African Community	11/01/04
African foreigners JHB Focus group with French-speaking African foreigners living in Braamfontein	21/03/2002

Table 9.3: *Classification of focus groups according to 'race', income,* and city*

		Cape Town			Johannesburg		
		White	Coloured	Black	White	Coloured	Black
High income*		1. Business 2. Oranjezicht 3. Panorama 4. Durbanville	1. Pinelands 2. Punts Estate 3. Bo-Kaap1 4. Bo-Kaap2	1. Khayelitsha1	1. Linden 2. Roodepoort1 3. Roodepoort2 4. North Riding	1. Fleurhof 2. Florida	
							15
Middle income*		1. Ruyterwacht 2. Kraaifontein	1. Summergreens 2. Westridge	1. Joe Slovo Pk1 2. Gugulethu		1. Bosmont 2. Mayfair	1. Dube 2. African foreigners JHB
							10
Low income*			1. Lavender Hill 2. Tafelsig 3. Eersterivier	1. Joe Slovo Pk2 2. Khayelitsha2 3. African foreigners CT			1. Brixton 2. Alexandra 3. Tembisa 4. Tsakane
							10
	6	9	6	4	4	6	
		21			14		35

* Income has been inferred from profession and type of housing