HOSTELS IN SOUTH AFRICA: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Edited by
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Dedication

This collection is dedicated to all who live and/or have lived in the former single-sex workers' hostels in South Africa.

Through this book, we say your lives matter!

Ngalencwadi sithi izimpilo zenu zibalulekile (isiZulu)

Ngalencwadi sithi ubom benu bubalulekile (isiXhosa)

Ka buka ena bophelo ba lona ho bohlokoa (seSotho)

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Foreword

Migrant Hostels as Non-Places for Citizens in South Africa

The continued existence of hostels introduced to contain those from whom only their labour was needed by the extractive economic system of colonialism and Apartheid, is testimony to the failure of successive ANC governments to radically transform the inherited post-Apartheid socio-economic system.

A 2015 report, titled 'An apartheid legacy, South Africa's hostels breed anger and violence', quotes Lindiwe Sisulu, then-Minister of Human Settlements, explaining to Parliament that 'she wanted to do away with hostels… But with no better alternative for the millions coming to the cities in search of work… closing them risks prompting more unrest.' This admission by an ANC cabinet minister, 21 years into the ANC being in government, is the clearest example of the ANC's lack of understanding of and capacity to lead the radical transformation of South Africa post-1994. The primary task of being in government is to create legislative and regulatory opportunities for alternatives to meet the basic needs of citizens and to enable well-being and prosperity for all.

Julian Cooke's contribution to this timely book delves deeply into hostels as the abomination designed to subjugate and dominate indigenous Africans. Hostels are non-places. A place in human society is made to enhance the activity, pleasure, good function, and dignity of human life. Hostels as non-places negate each one of the spatial requirements of a place fit for human habitation. Hostels are characterised by all that negates human dignity: excessive enclosure; conflation of public and private realms; over-crowding and lack of privacy; excessive sameness of the built fabric; awkwardly functioning spaces; lack of sheltering spaces, greenery, flowers, and trees; presence of surveillance.

The failure to reimagine hostels extends to the failure to reimagine townships, where most hostels are situated, which are themselves non-places. Who would design an RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme) house – equivalent to half of the old Apartheid matchbox that many sacrificed their lives in fighting so hard against their indignity? The failures of successive ANC governments to restore the human dignity of the majority of indigenous African citizens in their diversity, reflect a combination of failure of imagination beyond the known, incompetence, and deep-seated mental slavery. A fully liberated people would not tolerate seeing so many of their fellow citizens confined to the indignity of life in non-places, whilst they enjoy lives of opulence in state houses and upmarket suburbs.

I have detailed the long-term impact of confining human beings in these spaces called hostels in my 1993 book *A Bed Called Home: Life in the Migrant Labour Hostels of Cape Town*, in the hope of alerting future governments to the bitter fruits we were likely to reap as a nation if we were to fail to act radically to put an end to

this dehumanising accommodation system. Tragically, indigenous African families continue to bear the brunt of the structural, physical, emotional, and intellectual limitation of space that undermines human well-being and thriving. Our country is paying the price in brutal violence of all forms, including the highest levels of gender-based violence recorded in the world, continuing and growing inequalities, and tragic neglect of rural areas that is fuelling unprecedented urban migration.

We need to reimagine the spatial geographies successive post-Apartheid governments continue to perpetuate on the peripheries of inherited colonial/Apartheid cities and towns. The botched land restoration to its indigenous owners is at the heart of the 'lack of alternatives' that successive ANC governments claim. There are plenty of creative alternatives to set off virtuous cycles of people returning to the land and taking ownership of its use for the mutual benefit of all people, both present and future generations. The 2015 South African Expropriation Bill pioneered by former Minister of Public Works, who was Minister of Tourism, Patricia De Lille, as leader of the then Independent Democrats, has been stuck in the National Council of Provinces due to the lack of political will by Parliament and the parties represented therein who are pandering to vested interests of white capital owners. The Expropriation Bill has been tested against all critical constitutional requirements and has met each one of them. Political will is needed to pass this bill into law to unleash the restitution and just distribution of land to the indigenous people of this land. This would trigger an unprecedented inclusive property boom that would mop up unemployed young people to become trained and work the land in both urban and rural areas.

The second enabling regulation should take a leaf out of the Irish Rural Development Programme that required every property development programme to first establish designated social housing on a section of the land to be developed to ensure integration of low-income families in mainstream housing provision. Niall Mellon, an Irish businessman, attempted to introduce the concept in our country without success. ANC government officials were too invested in their unsustainable RDP housing scheme that perpetuated the angry divide of the Apartheid system.

The third alternative was developed by then Mayor Herman Mashaba to address the Johannesburg CBD decline that is a huge untapped opportunity to create low-income housing as an integral part of the re-development process. The combined ANC/DA vested interests made sure to undermine this development leading to Mashaba's resignation and South Africa's missed opportunity. Shanghai city in China has not only embedded this in its property development process, it has encouraged and supported the emergence of thousands of community gardens that bring together city residents of all classes to green their environment and benefit from production of indigenous fruit and vegetables.

Alternatives abound, but it takes political will to reimagine and implement policies, laws, and regulations to turn our human settlements into places of healing and restoration of human dignity, nation building, promotion of well-being for all, and healthy ecosystems.

This book is a must-read by anyone who would like to understand the extent of the urgency of design and implementation of radical transformative policies associated with post-war and post-disaster situations. There are numerous examples elsewhere in Africa, Asia, and Latin America of how to undertake such massive rehousing programmes. A key success factor and component of such programmes is a focus on restoration of the dignity of people so they can become contributors to the processes that are intended to benefit them and their communities. Paternalism has no place in such programmes.

Paternalism of the ANC's governance philosophy is the poison our country must banish from public representation. The 'healing' process that 'We, the people' committed ourselves to in the Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa is not possible within a paternalistic governance system. Freeing the human spirit to find full expression in dignified, respectful, trusting relationships would unleash their energies and creativity. Every human being in this beautiful country deserves to move from generations in non-places to places of dignity and hope.

Mamphela Ramphele
Co-Founder of ReimagineSA
October 2023

Preface

The journey of this book started in 2021. As a scholar of former single-sex workers' hostels in South Africa, I had been noticing with interest the diminishing appetite of scholars to research and write about hostels as a key colonial and Apartheid institution whose effects still haunt us today. In working towards the book *Hostels in South Africa: Spaces of Perplexity*, I found it hard to source recently published articles or even books on hostels. Most literature was from the 1990s and before. I made it my assignment to reinvigorate this field. As I was doing this work concerning hostels in 2021, we experienced what became known as social unrest or insurrections that erupted in certain parts of South Africa, and the news told us that it was the hostel dwellers who were primarily the culprits behind the unrest. They theorised and provided evidence in the form of photographs and videos from hostels. However, these proved not that the looting was started from or by hostel dwellers, but that hostel dwellers were involved in the looting spree. For me, there was a disconnect in what was presented. I must confess, I was discomforted by such a disconnect, and I felt my role as a scholar was to do research in order to find out the actual role of hostel dwellers in the 2021 July social unrest. As one can imagine, that kind of research would definitely take long to complete.

I wrote a research proposal and attained ethical clearance from the Department of Sociology at the University of Cape Town, and started my research in Durban, Johannesburg, and Cape Town hostels as planned. That research process is still ongoing. However, I felt that it was taking too long to get me to where I wanted to go. I had the idea of having a special issue in a local journal and called for papers on hostels and social unrest. I approached the *South African Review of Sociology* (SARS) journal, in which I was involved with editorial work at the time. The South African Sociological Association executive, together with SARS, rejected my proposal for a special issue in 2021 as it was deemed to be a conflict of interest. I then approached *Acta Criminologica: Southern African Journal of Criminology* with the same proposal, and they accepted it with excitement and sent out a call for papers. The response was poor and the papers received were too few to constitute a special issue. They gave me a couple of options as a way forward, and this included readvertising the call for papers. I was discouraged and felt that this was a sign of exactly my initial sentiments about the lack of research interest on hostels. I felt that readvertising was not necessarily going to yield any different results.

I then had the idea of writing an edited collection on the broader hostels subject. With that, I decided to solicit papers from people who had written on hostels historically. I received a fair number of positive responses from these senior scholars. I also wrote to the few authors who had submitted papers in response to the call on *Acta Criminologica*, informing them of the challenges we had with the special issue and proposing my new idea of an edited book version. They all embraced this alternative and a new journey started for all of us, which you are

witnessing the culmination of in the form of this book.

For me, what this book presents 'are *not* simple 'case studies' of the impact of the larger economic and political forces. Instead they present vantage points for illuminating processes of social and spatial interconnection, and a means for gaining a fuller understanding of the possibilities for social change' (Hart & Sitas, 2004: 37).

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama
Cape Town, August 2023

Abbreviations

ANC:	African National Congress
APK:	Auckland Park Kingsway
ASGISA:	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
CBD:	Central Business District
Cllr:	Councillor
COSATU:	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CRUs:	Community Residential Units
CPTED:	Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
CSIR:	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
DBSA:	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DHS:	Department of Human Settlements
ERAB:	East Rand Administration Board
FOSATU:	Federation of South African Trade Unions
GBH:	Gross Bodily Harm
GEAR:	Growth, Employment, and Redistribution
IFP:	Inkatha Freedom Party
ISS:	Institute for Security Studies
IUDF:	Integrated Urban Development Framework
HRP:	Hostel Redevelopment Programme
KZN:	KwaZulu-Natal
MAWU:	Metal and Allied Workers Union
NCPS:	National Crime Prevention Strategy
NDP:	National Development Plan
NBRI:	National Building Research Institute
NFP:	National Freedom Party

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

RAU: Rand Afrikaans University

RDP: Reconstruction and Development Programme

UDF: United Democratic Front

UJ: University of Johannesburg

SABC: South African Broadcasting Corporation

SACTWU: South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union

SAHRA: South African Heritage Resources Agency

SAPOA: South African Property Owners' Association

SPLUMA: Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TWIU: Textile Workers' Industrial Union

WRAB: West Rand Administration Board

Introduction

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama[1]

Hostels are in the news every other day, however many people in South Africa have never laid foot in a hostel. The knowledge and mental pictures that an ordinary South African has of hostels is based on the images and videos publicised through the mainstream media. The other platform where people see hostels represented is *Emzini Wezinsizwa*. *Emzini Wezinsizwa* is a South African sitcom which was broadcasted for almost a decade after 1994 on the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Channel 1. It was enjoyed by many viewers, firstly because of its multilingualism, which ensured wide accessibility. Secondly, its ability to expose hostel life to many people who did not know about life in hostels. Thirdly, it addressed key socio-economic issues in a socially and culturally acceptable, humorous, and ethical manner. Some of those issues were rural-urban migration, integration of foreign national migrants with South Africans in hostels, the pitfalls of intercultural communication, various livelihood strategies, and the challenges of unemployment, underemployment, and patriarchy. The departure point of *Emzini Wezinsizwa* was the labour migration system which saw thousands of black people from across the country going to Johannesburg, the city of gold, for opportunities to provide for their families and how the system marginalised women and children. Therefore, the oppressive ways in which the Apartheid system regulated the hostels in relation to townships and rural areas was explicit in this sitcom.

The main reason why hostels are on the news every other day is because of reports about violent crimes (Xulu-Gama, 2017b; *SABC News*, 2023; *ENCA*, 2023), political violence (Rueedi, 2020; Sitas, 1996; Ramphele, 1993; Zulu, 1993; *Sowetan Live*, 2023), and protests for service delivery (Elder, 2003; *Newzroom Afrika*, 2023). This then exacerbates the historical stereotypes about hostels as unsafe, insecure, and violent spaces filled with toxic masculinities (Rueedi, 2020; Xulu-Gama, 2017b; Moloto, 2015; Elder, 2003; Ramphele, 1993; Zulu, 1993). Glen Elder (2003:153) posits that the 'physical incarceration of hostel dwellers behind barbed-wired fences, and their symbolic imprisonment […] secured a discourse that labels their living spaces as fortresses of fear and this has further isolated hostel dwellers' urban experience.' Elder's position demonstrates that there were other spatial features, i.e. barbed wire, beyond the socio-cultural and sexual aspects which helped create the stereotypes around hostels and its dwellers.

There are two main reasons for people not setting foot in this place. Firstly, hostels were historically established for a specific type of a person: a black, working-class, male, rural-urban, and foreign national migrant. Historically, as a black, working-class, male, rural-urban migrant worker, you were based either in the township or hostel, if not in your boss's backyard accommodation or later, in an informal

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settlement. Even though that has evolved and hostels have been degendered, they have not been fully de-ethnicised, de-racialised, nor de-classed, and as a result many South Africans still stereotype hostels and its dwellers (Moswane, 2018). A loose isiZulu translation of hostels is *indawo yamadoda* ('a place for men') or *ezimpohlweni* ('a place for bachelors – unmarried men'). Secondly, hostels, through colonial and Apartheid spatial engineering, were generally located in spaces on the edges of cities or in townships. Noeleen Murray and Leslie Witz (2013: 5) argue that hostels were 'far enough to appear as spatially distinct, separate, perhaps even rural, locality.' Most hostels are located in townships, however, historically those spaces were not recognised as part of the townships. Hostels were instead conceived and regulated as different 'isolated communities' although mostly based within townships (Minnaar, 1993). This was a result of the Apartheid socio-spatial engineering which depicted the hostels as the periphery of townships, as an extension of part of the rural, with policies being implemented slightly differently for the two sets of people found in these overlapping spaces.

The fundamental theoretical basis of this book is the realisation that capital is racial. The theory of racial capitalism as developed in South Africa held that race and class are intertwined and constitute a single site of struggle, (Levenson & Paret, 2023a; Levenson & Paret, 2023b). This realisation showed the limitations of the Marxist lenses as the owners of the means of production are not strictly distributed by class categories i.e., the bourgeois and the proletariat. The owners of the means of production were white persons, and the dispossessed were black persons. Racial capitalism is a phenomenological theory that emanated in South Africa in the 1970s as an attempt to unpack and understand the domination of black persons by the white supremacist regime, and was companioned by the South African Communist Party. It sought to understand the machination of the oppression of black persons through classic, Marxist lenses.

Gillian Hart and Ari Sitas argue that 'migrant and urban black workers often differed on community issues and community struggles' (2004: 33). Having hostels as isolated communities was part of the strategy of the Apartheid government of divide and rule (Mamdani, 1996). Therefore, hostels became known as spaces accommodating men who were uneducated, traditional (in this case meaning 'backward'), and imbued with toxic masculinities. Hostels were modelled and moulded to be violent spaces: spatially, socio-economically, sexually, and environmentally (Elder, 2003). Hostel dwellers could be identified from their dress code, hair-cuts, and accents, even when speaking a local language spoken in the townships. In short, historically, hostel dwellers' epistemologies and ontologies clearly marked them out.

For a South African who does not live and who has never lived in a hostel but who has set their foot in hostels, there are a few common reasons for having encountered hostels across the country. When I asked a group of postgraduate students enrolled for one of the sociology courses at the University of Cape Town if there is anybody

who had been to a hostel, only one student raised their hand. They went there for the first time to buy *inyama yangaphakathi* ('tripe') from a hostel. Yes, this is one common reason why people go to hostels – because in each and every hostel you are likely to find an informal outlet which sells very tasty tripe.

The second famous reason for people to go to hostels, particularly men, is alcohol. Hostels have a lot of taverns, including informal drinking spots, which sometimes offer competitive alcohol prices when compared to the township prices. Hostels also offer various types of traditional/home-made alcohol which might not be easily found outside hostels.

The third reason would be to find a traditional healer (*isangoma* or *inyanga*) and/ or spiritual healer (*umthandazi*).[2] As I have shown in my earlier work (Xulu-Gama, 2017a) hostels have become a space in which people find a base, in response to their ancestral or spiritual calling, to conduct their spiritual and or traditional consulting (to run their informal businesses) as a livelihood procurement activity. Ramphele (1993) also argued that children of male migrants came to hostels to seek traditional healers in cases where they were spiritually haunted (*ufufunyane*). While some hostel dwellers claim it does not make sense to use the hostel for ancestral worship, the spiritual and traditional leaders and healers understand that it is a fertile land because it is overcrowded by people from rural areas with different beliefs, and who practice different forms of spirituality (Xulu-Gama, 2017a). Sometimes, black people look to ancestors as a form of spirituality to find answers for the challenges they face in life, like being poor, unemployed, health deterioration, etc, and the traditional and/or spiritual healer facilitates the healing and or breakthrough from this encounter.

The fourth[3] and infamous reason is to find *inkabi* (hitmen) if one has a target (person) to be eliminated (killed) (Xulu-Gama, 2017b). Obviously, this last reason is not something one will easily hear people talk about openly, however it is an open secret to the South African community. The taxi industry and politicians are known to make use of this service provided by the hostels (Moerane, 2018). This point is also related to finding illegal firearms, with even South African police reports acknowledging that people use hostels to hide their illegal weapons (Moerane, 2018).

2　After engaging with Bongani Nyoka's (2013: 12) work, I feel it is important to note that this should not be understood as witchcraft practice. He argues that in 'some unsociological logic – in South African public discourse and, by extension, in the academy – the term [*umuthi*] is used to mean or is associated with "witchcraft" so that when one uses *umuthi* s/he is *ipso facto*, practicing witchcraft.' Therefore, I would not like the reader to fall into the trap of applying a negative definition to the practice of traditional and or spiritual healing. Bongani Nyoka further argues that there is no reason to conflate herbal medicine with spirituality – 'There is no reason to suppose that the two are mutually embedded or mutually reinforcing' (2013: 13). However, for the purposes of this paper, the way I am framing the understanding of spirituality with traditional beliefs, in this case, is inclusive of the usage of traditional medicine, *umuthi*.

3　These reasons above are not presented in any order of importance.

Unlike the examples I make above of why people go to hostels if they have never lived there before, the first time I went to visit hostels was in 2009 and it was to try and gain access to conduct my PhD research, which I did successfully. However, outside my work (in the form of research and community engagement), I tend to go to hostels to buy *inyama yangaphakathi*. I also go to visit some of the friends and 'family' which I have made through many years of working in hostel spaces. Similarly, Moloto (2015) and Moswane (2018) said they lived fairly close to the hostel and they had never set foot there, though they were always curious about the hostel and the people who lived in it. It was only when they decided to do research on hostels that they went there for the first time (Moloto, 2015; Moswane, 2018).

What are Hostels?

> 'Hostels are a euphemism in South Africa for single-sex labour compounds constructed to house Africans who were, until 1986 when pass laws were repealed, only permitted to reside in the urban areas to minister to the needs of the white man and to depart therefrom as soon as they cease so to minister' (Ramphele, 1993: 1).

I have called them 'Spaces of Perplexity' (Xulu-Gama, 2017a) while other people have called them many different things, often evoking their perceived characteristics. My research participants, both men and women, called them *indawo yamadoda* (Xulu-Gama, 2017a), while others have referred to them variously as communities in isolation (Minnaar, 1993), an extension of the rural, total institutions (Goffman, 1961; Sitas, 1983), segregated and gendered spaces (Xulu-Gama, 2017; Elder, 2003), violent spaces (Xulu-Gama, 2017b), volatile spaces, sites of violence and repression, and sites of significance (Murray & Witz, 2013).

The government has tried to make homes from hostels and called them community residential units (CRUs) (Xulu-Gama, 2017a). Hostels are colonial, Apartheid institutions which served to accommodate and control the presence and movement of black people in cities as they straddled rural and the urban spaces for employment purposes. They are one way in which the capitalist economy addressed the black working-class urban housing needs, controlling their reproduction, exploitation, and oppression. Melamed (2015: 1) argued that 'capital can only be capital when it is accumulating, and it can only accumulate by producing and moving through relations of severe inequality among human groups – capitalists with the means of production/workers without the means of subsistence, creditors/debtors, conquerors of land made property/the dispossessed and removed.' Hostels as institutions were wedded to the social, cultural, and political formations in the country. Hostels were classed, sexed, gendered, and racialised spaces of oppression and exploitation, firstly of black men by the whites, and later of black women by whites and men as well. Hostels were an extension of the compound system, a much tighter humiliating system of control that was established in the mines to house the migrant mineworkers. Compounds have slight differences to hostels, with compounds accommodating workers for a singular employer and under

the authority of that employer. The essence of racial capitalism is that capitalism self-perpetuates and successfully embeds itself with race in phenotypical concrete terms (Levenson & Paret, 2023a). The bourgeois class is white, and white is bourgeois, while on the other hand a proletariat, vagabond is black, and black is proletariat and vagabond (see Fanon, 1963) and while the state is no longer white phenotypically and racially, it is still capitalist and anti-black. Therefore, racial capitalism concretised enmeshed black and blackness with phenotypic when it transcended the European boarders (Levenson & Paret, 2023a).

What Roles are Hostels Playing Now?

Should hostels be improved, transformed, or eradicated? What roles do hostels really play in contemporary South Africa? The answers to these questions are intricately connected as the role that hostels play might assist in determining what is to be done with them. It seems easier to answer the question on the role they played in the previous political system. The question of why we have hostels in this day and age is complex and can be answered in different ways. My first attempt at an answer for this question is that hostels are historical institutions and we know it is difficult, if not impossible, to erase history. Hostels are a remnant of the painful past and are also proof of some of the failures of the democratic ANC government. They are 'symbols of suffering and of the possibilities of resistance' (Murray & Witz, 2013: 51). Hostels are a reflection of the perplexities, the paradox of blending the new with the old without eliminating the old, and sometimes having the old seemingly overcoming the new. Hostels are places of political struggle, struggle for a livelihood, struggle for accommodation, and struggle for economic development as people are seen establishing their small businesses which are sometimes located in informal settlements. Hostels provide a space for a struggle towards class mobility as it receives and accommodates students registered for education in higher education institutions (Xulu-Gama & Lorgat, 2022).

The official South African position is that hostels were done away with as an institution together with related policies and legislation. The new name given to hostels is CRUs.[4] Accordingly, we should not be referring to 'hostels' anymore but obviously 'hostels' v CRUs remain a lived reality of thousands of South Africans, mainly from rural areas. The reality of hostels is that the more things have changed, the more they have remained the same.

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4   I must confess, as an isiZulu speaker who is a hostel scholar, I, together with hostel dwellers have found it difficult to use or translate this new name. Hostels were easy because in isiZulu we call them amahostela. In isiXhosa we call them amahostela or emaholweni ('in the halls'). Compounds were also easy because we call them inkompolo (singular) or izinkompolo (plural), all directly taken from the English versions. Therefore, it has been easier for people to continue to call CRUs hostels. However, if people's meanings and experiences of the hostels begin to change and differ from the Apartheid era, perhaps the same people will be able to naturally come up with a phrase which is suitable for a place that they live in. Hostels, meanwhile, will always imply former single-sex workers' hostels.

In the mid-1990s, there was a hostel redevelopment programme which was later replaced by the CRUs programme in the early 2000s and hostel buildings were supposed to be upgraded, refurbished, or demolished, and new buildings erected. I use 'supposed to' because this has not been a reality for most people living in hostels. Some people still live in the hostel buildings constructed during the Apartheid era, while others have lived in informal settlements, which are an extension of hostels, since the 1980s. Some people do, however, live in the refurbished buildings, which have been adapted to suit small families. These sometimes mean cardboard or wooden planks installed as partitions in what were previously large halls filled with sets of concrete bunk beds. In other cases, more resilient walls were put up, making bedrooms to accommodate family housing. Some conversions to CRUs were flimsy while others were more concrete.

The group of people who have been accommodated in the newly established CRUs are the lucky ones. They have found it easy to change the name from hostels to flats or *izitezi*[5] (multi-storey buildings). This is a fancier name because as black people in South Africa we never lived in flats or *izitezi*. So it is exciting to go levels higher and experience being above others for a change, even if those below you are your fellow black people, family members, or homegirls/homeboys. However, the reality is that people living in CRUs also have a set of complaints emerging from the lived reality being too different from what is stated in policy or what they dreamt of. There has been a sharp disjuncture between popular aspirations and expectations and the transformative potential of the CRUs. Men have been encouraged to bring their families, yet they have been pushed into even smaller spaces than they occupy in the rural areas. So, going back to the question of what role hostels play today: this means hostels play no role because they are non-existent, at least in policy. Looking at it practically, the persistence of hostels and their deteriorated state is a direct indication that black lives do not matter. They continue to accommodate thousands of black people, serving as a daily reminder that it is not yet *uhuru*[6], and that black working-class people are not free. Theoretically, it can be argued that hostels are still in existence because in South Africa we have the colonialism of a special type (CST), a type of colonialism in which 'the oppressing White nation occupie[s] the same territory as the oppressed people themselves and live[s] side by side with them' (Levenson & Paret, 2023: 3404). The establishment and stubbornness of hostels in South Africa forms part of the conditions in which capitalism became racial. Levenson and Paret (2023) have demonstrated that racism and capitalism do not play themselves out in the same form or degree in different capitalist countries, therefore 'capitalism assumes a racial guise under specific conditions' (2023: 3407).

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5   Multi-storey buildings. This conception is, however, not applicable to some hostels which have been opened up for families but have not been rebuilt or redeveloped in double or multi-storey buildings, i.e. Vosloorus hostels (emaZulwini) in Gauteng.
6   Uhuru is a Swahili term meaning freedom or independence.

What Change did the Community Residential Units Bring?

The introduction of CRUs was key because it made the presence of women and children at the hostels official. This can be understood as representative of the vision that since everybody was welcomed and encouraged to bring their family members to live together in the CRUs, rural-urban migration would be a non-issue. It was for that reason that Gillian Hart and Ari Sitas (2004) argued that the post-1994 democratic dispensation ignored the persistence of migrancy[7] (see Bank & Posel, with Wilson, 2020).

In critique of the CRUs, Elder (2003), using a feminist and queer analysis, argues that the insistence on the inclusion of women and children is based on the limited and exclusionary understanding of hostels as heteropatriarchal – which, he posits, was a constituent part of the racial system known as Apartheid. 'Heteropatriarchy is the social power structure that creates and maintains the heterosexist binary of masculinity and femininity and the associated social expectations (gender performances) determined according to biological sex' (Elder, 2003: 4).

Similarly to my own critique (Xulu-Gama, 2017a) in terms of how the CRU policy has understood the concept of family, Bongani Nyoka, in an article published in 2013, critiques how South African sociologists, relying on Eurocentric sociological concepts and theories, incorrectly uses 'families', 'extended families', and 'households' by imagining black South African families to be organised according to Western family structures. 'Yet *usapho* (a family) among *ama*Xhosa, for example, is not limited to one's immediate biological relatives i.e. parents and siblings – nor, for that matter, is it limited to living in the same house/home. It also includes "uncles", aunts, grandparents and even people who are not even related by blood but through *isiduko* ('clan name')'[8] (Nyoka, 2013: 12).

A further critique of CRUs is from Khanyisile Mthembu (2023) who conducted research in KwaZulu-Natal's Glebelands hostel, focusing on the presence of women and children. Her research participants argued that the criteria for qualification 'were unclear' and none of them were eligible for family units as they did not meet the requirements. As a result, from her sample population, though small, 'None of the women had secured accommodation by making application for

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7   Instead, Hart and Sitas (2004: 33) note that, 'In practice there are many indications that, for huge numbers of South Africans, rural-urban connections remain a central feature of everyday life. Yet these connections seem to have shifted fundamentally, with new and intensified forms of urban-rural entanglement emerging as the costs of increasing urban insecurity are being displaced to the countryside. In effect, impoverished rural regions in the former Bantustans appear to be taking on – or extending – the function of social security of the last resort, with old-age pensions forming a crucial resource.'

8   'Thus a man and a woman who share the same isiduko can never get married because they are considered siblings. Also, in many South African languages, the concepts of a "cousin" or an "uncle" on one's paternal side of the family simply does not exist. For example, my father's younger brother is not "uncle" but utat'omncinci or ubab'omncane – literally "younger father". Similarly, his children are not "cousins" but my siblings – abanta'kwethu. Thus, "uncles" and "cousins" – to use familiar terminology – do not belong to an "extended family" or "household" but are members of the family tout court. This may not always be easily intelligible to some, but it makes a lot of sense when one immerses herself in the ontological narratives of her objects of enquiry' (Nyoka, 2013: 12).

accommodation through eThekwini Human Settlements in accordance with the stipulated CRU Programme guidelines' (Mthembu, 2023: 149).

Now that the gender exclusion was seemingly taken care of by rebuilding and opening the doors to women and children, what about the socio-spatial and cultural practices and lived experiences which the hostel dwellers knew and embraced? What about their sociological orientation, sociological imagination, and personal preferences? How would we undo the stigma associated with being violent, traditionalist, and being *umkhaya*[9] (homeboy/homegirl) or *amagoduka*[10] (rural-urban migrant)? How would we possibly win in this battle when Apartheid, racial capitalism, and socio-spatial positioning remain? On the other hand, there were sentiments that '[n]o-one must be forced to move. There is a strong community here. Many people have lived here for many years and we want to keep that community together' (Cooke, 2021: 17). The forced removals of the Apartheid era is still acknowledged as one of the most painful experiences of the past (Hlongwane, 2016). It is unfortunate that black working-class South Africans still go through similar experiences in democratic society (see chapter 6 in this volume on racialised dispossession in the Lwandle hostel).

In most cases, while old hostel buildings remain, old socio-cultural structures and racial capitalism have been diluted with new socio-political structures which have erupted and have been welcomed, although sometimes reluctantly so. Some of the characteristics of racial capitalism are racial segregation and stratification, social reproduction, exploitation, expropriation, uneven development, labour migration, and the belief in the purity of whiteness which has resulted in the Black Lives Matter movement. Hostels, particularly the ones which remain in the old buildings that were there before the democratic dispensation, still make use of organisational arrangements like block chairmen and *izibonda* ('headmen'*).* The question is, if the point was to dismantle or adapt the hostels, what were we dismantling or changing them into? Spatially and socially, the closest alternatives were townships, but the townships have their own historical traumas, political burdens, and failing systems to deal with (see Dlamini, 2009). Although they were intricately interlinked, hostels and townships were always spatially, socially, and politically fragmented. There was a lot of animosity between the two, which was also intentionally created by Apartheid political and socio-spatial engineers.

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9   Homeboy or homegirl (in isiZulu, umkhaya) is a gender-neutral word. When the word umkhaya is used by those who regard each other as such, omkhaya, it is fine, without negative connotations. However, there is another more negative form in which this word is used by an outsider, i.e., a township resident making references to a hostel dweller or to anybody who might be originating in the rural areas. As highlighted above, these people can sometimes be known through their accents and dress codes.

10   Ukugoduka means 'to go back home'. Igoduka means 'the one who often goes back home' (i.e., migrant). Amagoduka is a plural form of igoduka. Amagoduka are those whose homes are not the place in which they reside, but instead their home would often be their place of origin.

Hostels in Townships

Townships have their own ways of dealing with social crises, which encouraged Sarah Mosoetsa (2011) to argue that they are 'Eating from one pot' in her research conducted in KwaZulu-Natal's Mpumalanga Township. Townships are entangled with substance abuse, especially with *amaphara*[11], living on poison daily, while hostel dwellers pride themselves that in the rural areas people do not eat from bins (see Xulu-Gama, 2017a). Additionally, when township youth do well, they access class mobility which drains townships of its best (see Southall, 2016). The hostel, on the other hand, is a different scenario altogether. Firstly, they were always seen as temporary homes and they remain such for thousands of people. Even if people now live there for longer periods, and some live with their whole families, i.e. some are born there and there are no restrictions for retirement requiring eviction, hostel dwellers still know the 'true' definition of *ikhaya*.[12] *Ikhaya* is home, and a hostel is a hostel. The hostel is not a 'home', but a place where one resides in order to be close to work opportunities and workplaces, and for others it brings them closer to educational institutions, both schools and higher education institutions.

In the beginning I made reference to hostels as negatively stereotyped spaces and, indeed, as argued by Julian Cooke (2021: 21), although things change, 'reputations die hard'. Therefore, as somebody who has done extensive ethnography at the hostels in South Africa, it would be a misrepresentation not to mention the bright side about hostels, even though these are not widely reported on in the mainstream media. Those who have been to hostels but who are not hostel dwellers are drawn to hostels for various reasons: 1) hostel dwellers know the definition of respect; 2) hostel dwellers do well with traditional music groups and performances; 3) they are known for traditional food, such as *inyama yangaphakathi*; 4) hostel dwellers look out for each other, as *omkhaya*. Perhaps because of their regional organisation, *angeke ulale ulambile ehostela* ('you will not go to bed with an empty stomach at the hostel'). The majority of the dwellers still have *ubuntu*[13]; 5) hostels are known as spaces where it is easy to find intimate partners (men and women). Beyond that, those of us who frequent the hostels know that hostels are black communities just like any other in South Africa. They have all the resultant effects of the socio-economic ills that plague other majority black communities in South Africa, like unemployment, overcrowding, broken family structures, lack of decent and adequate housing, and lack of well-maintained infrastructure. The positive, negative, and the contradictory features of hostels mentioned above are some of the

11   The term 'amaphara', possibly derived from 'parasites', burst into South African public culture in the 2010s to refer to petty thieves addicted to a heroin-based drugs locally called whoonga or nyaope (Hunter, 2021: 59)

12   Ikhaya is a home. A home has shelter and, in that shelter, resides a family, people who are related in many different ways – not just a nuclear family. In a home there is structure, normally hierarchical in nature. People are born in ekhaya and are buried in ekhaya.

13   I acknowledge that this might seem contradictory or controversial to the reader who only knows hostels from mainstream media or even scholarly literature. However, being an ethnographer who is not only epistemologically and ontologically connected, I am also culturally and existentially connected in my fieldwork. This rootedness in my locale is fundamental to endogeneity. Endogenous knowledge is experienced by society as an integral part of its heritage (see Nyoka, 2013).

examples that led me to conceptualise hostels as spaces of perplexity (Xulu-Gama, 2017a).

Contribution of the Book

This book is in conversation with hostels literature and further seeks to contribute to research on the legacy of Apartheid on the black working-class by looking at hostels and compounds, and in doing so, engages with the sociology of migration studies, environmental design studies, socio-spatial justice, and violence. This book should be taken as part of what Hart and Sitas referred to as a 'new research initiative that seeks to illuminate key forces and processes taking shape in the post-Apartheid period – the ongoing importance, but changing character, of rural-urban connections; histories of racialised dispossession and their continuing salience; land and livelihood struggles' (Hart & Sitas 2004: 32). It is a reflection and an analysis of a journey, as we commemorate 30 years of democracy. Elder (2003) posited that paying attention to spaces is a good way of examining change especially if a country is going through various social ills. The point is to focus not only on the transformation of the built environment but also the meanings that are imbued within the new spaces, which, Elder (2003) explains, are spaces under transformation.

This book is in response to the dearth of literature in the hostel scholarship. A number of articles that one finds published in the past five years are based on what happened in the past 30 to 40 years (see Vosloo, 2020; Rueedi, 2020; Cooke, 2021). This edited collection is composed of nine brilliant chapters from people who, while specialising in different fields, are interested in the subject of hostels. This book is one of its kind in the history of South Africa: it is timely and transdisciplinary, though not exhaustive. The contributors are racially and generationally diverse, with senior scholars combined with emerging researchers. In terms of gender, we still see more men writing about hostels than women, which can be understood as a reflection of the complex relations between masculinities and femininities in hostels as well as the politics of the production of knowledge. There are, nevertheless, a few published works written by women on this subject, thereby drawing special attention to the lived experiences of women in hostels both during the Apartheid regime (see Ramphele, 1993) and in the post-Apartheid regime (see Mthembu, 2023 and Xulu-Gama, 2017a). I am not reducing women scholars' work to only be about women and gender issues, as it can be seen from these three (Ramphele, Xulu-Gama and Mthembu) sets of work that they engage over and beyond issues of gender and family structures through also focusing on violence, politics, and economic migration among other issues.

The book revisits hostels in order to assess the changes and implementation of the policies and legislation of the country as is relevant to hostels and hostel dwellers. Though the country is democratised and the Constitution claims that all are equal before the law, this book demonstrates that this is not a lived reality for the hostel dwellers. Therefore, the book is a sociological examination of spaces, livelihoods,

social justice, violence, and criminality to hopefully reframe hostel discourse with updated research studies. It is an opportunity to theorise hostels critically and differently to how they were theorised more than 30 years ago. The book asks, 'to what extent are the conditions in which hostel dwellers exist of their own making?'

The research presented here tells us about the history, the current spatial, political, and gendered racial violence, and resilience of the black working-class and an alienated set of people in South Africa. Additionally, it highlights what has not changed and has sometimes gotten worse in the country. The book also interestingly shows the different battles that hostel dwellers are now faced with compared to the battles they fought under the previous dispensation. The book is really about socio-spatial (in)justice and inequality as played out in the former single-sex workers' hostels. Relatedly, it is about the failure of the government to provide proper and adequate housing to accommodate the fast-paced urbanisation that has characterised the post-Apartheid period.

Though this book refers to hostels in South Africa, it does not in any way seek to homogenise hostels nor hostel dwellers. It acknowledges the complex and interlocking differences which exist. Some of these key and defining features of difference at the hostel are gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, level of education acquired, class, ethnicity, religion, the kind of shelter (old blocks, *izitezi*, CRUs, informal settlements), and area of origin. Additionally, the biggest difference could be the imaginations, dreams, and visions that the dwellers have for their lives and that of their family members.

Structure of the Book

This book is divided into three main parts. Part 1 deals with the history and the spatial design of hostels. The first chapter is a rich historical and spatial framing and analysis. This chapter presents images which were mostly taken and/or drawn to depict the historical spatial design of hostels. The second chapter is based on history and highlights how different legislation controlled African workers and, in response, how the workers defended themselves through various cultural formations. These authors both worked on hostels and with hostel dwellers in the course of their academic research, creative work, and technical training to advocate for change. The third chapter is based on secondary data analysis, though it is centred on work done only during the democratic regime. This chapter directly decries the socio-spatial injustices and inequality that continues to be found in hostels as a result of the history and the spatial design of hostels. These three chapters reflect on hostels across the country.

Part 2 engages with different types of violence and how criminality can be prevented. The first chapter in this section is a theoretical proposal of how the government should respond to the stubborn criminality and violence persisting beyond the political freedom acquired in 1994. The second chapter is based on hostel dwellers' perspectives in response to the social unrest of 2021, with data collected at Langa

hostel in Cape Town. The third chapter engages with racialised dispossession as ongoing violence affecting the black working-class in South Africa, focusing on Lwandle hostel in Cape Town.

Part 3 provides an analysis of the socio-political environment in hostels. The first chapter in this section starts with providing a picture of the living conditions of hostels at the eThekwini municipality. The next chapter focusses on the continuation of the marginalisation and exploitation of hostel dwellers by external political forces, though now under the new dispensation. The final chapter brings to our attention the often ignored issue of children and social reproduction in the hostels.

Some of the questions that this book answers are: what are hostels and what are compounds? What are the differences between the two? What purposes do hostels serve in the post-Apartheid regime? What links can be drawn between Apartheid hostels and post-Apartheid hostels? How do we problematise hostels in contemporary South Africa? How can we reconceptualise and re-theorise hostels in contemporary South Africa? What broader conclusions or arguments can be made about hostels in the wider Southern African region, considering that single-sex workers' hostel were not particular to South Africa?

Synopsis of the Chapters

Julian Cooke takes us through a very deep historical description of the hostel and compound system. He navigates with us through a variety of the hostels across the country. He also shows us that architecturally hostels were designed to be violent from inception, hence the violence that the hostels are well-known for did not start socio-politically, but had its genesis in its architecture. He uses what he knows best, architecture and urban design, to explain the struggles and the different types of means of control in hostels.

Ari Sitas, as a sociologist and artist, takes serious interest in how hostel dwellers incorporated their working lives with their culture and creativity, which is shown through poetry, plays, and through song. In this chapter, Sitas reflects on the work that he started doing in the 1970s and 1980s with workers who were based in hostels. He reviews the different encounters he had with the multiple identities of the migrant workers, hostel dwellers, activists, and creatives.

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama advocates for socio-spatial justice in the hostels, which she calls 'spaces of perplexity', and argues that more decisive and aligned efforts should be implemented in hostels in order for hostel dwellers to begin to enjoy the benefits of a democratic South Africa. She argues that the social and spatial segregation of hostels in history can be traced to the current epoch. She evokes a limited number of issues all of which evidently points us to links between the social and the spatial, thereby demonstrating socio-spatial injustice issues in South Africa.

Ntsika Mlamla, indirectly in conversation with Cooke, advocates for a different approach to the government's forms of socio-spatial redress. Instead of limiting the redress to opening hostels from being former single-sex accommodation to CRUs, he argues that the government should preoccupy itself with crime prevention through environmental design. As a criminologist, he feels there should be collaboration between criminologists, architects, anthropologists, and sociologists in hostel planning in order for change to be better realised in terms of security and safety.

Yonela Toshẹ-Mlambo and Zukiswa Zanazo's work uses Langa hostel in Cape Town as a case study. Using interviews, they show that hostels should not always be understood as synonyms for violent spaces. Hostel dwellers are able to learn from historical accounts and then refrain from partaking in activities which vandalises property, and which put the people in a compromised position in relation to employment opportunities. This chapter reflects a different perspective from how hostels have largely been depicted by the mainstream media and scholarly work.

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama discusses the act of turning hostel 33 in Lwandle into a museum. She argues that the decision and the processes involved did not take into careful consideration the histories, the meanings, and the wishes of the dispossessed hostel dwellers. She claims that this is a continuation of the racialised dispossession of black working people. The displaced hostel dwellers who were not immediately housed as was agreed were the ones who suffered the greatest loss, while the people who were responsible for the process of producing the museum were the ones who gained the most. She uses the ceremonial transformation concept to explain a process celebrating an event or change which does not positively impact the lived realities of the people on the ground.

Bisimwa Timothee Makanishe provides more of a comprehensive picture of the hostels from research conducted in nine hostels in the eThekwini municipality. Using mixed methods, he examines the material living conditions in all these hostels relying on three main indicators of well-being which are employment, income, and housing according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). While in many cases his findings reflect those of the various studies done on hostels and their living conditions, his work does, however, show some positive developments which have mostly not been reported elsewhere. For example, the majority of hostel dwellers have running water, electricity, and shelter over their heads. The upkeep on these services might not be great, but it is there.

Paulus Zulu focuses on the historical and current marginal position and the marginalisation and exploitation of hostel dwellers by external political forces. While Sitas writes about cultural formations in hostels, Zulu refers to cultural hybridity in hostels. They both conclude on the role of the informal/formal rural structures and connections as influencing the social arrangements in hostels, mixed with a variety of ways in which they adjust to urban settings. Zulu acknowledges the ways in which the government tried to improve hostels by converting hostels to CRUs but mentions the total failure in integrating hostels into the neighbouring

communities. He explains that hostels were always on a path to demise and continue to be, except now it is under democratically elected governance.

Bianca Tame engages with economic migration in the context of rising unemployment and focuses on the negative consequences it has had on social reproduction and undoing the legacy of family-life disruption in South Africa. She looks closely at gender and de-gendering as conceptual tools in hostels literature. She points out some of the limited ways in which hostel scholars have discussed the burden of care, which has been largely and critically engaged elsewhere in South African scholarship. The key criticism from the currently existing hostel scholarship is in how we have limited, if not demolished, the scope of looking at men and women as parents as well, beyond seeing them as workers, singles, and married couples. This further speaks to the limited representation of children and their experiences in hostels.

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Part One

HISTORICAL AND SPATIAL HOSTEL LANDSCAPE

A poem by Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama

Hamba Mntanami[1]

Hamba mntanami,
Ungakhohlwa imuva!
Ngoba umphasile umatikuletsheni
Akukho okusengakuhlula,
Hamba mntanami,
Ungakhohlwa imuva!
Usukhulile, usufundile
Ngoba ukwazile ukuziphatha kahle,
Akukho okusengakuhlula,
Ontanga bakho
bashaya ngambili; ngantathu wezingane
Kodwa wena usihloniphile singabazali bakho.

Ngalokho siyabonga!
Ungakhohlwa ukuthi
Konke okwenzayo,
Uzenzela wena.

Hamba mntanami,
Ungakhohlwa imuva!
Hamba uyoqala impilo entsha,
Uwena osuyithemba lami.
Uhloniphe umhlaba wawobabamkhulu
Uhloniphe abantu,
Abafowenu nodadewenu
uyobathola phambili.

Ikati lilele eziko laph' ekhaya,
Ukukugcina laph' endlini
ngeke kusize ngalutho
Ubaba wakho uyambona uyagula,
Ukusebenza ezimayini kumkhahlazile,
Kanti naye akafunanga ukulalela
uma ngithi akehlise ezinkambini.

Nami noma ngithi ngikhona, ngikhona,
Kodwa angisaqinile ngendlela ebengiqine ngayo

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1   Lenkondlo ibhalelwe ukuhlonipha omama ababheke amakhaya noma obaba bekhona noma bengekho. Iyindlela yokuhlonipha omama abakhulisa izingane bese ngokuhamba kwesikhathi bazidedele ziye emadolobheni ukuze ziyoqala impilo entsha. Lenkondlo ibhalelwe abantu besifazane abanethemba lokuthi izingane zabo ngeke zikhohlwe lapho eziphuma khona.

Impilo iyanqaba - Ngikhandekile impela
Imikhuhlale isho ukumuka nathi,
Amahlala khona ayazidalela lapha kithi.
Imithi yodokotela ayelaphi lutho,
Iyathikazisa nje kube kuphela.

Hamba mntanami,
Ungakhohlwa imuva!

Go my child[2]

Go my child,
Do not forget where you come from!

Since you have passed matric,
There is nothing that can stop you.
Go my child,
Do not forget where you come from!

You have grown and gotten educated.
Since you have been well behaved till now,
There is nothing that can stop you.
Your age group
Already have at least two or three kids each
You have respected us as your parents.

For that, we thank you!
Don't forget that,
Everything you do,
You do for yourself.

Go my child,
Do not forget where you come from!
Go and start a new life.
You are now my only hope
Respect the land of our forefathers!
Respect the people!
Bbrothers and sisters,
You will find where you are going.

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2   This poem has been written in honour of the women who head households with or without male partners.
     It is dedicated to the women who have raised children, and later have to let them go to the cities to start a
     new life. It is dedicated to women who have faith that their children will not forget where they come from.

There is too much poverty in this household,
Keeping you here at home,
Will not assist in anyway.
You can see that your father is not well,
Working in the mines affected him badly.
He also did not listen,
When I said he should reduce alcohol consumption.

No matter how hard I try,
It is clear that I am not as strong as I used to be.
Life is harsh – I am getting frail
Chronic diseases are a serious threat
They do as they please in our bodies.
Doctor's medicines are not effective,
They drug you only for a short while.

Go my child,
Do not forget where you come from!

Chapter 1: The Anatomy of Migrant Labour Hostels

Julian Cooke[1]

Introduction

The mining compounds and state hostels were variants of an institution used to house migrant labourers in South Africa for over 100 years, roughly 1885–1995. This chapter analyses each variant in chronological order: the diamond field compound, gold mine compound, and government hostel, showing how they were used to control and oppress migrant workers, drawing attention to both spatial and social means and to variations in the different types. The analysis puts forward the idea that although there are considerable differences between the three, they all work in the same 'equation', with social and spatial means as variables, but the outcome is always the same: control and oppression. This is true even of end-of-Apartheid and post-Apartheid hostels. Broadly, it shows that over time there is a gradual and slight improvement in the spatial arrangements and quality of the institution. However, in the first place, it never reaches anywhere near a quality that anyone could call home, and secondly, any improvement is matched by a deterioration of social freedom.

It is posited that the two principal means of spatial control are isolation and non-place. Isolation was induced spatially by separating compounds and hostels from each other and from other areas of towns and cities. They were surrounded by all kinds of elements to prevent anyone entering or leaving without being monitored. Effective surveillance over the men inside by the compound/hostel staff ensured control over those wishing to enter and leave. All examples of the institution were isolated in terms of gender – they were primarily males only. The compounds and hostels were also isolated by their large size – they were formidable, male-dominated urban precincts. Beer-halls accommodating thousands of patrons reinforced their excluding character. Many had ethnic separation in the living quarters. Isolation was augmented by elements which made the compounds and hostels autonomous and the inmates dependent: food outlets and dining kitchens, shops for all kinds of goods, beer-halls, hospitals, churches, and recreation facilities.

If place describes a space, found or made, which enhances the activity, pleasure, good function, and dignity of human life, non-place describes the opposite of that. As will be indicated, non-place is a consistent characteristic of the institution at the scale of the whole and in detail. This was part of the oppressive machinery.

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1   An earlier version of the chapter was published, in 2007 titled: The Form of the Migrant Labour Hostel : Space and Society (Cooke, 2007: 64-69)

The compound/hostel enabled exploitation of residents chiefly through its incorporation of facilities that were difficult, if not impossible, for residents to avoid – the facilities outlined above – and also services such as those for health.

Both compound types and the main hostel types are examined under these broad categories.

Kimberley's Closed Compounds

The first buildings to house large groups of migrant labourers, the compounds, were in the diamond mines in Kimberley (Wilson, 1972a). They were closed: mine workers who lived in them were not permitted to leave them during the period of their contract, nor were they allowed visitors.

Why were they closed? The chief reason proffered by the owners of the mines was to control the theft of diamonds (Turrell 1982: 2; see De Beers, 1890).

Figure 1.1 *Untitled (Source Cape Archives AG 1428)*

However, Turrell (1982; 1987) shows that there were deeper reasons – primarily, the increase of diamond production in the 1880s necessitated a greater control of labour. That meant having a continuous supply of workers, keeping them in one place long enough to become productive, ensuring consistent attendance, and maintaining health and discipline. There are two main parts to his argument: firstly, that the preferred source of labour, because it was available for longer periods and with more continuity, was convict labour.

Figure 1.2 *Convicts searching gavel, diamond mines, Kimberley. SA 40.405. G.W.W.(Source Cape Archives AF 649)*

Secondly, that mine management went to great lengths to coerce the better workers into renewing their contracts. Most contemporary analyses concur with his general conclusion (Ramahapu, 1981; Worger, 1987). Others also point to the chaotic state of the labour situation in Kimberley prior to the introduction of the compound (Worger, 1987; Hornsby, 1874). There was no predictable supply of men because they would periodically return home to organise their farms, there was very free use of violence by diggers to deal with workers who did not perform to expectations and this provoked a labour shortage, and there was widespread drunkenness which resulted in high absenteeism.

The *Master and Servants Acts* (1856) of the Cape of Good Hope government improved employers' control by permitting them to search their workers at any time and by forbidding the breaking of contracts, but they were insufficient to guarantee consistent attendance. Pass law regulations which controlled the entry and movement of black people in Kimberley added to the chaos, resulting in a huge number of arrests and a huge town prison population – seven times that of Cape Town's (Worger, 1987; Hornsby, 1874). The prisoners were used for mine labour, but because their sentences were short-term they could not guarantee a consistent flow of convict workers.

To solve the problem the mine owners put together an institution which was conceived as and closely resembled a prison.

The compound's initiation in Kimberley was closely linked with a report written by a mining engineer, Kitto (Wasserfall, 1989: 91). In it he suggested that the key to good productivity lay in emulating slave labour practices in Brazilian diamond mines. Furthermore, from their initiation and right up to 1932, compounds were used in parallel with convict labour stations (Wasserfall, 1989:104). Turrell (1982) showed that management preferred convict labour and this is borne out by early De Beers Annual General Meeting reports (De Beers 1889; 1890: 7). Accounts at the time show the currency of the idea: that compounds were '… prisons built around the orifices of the mines...' (Cronwright-Schreiner, undated). Their physical form powerfully confirms the comparison.

Social Means of Control

The principal new means of control to be added to the existing framework of laws and practices was to spatially isolate workers from society. The intention, according to the *Daily Independent* on Saturday, May 2, 1885, announcing the 'inauguration of the Compound System' (on the Monday of the same week), '... is to cut off all the means of communication with the outside world which has hitherto afforded the sable mining labourer so many facilities of his employer's property. He will henceforth never be outside the pale of his employer's authority' (*Daily Independent*, 1885).

The second new means was the creation of an institutional dependency. The intention was to make the worker dependent on the hostel for every daily need, '... all his wants will be attended to by his employer; he will be able (still in the seclusion of the compound) to purchase the gaudy Manchester and Brummagen goods in which the K...[2] soul delighteth; his pap will be provided for him out of his weekly wage, or he will have the option of purchasing it himself... A medical attendant and a dispensary are among the luxuries for which he has to thank his employers, together with the other means for leading a cleanly and wholesome life to which he has all along been a stranger' (*Daily Independent*, 1885).

Apart from extending control to every facet of a worker's existence, establishing dependency in this way had another advantage for management: economic exploitation. It is informative that the major protest against the compound system came from small family businesses. They objected to the way in which the mines 'stole' their clientele by providing food and other goods to the workers (Murray, 1901). Mine officials claimed that this was not so and that profits from the sale of goods in compounds were ploughed into community and charity institutions (Murray, 1901: 141). However, the effect was serious enough for one store-keeper to write that Kimberley had changed considerably for the worse since the introduction of the system (Cronwright-Schreiner, undated) and for a delegation to go to Cape

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2   A deeply offensive racial slur that will not be repeated in this publication.

Town to present the case – unsuccessfully[3] (Murray, 1901).

Inside the compound, men were entirely under the employer's rule and outside that of normal society. They were subjected to regulations, to disciplining, to searches, and in the process, to all manner of indignity (Murray, 1901). There was an induction process for arriving workers, wherein each man presented himself for a search to ensure he had no forbidden articles and for a medical examination. This ended with the signing of a contract. Once signed on he was obliged to behave in a prescribed way and to submit to the authority of '… a white manager and several assistants, who are responsible for the preservation of order…' (Eveleigh, 1914) '… and enforcing the compound regulations' (Williams, 1905). These included bans on alcohol, cards, women, and visitors. The means of enforcement were fines, beating, and confinement (Turrell, 1982). Much importance was placed on personal hygiene and 'if any fail(ed) to show the necessary regard to cleanliness, they (were) compelled to keep themselves clean' (Williams, 1905). Finally, when a man was leaving the compound there was the 'unpleasant feature' whereby he was obliged to spend time in solitary confinement where 'measures are taken by which it is impossible for him to carry away any diamonds about his body, inside or out' (Murray, 1901: 144).

All these humiliating, demeaning measures were clearly used not only to control the movement of black workers, but also to induce a sense of inferiority and to exert power over them.

Spatial Means of Control

The spatial manifestation of social isolation was the restriction to a particular place: the compound, where the worker '… will sleep and feed in the new and comfortable quarters provided for him and his fellows; he will march to his daily work in the mine and return in the evening to the place from whence he came' (*Daily Independent*, 1885).

Thus, the compound was located within the property of the mine, which itself was '… wired in so that the K... will never be off his employers' ground' (*Daily Independent*, 1885) and isolated from an ordinary human environment. It has the same relation with the town as Thomas Markus noted with the nineteenth century carceral institution, '... outside or at the boundary... (where) its impurity... can be made visible and filtered out before it contaminates the interior insidiously'

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3   Petition titled Return in compliance with a Resolution of the Honourable the House of Assembly adopted on the 15th June 1882, 'That a Respectful Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, requesting that the Petition addressed to his Excellency from the Merchants of Kimberley, bearing the date 30th May 1882, be laid on the table of the House.' Cape of Good Hope Printed by Order of the House of Assembly 1882. 'Your petitioners would earnestly desire to impress on Your Excellency that any legislation tending to confine natives to their employers' compounds after working hours or compelling them to spend their wages at shops established by the companies employing them will be retrogressive in its character, will be fostering one of the very worst principles of class protection, and will result in a very serious loss to the mercantile interests of the whole colony.' This was still an issue in 1894, see Verbatim Report op. cit. p. 2. Op. cit to what?

(Markus, 1994: 13). Here, too, it was believed that the 'fallen' individual was incarcerated for his own protection from his own innate immorality. For example, J. S. Moffat defended the system as 'a great improvement on the state of things which preceded it.' (Murray, 1901: 141) He believed that it shielded men from the traps and dangers of the '... vilest Cape dop' (Murray, 1901: 142). He also defended it on the grounds that the worker knew about the restrictions and practices in the compound before entering it (Murray, 1901: 142). That knowledge, in his reckoning, justified the humiliating system.

A second reading of the location in mine property can be made clearly in the General Plan of the de Beers Mines of 1906.
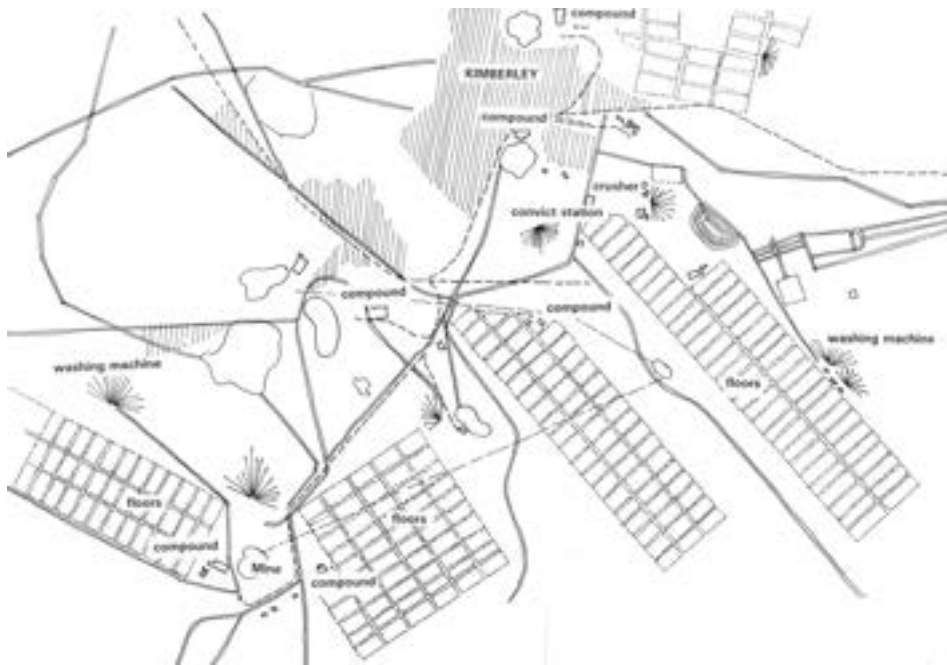
Figure 1.3 *General Plan of the Diamond Mines owned by De Beers showing the compounds related workings on Mine property, after map compiled by the Chief Land Surveyor 1906. De Beers Company Mines Limited – 16*th *Annual Report 1906. (drawing by Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers. File titled: Compound Hostel 2 Drawings + Reports 1991, correspondence)*

It enabled management to control the 'inmates' out of sight. The compound was '... again surrounded a few yards away from its walls by a railing indicating unmistakably that the property is private property and trespassers will be prosecuted. No unauthorised person will be able to approach the walls... unless he is able to avoid the vigilance of the guard' (*Daily Independent*, 1885). It is also clear that this spatial isolation was in order to contain unrest. The discontent in the early diamond fields could be put down, by calling in the police and dealing with the 'ringleaders' out of sight (Williams, 1905).

The General Plan also shows the compounds well separated from each other. This gave the mine management another kind of complete control. It was impossible for one compound to make contact with the other and each was easily surrounded. Therefore, collective worker action on a large scale was extremely difficult.

The plan of the compound itself sets out in detail a diagram of incarceration.
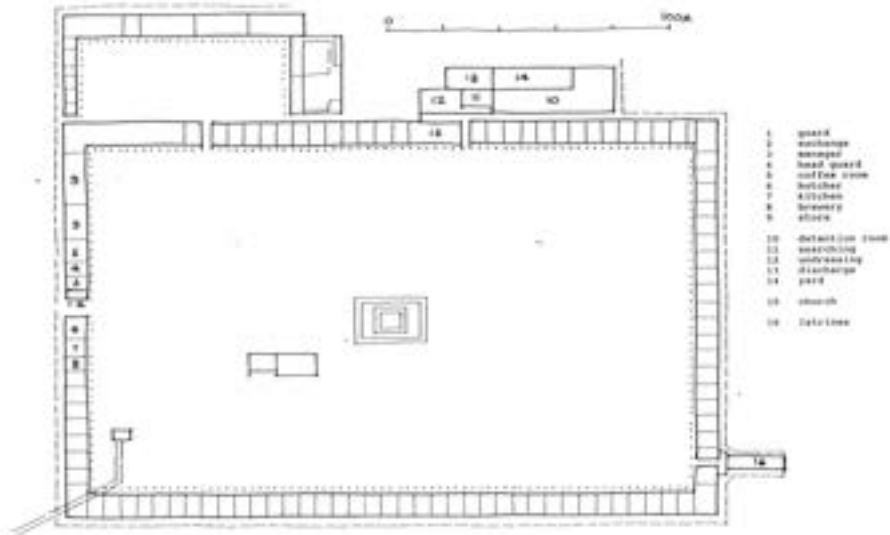
Figure 1.4 *Plan of Dutoitspan compound 1903, after Wasserfall J – figure 4.14. (drawing by Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers. File titled: Compound Hostel 2 Drawings + Reports 1991, correspondence)*

Figure 1.5 *Compound Bultfontein, D.B,C,M LTD. Kimberley. (Source Cape Archives A G 15013)*

It is a rectangular enclosure defined on its entire perimeter by two 3m high corrugated iron fences spaced 3m apart outside the wall of buildings, creating a no man's land between them (Williams, 1905). The sides of the enclosure are made up of the sleeping rooms, also of corrugated iron. They are punctuated by public

facilities, the church and latrines, and by gateways to the hospital court and the detention building. The entrance consists of a main gate which leads to the outside world where there is a guard house, administration facilities, and shops.

An underground passage, divided down the middle to prevent men going to work from interacting with those returning, links the compound like an umbilical cord to the shaft (Williams, 1905: 421). At its connection is a counting house. Large areas of the enclosure are further screened from the outside by an overhead wire ceiling intended to prevent inmates from throwing diamonds out to be picked up outside by their associates.

Figure 1.6 *De Beers Compound Kimberley Diamond Mines. (Source Cape Archives A 6651).*

This and a watch-tower over the gate complete an extensive paraphernalia of enclosure.

In order to further the isolation of mine workers, the compound was designed in a way that made surveillance comprehensive. It also aroused in workers the sense of being watched (Foucault, 1975: 210). As noted above, anyone approaching the compound would have had great difficulty not being seen – a no man's land created an easily watched 'moat' around the enclosure. In addition, the watch-tower gave a view over the entire precinct and the administrative offices looked into it. All uncovered space was easily watched and the life of the compound was led in the uncovered outside space. It was the circulation space for almost every activity.

Figure 1.7 *De Beers Compound. (Source Cape Archives AC 5997).*

Figure 1.8 *Compound. Wesselton, D.B.C.M., LTD., Kimberley. (Source Cape Archives AG15010).*

Figure 1.9 *Washing day, De Beers compound, Kimberley Diamond Mines, S.A. 40.358. G.W.W. (Source Cape Archives A 9652).*

Figure 1.10 *Untitled black and white photo. (Source Cape Archives AC 654).*

Numerous contemporary photographs show, and accounts describe, the presence of large numbers of men gathered outside (Williams, 1905). Cooking was done on open fires, people ate their meals outside, the toilets and ablutions were in blocks separate from the sleeping blocks. Thus, almost every action could be easily seen. The only places where this was not so were the dormitories. However, they (for between 20–25 men) did not inter-lead. All interaction with other dormitories also necessitated going outside. Finally, tall electric light poles, placed at regular intervals, allowed surveillance to be continued into the night (Williams, 1905).

The spatial arrangement was a lucid version of panopticism (Foucault, 1975); not in the shape of Bentham's fanning panopticon, where each inmate was individually observable, but similar to nineteenth century mental hospitals, where Philo (1989) shows the most effective surveillance was considered to be achieved by keeping all the inmates in large observable spaces.

Spatial Means to Create Dependency

Workers were forced into total dependence on the compound. They were not allowed out – and facilities were provided for every need. A well-publicised provision was space for sports and for tribal recreational pursuits such as dancing, mock battles, and singing (*Diamond Fields Advertiser*, 1898; Eveleigh, 1914).

Figure 1.11 *Tribal dancing in a Kimberley mine. (Source Cape Archives – J1084).*

The recreational highpoint was the swimming pool in the middle of the enclosure, pictured in local newspapers as swarming with happy men. It was useful for public relations (Williams, 1905) but also to give men held in confinement and subjugation relief from the tedium of daily life and keep them happy enough to work productively.

There were commercial facilities in addition to those for leisure. They were located, with the offices, along the entrance side of the enclosure. In the shops, food, clothing, blankets, and tobacco were readily available. There was also a coffee house and a kitchen where men would have been able to obtain prepared meals. It is here that the mine gained from having a literally captive market of tens of thousands of workers who were forced to buy everything they needed to survive from there.

Washrooms made it easy for the management to insist on personal cleanliness. Health was carefully watched over and when workers arrived, they were given a full medical examination, with those in poor health being put in quarantine (Williams, 1905). A hospital and dispensary catered for the sick and formed a small court related to the main enclosure. Its size is surprising for an institution of this population (3000 men), until it is realised that the extent of illness and the death rate of the mineworkers was extremely high.

A church was consistently part of the brief, which meant that no worker could argue to be let out of the enclosure even for spiritual sustenance.

Non-Place
There is a third way to read the General Plan (Figure 1.3): it shows no sign that the compounds (note also the convict station) are planned with human occupation as a primary or even secondary determinant of design. They are drawn as pieces of functional equipment, together with washing machines, power stations, crusher and pipe lines, related to the shafts and huge floors. There is nothing in their disposition, spatial connection, or orientation to suggest that these domiciles of thousands of men relate differently to the processes of exploitation of the earth from the way that a mechanical plant does. The planning is purely mechanical. It diagrammatises a worldview that does not accord the workers with normal human attributes, needs, and relationships.

The design of the compound as a whole could hardly be more dreary. The main court is huge. Undivided, it is far too large for an almost entirely residential court. Being only single storey, the court has no human scale – it is an abstract spatial diagram. Only the entrance side introduces some small change to the overwhelming sameness. There is nothing in the use of material to relieve the unremitting monotony. Although there are different kinds of activity space in the court, they are only slightly differentiated – there is no space for a small group or an individual. Especially as viewed in its climatic context, there is no effort to create shelter from heat, cold, or wind and there is no tree and no garden of any kind.

The constant watching and being watched combined with confinement, also contributed to non-place: making a space difficult to 'take possession of' and engendering a sense of discomfort, rather than comfort.

As for the dormitories, what were described as 'new and comfortable quarters' comprised in reality absolutely inadequate living spaces.
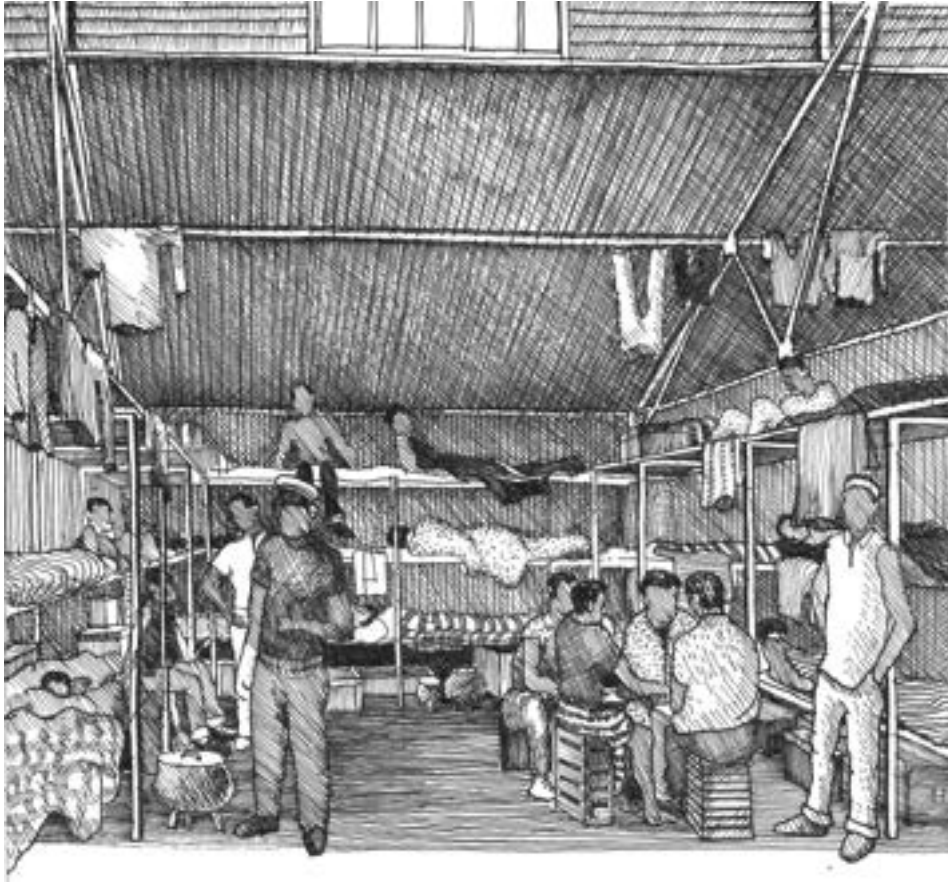
Figure 1.12 *Kimberley compound dormitory, interpreted from : Wassefall J Fig 4. 15. (Julian Cooke, Julian Cooke personal papers)*

The men slept on three tiers of wooden bunks on steel frames lining three sides of spaces '… without doors and with an open space along the top of the walls' (Turrell, 1982: 161). Thirty men lived in a space of 7,9 × 5,6m, i.e. 1,46m sq. per person. There was no window except in the roof ventilator. The lack of space, the piling up of people in the dark, meagre environment, the lack of doors, and total absence of any possibility of privacy or personalisation, all describe a place that could hardly be less conducive to human life. And it must be recognised that the miserable conditions were on a large scale – the Dutoitspan compound 'housed' three thousand men. Sheer size was another element in the construction of inhuman space.

The detention facility adds to the picture of a spatial arrangement for non-place.

Three aspects are remarkable: its location – it lies close to the body of the main enclosure like a vital organ linked by a short passage through a wall of building alongside the church; its size – approximately one sixth of the entire dormitory area; and its composition – undressing room, searching room, discharge, and detention room. Here the mine disciplined men for 'bad behaviour'. Here too, each worker, at the end of his contract, was obliged to undergo a most demeaning process. He was searched and given a laxative to ensure that any swallowed diamonds did not leave the premises (Murray, 1901: 144). The detention facility was not only for miscreants: every miner went through it.

The more closely the compound institution is examined as a set of spaces, the clearer it becomes that its objective was broader than control of movement and behaviour: it was also to dominate workers. It has the same goals as those of a jail as described by Markus (1994). It is concerned firstly with punishment managed through '... control, surveillance, discomfort, alienation and loss of privacy ...' Secondly, it protects normal society from the inmates by the impenetrable boundaries, and the most dangerous inmates are separated from the rest in the institution's innermost depths – the detention section. Thirdly, it reforms: everyone, not just the worst behaved, is confined, the illiterate is offered education, the heathen have the opportunity of conversion and moral reform (Eveleigh, 1914: 17), gambling and alcohol are forbidden, and the healthy pursuit of sport and tribal dancing is encouraged. Finally, it cures – 'the discipline of the workhouse, as of the prison and asylum, (was) achieved by external control of the body and internal moral reform by a coerced conscience' (Markus, 1993) via cleanliness. As in the jail described by Markus, the compound put great emphasis on health and washing.

A last point must be made. This jail was not for any worker but only for black ones. There was, in fact, a proposal to similarly incarcerate white workers. They too were viewed as thieving and irregular. However, the idea was quickly quashed (Allen, 1992). Thus, as a social institution, the closed compound was conceived in racist terms. It was to make black men feel like other, inferior beings and to reinforce in the minds of those holding power, white people, their sense of normality and superiority. The intention is evident not only in the physical and spatial means described above, but also in the writing of the time which described the compounds. As many of the quotations above show, it is permeated with derogatory, patronising, scornful, and generally alienating language. Contemporary photographs in newspapers reinforce a racist division. They concentrate on the centrality of the pool and the large spaces for tribal dancing, thus projecting into society a memorable image of racial differences and a power relationship: the happy workers, naked or in tribal gear, are being watched by their masters and patrons, relaxed and elegantly dressed. They publicised the munificence of the mine and the happiness of the inmates.

Gold Mine Compounds
Social Means of Control through Isolation

The gold mine compounds, mostly built after the turn of the 20th century, '…
share the same general structure (as the Kimberley compounds) which tends to
"contain" the workers and strengthen the bonds of discipline' (Ramahapu, 1981).
One commentator goes so far as to say that he knows of no society where free
workers have '... been subject to such overt total control' (Moodie & Dunbar, 1978).
However, less control was exercised by these mine authorities. The compounds
were not closed entirely as they were in Kimberley.

The first reason for this was that it was very difficult to steal gold, so there was much
less justification to close them. Secondly, the idea in Kimberley of using the closed
compound to reduce the problem of drunkenness no longer applied. Indeed, on
the Witwatersrand many mine owners had investments in alcohol and supported
a solidly drinking workforce (Van Onselen, 1982). Thirdly, closure would mean
unfair competition for city traders by cutting the workers off completely from the
market (Murray, 1901: 139). Unlike in Kimberley, this was not permitted.

Despite the differences, a combination of external and internal controls ensured
that there was no notable change in the equation of spatial and social means of
control and oppression.

There was increasing statutory control in the ordinary urban environment outside
the mines. By 1905 segregated residential areas were defined by the Johannesburg
Municipality; the Natives Land Act (1913)[4] laid aside rural land specifically for
use by Africans which discouraged free movement; the Natives (Urban Areas) Act
(1923) gave power to eject unemployed Africans from urban areas and to create
racially separate townships; the Native Laws Amendment Act (1937) set up systemic
restrictions on entry. Thus, while the compound reluctantly opened its doors a little,
it did so in a world that was tightening its control over the movement of black people.

To ensure that labour was consistent on gold mines, that labourers were ready for
work at the right time, properly fed for strenuous activity, disciplined in behaviour,
and controllable as a group, a range of new mechanisms was put in place. Contracts
were longer: on average, between nine and 16 months (Wilson, 1972a). Although it
was possible for inmates to go in and out of the compound, there were considerable
restrictions on movement. 'From the point of view of the mine owners, those
circumstances (wherein workers would be allowed out) had to be clearly defined,
limited, and difficult to obtain...' (Allen, 1992: 126). The compound manager could
issue or refuse passes to leave the compound and could exert this power quite
arbitrarily (Moroney, 1978). Visitors were allowed but strictly monitored. The
gates were manned by police who '… have the right to search anyone on leaving or
entering the compound and they can refuse entry or exit to anyone without giving
reasons for such refusal' (Ramahapu, 1981).

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4   See map of Johannesburg: https://johannesburgmap360.com/johannesburg-(joburg-jozi)-old-map

In the early days, before the South African War, the provision of facilities in the compounds did not appear to have been considered important and mine owners did very little to create even barely acceptable living conditions. Amenities were minimal, disease was rife, and the death rate was extremely high (McNamara, 1978). This neglect of the miners' welfare created a serious problem for the owners after the War: an acute shortage of labour. They attempted to alleviate it by importing Chinese labour. That was unsuccessful and they were forced to provide a more desirable environment.

Part of the improvement was the provision of food – which management realised would make workers more productive than if they were hungry. This increased the compound's autonomy and the workers' dependence on it. Moroney, in a clear example of the growing dependency, pointed out that '... food, as an extremely scarce commodity, became an instrument in the hands of management' who refused it to men who were considered to be not working hard (Moroney, 1978). Also, 'free' provision had a more profound and more general effect. Poorly paid miners were financially unable to turn down 'free' food and were therefore trapped into remaining in the compound (miners were poorly paid right up into the 1970s) (Wilson, 1972b: 66).

Eventually, apart from providing food and lodging, the mine sold food, beer, and other goods, had its own police, administered justice in its own court presided over by the mine manager, and looked after the workers' health, amusement, and recreation. In many instances, training, such as in the trades, was also on offer. Almost all the needs of a single man were catered for. Thus, the miners' dependence on 'free' or easy access to the necessities of life replaced the restrictions that had previously been placed on their movement in and out of the compound. Also, as in Kimberley, the workers were exploited not only through their cheap labour but also through being a more-or-less captive market.

In addition to these mechanisms of control, the gold mines further developed the ethnic separation which had been present in Kimberley compounds which '... an eminent author has described as a... living ethnological collection not to be found elsewhere' (Diamond Fields Advertiser, 1898)[5]. Even though contemporary descriptions do attribute different capacities to different groups (Diamond Fields Advertiser, 1898; Eveleigh, 1914; Williams, 1905), ethnic groups were not separated in their living quarters. On the gold mines they were. Ethnic differences were used to set up a divide-and-rule situation early in the 20th century and men were placed in separated living quarters under the supervision of ethnically defined indunas. The division was reinforced by encouraging traditional pursuits, particularly dancing (Ramahapu, 1981).

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5   *Diamond Fields Advertiser* op cit p. 36, Minnaar notes that 'ethnic rivalry was indirectly utilised on some (gold) mines where two ethnically different shifts were encouraged to compete to increase tonnages produced on each shift in order to increase productivity' in A The Dynamics of the Hostels Center for Conflict Analysis Group Social Dynamics.

That workers were trapped is borne out by the restrictions and degradation they were prepared to put up with. As in the diamond fields, the spatial control of miners and the management of routines 24 hours of the day was augmented by their subjection to fixed rules of behaviour. Moroney (1978), writing about the first decade of the 20th century, paints a lurid picture of control by violence and coercion. To maintain subservience hidings were meted out, torture was used, and men were jailed in the compound stocks. 70 years later recruits were still being humiliated, beaten, and herded naked '… past unsympathetic medical officers' (Moroney, 1978: 11). They were then orientated with '… emphasis being given to the importance of deference and respect for discipline' (Moroney, 1978: 11). There followed a brief training in which they were put through very strenuous exercises to test their heat resistance – from which white miners were exempted.

The military-like hierarchy of control in the gold mining compounds, retained into the late 1970s, has been well documented (Moodie, 1978; Ramahapu, 1981). The compound manager headed the system and had almost complete control over the miners' lives. 'There are no formal sanctions which prescribe the way he may impose punishment and the migrants have no right of appeal if they feel he acted unfairly, neither do they have protective clauses in their conditions of service. They are left to the mercy of the compound manager' (Ramahapu, 1981: 8).

Reporting to the Manager were indunas who maintained discipline. They acted like sergeant majors in making sure everything was clean and tidy; they were arbitrators in minor disputes and passed grievances up the line of authority. Although their title implied tribal authority, they commonly did not have such status, nor were they elected. They were appointed by the mine management. Because they were not legitimate representatives, their exercise of authority was frequently unacceptable and workers distrusted and feared them. They were backed up in maintaining discipline by the mine police, uniformed and armed with sjamboks (leather whip), who, according to Ramahapu, could '… be arbitrarily and severely authoritarian' (Ramahapu, 1981: 16). At the lower end of the scale were the izibonda – head-men of the sleeping units. They were elected and therefore were normally acceptable to the ordinary workers. Along with the structure of power went sets of rules of behaviour, wake-up calls, systems of fines for offences like lateness, and incarceration for more serious offences.

In response to all this hounding oppression there was resistance. Despite everything, workers were not subjugated. Certainly, they were controlled and oppressed, but from the early days of the compounds there was a simmering resistance. The level of discontent early in the century is illustrated powerfully by Bonner's account of the regular labour unrest on the Witwatersrand mines leading up to the 1920 strike by about half of the labour force (Bonner, 1979). Moodie (1986), writing about the 1946 strike, shows that there was an almost constant struggle between the workers and management around the 'moral economy' of the compound, which was defined in numerous unwritten rules of behaviour and treatment. There was a very fine line

between acceptability and unacceptability, and any crossing of it led to immediate and widespread worker reaction. That held the possibility of what management really feared: workers could break out of the compound with results that could be unmanageable. Thus, for management, the need for a configuration of buildings which was easy to control was pre-eminent.

The Compound Buildings

Although there was variety in their layout, the typical early gold mine compounds (and colliery compounds) reflected clearly their conceptual origins in the diamond fields and their divisive social foundation.

They were located on the mine far away from a normal urban environment, related primarily to the shafts and on private property guarded by police with dogs (Allen, 1992). They were stranded in space, as the Ferreira Deep plan shows.
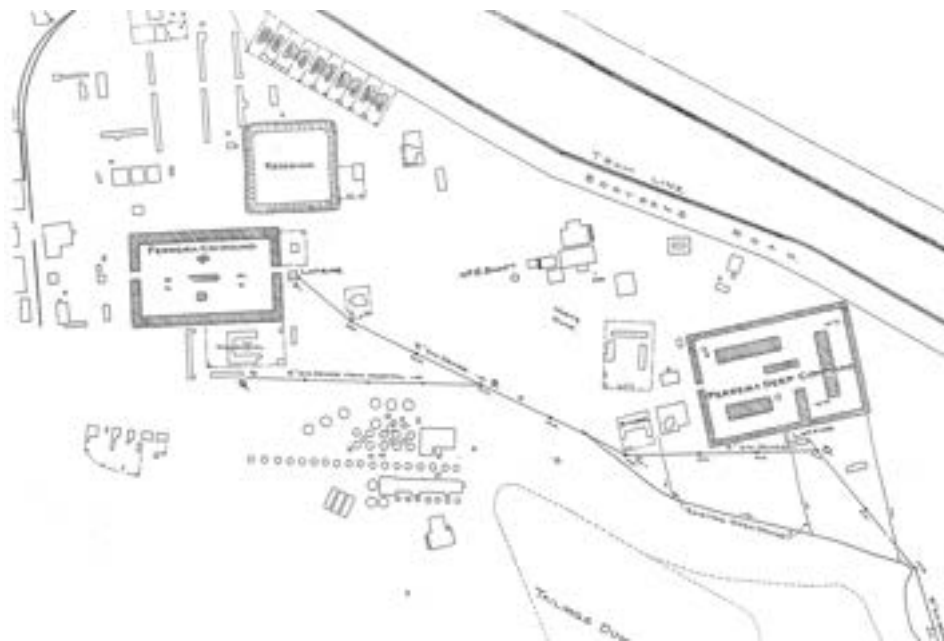
Figure 1.13 *Ferreira Deep Compounds, undated drawing Julian Cooke (Cooke, 2007: 67)*

In much the same way as a crusher or warehouse and, as in Kimberley, there appears to be no rationale for their location other than utility and separation from other compounds.

Geldenhuis Deep Ltd 'Compound for Natives and Chinese' (1905) shows, in terms of its overall layout, the characteristic traits of early 20th century models.
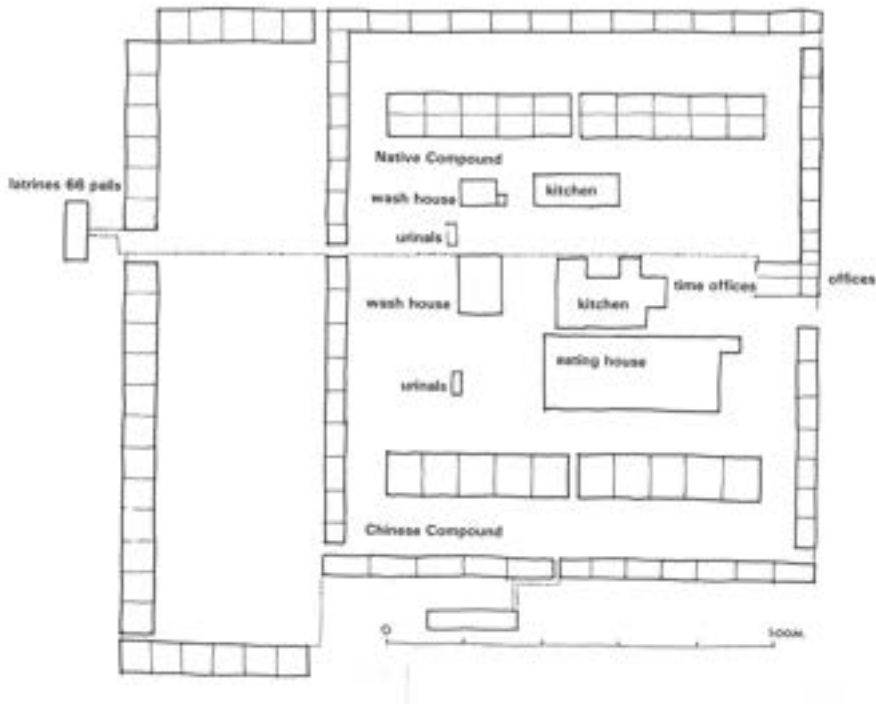
Figure 1.14 *Geldenhuis Deep Ltd 'Compound for Natives and Chinese' (1905). (Drawing by Julian Cooke).*

The sheer size of the institution, an area of about 2,5ha accommodating 3500 men, isolates it. The plan demonstrates a non-place. In general, there is no sign that the court spaces were designed to provide a setting for dignified life. The walls of dormitories enclose it like a jail forming two huge enclosures, 120 × 130m and 150 × 50m. These are divided by corrugated iron fences to create the African and Chinese sections. The scale is extremely impersonal and the huge spaces, surrounded by single storey buildings, lack any distinction whatsoever. Latrines are placed outside the courts and are reached via an alleyway bounded by corrugated iron fences. Both enclosures are entered through a single entrance with a police office on the one side and on the other, the administration offices. Each section has a urinal, a communal wash-house, and an eating facility – an eating house for the Chinese and a communal kitchen for the Africans. These buildings 'float' inside the enclosures, along with a few more dormitories. In their arrangement there is no sign of care being taken to make personal, protected, outdoor living spaces. The main entrance opens onto the kitchen yard. The Chinese urinal, rather than being placed to afford some privacy, occupies the centre of a large open space. The dormitory blocks placed in the enclosures restrict activity. There is sufficient space for informal ball games but there is no sense in the planning that that was intended. The only visible benefit of the plan is for the mine management: to offer it, despite

the lack of a tower, good surveillance. Indeed, as a whole, the arrangement inverts the relationships that one would expect in a design which takes proper account of people's need for community, amenity, identity, privacy, and choice. It directly reflects the complete neglect of living conditions in early compounds.

The dormitory rooms are similarly almost uninhabitable. They are intended primarily, if not only, for sleeping, and even if the men were to eat there, they would have to go outside to fetch their food from the kitchen. Indeed, they have to go out into the enclosure for all functions. Thus, all circulation is outside, visible, and easy to control. That said, the planning for surveillance is less rigorous than in Kimberley.

In its overall planning, the Driefontein Deep compound (1903) is even more utilitarian than Geldenhuis Deep: a dreary layout of undifferentiated spaces.
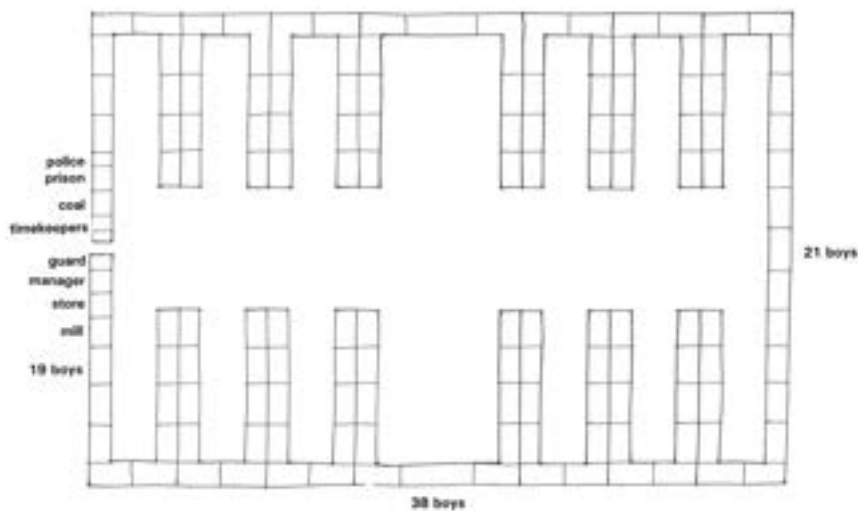
Figure 1.15 *Driefontein Deep compound (1903). (Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers. File titled: Compound Hostel 2 Drawings + Reports 1991, correspondence)*

The annotation of rooms at the gate encapsulates the nature of the little world of isolation and control – 'timekeepers offices, guard, compound manager, coal, prison, police, rat-proof store, mill, 21 boys, 30 boys' etc.

Larger scale drawings show the details of the accommodation. The cross-sections through a dormitory for between 19 and 25 'boys' are particularly informative.
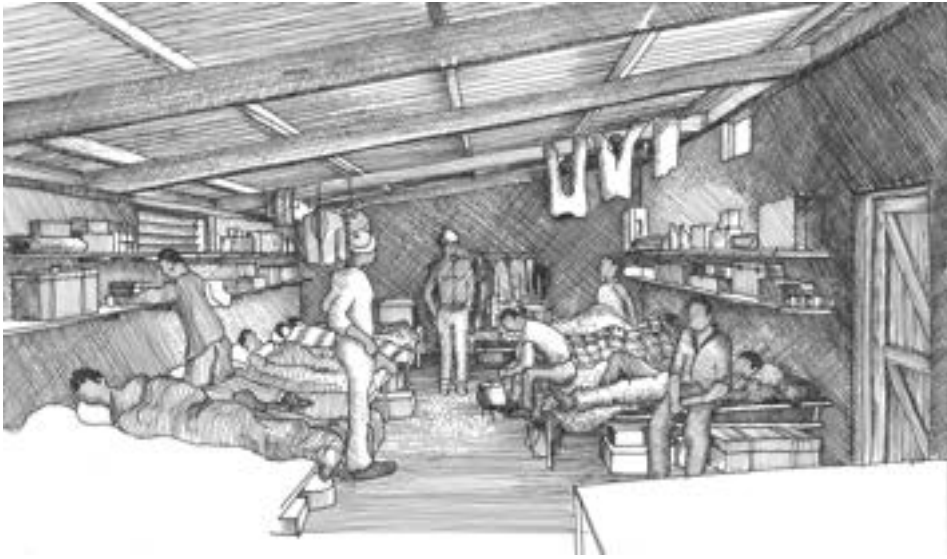
Figure 1.16 *Early gold mine compound dormitory interior, reconstructed from: Driefontein Deep G. M. Co "Compound for Natives" dwg no 81/3 1903. (rendering by Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers).*

The room is low on the outside (2100 from the floor to the underside of the roof beams and high, 3060 on the inside). On the floor, along each side, is a continuous steel bed, set at a slight slope, supported on angled iron legs and planned for sleeping workers at 1m intervals. Above the bed, running along the entire length of the room, are two shelves of corrugated iron on angled iron brackets built into the wall. It is difficult to imagine the designer planning the procedure of going to bed: a man would climb onto the bed from the end, walk across it to where sleepwear would be kept, change on the bed, and get under the blankets. Presumably also belongings such as mugs and plates were expected to be kept on the shelves and fetched from there, across the bed, when required. Alternatively, everything could be stored under the bed.

The planning defects were not alleviated by the finishes or quality of environmental control. The floor was unfinished concrete and the roof was corrugated iron without ceiling, i.e. bitterly cold in winter and baking in summer. Immediately below the wall-plates on each side of the room were openings – on one side wooden louvres (1200 × 450mm) for permanent ventilation, and on the other, small windows (600 × 450mm) for light. It was not possible to see out of either, not even by standing on the bed. There were two of each per dormitory and the consequent level of light, even on a sunny day, was very low. The space allocation is 2,5m sq. per person. As Lewis Mumford wrote of the design of workers' housing quarters in European cities of the 19th century, it '… could not have been more adequately designed if the sole object of the building(s) were punishment' (Mumford, 1940: 180).

How can this be understood? Wilson compared it with a boarding school (Wilson, 1972a) but not even the most Dickensian boarding school would have had such an arrangement. The military barracks huts, such as those used in the Crimea 50 years earlier, make a better comparison (Herbert, 1978). In some ways they were even less habitable. The prefabricated Gloucester hut, for example, has the same continuous bed at a slope and even worse volumetric standards. The similarity is instructive: in the barracks of the Crimea, far more fighting men died of disease than in battle (Woodham-Smith, 1952); the barrack huts are a form of temporary shelter for men on the move in alien territory; ordinary working-class soldiers in the British army were considered to be 'the scum of the earth' (Woodham-Smith, 1952); they were subject to iron discipline and misdemeanours were severely punished.

The hallmarks of the system continued well into the century. An example of a later compound layout may be seen in the plan for the Harmony mine of the Union Free State Coal and Gold Mines Company.
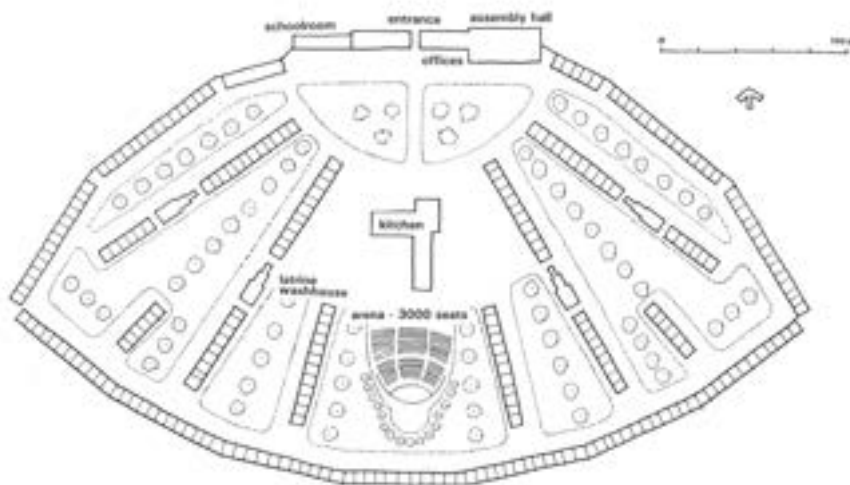
Figure 1.17 *Harmony Compound, after Union Fee State Coal and Gold Mines dwg no 4981, 1949. (drawing by Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers)*

It has the same huge scale, accommodating 5000 men in an enormous enclosure of roughly 450 × 250m. The single gate, the long rows of dormitory units, communal wash houses, and latrines are familiar. On the other hand, the drawing shows that an arena was carefully planned and that the compound was clearly intended to create a more amenable environment with treed and grassed areas. The more discrete placing of the latrines too, and the inclusion of an assembly hall and school rooms, help to create an image of a more thoughtful authority. Indeed, mine managements, faced continually with the possibility of striking workers, had to ensure that their conditions were, just, acceptable (Moodie, 1986).

That this did not imply any slackening of control may be clearly read in the most remarkable feature of the plan. Its configuration is of chillingly controllable long residential lines fanning out on the model of the classic panopticon. It was perfectly designed for the exercise of power – a stark reminder of the constant tensions in the institution. Several compounds with this design are still extant on the Harmony Mines.

The standard sixteen-man unit used in collieries into the 1960s is a good example of mid-century living quarters. It has the same mix as Harmony but at a detail scale of apparent improvement and chilling control.
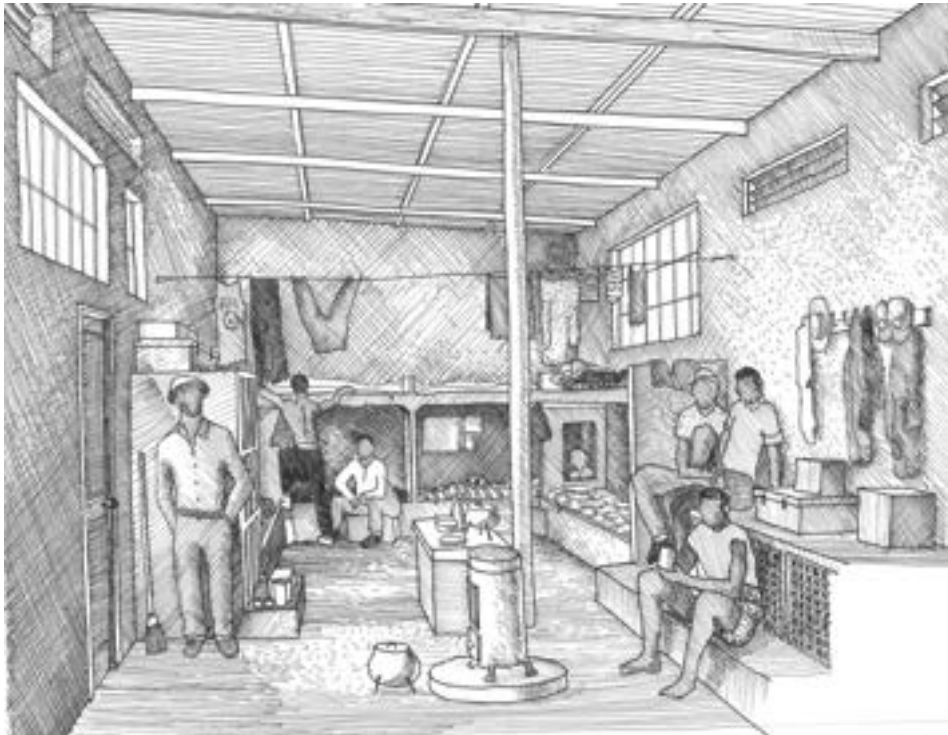
Figure 1.18 *Coal mine compound dormitory, 1960s. Reconstructed from: Anglo American Corporation of South Africa Limited Coal Department dwg no T191, 1956. (drawing by Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers)*

On the one hand, there are undoubtedly improvements on the designs of 50 years before and evidence of more attention being given to human privacy and identity needs. The first may be seen in the communal space, which is also the eating space. It is furnished with a slow-combustion stove and built-in brick and precast concrete table, seats, and lockers. Secondly, the space is separated from the two sleeping areas (4 × 3m). There is one on each side with four double bunks. Thirdly, there is a more convivial arrangement of the bunks.

On the other hand, there is little improvement in space standards. In this unit each man has 2,6m sq. of space compared with 1,4m sq. in Ferreira Deep, 1,72m sq. in Geldenhuis Deep, and 2,5m sq. in Driefontein Deep. Added to this, there

is a sense of uncompromising utility in the way the unit is designed. It exhibits many signs of the standards-conscious ethos of a time when science, through the efforts of the new National Building Research Institute (NBRI), was applied to housing in South Africa (Japha, 1986). The concept of a complete, functional unit contained in a space that can be replicated; the spaces are sized, illuminated, and ventilated to achieve acceptable minimum standards; the bunks are designed in ingenious prefabricated concrete components, with holes for ventilation, carefully thought out recesses for footholds to ease climbing up, stepped floors, and drainage channels to allow everything to be washed off. The windows too are designed solely for utility: placed above door head level where it would be impossible to see out even from a kneeling position on the upper bunks.

Apartheid's Public Hostels

In the Apartheid era, hostels (as the compound equivalents were now called) multiplied, although many were built by different levels of government for a long time before the coming to power of the Nationalist Party in 1948.[6] On the surface, these state hostels were a different kind of institution from the compound. The chief difference was that they were owned mainly by the state, local, and provincial authorities. Although some accommodated the authorities' workers, the vast majority served workers from the whole private sector. Therefore, it was impossible to close them. Workers needed to enter and leave at varied times, night and day, and they were accountable to various employers and worked all over the city. Indeed, the objective of the hostel was much broader than the compound: the authorities were concerned to ensure the right amount of labour in the cities as a whole. They were not concerned with its health or timeliness or efficiency. There was no obligation or need for the hostel to take responsibility for the workers' health, nor for wake-up calls or an involvement with diet or food provision or preparation. Theft of company products was not an issue. Within the hostel therefore, although there remained controls over entry and regulations for behaviour, and although there were remnants of the *induna* system of the mines still in place even in the 1980s,[7] workers, theoretically, had much more freedom.

Generally, however, after the Second World War, black people were increasingly restricted. The control had shifted from the monopolistic industry to the state and the compound system, in a sense, became fully entrenched in the statute books. It was no longer the employer that controlled every aspect of a black worker's life, but the state backed by the massive machinery of Apartheid. There was no longer any need for compound gates, because all movement into the city by African people was strictly controlled by the Pass Laws and the police. The compound manager with his file, his disciplinary code, his *indunas,* and mine police, was replaced by the local labour bureau offices and the whole panoply of laws of the formal policy of separate development maintained by an all-penetrating security system and police force.

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6   Hostels were built by local and other state authorities in South Africa from the beginning of the 20th century until the 1980s. The concern here is primarily with those constructed during the Apartheid era, i.e. post 1948.
7   I experienced this personally in Nyanga East, Gugulethu, and Langa in 1985.

Now the whole system enforced comprehensive separations. By 1952, through the Section 10 Amendment of the *Natives (Urban Areas) Act* (1923), all loopholes in the regulation of the flow of men into urban areas were blocked. With the *Bantu Laws Amendment Act* (1964), women too were drawn into the straightjacket of control over entry. Hostels remained male institutions for temporary workers whose wives and children now had to be in the 'homelands'. If the families visited the city, for the short time that they were allowed, they were simply not permitted to enter the hostels. While control of exit was relaxed, control over who entered the hostel remained strong. Ultimately it made no difference whether there was gate control or not, because women and children who did manage to gain access ran the constant risk of arrest and eviction.

The rearranged configuration of systems for control and defence was augmented by a new system of autonomy in two parts: the Bantustan or homeland, and the new system of the work contract. Firstly, the principle of a dependent autonomy was shifted from the urban end of the migration cycle to the rural one, where a labour pool was kept ready in the supposedly autonomous Bantustans, to be tapped when needed. Secondly and most tellingly, workers were obliged to have definite accommodation in order to arrange a work contract. With the housing supply always short of demand, hostels were the only accommodation available for many. Compared with alternatives, it was very cheap accommodation. Thus, workers in urban areas were still tied into a network of dependency in which the physical reality of the institution played a central role. In the case of labour unrest or any other kind of dissident action, the hostels were comparatively easy places wherein to contain and control thousands of men.

From the point of view of daily life, the major change was the agent of control – now the public authority, local, provincial or national. The hostels appeared to be autonomous, with their administrative services, their shops built into the programme, the cooking facilities which were provided, the internal and external recreational facilities. But they were planned and run by authorities who were answerable to the national government and their policies, bureaucracy, and police.

All this reinforced the fact that, by legal definition, hostel dwellers were at the bottom of the pile in terms of their right to urban residence. Their separation and isolation began to produce ugly consequences. They became alienated from other township residents with more substantial rights and came to be considered by those other residents as rural, unsophisticated, and dangerous (Segal, 1991; Woods, 1991). An insider/outsider syndrome developed (Segal, 1991; Woods, 1991). It came to a head on many occasions in the struggle for democracy in the 1970s and 1980s, when hostel residents assisted the regime in dealing with dissident action. In the years leading up to the first democratic elections, the syndrome was a crucial factor in continuing urban violence.

Spatial Controls

Spatially, the institution developed slightly different versions of the same basic components as compounds. The first means to keep them isolated, as in diamond and gold compounds, was by location. Hostels were not on privately owned land and in many cases were close to train routes and stations. Nonetheless, they were physically divorced from their surrounding urban environment by large buffer spaces or by major obstructions such as railways, motorways, or industrial areas. A typical example is Diepkloof hostel (1968) on the outskirts of Johannesburg.
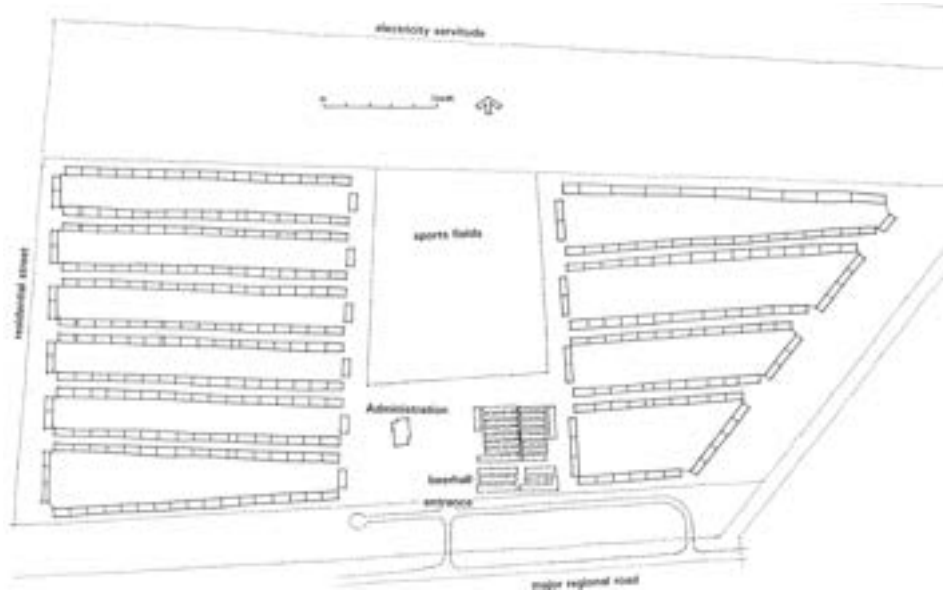
Figure 1.19 *Diepkloof hostel 1968. (Drawing by Julian Cooke)*

Figure 1.20 *Diepkloof hostel, 2992. (Source: Gray Robertson).*

It is cut off, as far as possible from its surroundings. On the South a 45m buffer strip separates it from the Old Potchefstroom Road, from which a service road, the only access, leads off. The buffer continues on the East up to a servitude for a sewer and overhead power-line. An open space, 100m wide, designated 'Park' but with little possibility of ever becoming a park, separates it on the North from another overhead power-line, with mine property beyond that. In the West the hostel borders a residential road. It does not connect with the road, but rather confronts it with the by now familiar inward-looking dormitory rows, with 2,5m high walls and 4m gates in the gaps between the rows. In many instances this broad urban isolation is reinforced by reducing entrances to a minimum.

Reinforcing the separateness of hostels was their huge size; for example, Diepkloof had 5488 beds. Being massive 'containers' of single men aged between 16 and 70, they were a threat to 'normal' urban communities and the sheer size of land taken up by institutions of up to 20000 men made them into impregnable intrusions into the urban fabric.

A third divisive component was the beer-hall. Typically, it catered for a large number of drinkers. At Nancefield for example, there was ample space for 3000 patrons at one time. Therefore, although it had become the centre of social life for insiders, for most outsiders it was distinctly unfriendly. The beer-hall was placed, as at Nancefield and at Diepkloof, between the approach road and the residential accommodation where it reinforced the hostel's threat to the outside world. It is not surprising that hostels became known, long before the violence of the early 1990s, as unpleasant or dangerous places to visit or pass by.

Apart from its divisiveness, the beer-hall represents the hypocrisy of the Apartheid regime as well as a further exploitation of black workers. At a time when the private sale of alcohol to black people was illegal, when the home brewing of traditional (e.g. sorghum) beer was banned, the government had the monopoly for the manufacture and sale of beer in township and hostel beer-halls. As far as the government was concerned, the more drinking of alcohol by this captive market the better because the profits from the beer-halls financed the hostel, its management and maintenance.

Non-Place

As in the compounds, the hostels had appallingly inadequate designs for dignified human habitation. Nancefield is a good example of hostel non-place (Figure 1.21). The blocks are arranged in two grids of slightly different orientations. Where they meet and one of them is cut off on the diagonal by a power-line servitude, units are simply chopped off on one side of the servitude and continued on the other, leaving a ragged void between. Firstly, a site for a large group of houses which is divided by a large servitude is clearly not a good one. Secondly, any architect or urban designer knows that such a 'solution' shows either extreme carelessness or an intention to make an incomplete, confusing, unpleasant space. Most edges of hostel

grids show a similar lack of thought. In Lifateng, for example, and Sebokeng the spaces between the lines of dormitories are far too large and awkward in shape for occupants to 'claim' and are experienced as littered, vacant lots.
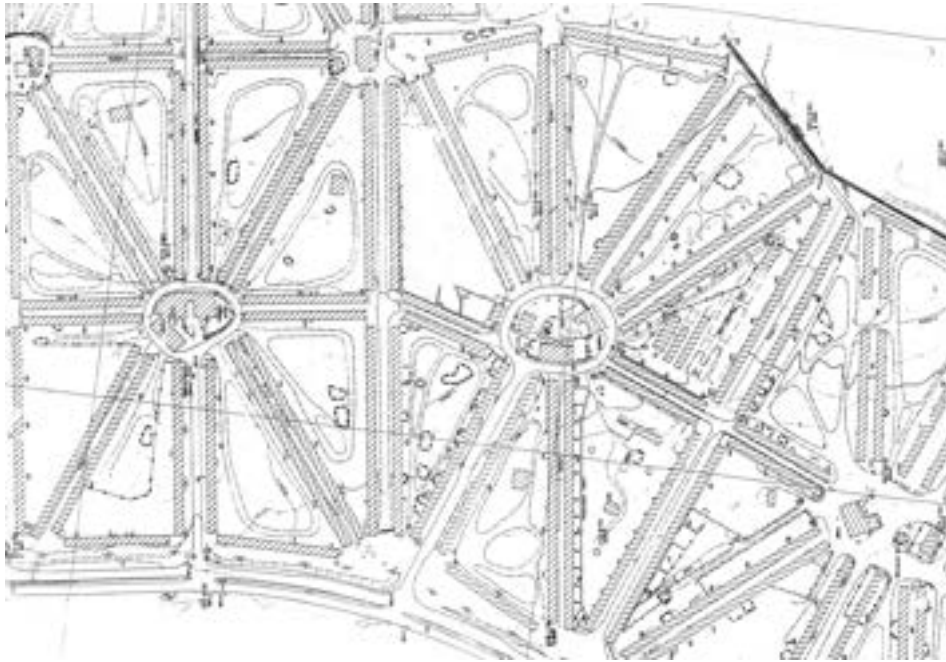
Figure 1.21 *Hostel 25a Sebokeng hostel detail. (drawing by Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers. File titled: Compound Hostel 2 Drawings + Reports 1991, correspondence)*

Perhaps the most notable feature of most hostels is the sheer repetitive monotony of their layouts. Of course, their low budget would have demanded repetition, but their level of sameness is unacceptable: a living environment which has no distinction whatsoever, which offers nothing by which people can identify or orientate, is an alienating, urban desert.
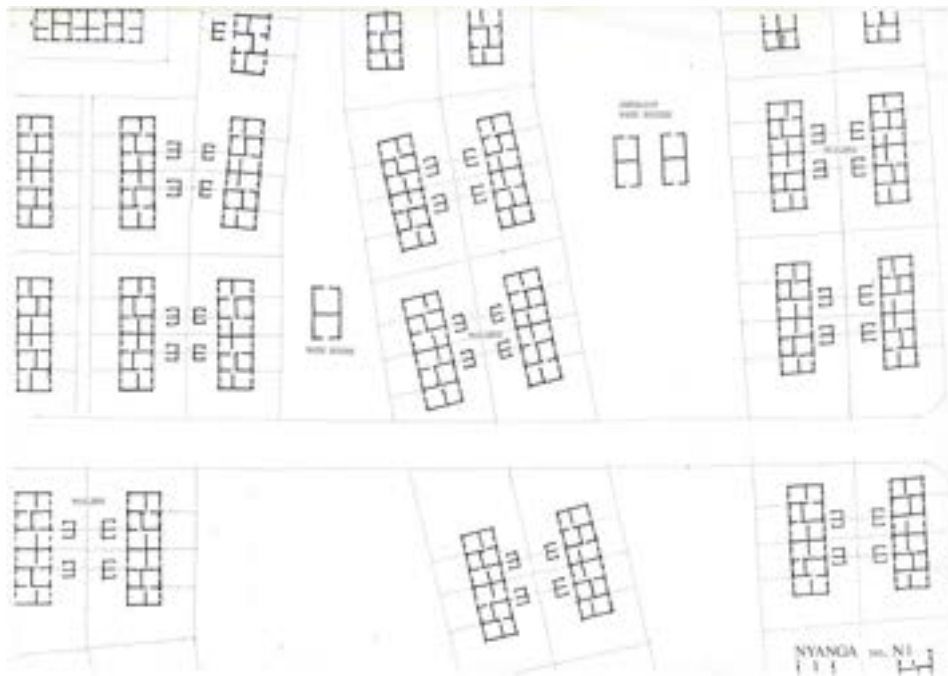
Figure 1.22 *Open space between blocks in Nyanga East. (Source: Urban problems Research Unit "Western Cape Hostels housing upgrade programme" Working paper no 36 1987. P.6. (Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers. File titled: Hostels Articles research notes Arch SA Article)*

In slightly closer focus, in Nyanga it will be noticed that the blocks are entered through doors placed on both long sides – a small consideration with a considerable impact. It means that they have no front or back. Consequently, there is no clarity of orientation and a confusion of public and private space. The blocks are stranded in space and none of the expected signs of normal human occupancy appear. A similar confusion appears in Jabulani and Dube where the entrances are consistently on one side of the blocks.
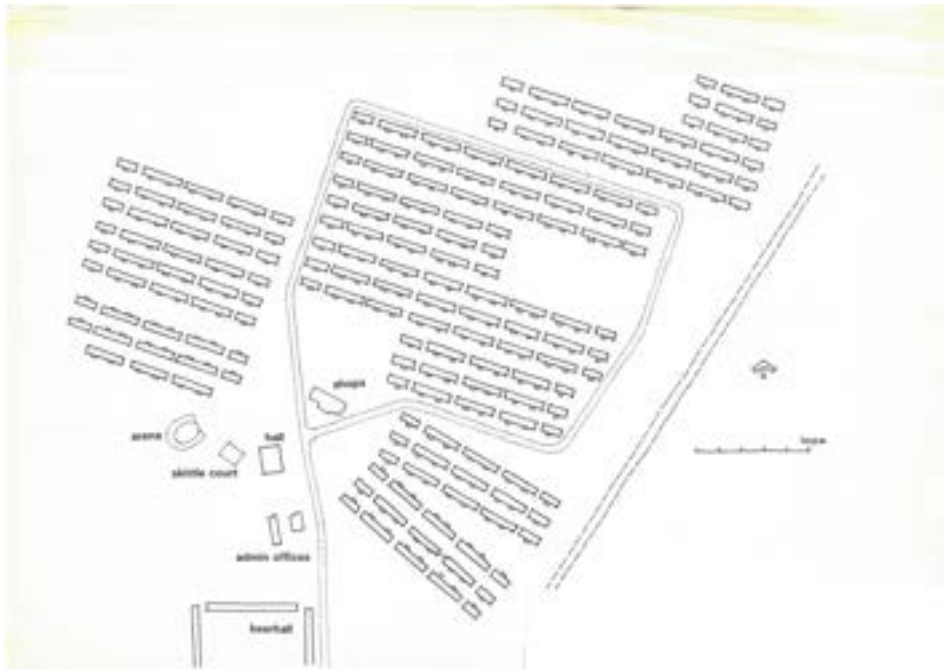
Figure 1.23 *Jabulani hostel – Soweto, drawing after City Council of Soweto Electricity Department dwg no SCC/002/04. (drawing by Julian Cooke 1986, Julian Cooke personal papers.)*

Thus, the spaces between have fronts on one side and backs on the other. In Langa and Gugulethu there are no entries from the street side.

Figure 1.23 *Untitled (Source Julian Cooke)*

The living units have their back to the street, making it a dangerous, unwatched no-man's land. Not only do the arrangements ensure there are not enough people in the street to make them sociable and safe, they also augment the sense of alienation and stranded-ness.

The recurrence of this kind of spatial confusion in hostels all over the country suggests that they were intended to be alienating spaces.

Four Main Hostel Types

The ever more restrictive legislated mechanisms of control in the country did not mean that within the hostels they were done away with entirely. Each of the four main spatial types shows that the controlling feature remained as strong as ever.

The Diepkloof hostel exemplifies the first of the spatial types: the rectangular enclosure type (Figures 1.19–1.20) similar to many of the compounds. It consists of ten large, long single storey courts (30–40m × 200–250m) with a gate at each end. The configuration reads clearly of a looser control over entry than was seen in the compounds, but it is equally clear that the enclosures can be easily sealed off.

The second, radial type is also single storey and is obviously made for surveillance.

There are numerous examples. The classic one is the Kwesini hostel.
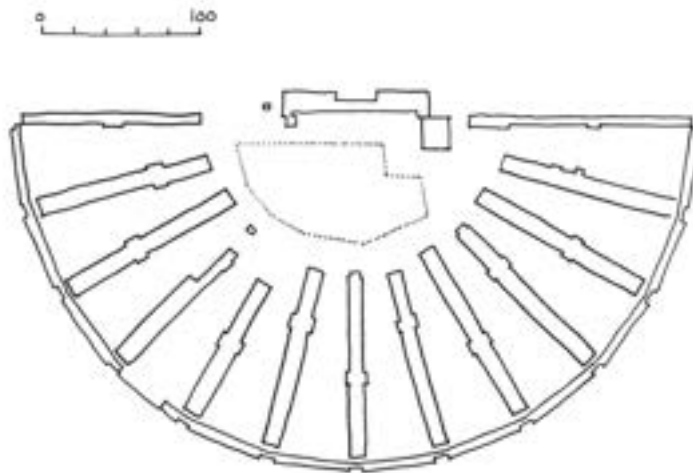
Figure 1.24 *Kwesini hostel – Gauteng, drawing after Katlehong City Council plan drawn by van Zyl, Atwell and de Kock, Town and Regional Planners, 1956. (redrawn by Julian Cooke. Julian Cooke personal papers).*

There are several variants, as at Mapetla in Soweto.
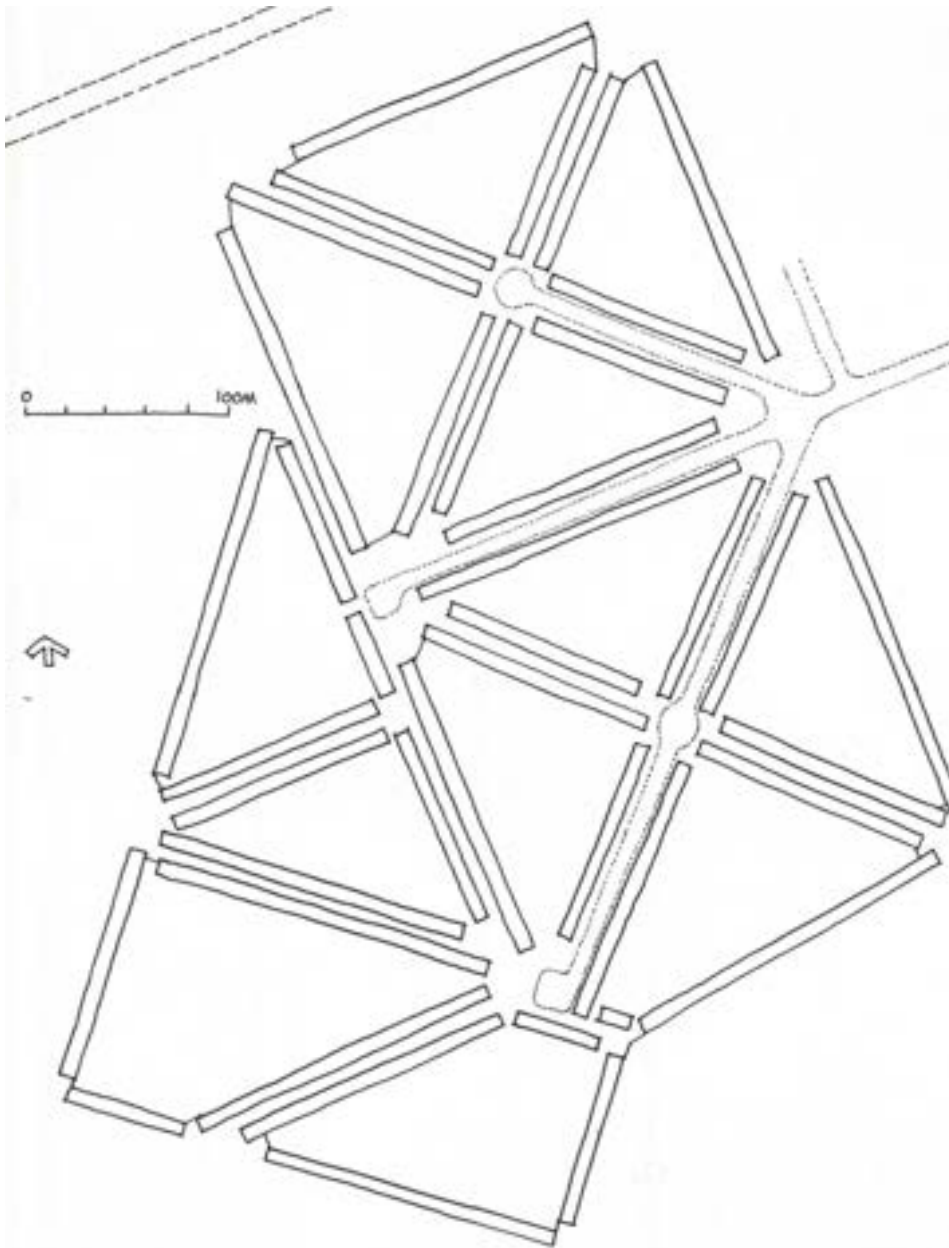
Figure 1.25 *Mapetla Compound, Soweto. (Drawing by Julian Cooke)*

Other variants are at Sebokeng, South of Johannesburg (Figure 1.22), a massive complex for 20000 men, and at Mohlakeng in Randfontein.
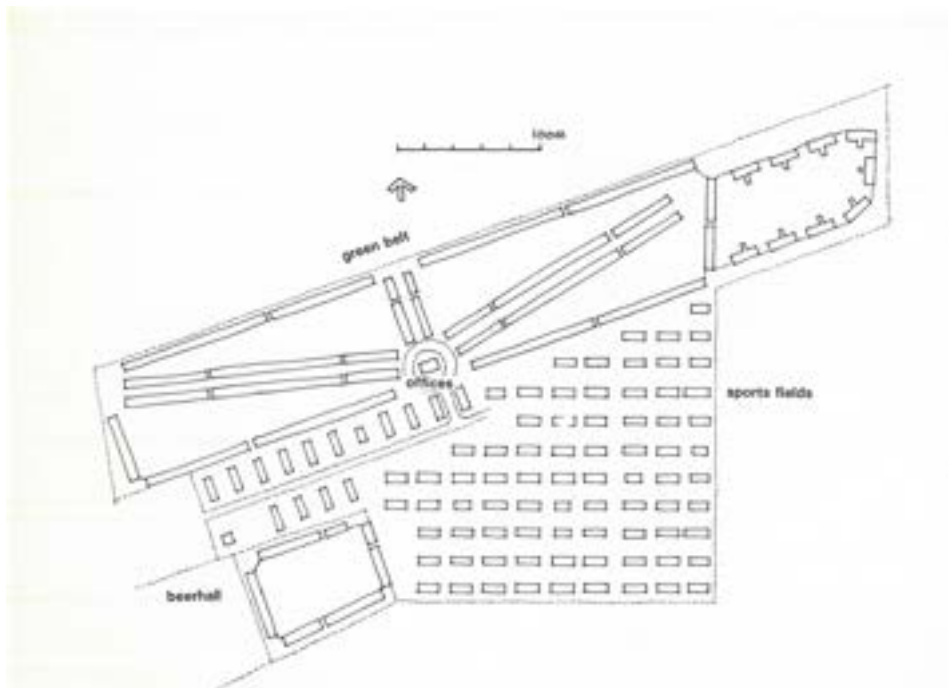
Figure 1.26 *Mohlakeng compound, Randfontein. (drawing by Julian Cooke).*

As indicated above, there was no longer the obvious justifications for surveillance. However, the radial design shows that, for the authorities, it remained of paramount importance. In fact, all hostel configurations were easy to control. We must assume, therefore, that they were designed for situations of unrest or insurrection and also to symbolise the subjection of the worker to the laws of the country.

Further evidence of the imperative of control is found in the third spatial type, the mega-structure, or multi-storey block. In many cases these hostels were inserted into built-up urban environments, as in Alexandra, in Wolhuter Jeppe in Eastern Johannesburg, and in Langa Old Flats in Cape Town. An example of this type, Alexandra has a controlled entrance gate with adjacent administrative offices, shops, and a police station. It is organised on several floors in a system of rows of rooms on each side of dark corridors. The rooms are interspersed at regular intervals with grouped ablution blocks and on each floor are communal kitchens. The buildings thus formed large, surrounded enclosures. The whole configuration resembles a fortress defending itself against the surrounding environment. In addition, there are carefully planned security devices which enable the police office to seal off all sectors of the building with electrically controlled doors. It must be recognised, therefore, that, as in the radial fan type, there are dual intentions in the form: to keep some people in and others out, to create both a jail and a fortress.

or

Figure 1.27 *Wolhuter hostel – 1992 Johannesburg (Source Gray Robertson)*
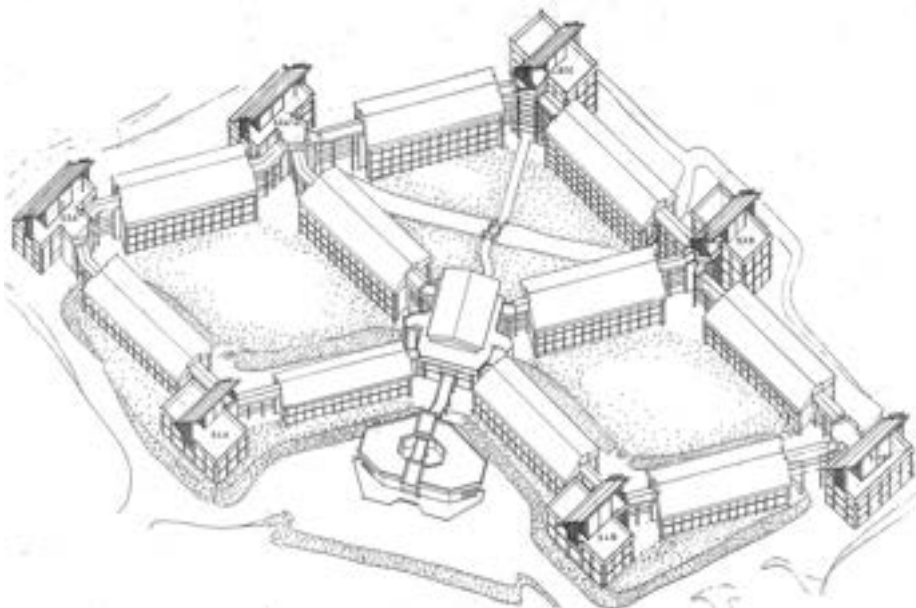
Figure 1.28 *Nobuhle hostel – Alexandra, drawing after West Rand Administration Board, Technical Department dwg no 33/a/3 (drawing by Julian Cooke, 1978. Julian Cooke personal papers)*

A second example is the George Goch hostel.
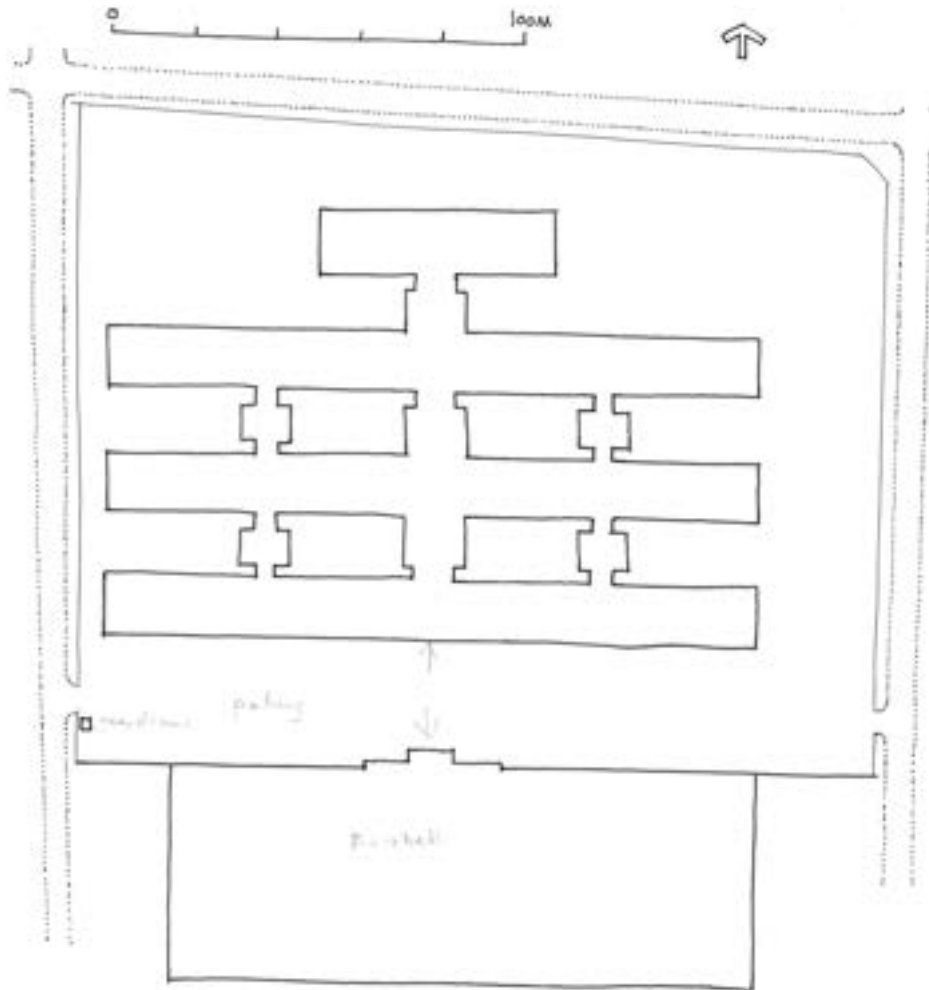
Figure 1.29 *George Goch hostel, layout sketch. By Julian Cooke*

It is composed of two elements: a mega-structure of residential blocks arranged in four evenly spaced rows, three long (150m long) and one short, all joined along a collective spine in a symmetrical arrangement; and an enormous beer-hall covering ¾ ha, ordered by the same symmetry. It is difficult to imagine a less humane design. It lacks any sense of appropriate human enclosure, shelter, life-enhancing detail, or softness. The blocks are surrounded by a high fence with one controlled gate, and the beer-hall is surrounded by a high brick wall. The space between the residential structure and the beer-hall is a long parking lot. This is the entrance space into which the main gate opens, and which gives access to both elements. The neo-classical symmetry, traditionally used for projecting power, is here turned inwards and finds its centre in this void between the two entrances.

The apogee of the mega-structure type would have been the Mabopane East hostel, designed by Meyer, Pienaar and Partners as late as 1986.
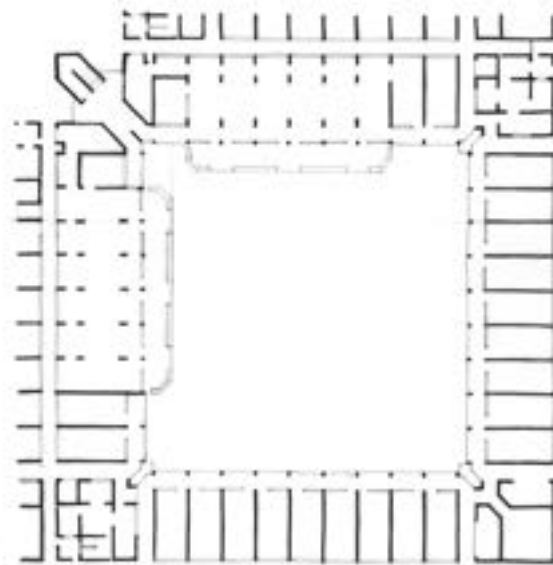
Figure 1.30 *Plan of Mabopane East hostel, designed by Meyer, Pienaar and Partners 1986.*

They had already designed perhaps the most notable South African mega-structure, Rand Afrikaans University[8] in Johannesburg. This hostel was to consist of 14 courts linked together in a manner derived from the well-known American architect, Louis Kahn. It clearly would have been a complex of considerably more architectural interest, and the courts have a much more human dimension than most hostels. However, there is much in the design that speaks of a mechanistic, controlling approach: the courts are repetitive in size and shape despite having very different positions and outlooks; they pay no attention to orientation, with rooms of inhabitants facing any direction; they are not strongly linked and the absence of a view out makes them claustrophobic.

The fourth major spatial type is the grid. There are numerous examples, such as the Soweto hostels of Meadowlands, Dube, and Nancefield, the Matthew Goniwe hostel in Port Elizabeth, and Nyanga, Langa, and Gugulethu in Cape Town. Apart from the mindless layouts, the monotony, and the confusions of public and private space noted above, a noticeable feature of the grids is waste of space between the blocks (Figure 1.23), which makes them easy to watch over, and to enter with military vehicles to control.

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8   This is now the University of Johannesburg, Auckland Park Kingsway Campus
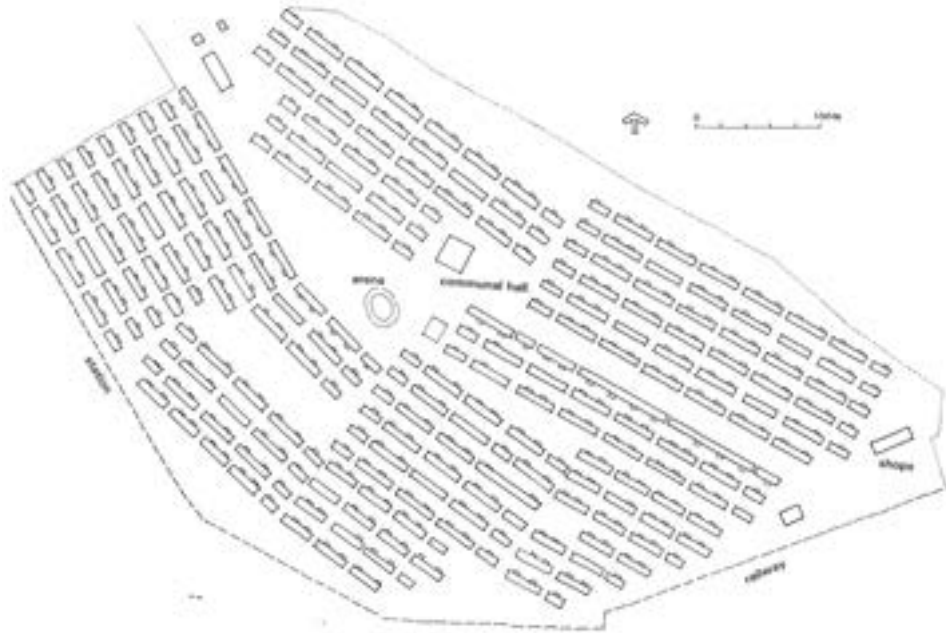
Figure 1.31 *Dube hostel, Soweto, City council of Soweto electricity department, 1986. Drawing by Julian Cooke. (Cooke, 2007: 68)*

The Living Units – Improvements

At the scale of the living unit, there is unquestionably some improvement on earlier models. Detail drawings from the Mohlakeng hostel show this.

Figure 1.32 *Interior of Mohlakeng hostel, reconstructed by Julian Cooke from Municipality of Randfonten, 1965. (Julian Cooke personal papers).*

The unit is entered through a communal room in the middle, which consists of a cooking area with a stove, lockers, sink, and an eating area with built in precast concrete benches and tables. Full height walls separate this area from a large room on each side, which in turn is divided in two by 1600mm high walls making space for two beds and lockers on each side of a central aisle. There are well-sized windows at a level that allows a view out from each of the bed spaces. The allocation of space per person is double that in mine hostels: 5,3m sq. Both Nancefield and Gugulethu have similar arrangements to Mohlakeng, with the latter improving on the privacy arrangement by having rooms that can be fully sealed. In Alexandra and in Langa Old Flats, corridors lead to two person rooms and there are ablutions at reasonable intervals.

In the finish of materials, there is little improvement on earlier models: floors are unfinished concrete, walls of un-plastered brickwork, many roofs of corrugated iron without a ceiling. Ablutions, in many instances, are far from satisfactory. Change-rooms in Mohlakeng, for example, have a lavatory room with seven trough toilets in a row, undivided, and flushed by an automatic system every 30 minutes.

There is no doubt that the arrangements offer an ameliorated living situation. However, there is no escaping that the main intention was to provide elementary temporary residence suitable for 'temporary sojourners' in 'white' cities. The advancements were made without making homes. The spatial organisation of Apartheid hostels shows that the general idea of the institution had changed little from earlier compounds. There was considerable variety in their space and size, but they all showed the familiar characteristics: the consistent isolation and introversion keeping insiders in and outsiders out, thus dividing the two; the consistent design for ease of control, despite the fact that many of the original reasons for control have changed and that the social control generally was so much more tightly organised, legislated, and policed; their consistent drab repetitiveness, mechanistic planning, meaningless outside spaces, and marginally adequate internal ones.

Hostels in the Last Years of Apartheid

In the lead up to the first democratic elections in April 1994, subsequent to the unbanning of the ANC and release of Nelson Mandela, all the stored malignity of these institutions spilled out. Hostels emerged as the locus of sustained violence that occurred in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. As one report of the time put it, 'Hostels are centres of violence across the Reef' (Everatt & Schrier, 1993). In two years there were more than 8500 casualties, including 2000 deaths. In a year, in Soweto alone, there were 2850 casualties and 520 deaths in incidents associated with hostels. Hostel dwellers were responsible for two thirds of the notorious train attacks.

In analysing hostel violence during this period, Dan Smit set out ten explanations (Smitt, 1991). They fall into three groups: explanations which would apply to any violent situation in South Africa, those which could apply to any violent situation but where hostels were a 'vehicle' for violence engineered outside them, and those which refer directly to the nature of the institution.

An examination of the explanations generates evidence of a new constellation of the compound/hostel equation. The hostel, by its very nature, is a generator of violence: this is the essence of the last set of explanations. The core problem is hostel dwellers' alienation from other sections of the community. Three examples are given: 'traditionally oriented hostel dwellers and modernist township youth', hostel dwellers of one political party versus a hostel or 'community' of another party, lastly, 'conflict involving local warlords, councillors, civics and hostel dwellers.' (Zulu, 1993).

It has been indicated that antagonism between ethnic groups was part of the strategy of isolation or separation. As soon as there was active political organisation in the hostels, it was impossible to avoid polarisation taking on a primarily political colour. Indeed, the polarisation that had been generated by successive segregationist governments was an excellent background for exploitation by newly legal political parties. The violence caused people who did not belong to the dominant political party in a hostel to flee. You could not be a political outsider in a hostel (Dunstan, 1992). Within a short time, hostels were occupied exclusively by this or that party, and so it remained into the late 1990s. In a visit to a hostel in Johannesburg, boundaries in Alexandra were pointed out to me 'over which no ANC member would dare cross':[9] Nancefield and Lifateng hostels in Soweto were unequivocally IFP; Sebokeng was unequivocally ANC.

There is evidence that when many residents fled the hostels in the violence, their places were taken by men brought in by a political party (Rubenstein, 1992). Studies (Zulu, 1993: 21) leave no doubt that hostels were used to locate large groups of supporters strategically around the cities. In Umlazi and KwaMashu, because support in the townships for the Inkatha Freedom Party had dropped appreciably, '… the hostels have constituted a conservative base where a perceptibly reactionary organisation can manoeuvre for political space' (Zulu, 1993: 21). They became the gathering points for Inkatha rallies. They were occupied by 'regiments' who went on daily marches. They launched attacks on neighbouring residential areas and forced all hostel dwellers to join. It is not insignificant that both Inkatha (Inkatha Freedom Party, 1992) and the KwaZulu-Natal government (KwaZulu-Natal Government Statement), strongly supported the retention of hostels in their submissions to the Goldstone Commission in 1992.

Their isolation now enabled the identification of supporters and opponents of the dominant political ideology. Identification with the place established who you were: an insider, a friend, an outsider, an enemy. Originally the intention of the fences, gates, and security systems set up was firstly to keep residents inside and secondly to ward off strangers. That was now reversed. The jail had become a fortress with a military garrison, and the inmates were no longer oppressed as workers but were marshalled and disciplined as soldiers.

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9   I was told by a guide on a visit in July 1994.

A further idea found in Smitt's explanations is that conditions 'conducive to violence' are nurtured in the hostels (Smitt, 1991). Herding, surveillance, unreasonable regulation and policing, lack of privacy, over-crowding, and non-place are all forms of subjugation and are the 'conditions conducive to violence'. They also cultivate a sense of rootlessness and fear which makes hostels easy to manipulate as 'vehicles' of someone else's violent intentions – Smitt's second set of explanations.

That the majority of residents could be dragooned into such extreme action is strong evidence of substantial remnants of subjugation. An individual could not dissent. Not only did he have to profess the dominant position, he also had to actively defend and propagate it, with his life. Dissenters were kicked out, severely punished, or killed. The strategy of keeping thousands of people in a state of transience and insecurity had been a means to maintain subservience and control. Now, those thousands were living in the same state but also in fear and anger. The new controllers were political parties and/or the Third Force. They were able to 'plug' their agendas into the ready-made circuits of hostels and use them as a medium for political gain through violence.

The nature of the hostels now evoked new kinds of dependency. A man was no longer dependent on the hostel for his food or his job, but for his safety. For example, although up to 1990, Umlazi hostel residents had mixed freely with those in townships in every kind of social setting, after the violence began, they were at risk in the township. Their hostel was a refuge (Zulu, 1993) in the same way township residents, who were politically at odds with the dominant party there, sought asylum in hostels. Thus, in some hostels, there was an influx of women and children, as at Nancefield, and in others, and informal settlements developed on the edge of the hostel and under its surveillance – as at Alexandra.[10] This gives rise to a further inversion: surveillance for protection rather than for control.

The rules have changed since the days of the closed compound but the essential anatomy of the institution has remained. It is as useful to new authorities as it was to the old.

Post-Apartheid

Since the violence in the hostels burst out in the 1980s and 90s, there was considerable concern about them and their part in the violence. However, there were also indications unrelated to the violence that the institution would continue. Most significant perhaps were the attitudes of hostel dwellers themselves. In many hostels there was an overwhelming support for their retention (Payze & Keith, 1991). There were powerful reasons for the support: hostels remained the only urban homes for the large number of people still involved in circulatory migration between rural and urban areas (Sebatane, 1979: 137). Many workers 'migrated' on a short time cycle, monthly or even weekly. As a cheap form of accommodation, the hostel suited those who were in the city primarily to earn capital to plough back

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10   Seen on a visit to Alexandra Men's Hostel in 1994.

into their family homes in rural areas. Whether they want to retain a connection with the country or not, many people would rather put up with all the deprivations of hostel life than leave their foothold in rural areas and make a full commitment to an urban existence. Whatever the reasons, it was a reality that many people had no choice: hostels were the only cheap living space for thousands. In the 1990s there were about 604000 hostel beds in South Africa.

Further indications of the continued use of hostels were to be found in the De Loor Commission report (De Loor, 1991). The report was prepared under a nationalist government prior to the democratic elections. However, it was framed within the consciousness of a pending interim government and took evidence from a wide range of sources. It recommended that new hostels should be constructed at a distance from residential areas (De Loor, 1991). In other words, it accepted the continuation of hostels and persisted with their most basic characteristic: isolation from normal city living.

In addition, the White Paper (Republic of South Africa, 1994) on housing, although it did state that 'the... desire to end the marginalisation of hostels and their residents has not yet been given effect...', had no proposal as to how this was to be done.

Finally, the policy document on hostels in 1995 (Hostels Redevelopment Programme, 1995), which prescribed how state monies were to be used, actually proposed the building of new hostels. In dealing with the upgrading, it suggested no more than superficial physical improvement. As a result, many hostels being upgraded in the new dispensation were simply having minor improvements made to them, such as to ablutions and paintwork. The system was being made more palatable, but prolonged.

These were alarming signs that the institution would persist in a new conglomeration. The socio/spatial strategies for control had produced a virulent legacy which suggested that, in its very definition, the institution carried an energy to keep re-forming into new maligned mixtures. In the face of this propensity, half-baked or palliative rearrangements were inadequate. Rather than alleviating the situation, they obscured the process of re-formation. Therefore, what was required was urgent and radical transformation of arguably the most obnoxious of colonial and Apartheid South Africa's institutions (Clarke, 1994). In the light of this, it is of concern to find references to hostels such as those which follow. A report in 2015 titled 'An apartheid legacy: South Africa's hostels breed anger, violence' noted that 'Minister Lindiwe Sisulu recently told parliament she wanted to do away with hostels... but with no better alternative for the millions coming to the cities in search of work... closing them risks prompting more unrest' (Serino & Dludla, 2015). An article stated that 'the single-sex dwellings have been a focus of the recent xenophobic violence that has hit the country's major cities. Police believe those who carried out some attacks on foreigners lived in the hostels around Johannesburg and Durban...' (Maseko, 2015).

Conclusion

The discussion has shown that although there are differences, some substantial, between the diamond mine compounds, the gold mine compounds, and the migrant labour hostels, socially and spatially they have similar ingredients. They oppress black workers in several major ways: by isolating them from 'normal' society and from each other, thereby controlling their everyday movement and social interaction; by regulating them with draconian laws, policing systems, and disadvantageous contracts; by creating a dependency – generally providing for everyday essentials and also 'protecting' them from dangerous outside forces; and by spatial planning and design of living quarters which range from jails to places which are very easy to control, primarily by means of limited access and good surveillance. They subject the same people to all manner of humiliation, punishment, beatings, incarceration, to having their every movement watched, and by accommodating them in non-place living quarters, which are quite unsuitable for a dignified life. Through the provision of commercial premises, mainly for food and beer, they are also used to exploit the captive market of workers economically.

The context for the use of these strategies has varied over the hundred or so years of the institution, the forms they have taken have shifted and changed considerably, and the combinations and emphases have fluctuated. However, much of the built-in fabric remained, and the maligned ingredients stayed the same even after the repeal of the Pass Laws and the end of Apartheid, thus sustaining them as places of control, oppression, and violence. It is difficult not to conclude that this maligned institution needs to be very substantially transformed.

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Chapter 2: Hostels and the Legacy of their Tawdry Past

Ari Sitas[1]

Introduction

The hostel system was the logical extension of racial thinking in South Africa. It underpinned the exclusion of the black majority and its simultaneous inclusion to work for a wage: in short, to subsist as migrant labourers. It was thought of and designed to be a closed system of total control, an extension of the compound system that was inaugurated in the mines of Southern Zimbabwe and the Witwatersrand. The hostels that formed a key later element of this system were, and remain to this day despite changes, a reminder of an oppressive and exploitative past.

What started as an experiment at labour control on the Kimberley diamond mines (Turrell, 1987) was perfected into a system of total control on the Witwatersrand goldmines (Moroney, 1978). This in turn created the possibility of imagining an archipelago of structures to house in segregation, 2500 to 5000 apiece, the entire African wage-earning majority during the Apartheid period (Cooke, 2007).

Personal Encounters

I had the opportunity to explore some of the dynamics of the mining areas of the East Rand and conduct my PhD research around the Vosloorus hostel system in the late 1970s and early 80s (Sitas, 1979 & 1984). Later, I was in contact with many hostel residents in Durban, especially the hostels of New Germany housing newly recruited women from Zululand and Pondoland who worked in the textile mills, the SJ Smith hostel in Umlazi that catered for the city's Southern industrial areas, and Durban's Dalton Hostel that serviced the CBD and the factory complexes of Sydney Road. I was also involved in cultural work with migrant workers who had been working in the mining areas of Carletonville, Welkom, and the metalworking areas of Witbank. Although the latter work was not specifically about hostels, the narrative of migrant and hostel life was always there, (Sitas, 2017).

It was also present in the imagery and narratives of black worker plays[2], in their poetry, and a range of biographies and autobiographies: the Rely Precision workers' *Ilanga Lizophumela Abasebenzi*[3] (1980) on the East Rand, Alfred Temba Qabula's poetry in *Black Mamba Rising* (1986) and his banned autobiography, *A Working Life, Cruel Beyond Belief* (1989), as well as his play *Once Bitten, Twice Shy* (1985).

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1   This chapter was drafted and circulated in April 2020, 15 months before what occurred in Durban and beyond was to 'overwhelm' everybody.
2   The plays have not been published. Transcriptions of them will be part of an Archive of the Culture and Working Life Project at the University of Cape Town's Collections. Descriptions of then can be found in Von Kotze, A (1988) listed below.
3   'The sun will shine towards the workers.'

Hostel experiences were also in The Durban Worker Cultural Local's *Why Lord* (1984), the Pinetown Local's *Koze Kube Nini* (1984), the Sarmcol Worker Cultural Co-op's *Mbube* (1992) which was all about the hostel violence of the year before. It was this so-called hostel violence of 1991–1992 that had me return to the Vosloorus hostels to understand the dynamics that led unionised workers in COSATU to join Inkatha's mobilisation and turn their aggression against other hostel workers and township residents (Sitas, 1996).

What I will do in this paper is to firstly discuss the institutional form of the hostel; secondly, to create an experiential mosaic out of the creative dispositions and ideas that emerged out of that context by African workers in the hostel system of the 1980s and early 1990s; and thirdly, through their accounts, trace what has changed in the hostel system in the post–1994 period.

Raison d'Être of the Hostel System

The very existence of the hostel system was to cater for the growing need to house new workers in town, and to keep them separate from others and administered through customary authorities that claimed a traditional legacy. Already by 1923 the so-called *Natives (Urban Areas) Act* (1923) separated a small minority of black urban dwellers – who were deemed to hold an exemption to reside in 'locations' because they were born there, or had worked continuously for a white employer for more than ten years – from the majority who were deemed to be temporary migrants and residents of the designated Native Reserves. They had to carry passes and be controlled in the passage from their rural home to the world of the mine. The erection of hostels during the Apartheid period went hand in hand with the attempted tightening of 'influx controls', and further attempts to create separate development by granting forms of homeland independence with some success in the case of Xhosa and Tswana homelands. It was in particular to respond to the need for a mass-producing labour force as manufacturing was on the increase in all urban areas, and not all companies were the size of Eskom, Sasol, or Iscor and able to house their own employees following the prototype of the mines.

These 'places of sorrow' differed from mining compounds, however much they were an extension of that system. Whether under municipal, township, or administration board jurisdiction, their ability to control and coordinate the activities of their inmates was always proscribed. In essence, although similar in design and purpose, they differed from compounds because of operational contingencies. They were, after all, under the authority of public bureaucracies which tried to 'service' a multiplicity of employers. Their inmates worked in a variety of settings, each one with its different patterns of work, making strict control over the movement of people very difficult and a constant source of frustration to municipal and administration policing forces.

According to Section 2 of the *Bantu Urban Areas Consolidation Act* (1945), hostels were proclaimed as 'Bantu areas' for the housing of single men or women, working

in town on a migrant basis. By 1977 about 700000 African workers lived in 'single-sex' hostels and mining compounds. Out of these, 322000 lived in hostels registered with the Bantu Area Administration Boards. The Reef sported 46 such structures scattered in all its townships and adjacent to its factories (Minnaar, 1992: 4–5). *De jure*, beds, rooms, dormitories, and complexes were linked to rents, rules, obligations, and expulsion measures.

For sociologists and social historians, Charles Van Onselen's (1976) *Chibaro: African mine labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900–1933,* looked at Erving Goffman's idea of a 'total institution' to capture the mining compound's modalities of control for the sheer exploitation of black labour. His conception of the total control over the entire aspects of work and leisure on the mines, subsisting within a prison-like enclosure, links with the theoretical work of Michel Foucault's (1975) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* on prisons, factories, and spaces of confinement. 'Within the confines of barrack-like accommodation, surrounded in some cases by barbed wire fences, a quasi-military system of labour discipline operated. Large numbers of black workers were controlled, marshalled and disciplined through the agency of the black compound police, suitably armed with sjamboks (leather whips). Underground control was effected through black capitaos or "boss boys" who were in turn under the supervision of white miners' (Van Onselen, 1976: 12).

But if control was in the minds of the planners and designers of the hostel system, such a design, so evident in its intention, became difficult because of the variety of needs it was supposed to cater for, as was mentioned above. There were multiple employers with thousands of firms employing anything up to 20 workers each and a smaller number, let us say hundreds, employing anything from 500 to over a 1000 workers.

In my early work, I called them 'diffusionary forms of control' to distinguish them from the 'total institutions' of the mining industry (Pearson, 1976; Crush, 1992 & 1994). For example on the Witwatersrand they were brought under the East Rand and West Rand Administration Boards (ERAB and WRAB respectively) that attempted to control both townships and hostels. What also was attempted was ethnic separation of migrant workers with dormitories on the Witwatersrand designated as separate, an attempt which was futile in KwaZulu-Natal or the Cape. Most attempts collapsed because the idea of such a colonial form of managerialism could not be made to fit with reality. It became absurd to manage the oversupply or undersupply of, let us say, Xhosa people and allocate and re-allocate beds. Yes, people clustered towards their home-groups, but often such ethnic divides evaporated.

The links between the procurement of cheap labour, the depressed wages of migrancy, and the system was made often since the early 1970s (Wilson, 1972), and the tawdriness of everyday existence there was explored in some detail (Sitas, 1984; Ramphele, 1993; Wentzel, 1993; Cooke, 2007). All that mattered was the job and the bed (or bunk). Without the former, you lost the latter and so too, you lost access to the cities. A relatively recent assessment by Julian Cooke (2007: 67) asserts that the hostels 'show starkly how colonial and apartheid regimes used the spatial devices of

jails or concentration camps to keep labour present and subservient, and in tandem with social regulation, created a divided and violent land.'

Set to be isolated from the urban fabric that surrounded them, hostels were at a workable distance from transport nodes and places of work. They were the stacking of human cargo for industrial and commercial usage.

When I started work on the East Rand, such spaces were not only tawdry but also felt totally neglected. They fitted all the descriptions of a carceral world: a series of face-brick prisons, every facility was in a state of disrepair from communal kitchen to toilets, the rooms unkempt with patched up windows, dark and inadequately lit. But all this was during Apartheid's late years where already the shift system freed beds for unemployed kin to occupy whilst looking for jobs, where the 'blackjacks' were on the pay of informal leaders (not the *izinduna*, real or appointed) who closed their eyes to what was going on. On occasion, they would be ordered to raid for undocumented and 'deviant' bed occupiers.

In my work I posited a distinction between 'defensive combinations' and 'cultural formations'. In the context of modern institutional and organisational life with its work patterns, repetitive tasks, and routines, people recoiled from and refracted pressures by forming groups, networks, and informal associations. Defensive combinations were so many practical ways of regulating the rhythms of work, of regulating social interaction, and of regulating relationships to authority and power. In the classic work on asylums by Erving Goffman (1964) we were shown how the patients coped in their total institution and developed a public and a private world which regulated their perceptions and interactions. Similarly, studies of migrant workers in South Africa (Sitas, 1984; Moroney, 1978) have shown how they regulate everyday life in their dormitories, on the stope-face at work, and cope by keeping those in authority at a distance. In many instances 'defensive combinations' turned into 'cultural formations' once the regulation of everyday life and belonging to a group is underpinned by reciprocal norms, values, and symbolic markers as against practical and instrumental considerations.

Responses

The challenge for the hostel dwellers was that they were of the city but not from the city and were seriously challenged by township politics. Their priorities were rural whereas the township issues were not exactly theirs.

Yet it was ironic that the customary and the hostel combined to usher the first waves of black worker militancy in the 1970s. Although the pressures preceded the actual events of 1973, it was during the annual Christmas 'party' at Coronation Brick and Tile where it was customary to have the Zulu Royal House surrounded by its appointed *izinduna,* as special guests. And so it came to pass that King Zwelithini, in addressing the workers, alluded to the fact that management promised wage increases in the new year. When they returned in January 1973 to their hostel, they were outraged that this was not the case and downed tools. Much was made

of this in the press and the radio which brought out the next large swathe of black women textile workers at Frame's factories in New Germany who were in the main hostel dwellers. After that, imitation effects spread all over Durban. During the next decade migrant workers constituted the backbone of the new unionism in all urban centres of South Africa: the seemingly most controlled and vulnerable workers, those who risked most in terms of livelihoods and access to the city, were to change the world.

The heart of South Africa's metalworks, the East Rand, followed suit with the hostels of Boksburg, Benoni, Springs, and slightly later Germiston, becoming the hotbeds of trade union growth and one of the largest worker strike-waves in 1981 that brought the East Rand to a standstill. This was followed by the rapid recruitment of union members on the mines, where the National Union of Mineworkers organised most gold and coal workers in just over two years.

By gathering so many people in such spaces, the system could not proscribe effective ways of living out lives and creating what we have termed cultural formations – these led to different ways of organising their gendering systems, enhancing their households' livelihoods, creating forms of leisure activity, and sharing and enforcing values – although most migrants I had interviewed prioritised the 'customary' but were quite ready to play with new possibilities the urban world made possible. Such large numbers of men or women created unique informal market opportunities, and micro-business operations.

In short, inside the bricked and tawdry walls of the hostels a complex informal pattern of association was always in existence, deflecting and responding to urban pressures. These associations, or defensive combinations, spawned a variety of cultural formations that co-existed alongside each other.

There are very few poems of the mining compound or the hostel experience that match Alfred Qabula's *The Small Gateway to Heaven* (Qabula, 1989: 49–51):

Tall brown walls crowned
 with barbed wire fences
Walls that hide what lives inside
 from all outsiders.
And inside them, the inmates never see
 the world outside
  They hear sounds
  Rumours of lives
  They hear stories

And on these walls: two gates.
 A small and a big gate
 Just as it was told in the
  histories of custody

But also in the stories of the entrances to Heaven

And they feel that they are blessed,
Those elected to enter feel they are blessed
Entering the small gateway to the hostel or the compound
Those unmarked, those without numbers on their wrists
cannot enter.
But I entered, I was elected to enter the small gates
And these eyes have seen wonders:
I saw the people stacked in shelves
Like goods in a human supermarket.

I saw the elect, long strings of men
In queues
One after the other tracing their steps through
the kitchens
[…]
And you imagined the heat of your food
before you received it cold.

Then there were the others: [the man] with his enormous *ukhezo*
[…]
Pouring out insults
Swearing and throwing the plate so the gravy
Poured and smudged the surfaces, fingers, anger

He was having his fun
His daily amusement
On the brink of a riot.

And at night another is busy courting
his workmate
Praising him as the beautiful one from KwaTeba
the one with the short breasts saying –
Since you left your sister behind
Please take her place in my bunk tonight.
And he asks and asks him to acknowledge his proposal.
[…]
And I remember:
When the recruiters invaded our homes
To get us to work the mines
They would say:
'Come to Malamulela
at Mlamlankuzi with its hills and valleys
There are mountains of meat
There a man's teeth become loose from endless chewing

And there where the walls are grumbling
Where the stoneface is singing
Promising bridewealth and merriment
Where sorrows disappear at the wink of an eye
Come to the place of the
 Hairy-jaw
 where starvation is not known.'

And we joined the queues through the small gate to Heaven
And we found the walls of our custody
 and degradation
 and of work darkness to darkness
      with heavy shoes burdening our feet
      with worry
For nothing
At the place of the Hairy-jaw
 away from our loved ones.
And I have seen this prison of a Heaven
This kraal which encircles the slaves

And I saw it as the heart of our oppression
And I saw the walls that separate us
      From a life of love

Qabula's is a vision of hell, of heavy work and long hours; a space of indignity, of loss.

In reflecting on black workers' theatre in KwaZulu-Natal, Astrid Von Kotze argued that over and above their focus on exploitation, plays like *Koze Kube Nini, Why Lord?* and *Once Bitten, Twice Shy* (1985), 'contain a moral lesson. They warn of the disintegration of rural values and the dangers which confront young workers who are ignorant of the ways of people in the townships' (Von Kotze, 1988: 104).

Alpheus Nhleko was part of the migrant workers who co-created *Ilanga Lizophumela Abasebenzi* – a foundry worker who, having been fired over a strike, was supposed to lose his access to his bed and by implication, to the urban areas in 1980. What he emphasised was the opposite of what Qabula described – not a beaten queue of men, but a space of care and solidarity. Yes, these were hardened men who, when drunk, would cause problems, but men who understood each other and cared: 'I was called to the yard by the leaders and told, you are going nowhere… no one will take your bed until you find another job… Here is R400 from the men… you are looked after. What is this union thing, you are punished for?... And I explained… Well… *mfundisi*, they said, this union stays here too!!!' [4]

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4   From my notes for Sitas (1984) *op cit.*

It is not that they did not decry the conditions at the hostel or that they were happy there away from home, but they pointed out how they learnt to look out for each other: to become men[5]. Back home each man has his domain; here, they were thrown into a strange domain, so they created rules and rituals of survival. Two of the four informal leaders knew of the union – they had heard from their kinsmen at the Benoni hostels who worked at Dunswart Iron and Steel (a factory that employed over 1000 workers). Once Dunswart turned to the union, Benoni and Boksburg became strongholds of the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU).

To the leading question of whether he was romanticising life in the hostel and life was not as solidaristic as he painted, his answer was humorous: the hostel was not a church and 'even in church you find the hoodlum and the murderer!' (Nhleko interview, 1984)[6].

Let us consider Martha Shelembe (also interviewed in 1984); she was the lead in the Pinetown Local's *Koze Kube Nini?* The play was about the worlds of the women's hostels in New Germany and their experiences as young women working in a textile mill. Pumzile Mabele, the writer of most of the play, could not be contacted to give her version, but Martha's assessment was quite conclusive. The play was about how the recruiters met them in the countryside, promising them money and happiness. How in *Ijelimani*[7], life would be full of promise and hope. It was hard to convince their elderly parents and the local *izinduna*[8] that going to town unaccompanied and working out there could not mean trouble.

Life in the hostel was harmonious and the spare time was spent in church and in the church choirs. Trouble started when Claremont township men realised how much young 'female talent' was trapped in the hostels. According to Shelembe an elaborate network of dating and partying was set in place that had many of them being swallowed up by the city, forgetting all about respect and their roots.[9]

The excitement of having money at the end of the month and helping with debts back home was a new experience, but work was hard, and their conditions were dismal. So they joined the trade union Textile Workers' Industrial Union (TWIU) which then became SA Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (SACTWU) and they started meeting township women and fellow workers in the metal and chemical industries of Pinetown through those structures. According to Shelembe, 'we realised that at branch level, we were many more than men… we had a strong voice in FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions)… But now, with the textile and clothing closing down… women are without factory jobs' (Shelembe interview, 1984).

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5   Sthembiso Bhengu captured this male solidarity well in his PhD – a '*madodahood*' of serious implications for such patriarchal mandates.
6   The interviews with Siyabonga Nhleko and Martha Shelembe were conducted by me as a follow up on worker creativity. They were included in the 1996 piece by Ari Sitas referred to below.
7   'Germany', referring to New Germany.
8   'Headmen'
9   This was the theme of Qabula's play *Once Bitten, Twice Shy* (1985).

Let us take Nester Lamola, who acted as the main protagonist in *Mbube* (1992) which was the Creative Co-op's response to the hostel violence.[10] She had lived for five years in Durban's all women hostel when she worked as a municipal road-cleaner, before she found a job as a domestic worker. In the play she wakes from an ominous dream that something had gone wrong with her husband who worked on the Reef as a construction worker. He had not contacted her and there were the stories of hostel violence doing the rounds and that Zulus were being mobilised to attack the townships. In real life, her ex-husband did work for a construction company on the Reef and in a 'typical' fashion in her assessment, he did take on another woman there, abandoning Nester and their two children. In the fictional account she is still in love with her man so she decides to catch the train to the Reef and go to his hostel. The space is militarised and she is turned away by the guards. 'This is no place, for women, this is a war zone.'

She disguises herself as a man and enters the hostel. She lies and improvises. She pretends to leave every day and go to work. She lies that she is looking for her brother. The inmates like this young man who has a wonderful falsetto voice that could lead their *mbube* choir and win accolades and competitions with their *isicathamiya* grooves. The play does not only pay tribute to the musical form that emerged out of the hostel systems of Durban but also uses the choral sequences to describe the pain of hostel life: the rural worlds they had left behind, their unrequited loves, their wages, the battles between the Bible and the bottle, and of course, politics. She wants to participate but she has no money to buy the proper attire as she is not working. She borrows money, she joins, but becomes pressurised to pay back. And they all call her 'Stinky' because she never showers. The hostel is a Zulu stronghold and she has to join the war call and arm herself to confront the 'enemy' in the township. She sings with gusto, leading the *giya* dance and they face the enemy. At the head of the so-called enemy stands her man leading them to song.

The play stops abruptly and the cast moves towards the audience asking, 'What are we doing to ourselves?' The cast engages with them in a dialogue about the hostel violence. The play ends with each 'man' wearing their choir hats and providing a sung lament about division and violence. She undresses to reveal that she is a woman.

If we are to construct an experiential and ideational mosaic out of all these creative insights we will find all the sociological variables playing a part: class, race, ethnicity, gender and gendering, sexuality, religions, customary rituals, possession, education, performativity, culture, and a variety of urban and rural interconnections. Trade unionism in the 1970s and 1980s brought with it a class dynamic that brought migrants in necessary contact with the urban workers that

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10 It has to be noted that these were Zulu people in outrage about what was being done in their name through Inkatha's incursion in the hostels.

were looking down on them.[11] Their presence there in large numbers forced the Wiehahn Commission in 1979 to recognise all workers as employees under the law, ending a century of colonial managerialism. The Riekert Commission attempted to reinforce the division between the Section 10 Urbans and Migrant 'rurals' in the early 1980s. It failed. In 1986, influx controls were abolished.

These workers' lives and dispositions were not only defined by the hostel experience – there was also the world of work and the networks of association they created and experienced there. Sociologists and anthropologists constructed academic debates between those who followed, for example, Hoyt Alverson in his *Mind in the Heart of Darkness: Value and Self-Identity among the Tswana of Southern Africa* (1982) to construct a worldview of alienation from work and a yearning for an uncorrupted rural worldview, and those who followed Dunbar Moodie who showed in *Going for Gold: Men, mines, and migration* (1994) the creative ways and workplace solidarities of the mining experience. It is a fascinating academic debate, and my work pointed to the necessary synthesis of both. The point was that people, no matter how oppressive their conditions are, create ways of deflecting structures and pressures, and in this process create meaningful spaces of co-existence and, often, resistance.

The Present

If during the late Apartheid period 322000 people lived in hostels so that they could work in the designated white areas, the latest figures (2019) by StatsSA have them at 429086, of whom the majority are in Gauteng numbering 141846. KwaZulu-Natal follows with approximately half of such numbers.[12] Indeed, they have become what Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama (2017) has named 'spaces of perplexity' – a catchment area for all black people, young and old, that needed a toe-hold in a depressed urban economy.

In principle, hostels should not have existed in a post-Apartheid society. But the ideal, typical migrant needed the cheapest form of accommodation in town in order to save and remit to the rural homestead.[13] The consolidation of customary authority over land reinforced rights over rural land for men and it would have been absurd for people to abandon such security. Many members of the trade union wanted to spend as little in urban rates as possible and save for back home instead. At best they argued for family housing. So, when influx control was finally abolished in 1986, the strict link between job and bed was loosened. This resulted in drastic changes for the various hostels. A compromise position was to turn them into residential units allowing for family accommodation.

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11 This was a major complaint by migrants during my interviews in 1980 and 1981, but they also pride in their strength – they were doing heavy steel and metal work not like the 'women's work' township men did for white bosses.

12 StatsSA (2018) Household Survey, 2007–18.

13 Of course there were variations to the theme. Many had a foot in the city and another in the countryside. There were liaisons, there was more than one homestead to cater for and so on, but the majority conformed to the 'ideal typical' characterisation.

According to Alpheus Nhleko, it is in the final instance a physical and violent world: 'in the foundry when the bosses were not watching we poured and moulded knives. It was rare that we used them… it was mostly for self-defence from *tsotsis*. Now, I hear, everyone has guns. My young relatives there… *are* the *tsotsis*' (Nhleko interview, 1984). Martha Shelembe disagrees, the hostel people are not *tsotsis* : 'you must never look down on the women in the hostels… even there, they hold the pillars of the home' (Shelembe interview, 1984).

As the Moerane Commission into political violence found, the Glebelands Hostel in Durban became a source of gunmen for political killings within the ANC. In their words –

> '… the conditions witnessed by the Commission in the Hostel corroborated the evidence of those who alleged neglect of the Hostel by the responsible authority, the eThekwini Municipality… The abdication of this responsibility was both in terms of the lack of maintenance of the physical property, as well as in the administration of the property, including the allocation of beds, which was left to criminal elements, resulting in violent competition for control of the lucrative business of controlling the renting of the beds.'[14]

The story does not end there. Hostel residents provided militia for xenophobic attacks in townships, and according to Nester Lamola, ' you want something done, you have money? Go to the hostel. There are hungry and eager people there.'

Martha Shelembe disagrees; there are wonderful people in the hostels. Look at *Ubunye bamaHostela* that is fighting for hostel residents' rights. 'Shot at, killed[15], betrayed, they still struggle on…' (Shelembe, interview). *Ubunye bamaHostela*'s description of their condition circulated during the pandemic is a fitting conclusion –

> 'For decades eThekwini hostel communities have been victim to municipal corruption, dysfunctional administration, poor service delivery and basic living conditions that have changed little since apartheid. We are only seen during elections when politicians come to encourage us to vote for them by distributing t-shirts and food parcels, but when we are in dire need, these politicians and their food parcels are nowhere to be seen… Hostel accommodation is overcrowded (as many as 30 people share some rooms) rendering social distancing impossible. Plumbing is ancient and poorly maintained with many leaking pipes and overflowing sewerage systems, while refuse removal and cleaning services are irregular and poorly carried out. Conditions are now so dire that communities are turning on one another in their despair and desperation to find food. We have experienced shacks being burned at KwaMashu Hostel and a general rise in criminality and

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14   Moerane (2018), The Moerane Commission Report.
15   The leader of the *Ubunye bamaHostela* was assassinated at the Glebelands hostel in 2015. It has not stopped the movement.

social unrest across all eThekwini hostels. This will not just be confined to the hostels, but is likely to overwhelm surrounding communities, increasing existing levels of brutality by law enforcement officials and leading to widespread looting, food riots and social instability which is already occurring in other areas. We cannot sufficiently overstate the need to prevent this from happening or the damage this will do to the social fabric of our communities.'[16]

In conclusion, the hostel is no longer part of a system of control but remains as another form of black urban habitation which combines overcrowding and shack settlement in new ways. Yet, it remains a tawdry sign of a past that should have been overcome. In the words of Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama (2017), they exist still as violent 'spaces of perplexity' and spaces to entrap the needy on the margins of South Africa's cities.

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Chapter 3: Advocating for Socio-Spatial Justice in the Spaces of Perplexity

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama

Introduction

A discussion of the hostels in South Africa, which I also refer to as 'spaces of perplexity', is essentially a discussion of the state of housing targeting the working-class black population, which oscillates from the rural areas to the urban areas in search of a better life. These spaces of perplexity reflect past plans and conflicts, as well as the hopes and dreams in the present post-apartheid transition (Xulu-Gama, 2017a). As I argued in 2014, hostels are a key site in which to investigate the complex and interconnected issues of space, place or non-place (as argued by Cooke), gender inequality, household reconfigurations, unequal power relations, multiple identities, lack of employment, and precarious ways of livelihood procurement. In this chapter, I argue that in their totality, exploring these issues highlight hostels as a clear depiction of socio-spatial injustice and inequality, which goes against everything that the new South Africa stands for. While acknowledging that South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world, the key aim of this chapter is to advocate for socio-spatial justice at the hostels in South Africa.

This chapter focuses on a space, former single-sex workers' hostels, which is a direct example of the kind of issues that the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 and the *Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16* (SPLUMA) (2013) engages with. Former single-sex workers' hostels, which in many cases have come to be officially known as Community Residential Units, continue to be a lived reality and reflection of a painful past for black people whose lives are torn between rural and urban areas. These spaces are a depiction of what is initially perceived as a breakaway from rural poverty and unemployment into supposed urban opportunities, only for the migrants to be trapped in circumstances which some feel are worse than where they come from. In my previous work, I have attempted to unpack these spaces of perplexity as 'spaces full of mystification, contradictions, confusion and resistance' (Xulu-Gama, 2017a: 10).

> 'Many people are confused about what the hostel is, who is it for and why it is there. People are uncertain about whose interests are served by the changes. What exacerbates the mystification is the fact that some people choose to remain in their understanding of the past about the hostel, which sometimes are no longer relevant. Sometimes people choose to focus too much on the changes brought about by the African National Congress [ANC] government and the changing

environment, so much so that they refuse to accept or respect the past and what it stands for. The other cause of mystification is how the current government constantly fails to create a comfortable platform for the hostel-dwellers to engage with it concerning crucial aspects of the remaking of the hostel, especially the drastic changes. The participants also raised many reasons for this perplexity. There is no single explanation that can fit everybody at the hostel. The concept of hostels now means many different things to different people and is dynamic and shifting. The spaces of perplexity represent a combination of all positive and negative experiences and expectations of a variety of people from in and around the hostel' (Xulu-Gama, 2017a: 10).

In this chapter, I intend to discuss socio-spatial justice critically in relation to the hostels in South Africa. In an effort towards developing a working definition of spatial justice, Adegeye and Coetzee (2019: 387) assert that it is 'spatial distribution of socially valued resources such as education, employment, transport, health and housing in any society in such a way that everyone would have adequate access to them, with the disadvantaged of the society being the first beneficiaries rather than last.' They add that the disadvantaged should be 'incorporated into spatial planning policies, plans, frameworks, and structure of cities by the promotion of diversity, democracy, equity and a just distribution based on merit and/or need' (Adegeye & Coetzee, 2019: 387). For this chapter, that valued resource is housing, which cannot be separated from education and employment opportunities, as well as health and transport infrastructure.

The White Paper on a New Housing Policy and Strategy for South Africa (Department of Housing, 1994), published two months after the 1994 elections, already documented five key sociological and spatial factors which were seen as having the potential to complicate housing policy implementation: 1) hostel accommodation, 2) circular migration and dual households, 3) prevalence of single, often female-headed households, 4) cultural and legal impediments for women to access housing, and 5) traditional and land tenure systems. These five socio-spatial factors were a function of the past policies and legislation which were designed to create and maintain social and spatial inequalities and injustices for black people in South Africa. Chapter 8 of the NDP 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012), titled 'Transforming Human Settlement and the National Space Economy' (p. 268) documents that:

> The release of a revised policy in 2004, known as Breaking New Ground, followed a growing recognition that the programme often resulted in poor-quality units; uniform and monotonous settlements on the urban edge and the concentration of the very poor in new ghettoes' (National Planning Commission, 2012).

The NDP 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012: 24) further acknowledges that '[t]he apartheid spatial divide continues to dominate the landscape. A large proportion of young people feel that the odds are stacked against them. And the legacy of apartheid continues to determine the life opportunities for the vast majority.' Furthermore, the preamble of the SPLUMA Act makes reference to the 'many people in South Africa [who] continue to live and work in places defined and influenced by past spatial planning and land use laws and practices which were based on – racial inequality; segregation and unsustainable settlement patterns…' (Republic of South Africa, 2013).

Hostels are an important rural-urban migration destinations particularly because according to the National Planning Commission, (2012) the percentage of people living in rural areas has fallen by 10% since 1994 and resulted in 60% of people living in urban areas. EThekwini, Johannesburg, and Cape Town are the fastest-growing cities which subsequently carry more pressure for spatial planning and basic service delivery. Despite the efforts which the government has put in place to unite South Africa after it was divided by colonialism and Apartheid, it remains largely divided racially and by ethnicity with widespread discrimination on class, gender, and sexuality bases (National Planning Commission, 2012).

The holistic approach towards decent living standard elements which includes housing, water, sanitation, electricity, education and skills, safety and security, healthcare, employment, recreation and leisure, clean environment, nutrition, and transport, as proposed by the NDP (National Planning Commission, 2012: 38) is impressive, but it is sad to say that the hostels are one example of a space where none of the above-mentioned elements is present in their fullness. The fact that during Apartheid some of the elements were present (though in complex and discriminatory ways) and today in 2025 I find none is worrying. I further acknowledge that these living standard elements were never designed to be present in their fullness for black people during the colonial and Apartheid period, which perhaps explains why they were not decent living standards since they were limited and discriminatory. Marks, Erwin and Fleetwood (2018: 314) documents that while we might be reluctant today to take lessons from the Apartheid government, there are perhaps some areas of governance from this period that might be useful for us to consider.

Through this chapter, I attempt to provide a critical examination of the hostels using a socio-spatial justice framework, being guided by the legislation and policies in place as set by the government in relation to the lived realities of the hostel dwellers. Below I start by providing the methodological tools used to gather and analyse the data presented in this chapter. I then outline the policy and legislative frameworks relating to historical and contemporary hostels in South Africa. I further provide a theoretical framework based on social and spatial justice. I then present a discussion of some of the key findings from my work on hostels and provide concluding points.

Research Methodology

The research methodology follows on from the work of Adegeye and Coetzee (2019) on spatial justice and its relevance for the Global South. It is purely of qualitative orientation and based on the synthesis of secondary data collected. 'Synthesis is typically a process of bringing together studies that are very much alike in terms of contents and findings' (Adegeye & Coetzee, 2019: 379). Meta-synthesis is a qualitative kind of analysis that attempts to consolidate and synthesise results from various but similar studies. This method of inquiry has an interpretive rather than aggregative intent (Adegeye & Coetzee, 2019: 377).

The approach to meta-synthesis which is relevant to this chapter is one which involves the combination of findings from one researcher's different studies in a similar field. This approach is argued to be the most transparent because it recognises the central belief of constructed knowledge. However, its main setback is that it does not allow for the investigation of various points of view (Adegeye & Coetzee, 2019: 378). I have overcome this methodological weakness by closely and carefully relying on the social, spatial, policy, and legislative framework as researched and written for the South African context.

The Policy and Legislative Framework

The establishment of former single-sex workers' hostels took place during the colonial era and was cemented by the Apartheid era starting in 1948. Hostels and compounds were key parts of the labour migration system; their existence and function were facilitated by numerous key pieces of legislation, and in this section, I outline a few of these.

The *Hut Tax Act 37* (1884) was introduced by the colonial government as a way of pushing black people into working in service of white-owned business interests, thereby creating a migrant labour system and dependence on the capitalist system. Each hut or household was required to pay a particular amount in cash or labour, pushing the black population to wage labour. The *Natives Land Act 27* (1913) then dispossessed black people and confined them to 7% of the country's infertile land, and this was later increased to 13.5% in 1936. This land dispossession affected their reliance on agriculture for survival, further pushing them to wage labour. As black people were pushed to work in the cities, racial segregation policies meant that they had to be accommodated in spaces reserved for black people in urban areas. The *Natives (Urban Areas) Act 21* (1923) was enacted to ensure this segregation of urban areas and to control the influx of 'natives' into urban spaces. The workers' hostels were an example of an urban location which solely accommodated black workers. Black people were divided and placed in these hostels also based on ethnicity in many cases. The *Group Areas Act 41* (1950) codified a further segregation of the urban areas so that different race groups lived separately. This made it illegal to be found living or working without a 'pass' in an area which was not allocated and segregated for your race group. Before leaving rural areas to look for work in the city, one had to be of a particular gender and age to qualify to move alone and to seek employment.

The *Population Registration Act 30* (1950) was a legal racial classification and registration of South Africans, and this was a core element of maintaining the separateness of people. This act prescribed that one could either be black, white, coloured, or Indian. In 1986, the *Abolition of Influx Control Act 68* (1986) was promulgated which could be understood as the beginning of freedom of movement for black people in the post-colonial era. Through the fightback of the liberation movement, and women particularly fighting for their freedoms and rights, *imijondolo*[1] started mushrooming in the 1980s in urban areas. In 1990, Nelson Mandela, a political activist who became the first black democratic president of the country, was released from prison and this had an impact on the rent boycotts in hostels. While the hostel rent went up unreasonably, on the other hand, black people felt freedom was at hand as Mandela was released from prison and there was no need for them to pay rent (to pay to live in their country). There is another argument that the boycotts and violence were a result of the insecurity of being accommodated in hostels. There were calls for the hostels to be emptied so that they could accommodate the people who had been in exile during Apartheid. The people who were in exile were mostly ANC political activists and the hostels were mostly accommodating people who were affiliated with the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in Durban and Johannesburg. Insecurity, instability, and uncertainty grew for hostel dwellers. This escalated into the political violence in the mid-1990s which is largely written about (see Sitas, 1996; Zulu, 1993; Segal, 1992).

Two months after the 1994 elections, the White Paper on a New Housing Policy and Strategy for South Africa was published, stating that '[a] housing programme cannot be limited to housing, but needs to be promoted in such a manner as to give meaning to the goal of creating viable communities' (Department of Housing, 1994: 10). This was basically a recognition that housing is more than a shelter. Furthermore, the White Paper documented that the 'government strives for the establishment of viable, socially, and economically integrated communities, situated in areas allowing convenient access to economic opportunities as well as health, education and social amenities' (Department of Housing, 1994: 19). The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was implemented as a result of the White Paper. This programme was so famous that all government housing which was erected targeting working-class people thereafter were called RDP houses. Unfortunately, they were not always situated in areas allowing convenient access to economic opportunities as well as health, education, and social amenities, as was envisioned by the policy above.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) is the supreme law of South Africa and it states that '[t]he people of South Africa are committed to the attainment of social justice and the improvement of the quality of life for everyone' (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Chapter 2 of the Constitution, which is the Bill of Rights, states in section 26 that 1) everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing, 2) the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within

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1   'Shacks', or 'informal settlements'.

its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right, and 3) no one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court made after considering all the relevant circumstances. No legislation may permit arbitrary evictions.

In the preamble, the Constitution recognises the injustices towards the people of South Africa in their past and affirms that it has been adopted 'to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights' (Republic of South Africa, 1996). It is against this backdrop that the notion of social justice should be understood. Some of the recognised values underlying our Constitution and included in the Bill of Rights, which are relevant for this chapter discussing socio-spatial justice in hostels, are the rights to equality (section 9), human dignity (section 10), freedom of expression (section 16), adequate healthcare, food, water, and access to social security (section 27). Additionally, the enactment of the *Housing Act 107* (1997) brought the housing framework in alignment with the 1996 Constitution, as highlighted above, and it repealed all previous housing laws including the *Slums Act 76* (1979).

While the government was successful in building more than 1,5 million housing units between 1994 and 2003, the quality, location, and socio-economic impacts were dire. While houses were built, the symbolic meaning which the people associated with those houses was claimed to be worse than that associated with what the Apartheid government had built for the people. 'Community participation was limited, and the houses contributed little to lift people out of poverty beyond the shelter and security aspects… The unfavourable location and high transport costs also prevented people from gradually upgrading and consolidating their homes, and resulted in many selling or renting them out, thereby creating an informal secondary market' (Scheba, et al., 2021: 20).

In 2006, the government published a policy framework and implementation guidelines for the Community Residential Units (CRUs) Programme which targeted low-income persons and households earning below R3500 per month. Some of the challenges that this programme was addressing were overcrowding, neglect, lack of integration with communities where they are located, and lack of maintenance leading to non-adherence to health and safety standards. Ownership of the existing housing stock would be transferred from provincial housing departments to municipalities, in terms of the provisions of the *Housing Act 107* (1997: 6).

The primary target market of CRUs were the existing residents of former single-sex hostels; people who had been displaced through evictions and upgrading, people from informal settlements, new qualifying indigent groups (as long as they could afford to pay some form of rent and pay for utilities), and new qualifying applicants in the municipal housing waiting list earning below R3500. People who wanted ownership were not going to be considered. Hostel re-development comprised either partial or complete demolition and site rehabilitation; or refurbishment and/ or conversion; or erecting a new building totally (*Housing Act 107*, 1997: 9). In 2014

I wrote a paper titled *From Hostels to CRUs: Hostels as Spaces of Perpetual Perplexity,* where I explained the processes and challenges that hostel dwellers went through with the introduction of this CRU programme at the hostels (Xulu, 2014).

 The last piece of legislation which I will discuss briefly is the SPLUMA Act (2013). SPLUMA has documented aims to promote social and economic inclusion, as well as developmental, equitable, and efficient spatial planning; to redress the imbalances of the past; and to ensure that there is equity in the application of the spatial development planning and land use management systems. One of the key development principles of spatial justice is that spatial development frameworks and policies at all spheres of government must address the inclusion of persons and areas that were previously excluded with an emphasis on informal settlements, former homeland areas, and areas characterised by widespread poverty and deprivation. SPLUMA is one of the legislative pieces which remains committed to the principles of social justice. It also highlights spaces (i.e., informal settlements and former homeland areas) which are critically and intricately connected to the hostels and claims that the inclusion of these spaces must be prioritised because of the well-known historical, social, and spatial legacy resulting from colonial and Apartheid socio-spatial engineering.

Theoretical Framework: Socio-Spatial Justice

Madonsela and Lourens (2021) provide a working definition of social justice which they acknowledge is influenced by both the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation's definitions. They posit that '[s]ocial justice means the just, fair, and equitable distribution of all opportunities, resources, benefits, privileges, and burdens in a society, group and between societies. This finds expression in the equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms by all. At the core of social justice is embracing the humanity of every person so that nobody should find it harder than others to exist in society, and nobody should bear more burdens than others. It is social injustice when one group finds it unduly harder than others to access life opportunities such as justice services, education, and the acquisition or retention of assets such as land to establish, grow, and sustain a commercial or social enterprise' (Madonsela & Lourens, 2021: 3).

According to Van der Walt (2004) social justice includes equality, human dignity, and socio-economic support and upliftment. The accomplishment of social justice and improved quality of life is a constitutional commitment which must be pursued and achieved over time in compliance with our constitutional obligations. He further argues that a) even now, after the establishment of a constitutional democracy, social justice does not prevail in South African society – it has to be attained through reform and transformation; b) social justice involves and is premised upon a number of fundamental rights such as equality and human dignity, but a particularly important aspect is socio-economic support and upliftment – improving everyone's quality of life; c) neither social justice nor improved quality of life can be established at once, and therefore the focus has

to be on attainment of these goals over time; d) however, the attainment of social justice and improved quality of life is not an empty promise or a hollow aspiration either – it is a constitutional commitment, which means that it has to be pursued in compliance with constitutional obligations and requirements (Van der Walt, 2004).

Matlou (2016: 545) argues that broadly, social justice means that every citizen of the Republic of South Africa is entitled to at least some or other form of fair treatment under the law. In South Africa, in the context of our history of (social, spatial) political and legal exclusion where not all people were entitled to fair treatment under the law, the idea of social justice is eminently important.

On a related point, Adegeye and Coetzee's work 'shows that in order to achieve spatial justice, the requirements of the criteria of equity, diversity, democracy and just distribution must be met in the areas of housing, health, education, employment and transportation" (Adegeye & Coetzee, 2019: 388). They conclude that 'the concept of spatial justice encompasses much that, if implemented appropriately, would lead to a just society and ultimately move closer to undoing the apartheid geographies in South Africa and creating spatially just cities in the global south' (Adegeye & Coetzee, 2019: 388).

It seems that the principles for spatial development as stated by the NDP 2030 are also in line with what Adegeye and Coetzee (2019) argued. In the NDP 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012: 277), spatial justice, spatial sustainability, spatial resilience, spatial quality, and spatial efficiency are defined as follows: spatial justice means that '[t]he historic policy of confining particular groups to limited space, as in ghettoisation and segregation, and the unfair allocation of public resources between areas, must be reversed to ensure that the needs of the poor are addressed first rather than last'; spatial sustainability advocates that '[s]ustainable patterns of consumption and production should be supported, and ways of living promoted that do not damage the natural environment'; spatial resilience means '[v]ulnerability to environmental degradation, resource scarcity and climatic shocks must be reduced. Ecological systems should be protected and replenished'; spatial quality is understood to mean that '[t]he aesthetic and functional features of housing and the built environment need to be improved to create liveable, vibrant and valued places that allow for access and inclusion of people with disabilities'; spatial efficiency means '[e]fficient commuting patterns and circulation of goods and services should be encouraged, with regulatory procedures that do not impose unnecessary costs on development.' In their mission to make known the 'voices of resilience' from a former social housing estate targeting poor white people, Marks, Erwin and Fleetwood (2018: 314) argue that 'placing flats in close proximity to decent schools, public transport and health facilities allows for an expansion of life chances and connecting to other social groupings and social institutions, thus providing the potential for broadening social capital and in turn leveraging new opportunities.'

In this chapter, I make reference to socio-spatial justice, although the material which I have relied on above speaks of social or spatial justice separately. There are two reasons why I have resorted to using the combined concept of 'socio-spatial justice' instead of separating these forms of justice. The first reason is that I see the concepts of space and place in terms of social relations, as influenced by Massey (1994). This perspective emerges out of 'insistence on thinking of space, not as some absolute independent dimension, but as constructed out of social relations: that what is at issue is not social phenomena in space but both social phenomena and space as constituted out of social relations, that the spatial is social relations "stretched out". The fact is, however, that social relations are never still, they are inherently dynamic' (Massey, 1994: 2). The way I conceptualise socio-spatial is seeing the social as embedded in the spatial as much as the spatial is embedded in the social. I see each as constructing the other. I believe that looking at these separately and independently of each other is exclusive, bounded, and analytically unhelpful. Social justice analysis in isolation of spatial justice is limiting as the problems and solutions are found in the sociological environment, which is not in isolation from the spatial environment. For this chapter, social injustices and inequality incorporate and stretch beyond the spatial, which is discussed here in terms of the rural and the urban, the hostel and the township.

Secondly, from the variety of social and spatial definitions provided above, there exists common threads that hold the social and spatial concepts together, and give it shape and identity. What is noticeable between the social and spatial justice definitions are principles of socio-economic upliftment, fair treatment, equality, equity, human dignity, and just distribution of housing, healthcare, education, employment, and transportation. Therefore, for the purposes of this chapter, what I call socio-spatial justice is about fixing, undoing, and/or redressing the wrongs of the past in ways that are not independent of each other – social and spatial instead of social or spatial. In short, socio-spatial justice is concerned with comprehensive, equal, and quality provision of basic infrastructure like housing, healthcare, transport, education, access to employment opportunities, and opportunities for general socio-spatial upliftment. It is also about equity, diversity, democracy, and just distribution of space founded on respect, care, recognition, and empathy for all. This framework which has been developed above gives us a strong standpoint to depart from in advocating for socio-spatial justice at the hostels in South Africa.

Discussion

The government provided RDP housing consisting of poor-quality units, which look uniform and monotonous, and are located on the urban edges. It is concerning that these government mistakes (i.e. poor quality of public housing provision) that were identified as early as 2004, ten years after democracy, have still not been fixed 20 years later. The introductory section of this chapter quoted the 2004 revised policy known as 'Breaking New Ground', which already identified and acknowledged the challenges of implementation. While the 'Housing Act recognised multiple dimensions of the

right to housing and sustainable neighbourhoods, the political pressure to deliver large numbers favoured mass provision of uniform units on cheap peripheral land, thereby relegating other forms of housing tenure and neglecting the importance of location. The consequences for entrenching urban inequality and creating new poverty enclaves have been profound' (Scheba, et al., 2021: 20). Furthermore, it is not only the spatial positioning which is still problematic but some of the design aspects of hostels which existed under Apartheid continued into the democratic era. For example, there are no recreational spaces, no gardens, no educational facilities, and very little space is allocated for housing targeting families. These directly impact on the sociological conditions and challenges the attainment of human dignity and socio-economic upliftment of the hostel dwellers' lives.

The level at which socio-spatial justice has not taken place in South Africa can also be seen from what the paper titled 'Navigating Entry and Survival in the City: A Relational Comparison of Migrant Workers and University Students in the City of Durban' demonstrates (Xulu-Gama & Lorgat, 2022). In this paper we show how some young people join their parents and or relatives in hostels because of lack of accommodation for students in tertiary institutions. These students, similarly to their elders when they first came to the hostel, sometimes have to sleep on the floor until a bed-space is accessible to them. 'The exorbitant residence fees and the shortage of bed-spaces at university residences have contributed to hostels being used as remedial accommodation' (Xulu-Gama & Lorgat, 2022: 88). In this paper we conclude by arguing that class solidarity among students and staff is highlighted, for example, by the linking of the #FeesMustFall with the #EndOutsourcing social movements. Importantly, the #Shackville installation, where UCT students erected a shack on campus, was a cry for the accommodation needs of students to be heard.

A paper which I wrote, titled 'Migrant Women's Experiences in the City: A Relational Comparison' (2022), looking at the similarities and complexities of rural-urban migrants and cross-border African women migrants, shows clearly that socio-spatial justice has not been achieved for women and children in the Southern African region and largely in the Global South. This piece of work decisively used 'feminist-standpoint epistemology as a way of embracing and acknowledging as valid the experiences and voices of women, especially in the field of [hostels and] migration, which was historically designed to be solely for men' (Xulu-Gama, 2022: 125). Socio-spatial justice can never be fully enjoyed by women and their children as long as patriarchy is pervasive and interconnected to different aspects of women's subordination. The socio-spatial injustices and inequality needs to take account of the different forms of gender inequality over time, race, class, and ethnic groups (Walby, 1990).

The paper (Xulu-Gama, 2022) further discusses the anxieties that women have around children's wellbeing and safety. They fear the discrimination and language barriers that their children might experience in the healthcare and schooling systems. Women find themselves raising children in spaces which are not of their

choice. In the rural areas people do not live in shacks, but they come to the cities to raise their children in small, overcrowded, delipidated, insecure, and poverty-stricken spaces. Women with children make calculated decisions in order to be in the queue for proper housing in the city, for easier access to educational institutions, for access to possible formal and informal employment opportunities, and for access to informal economic activity markets. For some women, they make these movements with or without their children as an attempt to preserve familial relations and to minimise the cost of living. For example, moving to a hostel to join a partner might be an attempt to preserve familial relations. Furthermore, moving with children might be a way to avoid taking care of two households, one in an urban area (hostel) and one in a rural area where the children would be left behind (see Xulu-Gama, 2017a; Xulu-Gama, 2022).

Marks, et al., (2018: 314), from their research in Kenneth Gardens (social housing previously targeting poor whites during the Apartheid period), outline the importance of a sense of security, pride, and stability created by the knowledge that rented housing could be passed on to family members and they mention this as a critical basic need in the life of any person. This factor was also a big concern for hostel dwellers, particularly old men who had been at the hostel for a long time. These are the men who were mostly nostalgic about the former single-sex space. Upon witnessing the rapid and what was experienced mostly as uncomfortable changes at the hostel (presence of women and children, political freedom, loss of morals and respect resulting in high crime rate, substance abuse, and perplexity), they became worried about the generational social security which was now challenged by such changes. This social security ensured that when they retired to go back to the rural areas, their male children could take over their bed-space at the hostel. The CRUs administrators at the hostel, however, threatened this expected form of social security by arguing that hostels were not *ifa lomndeni*[2]. This meant that, unlike what they were used to, the passing of the bed-space to children or family members was not going to be automatic in the newly constituted CRUs, as had been the case with hostels. CRUs regulations said people had to be registered independent of family lineage (Xulu-Gama, 2017a). This, for these men, was a denial of their autonomy which had been in existence over a long period of time. While the passing of a bed-space as generational social security was never documented in hostel policies, it was, nevertheless, an accepted social and cultural practice which emerged in response to their lived experiences at the hostels.

The current state of the hostels 'gives daily impetus to individual and communal insecurity and frustration, and contributes significantly to the high levels of criminality and instability prevalent in many communities in South Africa' (Department of Housing, 1994). Any basic literature search on hostels will reveal discussions on the violent nature of the hostels from the time when they were under the strict control of the minority government to the current democratic post-Apartheid government. This is a trend both in the mainstream media as well

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2 'Family inheritance.'

as in the scholarly literature. In my earlier work titled 'Violence and insecurity at the KwaMashu hostel in KwaZulu-Natal' (2017b), I examined two types of violence: group violence and interpersonal violence. Group violence was mainly framed through political affiliations, i.e. IFP, ANC, and later National Freedom Party (NFP). Group violence was also related to *izimpi zezigodi* ('tribal conflicts') from the rural areas from where hostel dwellers originate, which are later translated into fights and killings at the hostels. However, in recent years, i.e. 2021, we have seen the emergence of what I call 'class formations', where people, particularly in the hostels, were organised beyond their political party affiliations, or their gender and age categories, and were involved in protests and social unrest. Massey (1994: 22) argues that the geography of social structure is the geography of class relations.

Interpersonal violence at the hostels took many forms, with two prime ones being gendered violence against women (and men) and the usage of *izinkabi* ('hitmen'). The article's (Xulu-Gama, 2017b) main argument was that while there were deep histories of violence and clashes between men and women, residents and migrants, different ethnicities and various political parties, the built environmental design of the hostels played a key role in the violence (Xulu-Gama, 2017b). Cooke, through his architectural expertise, has demonstrated that the animosity among the people was unavoidable because of how the hostels were designed. Massey (1994: 23), through her feminist spatial lens, argues that 'the spatial form and geographical location are themselves significant in forming the character of a particular social strata.' Mlamla also, using his criminological expertise, demonstrates (in this volume) that Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is an option that the South African government might want to consider because of the alarming rates of hostel killings and other types of crimes. CPTED is a form of architecture which creates built environments in particular ways which discourage or limit the opportunities for criminal activities to take place in that space. This CPTED might be an important consideration for government if it will ensure that nobody finds it harder than another to exist in society just because of feeling unsafe and insecure, even when you are in your own residential space.

As a form of social housing, there are many ways in which Kenneth Gardens Estate in Durban can now be likened to some former single-sex workers hostels in Durban and elsewhere. The residence used to target a particular market (poor whites vs black migrant workers) and that is no longer the case because of the abolishment of Apartheid and racial segregation policies. Residents are supposed to pay rent; in reality, some pay and some do not. There are a lot of people who are not officially registered residents and that results from having various unofficial sub-letting arrangements. There is a minimum income which residents should be earning in order to qualify to occupy these spaces, but this is not applied practically. People with no income, too low income, and too high income are found in these spaces. The latter can easily be identified through their expensive cars and lifestyles or furniture. These forms of social housing, while they can be argued to be close to amenities, have deteriorating infrastructure, high crime rates, and substance abuse.

The argument made by Marks, et al., (2018) encouraging the current government to take lessons from the Apartheid government, resonates with the crime problem. Above, we see that the Apartheid government was intentional about social housing architecture and the control of the black working-class population. The post-Apartheid government should also be intentional about CPTED. The argument by Marks, et al., (2018) above has been supported by the hostel dwellers themselves where they argued that 'it was better in Egypt', referencing to the children of Israel in the Bible (Xulu, 2014). This implied that it was better at the hostel during the Apartheid era than at present. They stated that at least there was basic service delivery, no high crime rate, and no high unemployment rate like in the democratic era (Xulu, 2014).

Overall, failing to achieve socio-spatial justice 30 years into democracy is a feature of a failure to rebuild our social structure and regenerate the economy. Part of that is widespread non-payment for services which automatically constrains the long-term viability of the public environment and sustained housing production, as well as limiting the amount of resources available for new housing provision, as documented in the 1994 White Paper on a New Housing Policy and Strategy for South Africa. Therefore, in acknowledging the partnership between the key stakeholders, i.e. the government and communities, this chapter realises the fundamental prerequisite for enabling an environment for socio-spatial justice and the sustained delivery of housing which is for 'all parties not only to argue for their rights, but also to accept their respective responsibilities' (Department of Housing, 1994). Part of the responsibilities of hostel dwellers is to take good care of the housing and infrastructure provided by the government.

As I have argued above and in previous publications, hostels in the post-Apartheid era have become spaces of perpetual perplexity sharply at odds with official schemes and the vision embodied in government introduced CRUs (Xulu-Gama, 2014 & 2017a). The NDP 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012) concurs by saying that spatial transformation in the democratic era has been more ambiguous than initially anticipated. NDP 2030's analysis points to the following reasons, amongst others: 1) there are powerful interests at all levels concerned with maintaining the spatial status quo; 2) there has been no sustained effort to achieve spatial alignment, bearing in mind the diverse, often contradictory spatial effects of economic and social policies, and; 3) there is a lack of an overarching strategic approach to spatial development and this is a result of institutional fragmentation (National Planning Commission, 2012: 276). These three points are key in trying to understand the progress made towards transforming Apartheid hostel spaces to democratic CRUs using the socio-spatial justice lens.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter locates justice within social and spatial dimensions, and examines the progress made in working-class housing, i.e. looking at hostels against the backdrop of this conception of socio-spatial justice. The South African democratic

government recognised early on that housing was a critically fundamental issue that it had to deal with as part of a multi-pronged strategy to bring socio-spatial justice to the millions of black African people whose lives had been undermined by the previous white-minority governments. As has been highlighted above, most of the work that has gone into policy development has been impressive and it reflected consultation with the people to a certain extent. However, the weakest link has been the implementation of the policy and legislation. The government's own documentation (National Planning Commission, 2012) posits that the presence of powerful, monopolistic, capital interests at all levels, which work towards maintaining the spatial status quo, will continue to be a hindrance to the socio-spatial justice that this chapter advocates for.

This chapter has unveiled, in the form of a summary of my previous work in hostels, some of the lived experiences of hostel dwellers. These have included challenges which I have framed as resulting from the lack of socio-spatial justice. Hostel dwellers continue to experience difficulties associated with rural-urban migration, including young people who move for educational opportunities but who lack appropriate residential spaces in the cities. The discussion shows the complexities experienced by migrant women as they 'mother on the move', feeling unsafe accompanied by feelings of a lack of belonging. Furthermore, my work demonstrated perceived threats to men's autonomy and the elimination of generational social security for both men and women. The levels at which violence, crime, and insecurity is experienced on a daily basis is far from the attainment of social justice and the improvement of the quality of life for everyone as promised by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The question which remains to be answered is: in what ways do the hostels and the lived realities of the dwellers heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights (Republic of South Africa, 1996) as advocated by the document which is the supreme law of this country?

Additionally, hostels will not facilitate the socio-spatial justice that the constitution has promised to everyone if the social and spatial justice plans do not prioritise the disadvantaged of society so that they are 'the first beneficiaries rather than last' and are intimately 'incorporated into spatial planning policies' as argued by Adegeye and Coetzee (2019). The White Paper on a New Housing Policy and strategy for South Africa (1994) and SPLUMA (2013) pinpoint categories of people and spaces which should receive primary attention for socio-spatial justice, and, among others, they mention hostels, informal settlements, former homeland areas, circular migrants, dual households, single, often female-headed households, and areas characterised by widespread poverty and deprivations. These should be the first set of beneficiaries of socio-spatial justice because they continue to harbour the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised populations.

In conclusion, this chapter makes two key contributions to scholarship. Firstly it takes a theoretical position which merges the concepts of social and spatial justice, thereby advocating for socio-spatial justice in the hostels, which are also known as spaces of perplexity. It justifies the merger through an application of relational analytical tools of understanding the social as being embedded in the spatial, and vice versa. The experience of space is constructed out of social relations; one cannot examine one independently of the other. This conception allows one to see the hostel space in multiplicity, as continuous and dynamic, because such are social relations. This framework is in line with the conceptualising of hostels as spaces of perplexity. Here, providing housing to the disadvantaged as an act of social justice should transcend material and spatial provision and extend into the sphere of social justice where social relations, feelings of security, experiences of being treated fairly, a sense of belonging, access to opportunities to develop in life, and access to infrastructure and transportation are recognised as significant in the realisation of a holistic, humane quality of life.

Secondly, this chapter argues that South Africa has not yet achieved socio-spatial justice. It provided evidence in the form of published research done on hostels showing how policies and legislation have not been able to achieve socio-spatial justice for the working-class population. Socio-spatial justice is expressed as fair, equitable, just, democratic, and diverse access to land, housing, healthcare, transportation, education, employment, and social advancement. Socio-spatial justice can only be realised if there is a proper consultative process and successful policy implementation.

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Part Two

VIOLENCE AND CRIMINALITY
AT THE HOSTEL

Chapter 4: A Critical Review of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design for Hostel Violence

Ntsika Edward Mlamla

Introduction and Background

In recent years, the violence occurring at hostels has garnered significant attention. Media platforms have featured stories about killings at hostels, making headlines. This study seeks to develop strategies for preventing crime in hostels through environmental design. The built environment is often an important contributing factor in determining whether a crime is likely or unlikely to occur in a particular location. Therefore, changing the built environment in a specific way could create challenges for certain types of crimes to be committed and may reduce incidents of violent crime in particular areas. This is a well-recognised and widely used approach to crime prevention and is internationally best known as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).

The idea of manipulating the environment, specifically the built environment, to help in crime prevention is not new (Council for Scientific and Industrial research [CSIR], 2001). For instance, defensive walls were built around medieval towns to protect the residents from intruders. Numerous attempts were also made in East Rand hostels to erect a fence around them but this was disputed and brought down by hostel dwellers according to different accounts (Xeketwane, 1995). This was, in effect, an attempt to use environmental design as part of a strategy to prevent crime.

The government faced a challenge in preventing crime in South Africa after 1994. In 1996, the government introduced South Africa's National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS). The NCPS has a four-pillar approach to crime prevention, which includes the criminal justice process, reducing crime through environmental design, public values and education, and lastly, transnational crime. The focus of this paper is on reducing violent crimes at hostels through environmental design.

The implementation of this pillar was supported by an extensive study conducted by the CSIR and the Institute for Security Studies (ISS). It involved extensive local research aimed at contextualising international theories, approaches, and concepts, including CPTED (Jeffery, 1971), situational crime prevention, environmental criminology, and defensible space (Newman, 1973).

The review that was done for the NCPS in 1997 on the implementation of environmental design as crime prevention revealed that South Africa does not have much experience that can be used (CSIR, 2001). There was no crime trend analysis

done by the architects prior to the design process to accommodate CPTED. The review added that to use the built environment as a crime prevention method, some serious measures would need to be taken into consideration. Scholars like Cozens (2014) and Ekblom (2011) revealed that crime prevention through environmental design has gained momentum and is implemented in various parts of the world like Europe, South America, North America, Asia, and Africa.

There are problems that are related to CPTED. Some interventions into crime prevention have multifaced effects related to them, and this is equally the case with CPTED. While the crime prevention strategy is gaining popularity and support internationally, nonetheless, the results are not always positive. In some instances, CPTED attributes can be found to be reducing the quality of life (Cozens & Love, 2017). Furthermore, some built environment interventions may reduce some crime while also concurrently supporting other crimes. Scholars concurred that it is difficult to evaluate or to measure the effectiveness of the built environment in preventing or reducing crime (Cozens & Love, 2017). This is exacerbated by the fact that design practitioners and policy makers expect immediate changes due to the effectiveness of the intervention, while academics emphasise doing things the right way, which takes longer (Gill & Turbin, 1999).

The National Development Plan 2030 (National Planning Commission (NPC), 2012) recognises that situational factors such as spatial or environmental design should be considered when developing a framework for community safety and crime prevention, and specifically mentions '…urban design that will take account of safety…' The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (2016), in the *Integrated Urban Development Framework* (IUDF) does acknowledge the significance of planning, design, and management in creating safer living environments, particularly public spaces (e.g., residential spaces, hostels).

The aim of this paper is to discuss strategies to eradicate violent crimes (killings, robberies) at the hostels. The objectives of this paper are to develop crime prevention strategies using CPTED, as well as to develop community-based crime prevention methods. This chapter begins with the history of violence at hostels in South Africa. It also demonstrates the contribution of informal settlements to violence at hostels. The chapter then conceptualises CPTED where the first generation CPTED and the second generation CPTED are explained. The link between CPTED and crime at hostels is drawn to demonstrate how hostels can work together with the government to ensure CPTED is practiced effectively to eradicate violent crime at hostels. The chapter will then draw a conclusion and give recommendations.

History of Hostel Violence

Hostels and compounds have been known to be fertile grounds for violence especially gross bodily harm (GBH) and murder. Numerous scholars indicated that violence at hostels was rife between the 1980s and the early 1990s (Minnaar, 1992; Josephy, 2014; Burger, 2019). Notably, this was the time of political transition

in South Africa. Further, Josephy (2014) indicated that single-sex hostels became spaces for brutality where hostel dwellers faced township dwellers, the African National Congress (ANC) clashed with the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and battle amongst hostel dwellers occurred. In addition, the ANC and IFP used hostels as their recruitment sites to increase their membership and representation at hostels. The recruitment involved young men who were used to fighting against the government of the day through protest and armed conflicts, inter-political violence, fighting hostel communities of the opposite party and the surrounding townships (Rueedi, 2020). This exacerbated further the sense of stigma and isolation toward hostel communities because of the high levels of violence that was taking place there. Hostel dwellers in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng who supported either the IFP or the ANC drowned in a whirlpool of violence before and after the 1994 election.

Hostel violence has existed for a very long time and can be traced back to mining compounds. During the political transition, hostel violence increased sharply as they were the target for political parties, which led hostels to be at the centre stage of the violence (Minnaar, 1992). Literature shows that the violent encounters at the hostels, either hostel dwellers versus hostel dwellers or hostel dwellers versus township residents, led to many deaths (Minnaar, 1994). Killings have been part of the violence at hostels and are still taking place. The violence at hostels did not only occur during the Apartheid era. After 20 years of democracy, the killings at hostels continue.

Informal Settlements at Hostels

With the abolishment of influx control in 1986 and the easing of regulations on people who may enter hostels, there was a new era which had a tremendous effect on the hostels (Sitas, 1996) and compounds (Segal, 1992). Many people started to move to urban areas to solicit for employment which led to overcrowding at hostels. This overcrowding also led to people building their own little informal homes close to hostels (Xulu-Gama, 2017b). The term *umkhaya* ('homeboy') gained strength as people moved to stay with their homeboys, and some would find accommodation in the informal settlements.

Xulu-Gama (2017b) revealed KwaMashu hostel dwellers indicated that it was better during the Apartheid regime as they were able to access basic services then. This was because of the situation that they were faced with due to overcrowding caused by informal settlements. These informal settlements also make policing difficult for the law enforcement agencies while also making it easy for criminals to hide in shacks as police officers will not be able to access them. For example, on 24th of August 2018 in KwaMashu hostel, police say officers had been conducting operations at the hostel at about 6pm that evening, when they heard gunshots coming from an informal settlement within the precinct[1]. While police officers were attending to this, suspects shot at the two of them. The then police spokesperson,

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1   Ryan, 2018. https://www.ecr.co.za/news/news/durban-police-officer-shot-dead-kwamashu-hostel/

Thulani Zwane, said one police officer was fatally wounded and the other sustained gunshot wounds to his leg.

Another incident took place on 26th August 2022 where police officers were trying to recover a hijacked vehicle. The matter was reported to the KwaMashu police and the vehicle was tracked to the KwaMashu men's hostel at the corner of Mfundiso and Phumula roads. The Kwa-Zulu Natal provincial police spokesperson, constable Thenjiswa Ngcobo, said when police went to the hostel, they found the car parked between two shacks (Goba, 2022). While waiting for the tow truck, a man appeared between the shacks and opened fire at the police officers. The officers fired back but the suspect managed to escape[2]. This shows the danger that shacks pose and they put police officers at risk when they are forced to enter through the shacks for their occupational duties.

Numerous hostels have informal settlements within or near hostels which affect hostels heavily. The above examples of specific crimes confirms that they do contribute to the rate of crime at hostels as they provide easy get-away options for criminals, while they make it hard for law enforcement agencies to execute their duties such as random patrols and ensuring visible policing. There are no house numbers at the informal settlements, there are no roads between the shacks allowing police to do car patrols, no proper street names, no proper lights, and all these factors impede police officers from policing these areas and exacerbate the rate of crime at hostels.

Conceptualisation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

CPTED aims to decrease crime and fear of crime in specific locations by minimising opportunities for illegal activity and promoting pleasant social interaction among the lawful occupants of those areas (Wallis, 1980). The focus is on prevention rather than on arresting and punishing individuals. CPTED claims that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement in quality of life (Crowe, 2000: 46). Unlike other reactive criminal justice interventions, CPTED is a proactive approach (Wallis, 1980). CPTED can be used to design or modify environments to reduce opportunities for crime and the fear of crime. Although the term CPTED was originally coined by Jeffery (1971), much of the theoretical and practical developments in this area have been based upon Newman's 'defensible space' concept (1973).

Newman (1973) proposed that there are six broad characteristics to first-generation CPTED concepts; territoriality, surveillance (informal and formal), access control, image/maintenance, activity programme support, and target hardening (see Figure 4.1).

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2   Goba, 2022. https://www.citizen.co.za/witness/news/police-officer-shot-at-durban-hostel/

Figure 4.1: *First generation CPTED – the key concepts*
Source: *Cozens et al., 2005*

Territoriality

Territoriality is a design concept directed at reinforcing notions of proprietary concern and a sense of ownership in legitimate users of space, thereby reducing opportunities for offending by discouraging illegitimate users. Territoriality is the umbrella term in first-generation CPTED on which all others are based. Different forms include symbolic barriers (e.g. signage) and real barriers (e.g. fences or design that clearly defines and delineates between private, semi-private, and public spaces). Access control and surveillance will also contribute towards promoting territoriality by promoting legitimate users' informal social control. CPTED emphasises crime prevention techniques that exploit the opportunities in the environment 'both to naturally and routinely facilitate access control and surveillance, and to reinforce positive behaviour in the use of the environment' (Crowe, 2000: 37). These strategies are not independent of one another; they act in concert to use physical attributes to separate public, public-private, and private space, to define ownership (e.g. fences, pavement treatments, signs, landscaping, and artwork), and define acceptable patterns of usage, in addition to promoting opportunities for surveillance (Cozens et al., 2005).

Access Control

Cozens et al., (2005) explained access control as a CPTED concept focused on reducing opportunities for crime by denying access to potential targets and creating a heightened perception of risk in offenders. Access control can include informal/natural (e.g. spatial definition), formal/organised (e.g. security personnel), and mechanical (e.g. locks and bolts) strategies. Scholars (Newman, 1996) have revealed a correlation between the level of crime and features of the design, especially the features that allowed unrestricted movement through residential facilities. In contrast some researchers have also found that busier streets with some pedestrian movements have experienced reduced levels of recorded crime (Hillier & Shu, 2000a & 2000b).

In Chicago (Popkin et al., 1995a & 1995b), ground floor entrances to public housing complexes were enclosed in new lobbies with the installation of concierges and metal detectors. Most residents reported significant reductions in shootings, violence, and drug dealing. From their overview, Eck (1997: 7–8) states 'these evaluations are suggestive of possible beneficial effects in reducing pedestrian movement through large public housing complexes.' This demonstrated the feasibility of access control, and the likely effectiveness of access control in reducing crime at the hostels.

According to Eck (1997) research has suggested that areas with unregulated access have more crime than areas with street layouts with more restricted access. The development of access control could reduce fear of crime at hostels as there would be a limited number of people who can access the hostel. Newman (1996) reported that having access control can reduce the fear of crime amongst neighbourhoods. It materialised in Chicago, London, and New York, and it can also be effective in South African hostels despite the difference in time and location (place). For it to work effectively in South African hostels, it would need to be developed to cater for the context in which hostels were built and to solve specific problems faced by South African hostels.

Activity Support

Activity support involves the use of design and signage to encourage intended patterns of usage of public space. Crowe (2000) notes how within reason, activity generation and support seek to place inherently 'unsafe' activities (such as those involving money transactions) in 'safe' locations (those with high levels of activity and with surveillance opportunities). Similarly, 'safe' activities serve as magnets for ordinary citizens who may then act to discourage the presence of criminals. This approach clearly contains elements of territoriality, access control, and surveillance. Although increased numbers of pedestrians may provide additional eyes on the street and potentially discourage some offences, this may also actually encourage and provide other targets for crime (e.g. pick-pocketing).

Image/Management

Promoting a positive image and routinely maintaining the built environment ensures that the physical environment continues to function effectively and transmits positive signals to all users. The significance of the physical condition and 'image' of the built environment and the effect this may have on crime and the fear of crime has long been acknowledged (Lynch, 1960) and an extensive body of research now exists. In terms of the management of private rental housing, Eck (1997) argues there is strong evidence that improving management of rental properties can reduce drug-related crimes. Vacant premises have been found to represent crime 'magnets' (Spelman, 1993) and smaller buildings were a preferred site for drug dealing since they had less management and financial resources to regulate such criminal activity. This notion is supported by the broken windows theory as presented by James Wilson and George Kelling in 1982; that spaces that are left unoccupied and those that are not well taken care of invite criminal activities (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). Crucially, much research suggests that the routine maintenance of the urban environment will significantly assist in reducing crime (Wilson & Kelling, 1982; Ross & Jang, 2000). Wilson and Kelling's (1982) 'Broken Windows' thesis stressed the vital importance of maintaining the environment as a physical indicator of levels of social cohesion and informal social control, and various researchers have developed this theme.

Ross and Mirowsky (1999) claim that research has consistently found that the presence of neighbourhood incivilities results in increased levels of fear (Taylor & Covington, 1991). In terms of criminal activity, the presence or absence of social and physical signs of disorder and decay may be crucial. Indeed, for Taylor (1991: 970) 'the environmental "image" offenders have of an area is associated with the extent to which the area is victimised.'

Target Hardening

Target hardening increases the efforts that offenders must expend in the commission of a crime and is the most long-established and traditional approach to crime prevention. However, there is much disagreement concerning whether or not target hardening should be considered a component of CPTED. It is directed at denying or limiting access to a crime target through the use of physical barriers such as fences, gates, locks, electronic alarms, and security patrols. Significantly, excessive use of target hardening tactics can create a fortress mentality and imagery whereby residents withdraw behind physical barriers and the self-policing capacity of the built environment is damaged, effectively working against CPTED strategies that rely on surveillance, territoriality, and image. There are concerns about target hardening where some scholars believe that it works against the standard principles of CPTED and also that it does not necessary guarantee safety.

Surveillance

Surveillance is an 'operational task' which can be subdivided into a generic 'script' (Ekblom, 2011) of watching, patrolling, or remotely monitoring some building, interior, or landscape, for the presence of some suspicious person or occurrence of suspicious behaviour; detecting possible suspicious behaviour; provisionally attributing innocent or criminal intent; investigating further; and/or making some escalatory response, whether to confront or arrest the person directly; take protective action such as locking down a building; or report or summon assistance.

Physical design has the capacity to promote informal or natural surveillance opportunities for residents and their agents and surveillance is part of capable guardianship (Painter & Tilley, 1999). If offenders perceive that they can be observed (even if they are not), they may be less likely to offend, given the increased potential for intervention, apprehension, and prosecution. Different types include natural (e.g., residents' self-surveillance opportunities as facilitated by windows), formal or organised (e.g. police patrols), and mechanical surveillance strategies (e.g. street lighting and CCTV).

Passive surveillance is the casual observance of public and private areas by users or residents during their normal activities. It can also be referred to as the presence of protective eyes. The extent of visual contact people have with a space, and whether their presence is visible, determines whether they can intervene and whether users feel safe. Ekblom (2011) also opined that 'passive surveillance' is where the preventer is not specifically looking for suspicious activity but happens to notice it when it occurs. It is not a task per se, but refers to the potential of people to become active surveillants through their presence or remote access to information. Passive surveillance depends on a range of factors, including the placing of windows, doors, and other openings, the distances between buildings, the sizes of public spaces, vacancy rates, and degrees and types of use. The zoning of city areas and the functionality of buildings are key elements in determining whether protective eyes are present day and night, or not. Multifunctional land uses, rather than monofunctional zoning, are required to ensure long hours of use. Active surveillance refers to surveillance by police or other agents whose express function is to patrol an area. Ekblom (2011) indicated that active surveillance relates normally to the duties of guards or police patrols; also, perhaps, to vigilant repeat victims or nosey neighbours.

A second generation CPTED was developed with what was a refinement of the first generation CPTED after it received criticism. The second generation CPTED's approach was deemed to be a bit more robust and rigorous. This refinement extends beyond mere physical design to include social factors. The second generation CPTED went beyond the first generation CPTED and used risk assessments, socio-economic, and demographic profiling as well as active community participation (Saville, 1996). The social and cultural dynamics has been lacking in the first generation CPTED, which are very important components to any community

intervention's potential effectiveness as the first generation CPTED mostly focused on physical design (Saville & Cleveland, 2006; Cozens & Love, 2017). The second CPTED uses four strategies: social cohesion, connectivity, community culture, and threshold capacity.

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is the core of second generation CPTED, just as territoriality is the core of first generation CPTED (Saville & Cleveland, 2006). Social cohesion encourages community safety by using different strategies. The strategies range from conflict management, emotional intelligence, tolerance of one another, and understanding differences without resorting to violence (Goleman, 1995). Social cohesion entails embracing similarities and differences that exist within a specific community and that create a unique community. Socially cohesive communities are characterised by shared values, goals, vision, a strong sense of belonging, and emphasis on establishment of the relationships amongst people from different backgrounds (Cozens & Love, 2017).

Hostels are communities that accommodate people from different backgrounds, different beliefs and value systems, different cultures, different tribes, and different political affiliations. Some might have similarities because of their background according to culture or religion. However, the importance of social cohesion is that it would help them understand each other, even if they have disagreements, but they never resolve these with violence.

Community Connectivity

This is necessary as it creates the strong bonds and partnerships within the community. Community connectivity refers to the neighbourhood's ability to establish and maintain favourable relationships and exert influence over external entities, such as government funding sources (Saville & Cleveland, 2006). Connectivity is imperative as neighbourhood is not possible in isolation (Renzetti & Maier, 2002). This strategy also helps in encouraging and developing sustainable self-policing and policing measures which will prevent crime and any antisocial behaviour (Cozens & Love, 2017). People at hostels need to connect to one another within their communities and also need to connect with people from other communities, as well as other social groups within their neighbourhood. Some people within hostels are suffering from isolation; they experience the killings of their families, friends, and colleagues. However, they do not have anyone to come to their rescue. It is necessary to build victim empowerment centres, strong rooms, and war rooms that will be easily accessible to people who need them. The establishment of these safe places should be done with the support of the private and public sectors, and they do not have to focus just on issues related to violence, as there are other community related issues (DeKeseredy et al., 2004).

Saville and Cleveland (2006) explained that there are some characteristics of connectivity that best describe community connectedness. As revealed, community

connectivity assists in developing relationships with the external sister government department that can offer support to hostels through different services they offer. Training, skills development, job seeking workshops, and self-employment empowerment are some of the forms of assistance that can be encouraged when there is strong connectivity within the community.

Community Culture

This strategy suggests the development of history that will be shared within the neighbourhood. This could be done through concerts, *izicathamiya* (male voice music groups), sport events, festivals, music, poetry, and art (DeKeseredy et al., 2004). In the context of hostels, this initiative could include poetry and *izicathamiya*, *ingoma* (singing traditional songs and dancing) that will send out strong and powerful messages to hostel dwellers about the effects of the killings and violence taking place at hostels. This could be done either on the playing grounds, open parking areas, or parks, and events should be open to everyone at no cost. This could also attract sponsors who would be interested in donating by awarding prizes to winners in such initiatives. Perhaps, too, artists could be paid for their work with cash or in the provision of spray paint because many of them are in desperate need of money (Ferrell, 1993). There are some *maskandi* artists that are staying at hostels. They (*maskandis*) can benefit and contribute immensely; they can benefit if they host concerts and identify talents from hostel dwellers. Community culture brings people together under a common purpose (Saville & Cleveland, 2006).

Threshold Capacity

The threshold capacity concept suggests the inclusion of several types of land uses in the neighbourhood, such as parks for socialising, food outlets for grocery shopping, and sports or entertainment facilities for recreation. The purpose of managing the threshold capacity is to maintain the neighbourhood ecosystem at levels that support a human-scale and pedestrian-oriented neighbourhood environment. According to Saville (1996) capacity policies also aim to prevent the presence of land uses that compromise safety, such as an excessive number of restaurants serving alcohol or locations involved in drug dealing, which can create conditions that promote criminal activity.

When human neighbourhoods have more individuals than they can support, it leads to higher crime rates. Scholars revealed that exceeding a maximum capacity is linked to reaching a tipping point, where the operation of the community undergoes substantial changes, usually in terms of problematic crime prevention (Saville, 1996; Saville & Cleveland, 2006; Cozens & Love, 2017). Poor maintenance and neglect can serve as magnets for vandalism and graffiti, which in turn diminishes the overall perception of the neighbourhood and undermines the advantages of proper upkeep. The combination leads to a continuous rise of neglect and an increase in criminal activity. Numerous scholars have indicated that hostels have exceeded their threshold capacity, this effected post the abolishment of influx control (Zulu, 1993; Xeketwane, 1995; Xulu-Gama, 2017b). As a result,

there is overcrowding at hostels and some have shacks which further exacerbates the impact of threshold capacity. Numerous reports have indicated that there is physical dilapidation at hostels. The broken windows theory suggests that once there is a problem in a certain neighbourhood that remains unsolved, it attracts criminal activities.

Figure 4.2: *Second generation CPTED*
Source: *Cozens et al., 2005*
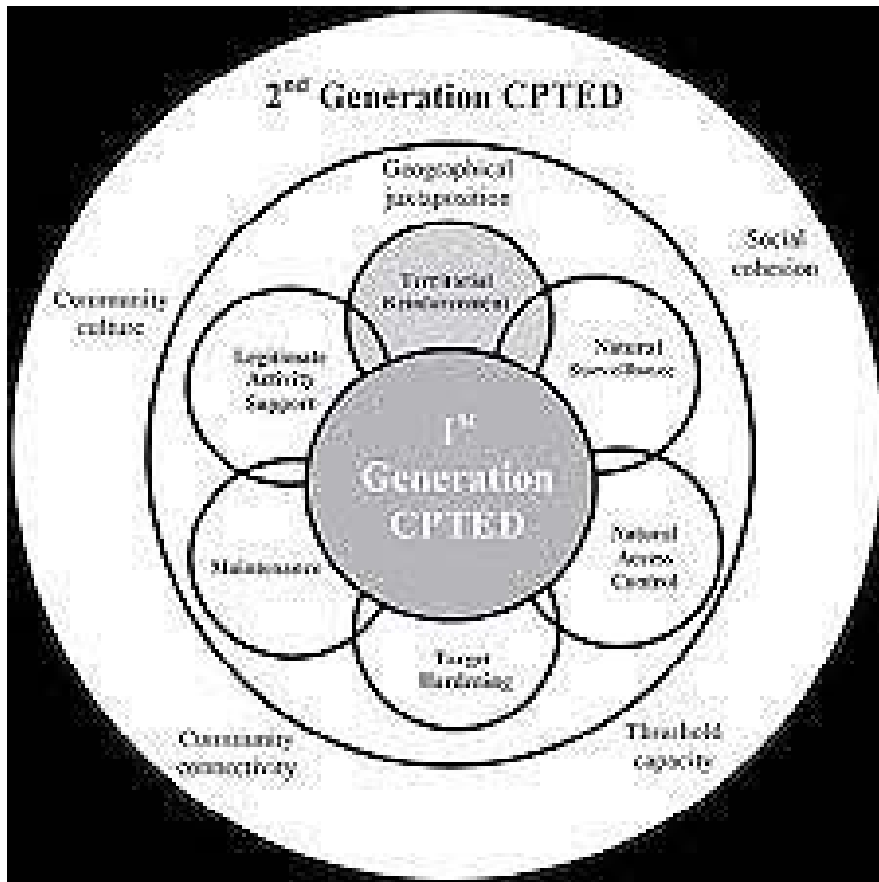
Figure 4.3: *Dynamic integrated model for CPTED*
CPTED combining first and second generation
Source: *Adapted from Cozens, 2014*

Discussion

Crime prevention through planning and design in South Africa, as postulated in the South African National Crime Prevention Strategy (CSIR, 1996), recognises the historical racial injustice that resulted in unjust spatial and geographical locations, and design of hostels. The South African idea of crime prevention through planning and design encourages a method that recognises the injustices resulting from the nation's historical circumstances. It focuses, to a significant extent, on initiatives that would change the urban form and built environment at both a macro- and micro-scale, helping to reshape society as a whole. The idea is to manipulate the physical environment in order to reduce or even eliminate the opportunities for crimes to be committed.

This chapter discusses how CPTED has the potential to significantly improve the sustainability of South African hostels. CPTED initiatives would not only reduce crime in specific local areas (at the micro-level), but they could also contribute

to the overall transformation of society through changes in urban form (macro-level). Environmental design in South Africa needs to be applied at many levels, encompassing the following, in order to effectively handle these challenges: planning, design, and management:

- Planning – Physical urban planning approaches at strategic level, such as strategies to promote the reduction of vacant land, encourage mixed land use, and support the integration of communities. The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in the *Integrated Urban Development Framework* (IUDF) (2016) does acknowledge the significance of planning in creating safer living environments, particularly public spaces (e.g., residential space, hostels).

The key to the success of any intervention that involves the planning and design of the physical environment lies in the extent to which the people using these environments are involved in the process. As Xeketwane (1995) indicated, hostel dwellers are usually not represented at the strategic meetings that take decisions about the changes and developments at the hostels. For example, when the Transvaal Hostel Residents Association refused fencing in Thokoza hostel and Glebelands hostel, dwellers in Glebelands hostel indicated that they were not consulted about the proposed fencing of the hostel (Xeketwane 1995; Hans, 2016). The hostel leaders should form part of the strategic planning of the developments and interventions done at hostels so that they can own the intervention in order for them to work successfully.

To avoid the problem of informal settlements at hostels, the planning approach should not allow any space that is unattended at hostels. The planning should make use of every space that is at the hostels. In KwaMashu hostel there are informal settlements which make it hard for police officers to police the area adequately. They were built because people wanted their own rooms and there was available space which was not occupied, so they made use of those spaces. Xulu-Gama (2017b) explains how informal settlements mushroomed in KwaMashu hostel and the different reasons why people had informal settlements. The rise of informal settlements in KwaMashu hostel led to overcrowding, which also gave rise to crime.

As indicated by Xulu-Gama (2017b) some of the informal settlements in KwaMashu hostel are used for business purposes. During the planning phase of development in the hostels, those who have businesses should register so that there can be a space that will be reserved for business purposes, and they should be registered to specific individuals so that it can be easy to regulate and control mixed land use within the hostel. This would guide the design of the space for mixed land use and would make it easy to manage the businesses within the hostel because there would be an area designed for businesses, making policing of illegal traders, those who are selling illegal goods or substances, easier. The second generation CPTED, on threshold capacity, suggests that spaces should be used for what they are intended for (Saville & Cleveland, 2006). Furthermore, the human neighbourhood should not exceed the capacity of the community or space.

- Design – The chapter posits that there is a need for detailed design of different urban elements, such as the transport system, roads, sports and recreational facilities, public open spaces, buildings, and the spaces between them. From the literature, particularly Xulu-Gama's (2017b) observations, it appears that this does not exist. The second generation of CPTED suggests that having sports and recreational facilities and halls helps the neighbourhoods to create a community culture which becomes the identity of the community and unites the neighbourhood.

  Numerous scholars have questioned the design of single-sex hostels in South Africa, stating that they were poorly designed (Zulu, 1993; Xeketwane, 1995; Xulu-Gama, 2017b). When reflecting on the reason behind the establishment of hostels and compounds by the Apartheid government, one understands why they were poorly designed; they were not built for human comfort. A debate around redesigning hostels in a manner that will be easy to combat crime using CPTED is necessary. The majority of hostels were established as single-sex hostels which did not cater to families. Women and children started to move into hostels; the design structure and built environment has to accommodate such transition.

  Police have complained about how difficult it is to police hostels because of the way in which they were designed. For example, when crime is reported in block 56 in Glebelands hostel the police take about 30 minutes to get to the crime scene because there is no road that leads them straight to block 56; they have to take a long route, leave their vehicle far away, and walk. Even when you enter the hostel block, they are poorly designed such that the criminals would have an upper hand (advantage) in attacking before the police get to the crime scene. This points to the fact that even the buildings are designed in a way that is difficult to police, which also makes it hard for police to respond timeously to the crimes reported.

  This paper proposes that hostels should be redesigned to be user friendly to the residents and to be easily accessible for policing purposes. As the broken windows theory suggests, once a building is left unattended, it opens opportunities for criminals. Equally, hostels have not been given attention for quite some time by authorities (the government in charge) which has left a gap for criminals to take over hostels. This was made evident by the former Public Protector's report on Glebelands hostel (Public Protectors South Africa, 2017).

  Redesigning the hostel will help in ensuring that hostels are fully functioning communities, with all amenities needed by those communities included within the design. These include clinics, schools, roads, well maintained parks, and playing grounds.

- Management – There is a need for managing the entire urban system and the precincts within it (e.g. infrastructure, maintenance by law enforcement, administration), as well as managing and facilitating the implementation of CPTED initiatives.

  The redesigning of hostels would help in managing hostels effortlessly. At the

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strategic level (planning phase) all the stakeholders that have roles to play at the hostels would have been present. At the planning stage, every stakeholder would know their role, as it will be clearly outlined throughout designing and managing the hostel.

It appears that hostels are either poorly managed or not managed at all. Hostels now are physically dilapidated; there are broken windows, broken doors, dirty walls, big trees that are over flowing over buildings, streetlights that are not working, malfunctioning bathrooms, kitchens, and running sewages.

Many South African hostels have lost control and count of who stays at hostels.

As indicated in the Public Protector's report (2017) there is uncertainty about how many blocks are in Glebelands hostel. Furthermore, Hans (2016) also concurred indicating that there is overcrowding at Glebelands hostel as it was supposed to accommodate 13000 people, but is accommodating more than 19000 people. This opens a loop hole for criminals to sublet rooms of beds that do not have occupants. When redesigning hostels, the design will change to a design that will be comfortable and friendly. This will also assist in reallocation of the residents and proper management of hostels.

When hostels are properly managed, subletting crimes that we see currently will not take place because everyone will be renting from the municipality and will be getting service delivery. As the former Public Protector reported (2017) Glebelands hostel is not properly managed which is one of the causes of crime at the hostel. Criminals saw an opportunity to make money since the hostel is not properly managed.

Community involvement is essential for the successful implementation of CPTED interventions. A people-driven process designed to engage community members in identifying environmental crime problems and developing appropriate responses is needed. The three important aspects (planning, design, management) need to be covered for the smooth implementation of CPTED. This will help in ensuring that crime is eradicated more easily at hostels.

Crime prevention using environmental design can be used as a method to prevent hostel violence in South Africa. However, some serious steps would need to be taken to ensure its success. The research shows that the CPTED approach appears effective in reducing robbery (Casteel & Peek-Asa, 2000). However, it does not show clear trends regarding which components of the CPTED approach are most effective. Programmes with multiple components, especially those that include measures with low-cost implementation and maintenance, may be the most easily introduced and accepted by communities. CPTED is a crime prevention theory focusing on tactical design and the effective use of the built environment, which, when applied, reduces both crime and the fear of crime. A main objective of CPTED is to reduce/remove the opportunity for crime to occur in an environment, and promote positive interaction with the space by legitimate users. CPTED is a preventative, pro-active model, and not a reactive one. This suggests that when

proper planning has been done, and hostels are well designed, then managing hostels, including crime at hostels, will be easier. That would be the success of the CPTED model. CPTED however, should not operate alone as the sole crime-prevention method; instead, it should work in conjunction with other social, environmental, and community-based strategies.

Fencing

This paper argues that fencing, a cornerstone of CPTED, can reduce crime in hostels, but this is contested by some hostel dwellers. Nonetheless, hostel dwellers and other stakeholders must all be consulted before fences are erected. Fencing forms part of CPTED and would fall under target hardening (Kruger & Landman, 2008). While this is the case, hostels dwellers have a different understanding and perception about fencing at hostels. Xeketwane (1995) pointed to the fact that the Transvaal Hostel Residents Association rejected the fencing of hostels. They indicated that the R240000 security fence constructed at Thokoza hostel in September 1990 had already been torn down. Part of the point raised by the Transvaal Hostel Resident Association was that the hostel dwellers were not consulted by the government. Xeketwane (1995) explains that this decision was taken after the summit meeting between the late international icon, former President Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela and F.W. de Klerk in 1992, where it was agreed that fencing should be erected to prevent township violence. Following an intensive investigation by the Goldstone Commission into the involvement of some of the hostels in politically motivated conflict and criminal acts, the position that all hostels associated with violence and crime should be fenced off as a short-term interim measure to curb the violence emerged.

Hostel dwellers in Glebelands hostel gave similar responses on the enhancement of the safety and security measures to those given by the Transvaal Hostel Resident Association, specifically that they were not consulted by the government about the security measures (Hans, 2016). The hostel dwellers indicated that fencing exposes them to their enemies as it made it difficult for them to escape when they are attacked. Just like it happened in Thokoza hostel in 1990 where they tore down the fence, Glebelands hostel dwellers also threatened to break down the fence because it left only one entrance which made it easy for them to be ambushed by their enemies.

It is important to note that even though some hostel dwellers together with the Transvaal Hostel Resident Association rejected fencing, other hostel dwellers and many township residents, particularly those living near the two hostels, welcomed the fencing of hostels as a temporary measure to reduce violence (Xeketwane, 1995). They accepted this temporary provision of fencing as it would allow police and other institutions of law-and-order easy monitoring of people entering and leaving hostels. However, some view the fencing as isolating hostel dwellers from the general community.

These perceptions increased the sense of isolation and resentment of hostel dwellers as they continued to be referred to as communities in isolation (Xeketwane, 1995). This sense of isolation and resentment helped fuel the kind of violence we have witnessed on the Reef between hostel residents and township communities. Minnaar (1993) indicated that amongst the reasons hostel dwellers refused fencing was because they felt like they were being isolated from other communities. On the other side, township communities continued to call hostel residents the 'OJs', *iziqhaza* ('stupid people'), *amadramti* ('illiterate'), *amagoduka* ('migrants'), *izimpohlwa* ('single men'), and many other stigmatising names (Xeketwane, 1995). Township residents attributed political violence in the period leading up to the inaugural democratic era to hostel dwellers.

As scholars of CPTED indicated, some of the principles might work in some communities and for specific crimes (Cozens et al., 2005; Cozens & Love, 2017). Letting community members be part of the decision-making bodies so that they can own the prevention methods and interventions will be beneficial. Numerous scholars advocate for community involvement/ engagement and community owned interventions for the effective implementation of the interventions and strategies (Mlamla & Shumba, 2021). The crime committed in communities either brings the community together (social cohesion) or collapses the community. However, having interventions owned by the community surely enhances social cohesion within the community.

Image and Aesthetics at Hostels (Abolishment and Redesign of Hostels)

There have been various calls by political representatives and the government to abolish single-sex hostels by converting these establishments into contemporary family apartments with various ownership structures, such as rental units, bonded units, and totally subsidised units. The former Minister of Human Settlements, Lindiwe Sisulu, promised that her department plans to demolish hostels (Newswire, 2015). Current debates are around the abolishment of hostels or that of moving towards Community Residential Units. This program of conversion to CRUs or family units has started in some hostels like Glebelands and KwaMashu hostels.

Hostels have a reputation of being breeding grounds of criminality. Hostels are now referred to as heaven for assassins, hit men (*izinkabi*), and other violent crimes. The lawlessness in hostels stems from the collapse in maintenance and lack of property management. This resulted in hostels being occupied, which led to overcrowding of already congested facilities. Sometimes, 20–50 men can be housed in a single room (Mothotoane, 2011). The CPTED could be implemented perfectly as the design of the hostels would accommodate crime prevention using the built environment at the hostels. When hostels are either abolished or redesigned to be family units, the manner in which they will be designed, the environment within the hostel, the streets, street lights, parks, fencing, cameras, sports, art and culture facilities, clinics, schools, victim empowerment centres, and war rooms would be done at the planning phase.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes that there is a growing body of research that supports the assertion that crime prevention through environmental design is effective in reducing both crime and fear of crime in the community, and it would be effective in reducing crime and fear of crime in South African hostels. Though it has been noted that it can prevent certain types of crimes, it would also have an impact on reducing other crimes. Furthermore, crime prevention measures that were effective in one situation may not be as effective in another. It is therefore critical to develop responses to crime problems based on a thorough understanding of the local context, including the crime situation and the physical, social, and institutional environments. Ideally, CPTED should be part of a larger, integrated crime prevention initiative that includes other approaches, such as law enforcement and social crime prevention initiatives. Coordination of such crime prevention interventions could be aided by a community-based crime prevention strategy.

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Chapter 5: Perspectives of the July 2021 Social Unrest among Langa Hostel Dwellers

Yonela Toshẹ-Mlambo and Zukiswa Zanazo

Introduction

In July 2021 social unrest occurred in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and Gauteng after the incarceration of South Africa's former president Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma (Human Rights Commission, 2024). Zuma was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment after he failed to present himself before the Judicial Commission of Inquiry on accusations of corruption, fraud, and state capture (Vhumbunu, 2021: 3). When Zuma handed himself to correctional services on 7 July 2021, violent protests occurred which were accompanied by looting of shops and businesses, and these violent protests later spread to Gauteng on 9 July 2021 (Vhumbunu, 2021: 5). The July 2021 social unrest has been coined as the worst unrest in post-Apartheid South Africa (Mongale, 2022:1). Makonye (2022: 58) notes that supporters of Zuma in KZN alone burnt 20 trucks and set up roadblocks.

The Human Rights Commission report (2024) debunked the widely held belief that the social unrest was mainly as a result of the arrest of Zuma, but rather stated that it was motivated by economic challenges that were brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mongale (2022: 7) argued that the unrest was led by the Zulu ethnic group who are in the majority in KZN where Zuma has a strong base of followers. Therefore, the stereotype of Zulu nationalism was used as a tool to gain support for the protests in KZN under the demand for the release of Zuma.

The Western Cape is one of the provinces in which this social unrest did not occur. We sought to ascertain why, using Langa hostel in Cape Town as a case study. This study, therefore, explores the perspectives of Langa hostel dwellers during the July 2021 unrest in order to understand why they did not participate in the July social unrest. The reason for choosing a hostel was influenced by the association of hostel dwellers with this social unrest. Lancaster (2022: 8) noted in relation to the unrest in Gauteng for example that the violent protests spread to hostels in Gauteng near the inner-city, which housed predominantly Zulu migrants, and later spread to other mining hostels and township areas.

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is crucial when the research seeks to give voice to the participants (Pathak et al., 2013). The voices of Langa hostel dwellers are central to this study because the study seeks to unravel their views on the social unrest. 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted face-to-face with Langa hostel dwellers, and the data was analysed

thematically. The research paradigm that informs this study is the critical research paradigm. Fossey et al. (2002) explains that critical research is based on an understanding of how the thinking of people is historically and socially constructed. As this study is based on the perspectives of Langa hostel dwellers on the July social unrest, it is important to look at how history and their social environment might have influenced the meanings they attach to the July social unrest.

Critical research analyses the historical and social foundations of meaning as well as its context (Fossey et al., 2002). We found that Langa hostel dwellers decided not to participate in the July social unrest because they wanted to protect their community from the consequences of looting. This decision was influenced by a historical event in which the community lost their post office as a result of a violent protest. Some Langa hostel dwellers thought that the unrest was led by Zuma's followers who were of the Zulu tribe while other Langa hostel dwellers believed that the violent unrest was a result of socio-economic challenges in the country.

This study argues that the historical experiences of violent protests played a major role in the refusal of Langa hostel dwellers to participate in the 2021 July social unrest. Langa hostel dwellers also experienced unemployment and poverty because of the socio-economic conditions in South Africa and as a result of the lockdown restrictions, but that still did not motivate them to participate in the social unrest. This was influenced by the consequences of a violent unrest they once took part in. This chapter starts with a brief history of Langa hostel and the association of hostels with violence. Then, it discusses Zulu nationalism and how it played a part in this social unrest. The chapter will then draw on the perspectives of Langa hostel dwellers on the July 2021 social unrest. The chapter closes with a discussion and a summary concluding the discussion.

History of Violence in Hostels

Understanding the history of the establishment of the Kwa-Langa hostel is important because history and historical events influence how people behave, and people generally value historical events and the traditions that come with them. Understanding the history of the establishment of Langa hostel cannot be understood separately from the broader history of land dispossession of Africans. There are historical accounts about the forced removals that resulted in the establishment of Langa hostel. Langa township is the first black township in the Cape and it was established in 1901 for Africans who were forcefully removed from the Uitvlug farm which is now known as Ndabeni (Mdunyelwa, 2015).

The violent social unrest, as mentioned earlier, was also linked to hostels in Gauteng. Violence has been reported in the history of hostels to be a challenge. Unlike hostels in the Western Cape (Ramphele, 1993; Wilson & Mafeje, 1963), hostels in KZN and Gauteng have been associated with violence (Mamdani, 1996; Zulu, 1993). Crush et al. (1995) mentioned that violence in the hostels can be traced back to the Apartheid era in the 1970s. The high levels of assaults and killings in hostels made

hostels unsafe for hostel dwellers (Pirie & Da Silva, 1986). Segal (1992: 191) argued that what contributed to physical violence in hostels during Apartheid was the expansion of a criminal sub-culture as a result of increased pressure on inadequate resources and decreases in wages. Wilson and Mafeje (1963) also mentioned that violence would be caused by men stealing money from each other in hostels. Violence is still reported to be a challenge in post-Apartheid South Africa. Xulu-Gama (2017) found that in KwaMashu hostel violence had become worse in post-Apartheid South Africa because there are no hostel police anymore as there were during Apartheid. Josephy (2014) claimed that the Alexandra, Denver, and Jeppe hostel dwellers were said to have taken part in the 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa. This shows that the July 2021 unrest was not the first violent unrest hostel dwellers were associated with.

Socio-economic factors have also been said to be part of the contributing factors to the July 2021 social unrest in South Africa. Historically, hostels were designed to only house circular African migrant labourers who were working in the mines (Ramphele, 1993; Wilson & Mafeje, 1963; Xulu-Gama, 2017). According to Scorjie et al. (2017) hostels changed from being accommodation for employed migrants to being homes to the unemployed in post-Apartheid South Africa. After the abolition of influx control in the post-Apartheid period people were able to migrate to hostels without being employed and this led to an increase in unemployment in hostels (Segal, 1992). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic also needs to be considered when looking at the contribution of socio-economic conditions to the July 2021 unrest as it had an exacerbating impact on the unemployment rate of South Africa. The 32,6% unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2021 was reported to be the highest ever since the advent of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey in 2008 (Statistics South Africa, 2021). This decrease in employment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic shows why the July social unrest has also been associated with worsened economic conditions.

Zulu Nationalism

Zulu nationalism is said to have played a part in the support Zuma gained after his incarceration. Mongale (2022: 1) asserts that stereotypical Zulu nationalism was central in debates around the causes of the July social unrest. In order to understand the impact of Zulu nationalism on this social unrest, it is important to briefly look at the history of how it emerged. It should be noted that the history of Apartheid in South Africa contributed to the increasing salience of tribal differences in the country as it was a tool used to divide Africans. Ndletyana and Maaba (2010: 125) assert that through the *Native Administration Act* (1927), the government reduced Africans into tribesman and divided Africans according to tribes. The Native Commissioner was given the discretion to constitute a tribe where there was none, place that tribe in a village, and assign a chief to be the ruler of that specific tribe (Ndletyana & Maaba, 2010: 125).

Zulu nationalist resistance was organised through the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi (Piper, 2002). They rallied against what they assumed was a Xhosa dominated ANC. Hence, the IFP conducted an anti-election campaign in KZN (Piper, 2002). Mlambo (2021) argued that the violence that erupted between the ANC and IFP was political rather than ethnic violence between amaXhosa and amaZulu as it was portrayed to be. Ndletyana & Maaba (2010: 123) substantiate this by noting that the assumption that the ANC is a Xhosa dominated party is a stereotype. However, it cannot be disputed that Zulu nationalism contributed to the rise of Zuma into the presidency of the ANC and, therefore, the country, and to the support he received after his incarceration. Ndletyana and Maaba (2010: 123) argue that in the power struggle between Zuma and Mbeki for ANC presidency during the time Zuma had legal trials, Zuma was portrayed as a victim in a Xhosa-dominated ANC because it was assumed that amaXhosa wanted to maintain their dominance in the party. This led to the rise of the ANC in KZN in support of Zuma, who presented himself as a Zulu cultural figure (Ndletyana & Maaba, 2010: 124). It can be noted that the July social unrest began in KZN as Zuma's followers were said to be fighting against his incarceration. It is, therefore, important to understand how the history of tribalism in South Africa and the history of Zulu nationalism contributed to the assumption that the Zulu tribe was at the forefront of the July 2021 social unrest.

Name of Participant	Gender	Age	Home Language	Date of the Interview
Dinga	Male	53	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021
Dlamini	Male	50	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021
Dunyiswa	Female	48	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021
Khayakazi	Female	38	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021
Mnyamezeli	Male	31	IsiXhosa	02 February 2022
Monde	Male	26	IsiXhosa	02 February 2022
Mzuvukile	Male	33	IsiXhosa	02 February 2022
Nciba	Male	38	IsiXhosa	02 February 2022
Nkohla	Male	56	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021
Nontlahla	Female	25	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021 and 02 February 2022
Sandiso	Male	31	IsiXhosa	02 February 2022
Sihle	Male	31	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021
Themba	Male	54	IsiXhosa	02 December 2021
Thulani	Male	42	IsiXhosa	02 February 2022
Yoliswa	Female	41	IsiXhosa	02 February 2022

Table 5.1: Participants' demographic information
Perceptions of Langa hostel dwellers

Demographic Information of Participants

We found that Langa hostel dwellers decided not to participate in the July social unrest because they did not want to suffer the consequences of the violent unrest. Langa hostel dwellers also believed that the social unrest erupted because of the arrest of Zuma, and they linked it with tribalism. Participants also believed that socio-economic conditions such as unemployment and poverty might have contributed to the social unrest. This section will discuss the findings by firstly focusing on why Langa hostel dwellers decided not to participate in the unrest, and then focusing on their views on the causes of the unrest.

Table 5.1 presents the demographic information of the Langa hostel dwellers who were interviewed specified by age, gender, and home language. Four of the participants were women while 11 were men. The dominance of men in the sample can be attributed to the history of hostels. According to Xulu-Gama (2017), hostels were built to house male migrant workers who had pass books to work in urban areas. All the participants were isiXhosa language speakers.

Reasons for not Participating in the Social Unrest

Langa community at large decided not to participate in the social unrest because they feared that the looting would lead to damage to their malls which would have an adverse impact on the community. A community meeting was called to warn everyone not to partake in the social unrest. Dinga explained in the quote below how they were united to save their community from the repercussions of looting. A collaborative decision was taken by the community: 'Down with looting, nobody is going to come here and destroy our properties.'

> 'Yeah, here we didn't support that thing. After we had a meeting, examined it, and reached the conclusion that people who are going to be disadvantaged are those who will be looting. Eh, after looting they would be disadvantaged as it happened. We were conscious that the vandalism of shops and entertainment places it will be difficult to re-build them again. We therefore united at that time in protecting our place' (Dinga, 2021).

> 'Langa there is a Facebook group whereby people share their problems. People talked that let's not drag down the dignity of Langa and not follow what we saw on TV' (Nontlahla, 2021 & 2022).

Based on the quotes above it is clear that Langa residents considered the consequences of looting in their decision not to take part in the social unrest. Langa community even went to the extent of using social media to warn the community members not to participate in the social unrest. As Dinga explained in the quote, looting comes along with destroying shops and at the end of the day when shops are vandalised, it is the community that suffers. Nkohla also expressed the consequences of looting.

'Because my belief is that if we are not satisfied with something as the community, we organise a march. There is no need for us to loot and take that dustbin and throw it here. Who stays here? It is us. The municipality does not stay here even the person we are fighting for is not saying here' (Nkohla, 2021).

Langa hostel dwellers were conscious about the aftermaths of the social unrest because of their own past experiences of violent protests. They had learnt a lesson from a previous incident that left them with no post office.

'Typical example we no longer have a post office in Langa because of what? Because of these unnecessary protests. If I am not mistaken, it has been eight years now since our post office was burnt. Up until today we do not have a post office' (Themba, 2021).

The loss of their post office as a result of a violent protest that led to their post office being burnt was the motivation behind preventing the participation in the July 2021 unrest by Langa hostel dwellers. Langa hostel dwellers also involved police and taxi drivers to ensure that their malls were safe from looting.

Opinions on the Causes of the Unrest

We also asked Langa hostel dwellers about their thoughts on why the social unrest occurred. Some participants believed that the protests happened because of the aftermath of the COVID-19 restrictions. Participants pointed out the economic challenges that had been exacerbated by the COVID-19 restrictions. They believed unemployment and poverty were what led to people looting. When Nciba was asked what he thought might have been the motivation behind the unrest, he explained in the quote below.

'We were worried about the lockdown. We were locked down at home while we were unemployed. We thought people in Durban were fighting for that. It was hunger, other people had lost their jobs' (Nciba, 2022).

What Nciba was explaining in the quote above is that the lockdown period was a very stressful period and unemployment was a challenge. Nciba thought the unrest was a result of the lockdown and unemployment. While other participants also shared the same thoughts on the lockdown and unemployment being a motive behind the unrest, some also had different opinions. Although it is clear from Nciba's quote that Langa hostel dwellers were also affected by the unemployment and poverty worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic, they still did not participate in the social unrest.

Other participants believed the social unrest had nothing to do with lockdown and its socio-economic impacts, but was rather influenced by the arrest of Zuma. They believed that it was Zuma's supporters who were fighting against the arrest of Zuma. Dinga explained in the quote below.

'They were supporting the former President [Zuma]. I think what led

to that thing was anger, they thought by doing that thing he would be released according to their powers. Now, it didn't go like that. Number two, the reasons I am saying it was wrong, it was not planned by the people who were leading it. Others joined a thing they didn't know nothing about. Most of the time a thing that is associated with political songs and violence they go after it without being aware that it will affect them. I have said it, it was influenced by anger thinking that he would be released, however, that didn't happen. It therefore spread over to other province. What I mean it is that what happened in July was a bad thing and that is why we chose not to support it and we are pleased that our youth here listened when we warned them not to join' (Dinga, 2021).

Although Dinga has explained that he thought the main reason behind the social unrest was the arrest of Zuma, he goes further to argue that others joined what they knew nothing about because of the political songs and violence. Dinga believes that it turned violent because it was not a well-planned protest by its leaders. Yoliswa blamed the former president for failing to present himself to correctional service.

'I am blaming Jacob Zuma because if he had presented himself to the correctional services the protest would have not happened to the extent that he wanted taken from his home because if it was me, not wealthy person if I break the law, I know that I will be arrested by the police but why he had to be taken from his home?' (Yoliswa, 2022).

Participants also associated the social unrest with tribal motivations. They believed that the reason the unrest was only in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng was because these provinces are dominated by the Zulu tribe and Zulus were fighting for their fellow Zulu man as Zuma is of the Zulu tribe. The next part of the section will discuss this in detail.

Participants believed that one of the motivations behind the protest not spreading to the Western Cape was because it is not a province dominated by the Zulu tribe. They believed that Zuma being a Zulu man influenced Zulus to fight for his release.

'I think this side, I am not sure if I will explain it exactly the way it is. This side there are only few of your people, Zulus. Zulus protect each other and this side there are only Xhosas, so as a result what happens that side, does not affect this side. I believe that if there were a lot of Zulu people here, it would have happened here. They were not going to neglect uMsholozi [referring to Zuma by his clan name]' (Sandiso, 2022).

Participants believed that as a result of tribes having an influence on the unrest, Zuma did not have many followers in Western Cape. This is expressed by Mzuvukile in the quote below.

'I think it is because that side is dominated by Zuma's people and this side most people do not want Zuma here in Western Cape. That side it is mostly Zulu people who are supporting him, who do not want him to be arrested. It has to do with tribe' (Mzuvukile, 2022).

Based on the views of these participants it is clear that there was no motivation of participating in the July social unrest; they felt that it was a battle of the Zulu tribe only, that it happened in provinces that they perceive as being Zulu dominated, and that it happened in support of a Zulu leader.

Discussion and Conclusion

It can be noted that history was a contributing factor in the refusal to participate in the July 2021 social unrest by Langa hostel dwellers. The loss of their post office years ago due to a violent protest was what they emphasised to have motivated them in ensuring that the unrest did not happen in Langa. According to the critical research paradigm, one's actions are limited by history because people's thoughts are socially and historically constructed (Fossey et al, 2002). Langa hostel dwellers' decision not to participate in the July social unrest was limited by their own history of losing a post office. The struggle of having to travel to go to the post office when they previously had their own post office is a reminder of a violent unrest they once embarked on. As a result, the emphasis from the participants was on protecting their properties. The need to protect their properties is relevant when looking at the damage caused by the July 2021 social unrest. The South African Property Owners' Association (SAPOA) revealed that as a result of the unrest, 3000 stores were looted while 1199 retail stores were damaged as a result of the violent protests (Vhumbunu, 2021: 5).

Langa hostel dwellers also believed that the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions might have contributed to the July 2021 unrest. This opinion has also been substantiated by literature on the July social unrest. Mongale (2022: 1) argued that the violence during the social unrest was triggered by hungry and unemployed people whose conditions were worsened by the lockdown restrictions. According to Fossey et al. (2002), critical theory advocates for the critique and transformation of current structures and how these structures are a constraint to development and social justice. This can be applied to the current structure of the South African economy that is composed of inequalities. Lancaster (2022: 8) argues that consistent marginalisation, economic exclusion, and high rates of unemployment in South Africa influenced the reception of looting by South African citizens who participated in looting. However, the socio-economic conditions still did not motivate Langa hostel dwellers to participate in the social unrest because they were limited by the history of losing their post office as a result of a violent protest. They considered the difficulty of rebuilding after destroying properties.

Langa hostel dwellers also believed that the social unrest was a fight against the incarceration of Zuma. They believed that it happened only in KZN and Gauteng because these are provinces that are dominated by Zulu speakers, and they supported Zuma because he is a Zulu leader. One cannot discuss tribalism in South Africa without looking at the history of tribalism and the history of Zulu nationalism in South Africa. The Union government through the *Native Administration Act* (1927) divided Africans into ethnicities and, consequently,

the Union government and Apartheid government utilised tribalism as a form of political control over Africans (Ndletyana & Maaba, 2010: 125). This has made tribal divisions a challenge even in post-Apartheid South Africa. The July social unrest has highlighted tribal divisions as it is pointed out in the literature that it was the Zulu tribe that was at the forefront of the social unrest. Tribal motivations did not encourage Langa hostel dwellers to participate in the July social unrest as they have a predominantly Xhosa tribal affiliation. Although this might have been a motivation behind the refusal to participate in the July social unrest, they emphasised the protection of their environment and preventing the repercussions of a violent protest as the most important factors that encouraged them not to participate in the unrest.

In conclusion, this study investigated the perceptions of Langa hostel dwellers in Cape Town on the violent July 2021 social unrest that occurred in KZN and Gauteng. It can be argued that the refusal to participate in the July 2021 social unrest by Langa hostel dwellers was motivated by their experience with violent protests. The history of violent unrest in Langa shaped the collaborative decision that was taken by the community to not participate in the July 2021 unrest. Langa hostel dwellers believed that the social unrest was motivated by socio-economic conditions in South Africa that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Langa hostel dwellers also believed that the social unrest was fuelled by the arrest of Zuma and tribal motivations were therefore also central in the social unrest. They believed that Zulu speakers led the social unrest because they were fighting for their Zulu leader. The Langa hostel dwellers were not motivated to participate because they are Xhosa speakers.

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Chapter 6: Racialised Dispossession as an Ongoing Process at Lwandle Hostel in Cape Town

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama

Introduction

> 'At the time of the opening of the museum (still at the time of writing), people occupying Hostel 33 have not been provided with alternative accommodation. Those Hostel 33 residents who had earlier endorsed the museum project, were disaffected by the time of the opening ceremony, two years later because they had still not been re-housed, and wrote a note which they pinned onto the hostel door, "disagreeing with you that the hostel be used as a museum, first give us accommodation"' (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 803).

Lwandle township was built, declared a location and a native village by Government Notice No. 71 of 17 January 1958. It was established in response to the scarcity of cheap labour in the Heldeberg basin (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 798). Immediately after 1994, it became part of the Hostel Redevelopment Programme, government's effort to turn former single-sex workers' hostels into Community Residential Units, which are also known as homes (Xulu, 2014; Department of Human Settlements, 2009). In 1998, there was an initiative to have a museum of the hostel, which later took one block of the Lwandle hostel, hostel 33, and made it an artefact of the museum. This decision meant that hostel dwellers had to be dislocated and displaced[1] from hostel 33 in order for it to be used as a space for exhibition. At the time of writing their paper, Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) found that only half of the people had been accommodated in the new hostel housing project and no further information was given on what would happen to the rest. The community generally became suspicious of the museum project. Nevertheless, the museum was launched on the 1st of May 2000, a date which annually marks International Workers' Day, to commemorate the Migrant Labour System and the history of hostel life in South Africa. On the 24th of September 2018, the government of Cape Town celebrated the allocation of hostel 33, located next to Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, as a provincial heritage site (Western Cape Government, 2018). This designation means a place has been declared to be a national heritage site by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) or a place declared to be a provincial heritage site by a provincial heritage resources authority (RSA, 1999).

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1   Internal displacement refers to the forced movement of people from their locality or environment and occupational activities (Hlongwane, 2016).

Lwandle hostel, which is in the Western Cape province, has not received as much mainstream media attention as hostels or townships like Nyanga, Langa, and Gugulethu townships in the province (see Ramphela, 1993). This chapter is a discussion of a book publication by Murray and Witz (2014) titled *Hostels, Homes, Museum: Memorialising migrant labour pasts in Lwandle, South Africa*. It seeks to provide a different and critical understanding of what is documented there as a bold idea of making the first township museum out of an 'unlikely institution'; an insignificant hostel to a celebrated significant artefact of a museum, making visible that which was 'invisible' (Murray & Witz, 2014). This chapter relies on relational comparison analytical tools to make two key contributions to scholarship using the Lwandle hostel 33 as an example. First, the people, processes, and policies engaged in turning hostel 33 into a museum illuminate power-laden processes of race-class relations in South Africa, thereby turning this hostel into a significant example of the continuous racialised dispossession of African working-class people. Second, the launching of the Migrant Labour Museum, which used hostel 33 as its key artefact, and the celebration of the allocation of hostel 33 as a provincial heritage site is a depiction of what Mlambo and Xulu-Gama (2022) called 'ceremonial transformation.'

This chapter proposes to deconstruct the existing celebrated narrative of the museumisation of hostel 33 and instead provides a different, more nuanced way to understand this process. This chapter has been inspired by praxis, which is the inseparability of theory with practice and fundamentally leans on Hart's 2006 publication titled *Denaturalizing Dispossession: Critical Ethnography in the Age of Resurgent Imperialism*. The fundamental engagement that this chapter seeks to provide is significant as it uses critical ethnographies and methods of relational comparison which are historically specific and context dependant (Hart, 2002). The aim is to illuminate power-laden processes and to challenge existing narratives of the first township museum in Cape Town which is based on imperialist visions of the world.

I come to this conversation as a sociologist, an ethnographer, a hostel scholar, and a black, academic, African woman born and bred in a township in South Africa. I use that positionality with the intention to expand social justice in the production of knowledge in hostels literature. As an ethnographer, having done extensive research in some hostels in KwaZulu-Natal, Cape Town, and Gauteng, I disagree with the argument that for hostel 33 to exist as a museum artefact, black working-class people had to be displaced and dispossessed of the only space they knew as a home[2] since the building of the hostel in the late 1950s. I see space as 'actively produced through everyday practices that are simultaneously material and meaningful' and it is through this conception of space (or space-time) that I can do 'vitally important critical work in illuminating the exercise of imperial power' (Hart, 2006: 980).

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2 A base in the city – away from the home in the rural areas.

In this chapter, I argue that taking away hostel 33 from the people who lived there was taking their situated embodied material practices, their discourses and power relations, the meanings and relations within their families, their histories and aspirations in their imagined futures. I propose that the reasons why it was possible for the 'stakeholders' to take the hostel away from the dwellers, which I understand as racialised dispossession, is because they (stakeholders) see the hostel space as abstract. This paper discourages the tendency of seeing the racialised dispossession of poor people of their land, spaces, and rights as a disembodied, abstract, natural process.

On that note, I find Chari et al.'s (2022) proposal of ethnographies of power as a possible way to learn from and advance to a radically different world to be a really useful pathway. They offer their work as an effort toward epistemic decolonisation. Nyoka argues (2013: 5) epistemic decolonisation is unfortunately not always met with enthusiasm in the South African academy. In his paper, titled *Negation and Affirmation: a critique of sociology in South Africa*, he argues that being rooted in one's locale is fundamental for endogeneity (Nyoka, 2013). Endogeneity says knowledge is first local before it becomes universal. Endogenous knowledge is experienced by society as an integral part of its heritage. Endogenous knowledge is critical for epistemic decolonisation (Nyoka, 2013).

This chapter is structured as follows: first a brief historical background on racialised dispossession in South Africa is provided. Second, I give a contextual background on Lwandle township and hostel. Third, a discussion of the museumisation of the Lwandle hostel occurs and I then provide concluding comments.

Brief Historical Account of Dispossession

Turner conceptualised dispossession 'as an extended, uneven, contested process of losing control over a resource rather than a singular legal event' (Turner, 2016: 276). Hart furthers this conceptualisation by arguing that dispossession needs to be grasped as an ongoing process and also rendered historically and geographically specific, as well as interconnected. She then posits that these specificities and connections can do political as well as analytical work (Hart, 2006: 988). Racialised dispossession in South Africa can be traced back to the first Europeans to settle in South Africa arriving from Holland in 1652 (Cilliers & Fourie, 2012). However, the South African democratic government through the *Restitution of Land Rights Act 22* (1994) stated that only those dispossessed after June 20, 1913 are entitled to restitution. The *Natives Land Act 27* (1913), therefore, becomes a key point in history which is recognised as having legislated the theft of 87% of arable land, leaving the majority black population with only 13% of less fertile land which was then designated as the native reserves or Bantustans. Following the Apartheid era, there was an expectation that what had been stolen would be returned to its owners after the 1994 democratic elections. Instead, the 'land question' came to be determined on the willing seller-willing buyer principle, and narrowly focused on agricultural land post-1994 (Hart & Sitas, 2004).

In understanding racialised dispossession as an ongoing process, Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) documents that there was a time (after the 1986 relaxation of influx controls) when white people from the neighbouring towns tried to get rid of the Lwandle community, in an effort to remove the 'black spot', using the excuse that it was overcrowded. So the community was going to be moved from Lwandle to Khayelitsha, which is one of the well-known black townships in Cape Town. Lwandle community was able to win the case against their forced removal, as the employers of the Lwandle community members joined them in their protest over the planned move; hence, they were able to retain the right to stay in Lwandle. The overcrowding increased even further when the government introduced the hostel redevelopment housing project after 1994.

This scenario brings race-class relations into sharp focus, whereby the whites from nearby towns wanted to get rid of the black Lwandle township, and it is the intervention of the white employers from the same neighbouring towns which assisted the Lwandle community to win the case. This chapter acknowledges that these white employers might have helped Lwandle residents out of their good hearts or belief in social justice. What is more likely, however, is that the white employers needed Lwandle residents to remain in close proximity for the same reasons the hostels were established in the first place; so that they would accommodate the poor black working-class close to where their labour could be exploited. This proximity enabled whites to more easily and cheaply use black people for domestic labour and various other piece jobs and pay them low wages. Further down the line, the Lwandle community was presented with another threat to erase their existence from the area. The plan was to demolish all the hostels and make a community service centre on the hostel's remains. The centre would include a library, municipal offices, sports field, taxi rank, surgery, and art and craft centre (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006). The fact that the hostel is still in existence means this plan was not a success.

Lwandle Hostel Historical Context

There is not a lot of research that has been done at Lwandle hostel, unlike many others across the country (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006). There are four key studies: Sloth-Nielsen et al. (1992); Jones, (1990); Mgijima and Buthelezi, (2006); and Murray and Witz (2014) which have been done at Lwandle hostel, and this section largely relies on these studies for context. Lwandle hostel is in a township at the South-East and about 45 kilometres from the city centre of Cape Town (Jones, 1990). The Lwandle hostel is situated in a peri-urban area outside the white residential area of the Strand, in a region formerly known as the Hottentots Holland Basin (Sloth-Nielsen et al., 1992). Lwandle originally accommodated rural-urban migrant workers from the Eastern Cape, but like most hostels in Cape Town, i.e. Langa and Nyanga, it now accommodates people from all over the country (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006).

Similarly to many other workers' hostels in South Africa, Lwandle hostel was built as an institution to accommodate and control dispossessed black working-class labour which moved from rural areas to urban areas for employment opportunities. Migrant men came to the cities to serve the needs of the white capitalists in the surrounding industrial complex. It was built as a prison, with only one entrance and exit point (Sloth-Nielsen et al.,1992; Jones, 1990; Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006). It was the only legal residential area for black people in its surroundings. Women and children were initially not allowed in the men's hostels. However, they started coming in 'illegally' because of various reasons until the relaxation of influx control in 1986, after which their presence was no longer formally 'illegal'. The hostel had originally been designed to accommodate 2000 men (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006) but by the year 2000 there were approximately 40000; some in informal settlements, some in new housing, and some in the old hostels which had been converted into family housing (Murray & Witz, 2014). As more people moved from the Eastern Cape to Cape Town in search of employment opportunities, the hostel suffered from overcrowding and dilapidation of basic infrastructure. These are just some of the social ills which many other hostels in South Africa also suffer from (Xulu-Gama, 2017; Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006).

Based on the dire living conditions in the hostels, Jones (1990), an anthropologist, decided to conduct research at Lwandle hostel on childhood experiences and interviewed children between the ages of ten and 14 years old. From the sample, 22 children were born in the rural areas and came to grow up in the hostel, and two children were born in a township and then came to live in the hostel. All were living with parents or guardians who were rural-urban migrant workers. Jones relied on ethnography for data collection. He was a 'voluntary teaching assistant in a self-help primary school which had been established by hostel residents following the state's refusal to make such a facility available to hostel children' (Jones, 1990: 22).

The data was collected through making the children write diaries and autobiographies when they got to class every morning over a period of six weeks. These were on specific topics as encouraged by the researcher, i.e. what they did, what they saw, and what they thought. They were encouraged to write about their past experiences as much as they could remember. The book traces the children's rural-urban connections, as well as their everyday lives, at the hostel, surviving under harsh, alienating Apartheid conditions. Forced removals[3], disruption, degradation, separation, poverty, migration, and broken families are some of the characteristics of Apartheid for black people (Jones, 1990; Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006). Jones (1990), however, makes note of the strengths, tenacity, and resourcefulness of the children in the midst of all these challenges.

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3   Forced removals refers to the dislocation of indigenous people within South Africa by the Apartheid government (Hlongwane, 2016).

Sloth-Nielsen et al. (1992) conducted research at Lwandle hostel exploring the perceptions of personal safety of African people particularly after the relaxing of influx controls in 1986. The authors, with a criminology and psychology background, adopted participatory data collection methods and were intentional about levelling power relations between the researcher(s) and the researched. They acknowledged that the meanings of concepts like crime and personal safety are not fixed and that they vary according to people's social, economic, and political circumstances. Some of their key findings are that improvements to the hostel dwellers' material conditions, like financial and living conditions, should be made a priority if their perceptions about personal safety are to be changed positively. Attention needs to be paid to the impact of power relations of race, gender, age, and material security as these are not simply culminative.

> 'Resources and efforts should be directed at developing and improving existing community initiated regulatory mechanisms, rather than imposing conventional state forms of law enforcement. Improving the personal safety of and decreasing the victimisation experienced by women and younger males in Lwandle, will require fundamental changes in the current androcratic and gerontocratic power relations' (Sloth-Nielsen et al.,1992: xiii).

Importantly, Sloth-Nielsen et al. (1992) make reference to how perceptions of personal safety is not about the legal definition of crime, but it is how people perceive what is a threat or that which could hurt them. They give further examples about how people would feel unsafe if existing in 'inadequate living conditions, economic exploitation and forced removals' (Sloth-Nielsen et al., 1992: 2). This was normalised during colonialism with the *Natives Land Act* (1913) and during Apartheid with the *Group Areas Act* (1950) which saw black people forcefully being removed from where they lived in order to be pushed to what became townships, hostels, and homelands (Sloth-Nielsen et al., 1992).

Museumisation of the Hostel

The book by Murray and Witz (2014), which is at the crux of this chapter, is made up of five chapters and two photographic essays, one by Paul Grendon and another by Thulani Nxumalo. Chapter one is titled 'Dislocation: Making a museum at the seaside'; chapter two 'Rehabilitation: Restoring a migrant labour hostel'; this is followed by Grendon's photo essay titled 'Dormitory accommodation.' Chapter three is titled 'Inventing an institution.' Chapter four is 'Revisioning: Images, photography and exhibition.' Chapter five is 'Retelling: From oral histories to textual pasts'. This is followed by Nxumalo's photo essay titled 'On the beach.' The postscript and conclusion remarks the end of the book.

According to Murray and Witz (2014: v) Charmian Plummer and Bongani Mgijima were primarily responsible for the Hostels, Homes, Museum initiative, such that it is argued 'without their initiative there would be no museum in Lwandle.' Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006: 799) explain in their publication that it was actually Plummer

who 'played a key role in facilitating the setting up of the museum by writing a letter to the Helderberg municipality in February 1998, asking it to "consider keeping one (or even two) of the existing hostels of what Lwandle was like before renovations changed the landscape". Plummer became the chair of the Steering Committee which was formed in response to Plummer's request. In Mgijima and Buthelezi's (2006: 799) own publication, they insert a footnote which reads 'Bongani Mgijima has been involved in the process from the beginning.' The paper later does mention the museum project leaders as Bongani Mgijma and Charmian Plummer in the main text. Other important people's names were written together with their important roles, i.e. C.P.J. van Vuuren owned the farm which was bought by the Stellenbosch Divisional Council to build the Lwandle township; Anne-Marie Cloete was a city librarian given the task of convening the steering committee; Brett Myrdal was an architect and a co-ordinator of the Hostels to Home Project, (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006). The question remains: why did Mgijima and Buthelezi not see the importance of highlighting Mgijima's role in the whole process, which Murray and Witz (2014) equates with that of his colleague (Plummer), or even the other players mentioned above? Is it because of race, or class inequalities, or both? Or is it because the museumisation was never Mgijima's idea?

The book tells us Plummer lived in Somerset West in the foothills of the Helderberg mountains. She was an ex-teacher in Somerset West, and she helped establish a creche at Lwandle (Murray & Witz, 2014). Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) wrote that Mgijima had 'partly' grown up in Lwandle hostel. We are not told what 'partly' means in this case, whereas Murray and Witz (2014) wrote that Mgijima lived nearby in what was the 'native location' of Lwandle. He was a history student at the University of the Western Cape where both authors (Murray and Witz) worked: one as an academic in Geography and Environmental Studies, and the other as a professor in the history department[4]. The authors (Murray and Witz) and purported co-founders (Plummer and Mgijima) served at one stage or another as board members of the museum, together with many other individuals who are mentioned in the book[5].

According to Mgijima and Buthelezi, (2006) the initiative to conserve hostel 33 was supported by the District Six Museum, the National Monuments Council, Helderberg Tourism Bureau, and the Helderberg Council. The Museum Steering Committee had to explain to the hostel 33 dwellers that a decision had been made to convert their hostel to Lwandle Museum. The hostel dwellers, in response, wrote a letter on 23 October 1998 to the Steering Committee stating that:

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4   'Geographers have, of course, long been complicit with imperial projects. Yet conceptions of space (or space–time) and scale as actively produced through everyday practices that are simultaneously material and meaningful can do vitally important critical work in illuminating the exercise of imperial power' (Hart, 2006: 980).
5   Murray and Witz (2014) are clear that there were too many people who played important roles in the establishment of the museum and upkeeping of it. The names of the people who contributed in various ways, money, time, expertise, etc., took almost two full pages. It is commendable that this came in the preface and not at the end of the book or footnotes as authors mostly do.

'We, hostel number 33 residents hereby approve our unit be converted to the hostel museum as long as we are still the residents of the hostel and catered for into the hostel to homes project. The idea was clearly explained to us by members of the committee, we are aware that this has the blessings of the community and we also want to fully support the idea of making history of our background and we are also proud that our community is developing gradually and effectively. We also thank you for your care and ambition to make this happen' (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 800).

Murray and Witz (2014) claim that their 'work' on Hostels, Homes, Museum 'sought to reconfigure history as critical, engaged and produced in a multiplicity of sites and genres' (Murray & Witz, 2014: vii). They write that what they were worried about is 'what kind of museum would it be? How would communities be reconstituted? Was there sufficient funding to enable the museum to operate effectively? What role would the museum play in the deeply contested local and national politics? How would the museum be managed and curated? How would hostel 33 be positioned? Should the tour be rerouted? Would visitors come?' (Murray & Witz, 2014: 161). As can be seen, we do not read anything explicit regarding their concerns, if any, about the displaced people. Perhaps they were not worried about those people, or if they were, they did not see the importance of discussing that in their book. Their focus was primarily on the prospects of turning the hostel into a successful exhibition space, no matter what the cost was on the lives of the people affected. It is not clear what was meant with the question 'How would communities be reconstituted?' because the title of the first chapter in the book begins with the word 'Dislocation.' Furthermore, they witnessed the protest that had been conducted by the people who had been unhoused as a result of the museum initiative. As a reminder of the timeline, the initiative began in 1998, was launched in 2000, and by 2006 there were a number of displaced people who were not provided with alternative housing as promised. Murray and Witz, meanwhile, published their valorising, self-congratulatory account of the museumisation of hostel 33 in 2014.

Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) point out the contestations and contradictions that have characterised the processes leading to the establishment of the Lwandle museum. They explained the time of the museum formation as a time for the hostel dwellers to re-imagine themselves, outside of the boundaries drawn by segregationist laws and regulations. I contend that Mgijima and Buthelezi were under the impression that hostel dwellers wanted to rid themselves of the label and perceptions of the hostel dwellers. My own research in hostels demonstrates that hostel dwellers did not want the changes imposed by the government in its transformative efforts (Xulu-Gama, 2017). Perhaps Mgijima and Buthelezi also thought transformation would be easy, especially with the infrastructural changes that were taking place as part of the hostel redevelopment programme. They go on to argue that people (including hostel dwellers) were now free to live wherever

they wanted as they were not restricted by Apartheid laws anymore, failing to point out that unattained economic freedom continues to be a hindrance for the black working-class majority to live wherever they would like to live. Mgijima and Buthelezi fail to foreground the racial and class boundaries which still impede the hostel dwellers beyond the laws and regulations of the country. I argue that it is these racial and class boundaries which disable hostel dwellers from re-imagining themselves in the post-Apartheid period.

They point out that the creation of the museum did cause a lot of contestation among the community members. While there were a few who gave their blessing for the museum to be established, some totally refused. There were hostel dwellers who were left without housing after the racialised dispossession brought by the establishment of the museum in the hostel space. Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) argue that the museum has not helped hostel residents but has rather led to a violation of their privacy, exposing them to the tourist gaze. This is what Murray and Witz (2014) fail to appreciate in their celebration of the first township museum.

Discussion

Using relational comparison analytical tools, I would like to borrow the 'ceremonial transformation' concept, as coined by Mlambo and Xulu-Gama (2022) in the publication titled *Ceremonial Transformation: The Significance of Renaming Memorial Hall after Sarah Baartman at the University of Cape Town.* Mlambo & Xulu-Gama challenged the nature and impact of the transformative processes that the institution (University of Cape Town) was engaged with, as much as this chapter challenges the nature and impact of the transformative processes taking place in the former single-sex workers' hostel institution. The naming or renaming processes for these institutions is different. UCT followed a more democratic and bottom up process, while the hostel decision-making and naming processes came from bodies outside the hostel with information, plans, and the vision of the museumisation process then relayed from the top to the bottom, as indicated above. Both Murray and Witz's (2014) and Mgijima and Buthelezi's (2006) publications provide proof that there was a group of people who did not agree with their hostel being turned into a museum, unlike the UCT case where there was no evidence of people who did not support the renaming process of the Sarah Baartman Hall.

Mlambo and Xulu-Gama (2022) provide a critique of some initiatives performed by UCT, an institution who's students led the Rhodes Must Fall movement (#RMF). In response to #RMF, among other efforts, UCT took a big step of changing the famous Jameson Hall into Sarah Baartman Memorial Hall in 2018, as a way to honour her and her people. Sarah Baartman was a Khoikhoi woman born in what is now known as the Eastern Cape province in South Africa. As a result of her physical features which were considered unnatural or animal-like to the colonial European gaze, she was trafficked from Africa to Europe during the colonial period in order to serve as an exhibition for Europeans and tourists. Over two centuries following the death of Sarah Baartman at age 26 in colonial captivity, we see hostel

dwellers who lived in hostel 33 being dispossessed of their hostel for the purpose of turning the hostel into an exhibition space for the gaze of outsiders. As a result of the unnatural living conditions that black people were subjected to under the colonial and Apartheid systems, the Helderberg municipality and the province of the Western Cape saw it fit to use their space for exhibition, violating their privacy and disregarding their situated embodied material practices and meanings. Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) attest to the fact that the idea of representation of the migrant labour system on a national scale was ambitious and misplaced. Furthermore, attempting to present migrancy on a single provincial level was also complex because it assumed boundedness of space – particularly for the workers' trajectories, whose 'narrated life-stories transcend provincial boundaries and other administrative borders' (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006: 805).

Mlambo and Xulu-Gama (2022) posit that, in this context, transformation is done as ceremonial – to be celebrated – have beautiful pictures taken – with long speeches delivered in front of big crowds, and for the event to make headlines without changing the quality of the lives of the people involved in the institution. This depiction of ceremonial transformation is what Lwandle hostel experienced. The quality of the lives of the hostel dwellers who were displaced did not remain the same but was worsened by dislocation, displacement, and dispossession.

Mlambo and Xulu-Gama (2022: 154) strongly advocate that 'bringing an end to ceremonial transformation is one way of successfully fighting the histories that resist change as well as changing the stubborn institutional culture plaguing our institution.' For the purposes of this chapter, challenging ceremonial transformation means discouraging the processes of classed and racialised resource (land) dispossession, abolishing forced removals, thereby stopping internal displacement which continues through the post-Apartheid era.

Firstly, what should be noted is that changing the hostel into a museum has been a process of taking the hostel institution (Xulu-Gama, 2017) and turning it into a museum institution. The ownership of both of these institutions is not with the working-class hostel dwellers. This forced process of change or institutionalisation of the hostel also took place when the government changed hostels to homes (otherwise known as CRUs) against scores of black working men's preference (Xulu-Gama, 2017). Second, the hostels were established by white people to serve the interest of (make profit for) white capitalists. The project of the museum has similarly been led by white people, notwithstanding that they are working with some black people (although the degree to which this is so is unclear), against the desires of other black working-class people.

Third, the establishment of hostels was a result of the forced removals of black people by the white minority government into the Bantustans, and later needing to bring them back under controlled and adverse conditions as cheap labour for the industrialising South Africa. While the removal of the Lwandle hostel 33 dwellers was 'negotiated' for the few who supported the museumisation of the hostel, it was

forced for those who were against this process. It is as much about removals of black people as Apartheid was about removals of black people from their land, it is just a matter of different types and levels of violence being at play.

Concluding Reflections

The establishment of the first Cape Town township museum in this case, and publicising it as an act of transformation, stands in a continuum with acts from the Apartheid era where black working-class people were removed from or dispossessed of their land and their homes. This museumisation is therefore in direct contrast with the principles of democracy, socio-spatial justice, fairness, and equality. Instead, it shows power-laden practices of race-class relations in South Africa.

While it was good on paper to have a museum to commemorate what was a racially exclusive space in a township, I am not convinced that it was worth doing it at the expense of the lived experiences of the men, women and children who have been dispossessed of a space to live in. If Helderberg municipality wanted to change the lives of black people by creating an institution (the museum) which was in previously racially exclusive spaces, and this was a way of transforming township spaces for the better, I contend that this transformative practice is inappropriate and unacceptable if the hostel dwellers' lives remain the same or deteriorate through displacement and dispossession. Lwandle hostel 33 has instead indeed become a good example of racialised dispossession as an ongoing process in some parts of the country previously allocated for black people.

The limit of this chapter is that it does not even begin to discuss other key issues related to the book under discussion: for example, what is heritage and what are the different meanings associated with heritage sites, and who has rights to determine such sites, meanings, and modes of remembrance[6]? What are the ethics of opening and operating an institution which is built on the grounds where poor people have been dispossessed of their space and have been left without housing as a result. I would further contend that even if all the displaced families had been housed, it would still be problematic if there were other Lwandle community members who lacked housing. Yet, there were a few non-resident middle-class people who felt it was more important to have a museum where people could visit occasionally, while the community members did not have permanent housing. On reflection, Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) acknowledged the damage done to the credibility of the first township museum which dispossessed people of their homes in order for the space to be used for exhibition. A further ethical issue that Mgijima and Buthelezi (2006) raised is the idea of collecting items for display in the museum which were still needed for survival use by the hostel dwellers. They show that if a museum is a place to keep old things for memory, what did that mean for the hostel dwellers' lives in which those old things are their own important possessions which they used on a daily basis (Mgijima & Buthelezi, 2006). Further research needs

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6   Different people have their own ways of remembering the past: perhaps for whites it is museums and for blacks it might be narrating stories and singing songs.

to be conducted, bearing all these complexities in mind, to explore the impact of the establishment of the museum and how it has affected the quality of life for the hostel dwellers.

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Part Three

SOCIO-POLITICAL HOSTEL LANDSCAPE

Chapter 7: The Living Conditions of Hostel Residents in eThekwini Municipality, South Africa

Bisimwa Timothee Makanishe

Introduction

This chapter assesses the material living conditions in nine public hostels within the eThekwini Municipality. Hostel dwellers have historically experienced precarious living conditions since their inception of single-sex hostels to accommodate migrant workers. Hostel residents are often described as 'poorly educated, unskilled labourers who mainly live in overcrowded, complex and stretched-out social spaces' (Xulu-Gama, 2017: 7). They also grapple with high unemployment, poverty, violent crime, and health problems, including HIV/AIDS among other challenges. Xulu-Gama further describes hostels as 'spaces full of chaos, tensions, unhappiness, [and] contradictions' (Xulu-Gama, 2017: 9). Despite this precariousness, living in hostels affords unemployed residents an opportunity to continue searching for employment. This entails that 'employment was and still is the primary reason men move to urban hostels' (Xulu-Gama, 2017).

The living conditions in hostels represent colonial and Apartheid marginalisation legacies which democratic South Africa continues to contend with (Mothotoana, 2011). In her book, *Hostels in South Africa: Spaces of Perplexity*, Xulu-Gama (2017: 7) argues that hostels 'have long been part of South Africa's divided landscape' and remain important for capturing 'recent economic and demographic changes.' One of the ways in which such changes can be measured is by assessing the living conditions of hostel dwellers against ongoing government efforts, such as the Community Residential Unit (CRU) program, to render hostels more viable and sustainable human settlements.

The end of Apartheid heralded the need to build a more inclusive society, which has resulted in a human settlement policy shift in South Africa. In 2004, the government introduced the Human Settlement Plan, 'Breaking New Ground', that provides a sustainable human settlement framework in line with the constitutional imperative mandating all government spheres to ensure that all citizens access essential services within the context of a non-racial and integrated society. The Department of Human Settlements (DHS, 2004: 7) refers to sustainable human settlement as 'well-managed entities in which economic growth and social development are in balance with the carrying capacity of the natural systems on which they depend for their existence and result in sustainable development, wealth creation, poverty alleviation and equity.' In this context, the DHS introduced the CRU programme to facilitate the delivery of 'secure, stable rental tenure for lower-income persons and households' in 2006 (Social Housing Foundation, 2010: 5).

The CRU programme implementation is tri-dimensional, comprising renovating hostels (e.g. fixing broken windows, toilets, etc.), converting them into family units, and providing essential municipal services including electricity, water, waste removal, etc., to residents (Ubisi, 2013). The programme's overall objective is to ensure more responsive and effective delivery of social housing that is inclusive of all income groups. This is in line with the 'spatial and affordability requirements' to cater to low-income earners (earning between R800 and R3500) unable to enter the formal private rental and social housing market (eThekwini Municipality, 2017; Thani & Ubisi, 2017; Turok, 2013).

The CRU programme further aligns with the sustainable human development framework as outlined in South Africa's 2004 Human Settlement Plan, titled 'Breaking New Ground'[1] and corresponds to the constitutional dictate that all government spheres are responsible for ensuring that all citizens access basic services within the context of a non-racial and integrated society (Department of Human Settlements, 2004). As Turok (2013) opines, the CRU program synchronises with the concept of integrated human settlements that rests upon three main pillars: 1) economic development, work, and income; 2) homes, services, and liveable places; 3) affordable, reliable, and safe public transport.

For the eThekwini Municipality, the CRU programme synchronizes with the 'housing objectives of spatial restructuring and economic generation' (eThekwini Municipality, 2017: 505), hence the delivery of over 2754 CRUs as reported in the eThekwini Municipality's Integrated Development Planning (IDP) 2020/21 review (eThekwini Municipality, 2021).

This chapter evaluates the living conditions of hostel residents in the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality. The assessment is based on a survey consisting of demographic data aimed at profiling the participant hostel residents. It also evaluates their satisfaction with and perceptions of service delivery, and material living conditions in their hostels. The rationale is that attaining conducive living conditions is predicated on two key factors. The first is access to employment, income, and housing to measure well-being based on material conditions, as prescribed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2011). The second factor is adequate access to public services, such as waste removal, sanitation, water and electricity, safety, etc., as recommended by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA, 2023).

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1   The Department of Human Settlements (2004: 7) refers to sustainable human development as 'well-managed entities in which economic growth and social development are in balance with the carrying capacity of the natural systems on which they depend for their existence and result in sustainable development, wealth creation, poverty alleviation and equity.'

Literature Review

Despite the social significance of hostels in South Africa, there is a dearth of literature evaluating the living conditions of hostel residents in the context of the CRU programme. Unlike previous studies, this chapter surveys the living conditions of residents in multiple public hostels in the eThekwini Municipality. The existing studies have approached the question through single hostel case studies, including the Sethokga Hostel conversion pilot project (Pienaar & Cloete, 2005), Mamelodi Hostel (Mpehle, 2012), and Kagiso Hostel (Thani & Ubisi, 2017; Thani et al., 2018) in Gauteng, and KwaMashu Hostel (Xulu, 2014) in KwaZulu-Natal.

These studies show that while the Hostels Redevelopment Programme (HRP)[2] as well as its successor, the CRU programme, constituted the 'right step in restoring human dignity and social fibre' of hostel residents, several obstacles have hampered the timeous realisation of that dream (Mpehle, 2012: 214). This, for example, is evidenced by the outcome of the initiative to convert Mamelodi Hostel into family units where, based on residents' perceptions, Mpehle found that the provision of family units was hampered by several challenges. These include corruption in the allocation of units, inflation, and non-payment of rent by residents (which escalated the cost of upgrading the hostel), and the lack of maintenance of the units that have already been built, as well as the displacement of residents due to the demolition of some of the old units, amongst other challenges. This evidence shows that the living conditions of Mamelodi hostel dwellers remained precarious despite efforts to afford them better living conditions.

The lived experiences of residents in other hostels under the CRU programme have been more or less the same. In Sethokga Hostel, for example, Pienaar & Cloete (2005: 61) found that the hostel conversion pilot project failed because of rigid bureaucracy and the lack of flexibility to meet the expressed needs of residents. In a relatively recent evaluation of the Kagiso Hostel Redevelopment Programme, Thani & Ubisi (2017) found that family units remained unoccupied five years after their conversion as most residents were unemployed and unable to pay the monthly rent. This forced them to continue living in their old hostels despite the unhealthy and unsanitary living conditions.

Likewise, Xulu's (2014) evaluation of the conversion of KwaMashu Hostel units between 2009 and 2011, found that the CRU programme did not result in improved living conditions, and instead resulted in manifestations of anger, frustration, and discontent among the dwellers living in overcrowded spaces and grappling with rising crime rates, high unemployment, electricity blackouts, non-functional ablution facilities, and poor service delivery (Xulu, 2014). The residents who participated in Xulu's study went as far as suggesting that the living conditions were better 'during the Apartheid era than at present' (ibid: 142).

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2   The CRU largely drew from the Hostels Redevelopment Programme (HRP) which was promulgated in 1991 by the National Party in an attempt to redevelop public hostels and encourage sustainable and humane living conditions by converting hostel units/rooms from single-sex dormitories into family units and integrating hostels into neighbouring communities (Thani & Ubisi, 2017; Xulu, 2014; Mothotoana, 2011).

Therefore, empirical evidence from selected hostels shows that the CRU programme has not resulted in improved living conditions for residents. This chapter adds to this knowledge by evaluating a larger, representative sample of public hostels within a municipality (eThekwini). Rather than evaluating the implementation process of the programme, the chapter focuses on the outcome with a specific focus on employment, income, accommodation, as well as public service delivery as indicators of material living conditions.

Theoretical Framework

To examine the living conditions in hostels, this chapter employs a two-pronged approach. On the one hand, the chapter employs the OECD's three main indicators of well-being based on material living conditions, namely employment, income, and housing (OECD, 2011). On the other, the delivery of public/municipal services is evaluated to establish living conditions in hostels.

Material Living Conditions

This chapter assumes that hostels cannot become sustainable and integrated human settlements as envisaged by the 2006 CRU programme and the 2004 Human Settlement Plan ('Breaking New Ground') unless their redevelopment results in better material living conditions. Therefore, the chapter employs the OECD's model for assessing material living conditions, encompassing three indicators: employment, income, and housing (OECD, 2011).

Employment is an objective indicator of material living conditions because it determines income earning and command over resources for individuals to earn an income, create wealth, and achieve better health, pride, self-actualisation, self-esteem, and social stability. Research shows that unemployment unwittingly results in undesired social outcomes, as it 'triggers participation in insurgencies, prompts people to join violent gangs, drives people to extremism, and it is the primary reason behind domestic violence' (Cramer, 2015: 1). Hostels are generally associated with both unemployment and violence, among other challenges.

Income from employment or other sources is a key indicator of material living conditions, central to human well-being and quality of life. This is because income determines the consumption potential of individuals to meet their basic needs, such as dwelling and food, healthcare, education, hygiene, sanitation, and other important life satisfaction outcomes (Wolbring, et al., 2013). The lack of sufficient income prevents access to vital basic needs and hampers the individual and household's ability to overcome poverty and achieve decent life conditions. While the CRU programme envisages providing accommodation to low-income hostel residents, if the programme does not coincide with adequate income for residents, they may still be unable to afford the assumed low cost of housing as they struggle to meet competing needs. Therefore, although improving income for residents is not a direct focus of the CRU programme, the success of the programme and the living conditions of hostel residents depend on their ability to afford the cost of

housing (improved hostel units) and meet other basic needs.

Housing is one of the most critical human basic needs; hence, it is a vital indicator for assessing human material living conditions. It comprises shelter and 'amenities to make the shelter functional, convenient, aesthetically pleasing, safe and hygienic' (Igwe et al., 2017: 3092). Inadequate, unhygienic, and unsanitary housing can compromise people's safety, security, health, and privacy, thus resulting in poor living conditions (Igwe et al., 2017: 3092). Some schools of thought have argued that housing is even more critical than food, considering that food is more affordable than housing, as expressed in the saying 'Give us a house, and we will take care of food' (Igwe et al., 2017: 3092). According to the OECD (2011), adequate housing is 'at the top of the hierarchy of human material needs' as it is paramount to attaining basic needs and positive health and social outcomes. Poor people are at higher risk of facing the harsh consequences of living in inadequate housing because their low-income status does not enable them to afford decent housing. This concern underpins South Africa's adoption of the CRU programme to improve the housing standard of low-income hostel residents.

The three indicators of material living conditions (employment, income, and housing) have been prescribed to measure well-being and quality of life (Nováková & Šoltés, 2016; OECD, 2011). While material conditions are essential in assessing quality of life, the latter is a broader concept beyond material conditions (Stiglitz et al., cited by Nováková & Šoltés, 2016). Hence, although this chapter does not provide a comprehensive assessment of the quality of life in hostels, it evaluates the living conditions of residents based on their material conditions as measured by their employment status, income, and housing.

Public Service Delivery

The delivery of public services also constitutes a critical indicator for assessing the living conditions of hostel residents because access to such services can affect human material living conditions. Public service delivery refers to 'the distribution of basic services such as safe water supply, electricity, health services, roads, street lighting, traffic controls, refuse collection, sewage disposal, and maintenance, as well as municipal parks and recreation' (DBSA, 2023). The effective delivery of such services is required to maintain healthy living conditions and improve the quality of life for residents. However, poor delivery of public services results in overall poor living conditions (DBSA, 2023). For example, poor delivery of water and electricity can render the entire housing environment unhygienic, unsanitary, unsafe, and therefore unliveable.

Methodology

This chapter is based on empirical research: a hostel barometer study, carried out on residents across nine hostels located within the eThekwini Municipality. The study was commissioned by the eThekwini Municipality and implemented by the Maurice Webb Race Relations Unit at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

A three-pronged approach consisting of a survey, interviews, and inspection of hostel facilities was used for data collection. Purposive, random, and proportional sampling techniques were adopted for the selection of participants. Only adult hostel residents (1190 participants) were randomly selected to participate in the survey, with the sample comprising a proportion of the resident population based on the number of beds in each hostel (see Table 7.1) as established by the eThekwini Municipality at the time of data collection.

Hostel	Population Based on the Number of Beds	Proposed Sample	Interviewed Sample
Thokoza	1014	80	89
Dalton	1569	100	100
Klaarwater	624	80	80
KwaDabeka	7484	160	165
KwaMashu	19137	190	196
Jacobs	916	80	80
SJ Smith	4730	120	127
Glebelands	11763	160	160
Umlazi	8022	160	160
KwaMakhutha	254	60	61
Total	**55513**	**1190**	**1218**

Table 7.1 Sampling frame

Table 7.1 shows that the proposed sample size (1190) was exceeded as additional participants were included in half of the participating hostels. KwaMashu and KwaMakhutha were the largest and smallest hostels, respectively. The sample for each hostel was proportional to its size.

Access to hostels was negotiated by an official from the eThekwini Municipality who assisted by connecting fieldworkers from the Maurice Webb Rece Relations Unit to the respective hostel leaders and councillors. This allowed fieldworkers to overcome the resistance they expected to encounter from hostel residents. While each interview lasted about 30 minutes, the data collection process lasted over two months, for two reasons. On the one hand, fieldworkers had to visit each hostel more than once depending on the population size. On the other, after completing work at one hostel, fieldworkers had to wait until access to the next hostel had been negotiated and secured. Access to working residents was also challenging because they were not available during the day and sometimes those who were available needed time to rest as they had to work the night shift. This prompted fieldworkers to include weekends in their data collection schedules.

The process of data collection adhered to the standard ethical research protocols, including voluntary and free participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent as prescribed by the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Data analysis was performed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) which allowed for the generation of descriptive statistics from the code data, captured survey, and inspection data. In addition, the data obtained through interviews with key informants were analysed thematically to capture the perceptions of key informants about the determinants of the living conditions in hostels.

Results

To examine the living conditions of hostel residents, the data analysis first consisted of generating demographics to profile and categorise respondents based on age, sex, and education. Secondly, data was generated to assess material living conditions based on employment, income, and housing (nature of accommodation). The data further provided participants' subjective views and preferences of housing aspects (e.g., ablution facilities and maintenance of hostel units). Thirdly, as indicators of living conditions, the data analysis focused on evaluating hostel dwellers' satisfaction with public service delivery, including water, electricity, waste collection, safety, and respondents' likelihood of residing with their families in hostels.

Demographics

Table 7.2 profiles the hostel resident respondents by age, sex, and education.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Age											
25 years and below	12	37	8	15	8	1	14	16	5	13	7
26–35 years	34	12	34	26	28	34	52	36	39	46	32
36–45 years	28	31	29	33	25	38	22	23	31	24	28
46–55 years	15	13	22	14	22	18	8	11	18	6	16
56–65 years	8	4	3	9	15	6	4	9	6	6	13
Above 65 years	3	3	4	3	2	3	0	5	1	5	4
Sex											
Male	70	85	63	73	48	100	78	0	99	81	59
Female	30	15	37	27	52	0	22	100	1	19	41

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Highest Qualification											
No formal education	6	8	5	4	3	10	6	6	8	6	8
Some primary education	11	11	13	11	15	15	6	9	13	13	8
Completed primary school	4	4	2	1	3	13	4	1	3	0	8
Some secondary education	40	43	45	38	41	38	36	26	41	48	44
Completed matric	30	29	32	31	27	20	35	44	33	29	23
Post-matric certificate	5	5	3	6	6	4	9	8	2	0	2
Diploma	3	0	0	6	4	0	4	5	0	4	5
Degree	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	2

Table 7.2 Age, sex, and level of education of residents

The data presented in Table 7.2 above shows that three in ten respondents were female, suggesting that although men still dominate hostels, they are no longer single, male-only human settlements. This is particularly important in the context of the CRU initiative of rendering hostels family-friendly residential units. Nearly all respondents (97%) fell within the working age bracket, including over four in ten (44%) aged between 15 and 35. This is consistent with research showing that hostels are spaces resided by workers, including those searching for employment (Xulu-Gama, 2017). The education levels, where only two in five (39%) had a matric or post-matric qualification, suggest that most respondents would struggle to secure decent employment in the modern economy where education has become an important factor.

Material Living Conditions

The material living conditions of respondents were assessed based on employment and income statuses (see Table 7.3 below) and the nature of accommodation (see Tables 7.3–7.7 below).

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Occupation											
Unemployed	49	55	59	45	52	44	52	40	39	45	50
Student	2	1	5	2	3	1	2	3	-	-	-
Retail industry	6	4	2	4	2	10	3	9	34	-	2
Security Industry	6	10	5	10	1	13	7	2	3	3	3
Healthcare industry	1	1	-	1	1	1	4	3	-	-	2
Hospitality industry	2	3	1	1	1	2	1	5	-	-	2
Self-employed	8	8	6	8	11	4	5	11	-	6	17
Transport industry	6	3	4	11	7	9	5	-	8	13	2
Manufacturing industry	2	1	1	1	5	1	-	-	3	4	2
Artisan (plumber, electrician, carpenter)	3	1	3	4	3	2	6	-	-	3	12
Pensioner	2	1	1	2	2	2	-	6	-	-	7
General worker	14	14	14	9	12	12	14	20	11	26	5
Income											
No income	51	56	64	47	56	45	54	44	39	45	48
Refused to disclose	16	13	13	23	18	16	12	20	15	18	18
R1000 and below	3	4	2	3	5	2	6	5	1	4	7
R1001–R3000	12	13	8	10	13	12	9	25	9	11	19
R3001–R5000	11	6	4	9	6	17	12	7	19	16	6
R5001–R7000	3	-	3	5	2	3	3	-	12	7	2
R7001–R9000	2	2	3	3	-	3	4	-	4	1	-
R9001 and above	1	1	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-

Table 7.3 Employment and income

Table 7.3 presents the employment and income statuses of respondents. It shows high unemployment and low income among hostel residents. Nearly half (49%) of respondents reported being unemployed and earning no income. Nearly three in ten (28%) were employed in industries (security, transport, retail, healthcare, hospitality, and manufacturing). More than a tenth (14%) worked as general workers, and less than a tenth (8%) were self-employed. Small minorities reported their occupations as artisans (3%) or students (2%).

The data shows that hostels accommodate workers from both the formal and informal sectors of the economy, which is consistent with South Africa's dual economy. However, the high level of unemployment remains a constraining factor in the context of material living conditions. The data is consistent with previous research (see Xulu, 2014; Xulu-Gama, 2017), which associates the living conditions in hostels with high unemployment and poverty. Unemployment aggravates poverty because it constrains the income-earning capacity of individuals and households.

As further evidenced in the above table, respondents generally reported low incomes, with more than half (51%) of the sample reporting earning no income because they were either unemployed or students. While nearly two in ten (16%) refused to disclose their incomes, more than one in ten (15%) reported earning R3000 or less per month and nearly a similar proportion (14%) earned between R3001 and R7000, while only a small minority (3%) earned over R7000 per month.

The data points to high levels of poverty among hostel residents, where a majority (54%) fall under the official upper-bound poverty line of R1335 per month (Statistics South Africa, 2021) as they either earn nothing (51%) or less than R1000 per month (3%). The data further entails that a significant percentage (66%) of hostel residents earned no income or below the national minimum wage, which is currently set at R27,58[3] per hour. This translates to R5516 per month for a worker who works ten hours a day, 20 days a month. Although the minority who reported earning nearly R7000 bridge the minimum wage threshold, this income does not afford them a decent standard of living as defined by the Labour Research Service (LRS) (see Nyagah, 2024). To live a decent life, in 2021, the LRS estimated that an income of at least R7911 is required.

The problem with low income is that it affects the purchasing power of individuals and households. Consequently, they struggle to meet basic needs. For example, this is evidenced by the nature of accommodation, where most respondents reported living in the least preferred hostel units, as demonstrated in Tables 7.4 and 7.5 below.

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3   This minimum wage rate was set in February 2024, and it is subject to annual increases.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Single room (single occupant)	32	20	30	48	36	53	12	9	63	20	32
Double room	18	5	13	28	10	17	29	15	30	34	18
Multiple beds (3–6 beds)	29	40	30	8	1	21	54	76	0	30	29
Family unit	12	11	26	2	47	8	0	0	0	2	12
Other (corridor, hall, transit camp, shack)	9	24	1	14	6	1	5	0	7	14	9

Table 7.4 Nature of accommodation

Table 7.4 profiles the nature of hostel accommodation based on respondents' reports. It shows that those living in family units were in the minority (12%) to the extent that in some hostels (e.g. Dalton, Thokoza, and Klaarwater hostels), no respondents reported living in a family unit, while less than a third (32%) lived in single rooms and nearly half (46%) in double room or multiple bed units. The exception is in KwaDabeka hostel, where nearly half (49%) of respondents lived in family units. Informality remains a significant aspect of accommodation in hostels as nearly a tenth (9%) of respondents lived in either a corridor, hall, transit camp, or shack, with the percentage more than doubling in some hostels, such as KwaMashu and Jacobs (24%).

The data in this table is best understood in the context of high unemployment and low income reported in the previous table. Low income entails that residents may not be able to afford decent housing. The fact that most residents resided in non-family units, shared spaces with multiple beds, or squat in hostel corridors, shacks, etc., shows that the vision driving the CRU programme remains unrealised. Such housing conditions are inimical to the value of privacy and peaceful, healthy living, among other imperatives of decent living conditions, as evidenced in Table 7.5 below, depicting the reasons why residents prefer certain types of accommodation.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
Preferred Accommodation Type	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Family unit	51	40	63	38	64	52	30	76	73	28	59
Single room	41	54	31	54	19	44	56	21	26	71	31
Double room	3	1	1	3	4	2	12	1	1	1	3
RDP House	4	2	4	4	13	2	2	-	-	-	7
Multiple beds	1	4	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Reasons											
I need to have privacy (cultural practices, spiritual beliefs, personal freedom)	37	40	31	51	30	33	43	11	31	69	34
To accommodate visitors/ family members	35	44	39	29	31	23	31	70	34	15	38
It is important for my safety and the safety of my belongings	6	4	6	4	1	18	11	2	11	-	2
The rent is cheaper if you stay in a single unit	1	3	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1	-
To avoid conflicts that arise when you are sharing with strangers	6	-	7	5	7	17	6	-	9	4	3
To avoid communicable diseases	1	2	1	1	1	47	-	-	3	-	-
I can apply family rules if I stay with my family	5	5	4	8	6	1	-	2	1	6	15
I enjoy sharing with other people	3	4	1	2	10	-	1	8	1	-	3
I do not like to stay here	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	8	1	-	-

Table 7.5 Preferred accommodation type and reasons

Table 7.5 illustrates the preferred form of accommodation by hostel residents, with family units (51%) and single rooms (41%) being the most preferred. The preference for family units was even higher, reaching between 59 and 75%, in five of the ten hostels, including Thokoza (76%), and Klaarwater (73%). Similarly, single units were the accommodation of choice for the majority of residents in five of the ten hostels, including Jacobs (71%) and Dalton (56%). The need for privacy (personal freedom) and accommodation for family members and visitors were the main reasons for most respondents' (72%) preference for family units or single-room accommodation. Other reasons included safety and prevention of conflict with roommates (6% each). Disease prevention was also a major concern, particularly in SJ Smith (47%). However, it is not clear why residents here were more concerned about the risk of communicable disease than residents in other hostels.

Therefore, the data in Tables 7.4 and 7.5 shows that there is a disjuncture between the type of accommodation a majority of residents preferred, and the type that they lived in. While the majority (92%) preferred family hostel units or single beds, less than half (44%) reported residing in those forms of accommodation. However, housing conditions are not limited to accommodation type; the availability of vital facilities, such as ablution, and the maintenance of the entire housing physical structure are critical ingredients of living conditions. Table 7.6 presents respondents' satisfaction with ablution facilities in hostels.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Satisfied	36	12	23	58	38	18	36	49	38	85	34
Dissatisfied	64	87	77	42	62	82	64	51	63	15	66
Reasons											
Happy with the condition of these facilities (we look after them ourselves and fix them when broken)	34	13	21	58	37	16	34	49	33	78	33
Toilets are not enough (block residents share fewer toilets)	11	39	9	3	7	8	7	0	4	4	8

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Facilities are not in proper working condition (broken toilet seats, handles, showerheads, tiles, taps, doors)	49	40	66	37	53	69	55	47	54	10	57
The bathroom walls are falling apart	3	7	3	2	1	4	2	-	3	-	-
They are not easily accessible (far from the residential block, there is a curfew, easy target for mugging)	1	1	-	1	1	2	-	-	3	1	-

Table 7.6 Satisfaction with ablution facilities

Table 7.6 shows high dissatisfaction with hostel ablution facilities as most respondents (64%) were not satisfied. They provided different reasons for their dissatisfaction, including insufficient ablution facilities, broken toilet seats, shower heads, taps, and doors, and bathroom walls that are falling apart. Insufficient and poorly maintained ablution facilities suggest that the living conditions are unhygienic, unsuitable for privacy, and unsafe in hostels. Respondents also reported that residents generally shared toilets, resulting in privacy and safety concerns, mainly as they had to navigate the distance between residential blocks and ablution facilities. This often rendered the residents vulnerable to muggings and other crimes, especially at night. Respondents who reported satisfaction with their ablution facilities indicated they took responsibility for maintaining them. Table 7.7 below illustrates the maintenance issues identified by hostel residents.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
What maintenance issues are you experiencing in the hostel?											
No maintenance is done here	20	49	11	26	22	9	10	1	11	9	15
Items within our unit such as toilets, doors, showers, sewage pipes, and taps are fixed promptly when reported	23	11	18	43	25	13	23	18	26	46	10
We have reported cases of broken windows, leaking roofs, and dripping taps in our unit and we decided to boycott the rent	31	16	51	1	27	69	27	71	34	14	7
We have reported broken sewage and water pipes which are still not fixed	16	6	8	35	23	4	17	1	6	29	28
Items outside the residential areas are fixed promptly (sewage and water pipes)	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	3	2
Units and buildings are not maintained	12	2	6	13	18	2	29	8	23	3	49
Grass-cutting is seldom done	4	15	4	1	2	1	-	2	1	1	5
There are no cleaners responsible for cleaning	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Appliances in the kitchen are not in good working condition	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	1	-	3	-
Cleaning is not thoroughly done (cleaners leave the waste on the steps of the blocks)	1	1	1	-	6	-	4	-	-	-	-
Shack dwellers don't get maintenance	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The distribution board and plugs for electricity are faulty and are not maintained	2	1	1	3	8	-	1	-	1	1	2

Table 7.7 Hostel maintenance[4]

Table 7.7 shows general dissatisfaction with maintenance in the hostels. Respondents complained about the lack of maintenance in several dimensions, including broken toilets and showers, broken windows, leaking roofs, and dripping taps in the hostel, as well as distribution boards and electricity plug points that were uncovered and faulty which made their living conditions hazardous. These maintenance needs were not fixed even when reported. Respondents were also unhappy with the cleaning and grass-cutting services which were seldom provided.

The data suggests that the housing standard in hostels is poor and hazardous, aggravating residents' already poor living conditions. While some residents resort to self-help with maintenance, they may not have the professional competence to provide adequate and safe maintenance. Others may not be able to afford the requisite materials and tools to conduct such maintenance. Without regular maintenance, sustainable and decent housing conditions, as envisaged by the CRU programme, cannot be achieved in hostels. Because the surveyed hostels fall within the public domain, it is incumbent upon the municipality to ensure adequate maintenance and delivery of other critical public services, as shown in Table 7.8 below.

Public Service Delivery

The delivery of municipal services such as waste removal, water, electricity, and safety and security is a key determinant of hostel living conditions. This is particularly vital because hostel residents are generally low-income persons and households with limited income and, therefore, generally unable to use private services. As elucidated in Tables 7.8–7.11, residents were generally satisfied with waste removal, cleaning, and electricity and water supply services. However, they were generally dissatisfied with safety and security services as they often experienced crime (see Tables 7.12–7.13).

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4   The responses in this table and others below were generated through multiple-response questions, hence they do not necessarily add up to 100%.

How satisfied are you with the waste removal? (Multiple responses)	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Satisfied as waste is collected consistently	61	46	42	67	69	44	64	87	59	87	64
Waste is never collected when cleaners go on strike	5	4	12	3	5	4	3	8	-	5	7
Waste collectors always leave dirt behind when collecting	11	14	13	11	18	8	11	1	9	6	7
Residents have to walk a long distance to the main road where we take the waste	2	2	7	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Sometimes cleaners do not come on specified dates and the waste remains on the road for a long time	9	16	6	13	7	14	5	-	11	3	12
Too many people sharing one bin and it gets full quickly	2	3	1	1	2	1	10	-	3	3	-
Uncollected waste makes the area a health hazard, particularly for children	6	-	10	1	12	18	2	-	5	3	2
Cleaners do their work, but they are understaffed compared to the population they are servicing	2	4	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	-	2
Waste collectors don't cover all the areas within the hostel when collecting waste	5	9	4	1	21	11	31	-	13	-	-
I would like to receive the refuse-bags	2	4	1	1	2	2	-	-	4	1	5

Table 7.8 Waste removed from hostels

Table 7.8 shows substantial satisfaction with waste collection services, with nearly two thirds (61%) of respondents saying they were satisfied as the services were consistent in the hostels. The level of satisfaction was much higher in Thokoza and Jacobs hostels (87% each). However, there were several concerns, including waste collectors leaving some of the waste behind and cleaners not coming on specific dates or going on strike. This was perceived as a health hazard, particularly to the children who stayed in the hostels.

Satisfaction with waste removal and cleaning services, as further shown in Table 7.9 below, points to a degree of hygienic living conditions despite some irregularities, which can potentially cause health problems and worsen the living conditions of hostel residents.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Type of cleaners (Multiple Responses)											
We do not have cleaners	26	15	66	25	22	35	4	1	1	3	25
Cleaners responsible for cleaning roads	19	32	19	23	16	12	2	-	8	5	49
Both residential block and road cleaners	49	43	9	45	36	31	15	15	85	90	26
I have never seen any cleaners/ not sure if we do have cleaners	6	20	7	9	3	3	7	-	-	-	3
Efficiency of cleaning services (Multiple responses)											
N/A	32	35	73	34	25	38	11	1	1	3	28
Residents are responsible for cleaning their blocks and facilities	9	12	4	9	7	15	0	7	4	5	46
Corridors and block steps are not cleaned	8	3	2	16	15	13	7	1	3	9	5
The hostel cleaning is always done well	37	22	4	43	25	19	56	64	80	83	16

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The cleaning is not done outside the blocks and in some sections of the hostel	12	25	11	4	7	11	24	16	5	1	1
There aren't enough cleaners, and they are not provided with enough resources	5	15	1	9	3	6	2	1	4	-	-

Table 7.9 Efficiency of cleaning services

Table 7.9 presents the reported categories of staff tasked with cleaning services in hostels and residents' perception of the efficiency of the services. Over two thirds (68%) of respondents reported that there were cleaners responsible for cleaning roads and residential blocks. The rest (32%) reported that they did not have or were not sure if they had cleaners for their hostel blocks.

In terms of the efficiency of cleaning services, more than a third (37%) of participants indicated that cleaning services were always done appropriately, while nearly a third (32%) could not evaluate a service they did not have or had never seen. Satisfaction with the efficiency of cleaning services was particularly high in the case of Jacobs (83%), Klaarwater (80%), Thokoza (64%), and Dalton (56%) hostels, where most of the respondents expressed this view. Residents in these hostels were more likely to report that there were cleaners, entailing that the availability of cleaners seems to correlate with the level of satisfaction with cleaning services.

However, nearly a quarter (24%) of respondents were unhappy that cleaning services were not adequate for various reasons. Some (20%) reported that cleaning was not done inside or outside the hostel blocks, including some sections such as corridors and block steps. Others (5%) indicated that there was a shortage of cleaning resources and staff. In this context, nearly a tenth (9%) of respondents indicated that residents were responsible for cleaning their blocks and facilities.

In addition to waste removal and cleaning, providing water and electricity as public services is a vital determinant of living conditions. Tables 7.10–7.11 indicate general electricity and water access satisfaction among hostels. While water is

generally accessible, most respondents indicated it was inaccessible inside their hostel units as access was through communal channels.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
From the kitchen inside the unit	38	11	46	13	98	12	52	2	10	86	59
From a communal washing/bathroom area	11	18	11	3	1	20	8	1	39	4	7
From the sink outside the unit	20	24	9	70	1	20	4	1	23	5	3
From a neighbouring residential block	4	14	6	-	-	2	2	-	3	1	30
From a communal kitchen outside the unit	23	17	24	9	-	47	25	91	19	3	-
From a communal standpipe	4	9	3	6	-	1	1	5	8	1	7
What would you like to see about the supply of water where you live?											
I would like to have hot water	46	44	42	44	62	32	55	69	36	30	41
There should be a tap inside the unit	13	21	11	19	2	7	18	5	18	1	30
I'm happy with the way I access water	29	5	38	29	38	36	28	21	34	60	18
Shack dwellers should have their standpipe/tap	3	13	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
All blocks must have internal taps instead of accessing water from other blocks	6	10	3	1	-	22	1	6	10	-	3
Residents should be notified if there are interruptions in the water supply	4	4	5	6	4	2	3	1	3	4	2
Taps for drinking water should be separated from toilets and showers	1	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	3

Table 7.10 Access to water in hostels

Table 7.10 shows general satisfaction with access to water as almost all respondents reported accessing water in their hostels and almost two in five (38%) had the privilege to access water inside their units, whilst the rest used communal washing or bathroom areas or kitchens, outside sinks, neighbouring residential blocks, or communal standpipes. However, respondents wished to see certain improvements, including access to running hot water in the hostels, more units having their taps inside, and shack dwellers having their own taps or standpipes, especially in KwaMashu, as well as taps for drinking water being separated from ablution facilities.

Access to electricity was relatively better across hostels, although some respondents also raised concerns about illegal connections, as illustrated in Table 7.11 below. Illegal electrical connections result in overload and intermittent electricity supply and pose a serious hazard to life.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Satisfied	70	45	61	73	85	78	79	88	73	91	44
Dissatisfied	30	55	39	27	15	22	21	12	28	9	56
Reasons											
Satisfied with the electricity supply	70	46	59	73	85	78	73	87	70	91	44
The plugs and switches are faulty	9	14	9	8	4	14	8	5	9	4	5
It is overloaded and the main switch trips because of illegal connections	12	29	18	9	4	2	3	7	15	3	7
We get too many blackouts without being notified	3	3	4	5	1	2	8	-	3	3	-
There is no electricity	2	2	1	3	-	-	1	1	1	-	18
The wiring is not properly done which makes it dangerous to the users/ residents	4	8	6	2	2	3	1	-	-	-	12

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The Distribution Board (DB) is not covered, and the wires are exposed	1	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	5
Electricity is too expensive	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	10

Table 7.11 Satisfaction with access to electricity

Table 7.11 depicts respondents' satisfaction with access to electricity in their hostels with more than two in three (70%) being satisfied and less than one in three (30%) being dissatisfied.

The proportion of satisfied respondents was higher than the average (70%) for most (7/10) hostels (that showed between 73% and 91% satisfaction). While less than a third (30%) of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with access to electricity across the board, the level of dissatisfaction was higher in KwaMashu (55%) and KwaMakhutha (56%) hostels, where over half of the respondents were unhappy.

Respondents provide different reasons for their dissatisfaction with the supply of electricity, with the main problem being illegal connections which lead to electrical overload and disruption in the power supply; faulty switches and plugs; and unsafe electrical installation as well as blackouts.

These issues with access to electricity raise safety concerns in hostels. However, other factors, such as crime, can affect safe living conditions in hostels. Tables 7.12 and 7.13 illustrate respondents' perceptions of safety and experiences of crime, respectively. The data points to unsafe living conditions underpinned by the lack of adequate security systems and experiences of crime in different forms.

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
It is safe	46	8	34	86	52	55	66	18	70	43	34
It is not safe	53	92	61	14	44	45	34	81	30	53	59
Refused to comment	2	-	5	1	4	-	-	1	-	5	7
Reasons											
It is not safe at night and threats from tavern visitors	8	21	12	5	1	9	7	-	3	5	7
Police visibility and community policing forums have improved safety conditions in the hostel	13	3	16	4	32	7	28	11	6	14	4
Accessibility to the police station which is either closer to the hostel or inside the hostel	2	1	10	3	-	-	-	-	4	5	-
Loss of property such as cars, cell phones, and clothes is rare in this hostel	8	24	6	1	2	2	2	5	14	15	5
Residents have mutual respect, are united against crime and report unlawful acts	29	11	5	77	20	45	33	7	45	19	33
An effective administrative system ensures that visitors are reported to the leader	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
Lack of effective access control systems (unfenced hostel and absence of electronic access devices)	19	21	6	4	16	21	10	71	25	18	15
Murderers/criminals enjoy the support and protection of the hostel leaders	5	12	18	1	1	-	1	-	-	4	-
Exposure to acts of violence such as robbery, random stabbings, rapes, gunfire, and mugging at gunpoint	9	3	16	4	13	9	14	-	3	10	21

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
Criminal activities committed by amaphara who either sell or consume different drugs in the hostel	4	3	2	1	9	5	1	5	1	1	8

Table 7.12   Perceptions of safety in hostels

Table 7.12 illustrates respondents' perceptions of safety, with a majority (53%) perceiving their hostels as unsafe. This was particularly the case in KwaMashu and Thokoza hostels where close to nine in ten (92% in KwaMashu and 88% in Thokoza) respondents regarded their hostels as unsafe. Respondents raised several safety issues, with the main ones being the lack of effective access control systems due to the unfenced hostel and the absence of electronic access devices; acts of violent crime, including robbery, random stabbings, rapes, gunfire, and mugging at gunpoint; hostel leaders protecting and supporting criminals; and drug peddlers and users in the hostels. Where hostels were perceived as safe, this was attributed to responsible citizenry where hostel residents had mutual respect and reported unlawful acts, as well as police visibility and community policing forums.

When was the last time you experienced crime?	Total	Kwamashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
Within the last three months	45	14	3	17	19	13	58	16	16	31	45
Over three months ago	10	13	18	25	32	15	6	35	18	18	10
Never	45	72	79	58	48	72	36	48	66	51	45
Reserved comment	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Nature of the crime	468	117	42	34	49	63	28	57	29	26	23

When was the last time you experienced crime?	Total	Kwamashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	196	160	160	165	127	100	89	80	80	61
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Murder	12	3	24	15	14	8	11	-	24	46	4
Theft (cars, clothes, possessions, burglary)	56	53	48	68	59	32	64	100	41	27	61
Robbery/mugging	28	42	26	15	18	51	-	-	35	27	35
Kidnapping	1	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Rape/attempted rape	2	1	2	-	2	5	11	-	-	-	-
A confrontation between police and criminals	1	-	-	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-
Drive-by shooting	1	1	-	3	6	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 7.13 Last time respondents experienced crime in hostels

Table 7.13 depicts respondents' experiences of crime in hostels, with more than two in five (42%) indicating that they have experienced crime, of whom more than half experienced it within the last three months. The proportion of those who have experienced crime was higher in Thokoza (66%), KwaMashu (57%), Klaarwater (56%), and SJ Smith (51%). In contrast, the percentage of residents who reported that they have never experienced crime was higher in Umlazi (78%) as well as Dalton and Glebelands (72% each). There is a need for further research to understand the contributing factors to lower crime in these hostels since hostels are generally regarded as crime hotspots (Xulu-Gama, 2017). The most reported crimes were theft and robbery (84%) followed by murder (12%). All respondents from Thokoza who indicated they had experienced crime cited theft as the crime they had experienced. Other crimes selected, although they are not so prevalent, included kidnapping, rape, and drive-by shooting.

Despite the generally unsafe living conditions, most respondents were optimistic about the likelihood of residing in hostels with their families, as shown in Table 7.14 below. This optimism was driven by living conditions, where hostel housing offered a family-friendly space due to the perceived safety, ease of access to essential social facilities such as schools, hospitals, and recreational amenities, and affordability enough to fit tight residents' budgets. KwaMakhutha

However, a significant percentage of respondents (41%) were pessimistic about the likelihood of residing in a hostel with their families. They cited perceptions of hostels as a hostile environment and the need to retain their rural homes, among other reasons (see Table 7.14).

	Total	KwaMashu	Glebelands	Umlazi T section	KwaDabeka	SJ Smith	Dalton	Thokoza	Klaarwater	Jacobs	KwaMakhutha
	1218	**196**	**160**	**160**	**165**	**127**	**100**	**89**	**80**	**80**	**61**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	59	43	71	46	75	64	45	75	69	43	64
No	41	57	29	54	25	36	55	25	32	58	36
Reasons											
I have sufficient space for my family	21	17	19	16	17	39	10	32	24	18	25
I already stay in a peaceful and safe unit with my family	11	9	21	7	24	3	8	-	-	6	18
Because of the proximity to better facilities (schools, recreational facilities, hospitals)	9	9	10	4	9	9	4	19	16	3	3
I will have more time to spend with them	9	4	8	16	11	6	10	-	16	6	10
There will be increased savings since there will be no separate budgets	7	7	8	3	6	3	8	21	6	6	7
Residents will fight as they will compete with women	2	2	3	2	-	4	3	-	-	3	-
Hostels are not a conducive place to nurture children hence they will be exposed to immoral behavioural habits	29	37	19	40	2	23	37	19	28	43	23
A lack of recreational facilities for children	3	12	5	5	-	-	-	1	-	3	-
I'm committed to retaining my rural home; a hostel is a temporary place while working	5	-	3	8	3	8	11	3	5	4	7

Table 7.14 Likelihood to stay with own families in hostel

In Table 7.14, nearly three in five (59%) respondents believed they would reside in hostels with their families. This was particularly true in the case of Thokoza and KwaDabeka hostels, where three quarters (75%) of the sampled residents supported the idea. More optimistic respondents reported having sufficient, safe, and peaceful space to reside with their families in hostels, or the hostels were located near vital educational, health, and recreational amenities.

However, over two in five (41%) respondents said they would not reside in hostels with their families. The trend was more prominent among residents in KwaMashu and Jacobs hostels, where nearly three in five respondents held this view. They provided different reasons, including the hostels not being socially or morally conducive for children, the lack of access to social amenities, and the need to preserve the main family residence in rural areas. This is in the context where the low-income status of residents is generally incompatible with the cost of keeping two separate residences for the family. Hostels are therefore used as temporary shelters for work purposes.

Discussion
The findings in the chapter show generally poor living conditions, based on the material living conditions of residents and the delivery of public services to hostels in eThekwini Municipality.

The Material Living Conditions
Considering OECD's (2011) indicators of well-being based on material living conditions, two observations emerge from the findings. The first is that residents are faced with high unemployment and low income levels. The second observation is that there is a mismatch between aspirations and experiences about accommodation.

High Unemployment and Low Incomes
The findings show that hostel residents are confronted with high unemployment and low income, coupled with generally low levels of education reported among hostel residents as over three in five (63%) do not possess at least a matric-level qualification. The data on employment and income points to high levels of poverty in hostels, where a majority (54%) fall under the official upper-bound poverty line of R1335 per month (Statistics South Africa, 2021) as they either earn nothing (51%) or less than R1000 per month (3%). The data further entails that a significant percentage (66%) of hostel residents earned no income or below the national minimum wage which is currently set at R27,58[5] per hour. This translates to R5516 per month for a worker who works ten hours a day, 20 days a month. Although the minority who reported earning nearly R7000 bridge the minimum-wage threshold, this income does not afford them a decent standard of living as defined by the Labour Research Service (LRS) (see Nyagah, 2024). To live a decent life, in 2021 the LRS estimated that an income of at least R R7911 is required.

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5   This minimum wage rate was set in February 2024, and it is subject to annual increases.

The findings concur with previous research showing that hostel residents were confronted with unemployment and low income, which affected their living conditions to the extent that they could not afford to pay their rent regularly (Thani & Ubisi, 2017; Xulu, 2014; Mpehle, 2012).

The general employment and income statuses of hostel residents are an indication of the precarity of the material living conditions facing hostel residents in eThekwini. According to the OECD (2001), employment is important for well-being because it determines income earning and command over resources for individuals to achieve self-actualisation and self-esteem, as noted previously. Likewise, income is central to well-being because it provides resources and determines the consumption potential of individuals to meet their basic needs, thus resulting in better health, education, safety, hygiene, sanitation, and other important life satisfaction outcomes (Wolbring, et al., 2013). Therefore, through income, employment leads to social stability, wealth creation, and better health, whereas unemployment negatively affects subjective well-being which may result in psychological maladies.

Poor Housing: Mismatch Between Residents' Housing Aspirations and Experiences

The findings in this study show that the quality of housing remains concerning for hostel residents. More than three in five respondents (64%) expressed dissatisfaction with the ablution facilities in hostels, and the lack of maintenance was also a cause for concern as broken toilet and shower doors, windows, leaking roofs, dripping taps, falling walls, and hazardous electrical installations were indicated amongst other maintenance issues. Mpehle (2012) observed similar trends in Mamelodi within the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality where residents reported the lack of maintenance associated with broken windows, leaking roofs, and generally poorly maintained housing facilities.

Therefore, it can be argued that the quality of housing offered through the hostel system in the context of the CRU programme is critically poor, hence the housing aspirations of hostel residents remain largely unrealised. While a majority (51%) of residents preferred to live in family units (see Table 7.5), only about a tenth (12%) resided in such units (see Table 7.4). This is further evidenced by the demographics where there is a disproportion between the sexes as shown by the dominant presence of working-age males against the number of females and children. This suggests that hostels have not yet operated as family units as envisaged in the CRU programme.

Previous studies by scholars alluded to delays in the delivery of upgraded hostels in Gauteng caused by factors such as rigid bureaucracy, corruption, non-payment of rent by residents, and higher costs of upgrading hostels (Mpehle, 2012; Pienaar & Cloete, 2005). Could this be the case in the implementation of the CRU

programme in eThekwini?[6] Whatever the reasons may be, it is apparent that South Africa's dream of converting hostels into family units remains largely unrealised, particularly in eThekwini.

Therefore, from a housing perspective, the material living conditions remain precarious in eThekwini's public hostels. Adequate housing, according to the OECD (2011), is fundamental in the hierarchy of human material needs as it is paramount to the attainment of basic needs, and necessary for positive health and social outcomes, hence accommodation is often the main element of household expenditure.

Service Delivery

The DBSA (2023) considers the effective delivery of public services, such as water, electricity, health, sanitation, as well as safety services, as a sine qua non to achieving healthy living conditions. The effective delivery of such services is required to maintain healthy living conditions and improve the quality of life for residents. However, poor delivery of public services results in overall poor living conditions (DBSA, 2023). For this reason, this chapter adds the concept of service delivery (cleaning/waste collection, safety/crime prevention, water, and electricity) to the OECD's indicators of well-being based on material conditions (employment, income, and maintenance) in constructing a theoretical framework to determine the acceptability of living conditions of hostel residents.

Limited Cleaning Services

The study findings show that respondents were generally unhappy with cleaning services. Some reported that outside and other sections of their hostel blocks, including steps and corridors, were often uncleaned. Others alluded to the shortage of cleaning resources and staff. In some cases, residents were responsible for cleaning services in their hostels.

Lack of Adequate Crime Prevention Services

The study finds that residents were generally dissatisfied with the delivery of crime prevention services. The perceptions of hostels being unsafe also reflect the precarious living conditions that hostel dwellers are still confronted with. Although a majority of respondents reported that they have not experienced crime in hostels, the proportion of those who reported otherwise is critically high (42%). The association of hostels with ineffective public service delivery is not a new phenomenon.

Relatively Adequate Water, Electricity, and Waste Collection Services

While the findings paint a glum picture of the living conditions in the hostels, some positives did emerge from the data. These include the delivery of water, electricity,

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6   This is a potential subject of future inquiry, as it was not within the ambit of this current study.

and waste collection services. Nearly all respondents reported having access to running water in their hostel units or through communal standpipes. Residents generally expressed satisfaction with the delivery of water despite their expressed need for further improvements, such as access to running hot water, the separation of drinking water from ablution facilities, and access to water for hostel shack dwellers.

Regarding the provision of electricity, respondents were generally satisfied with the fact that they have access to electricity, despite some concerns about faulty switches and plugs, blackouts (load shedding), and illegal connections which often disrupt the supply of electricity.

The delivery of waste collection services was also a point of satisfaction as over three in five respondents reported that waste was consistently collected from their hostels, although some also reported that sometimes some waste is left behind in the process of collection.

These positive developments have not been reported in the previous studies cited in this chapter. The general satisfaction with the delivery of these municipal services entails better living conditions for hostel residents, although they were also concerned about the irregularity of cleaners and inefficiencies in waste collection. A clean environment is sacrosanct in maintaining healthy living conditions.

Conclusion

Considering the three OECD indicators of well-being based on material living conditions, it can be argued that the combination of high unemployment, low income, and poor housing suggests that generally hostel residents are still affected by poor living conditions within the eThekwini Municipality. These findings are consistent with previous studies (e.g. Xulu-Gama, 2017; Mpehle, 2012) conducted mainly in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal showing that, despite attempts by the government to improve the living conditions of urban hostel residents since the advent of democracy, the situation remains precarious. The studies show hostel residents have grappled with poor public service delivery, including electricity and water supply, and crime prevention in South African metropolitan cities. The weak public service delivery regime, in terms of crime prevention, cleaning, and waste collection services, also points to the precariousness of living conditions in hostels, and is inconsistent with the vision of making hostels socially cohesive, family-friendly, and sustainable human settlements.

The strides that have resulted in a majority of residents expressing satisfaction with the supply of electricity and water in hostels within the eThekwini Municipality are a step in the right direction, which should be encouraged and emulated to improve the provision of other critical public services to residents. Most importantly, the findings in this study further highlight the need for more social support aimed at raising the educational levels of hostel residents and providing better employment opportunities, which may eventually result in higher incomes. Furthermore,

regular maintenance of hostel buildings, units, and ablution facilities should be undertaken to ensure better and healthier living conditions for hostel residents within the eThekwini Municipality.

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Chapter 8: Marginalised and Exploited: The Political Sociology of Hostels

Paulus Zulu[1]

Introduction

This chapter explores the political manipulation and exploitation of the marginal situation of hostel residents as a consequence of the political economy of migrant labour. The assertion is that the marginalisation of hostels renders them vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation by indiscreet forces who have either capitalised on social conditions in the hostels to further their economic interests, or used hostels as pawns in their political ambitions. The history of hostels is replete with instances of conflict and violence, which reached its zenith in the violence between hostels and townships in the Reef at the beginning of the 1990s and included violence between and within hostels in the same period. Evidence then pointed to a mysterious 'Third Force' sponsored by Apartheid security forces with the knowledge of the government. While the violence brought about catastrophic outcomes for both the hostels and the surrounding township and shack settlement communities, earlier evidence had demonstrated that where shared interests existed, hostel residents responded positively. For instance, during the early 1980s workers living in hostels had joined forces with fellow workers to form a vibrant trade union movement, or at other times, joined in township struggles such as in bus and other forms of transport boycotts. However, notwithstanding the efforts of the post-Apartheid government to 'normalise' hostels, marginalisation and political exploitation of hostel residents remain a big blot, first in the quality of life of hostel residents, and secondly in the creation of social cohesion within the South African population.

Theoretical Framework

The position of migrant workers living in hostels falls within the perspective of marginality theory, with the migrants perceived to be in marginal situations, described as 'those hierarchical situations in which there is any inconsistency in the rankings in any of the matters falling within the scope of the hierarchy' (Dickie-Clark, 1966: 367). In the South African political economy, migrant workers are not only recruited into menial jobs which are frequently labour-intensive, but because of their location in the social division of labour, they are also less sophisticated relative to the rest of the labour force. Also, relative to urban culture, migrants have a rural-based value system which, by urban township standards, is considered inferior. As Schlemmer and Moller (1982) put it, the location of migrants in menial

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jobs translates into less spending power. Hence, they do not share leisure pursuits with their urban counterparts in relatively better-paying jobs. Therefore, while migrants share most attributes with fellow manual workers, there are areas such as residence and cultural orientation where differential ranking norms operate. These include levels of sophistication expressed in the movement from traditional cultural practices to Westernised behaviour. It is these observations that create a marginal situation among migrants. Political experiences, particularly the administration of hostels, exacerbate feelings and perceptions of marginality.

Lauren Segal (1992) refers to earlier studies on hostel migrants as depicting hostels as carceral institutions of control, where mine bosses kept migrant workers, generally recruited from far away rural villages, in check. She proceeds from this position and notes later studies which included inner city hostels. She refers to migrant workers as men of four worlds: 'the hostels, the black townships, their places of work as well as their rural homes' (Segal, 1992: 194). What is significant in this ascription of belongingness is that besides the contradictory locations and life experiences, hostel residents have not been equal participants in the various memberships assigned to them. I use the word 'assigned' because membership in three of these entities (hostels, township, and work) is circumstantial and not organic. Secondly, positions occupied by hostel residents in these ascribed memberships are contrived differentially and unequally when compared to the natural positions that the same incumbents have in their rural homes. Consequently, hostel residents might easily suffer simultaneously from both marginalisation and status incongruity. The response to this tenuous position is to adapt to each situation as circumstances allow, resulting in situational selectivity, where incumbents can easily balance simultaneous membership in a trade union, an ethnic identity, political affiliation, and participation in community struggles alongside township residents. Notwithstanding these adaptive defence mechanisms of the ego, the hostel resident remains marginalised from immediate mainstream society.

Practically, while the social experiences of hostel residents, such as blackness expressed in discrimination in all aspects, are no different from those of surrounding townships, teleological aspirations differ. Schlemmer and Moller (1982) posit what they call the response patterns of migrants to the migrant labour system, and conclude that a majority of migrants are not acquiescent to the system, and respond by adopting innovative ways out of the system. However, and most importantly, 'the innovative spirit is systematically broken in the course of his working career' (Schlemmer & Moller, 1982: 13). Studies on migration demonstrate that the former constitutes the bulk of migrants. These are migrants who fit into Milton Goldberg's review of the Park and Stonequist exposition of the theory of the marginal man, where 'an individual shaped and moulded by one culture is brought by migration, education, marriage, or other influence into permanent contact with a culture of a different content, or when an individual from birth is initiated into two or more historic traditions, languages, political loyalties, moral codes, or religions' (Goldberg, 1941: 52). In this instance, the individual 'is likely

to find himself on the margin of each culture, but a member of neither' (Goldberg, 1941: 52). Thus, in Goldberg's view, Park speaks of 'a cultural hybrid, a man living and sharing intimately in the cultural life and traditions of two distinct peoples; never quite willing to break, even if he were permitted to do so, with his past and his traditions, and not quite accepted' (Goldberg, 1941: 52). The non-acceptance is mainly because he is 'a man on the margin of two cultures and two societies which are never completely inter-penetrated and fused' (Goldberg, 1941: 52).

Essentially, political factors determined both the shaping of a migrant's personality and the marginalisation of the same migrant by mainstream society. First, by creating conditions that differentiated between urban insiders and migrants. Colonial, and later, Apartheid politics created a rift between township residents and migrants in hostels. Thus, while all black people were subjected to the same working conditions at work, township residents as insiders were subjected to a limited form of influx control regulations and not only did they live with their families, but they could also work wherever they chose in the city; while migrants living in hostels could only work for the employer who had brought them to the city in the first place. Secondly, there were issues such as schooling, rent, and other political ills which affected only township residents but not migrants. Such developments resulted in two political cultures, a division which exacerbated the already existing socially hybrid status of migrants. It is this marginal status of hostel residents that political forces exploited and continue to exploit periodically as suits their political ambitions. Consequently, because of vulnerability from the marginal status, hostels feature either positively or negatively, as the case might be, in almost all political developments, in most instances not from their own volition but rather from manipulation by these forces. This will become clear, particularly in the case studies on politically motivated violence in hostels in the following pages.

Social Organisation of Life in the Hostels

Describing the social organisation of life in hostels around Durban as a contributing factor in the development of a special worldview, Zulu states:

> 'Access to hostels tends to be through personal contacts, or via companies which reserve specific blocks for their employees. This has greatly contributed to the formation of homeboy cliques among residents in hostels mainly because personal contact is inclined to favour homeboys and, secondly, because previous employment policies by certain companies tended to favour regional cliques. Consequently, social life in the hostels tends to be organised around regional or ethnocentric arrangements despite the existence of cross-cutting activities such as work, religion and sporting life. For instance, musical groups often comprise men from the same geographical districts, and soccer clubs may follow the same arrangements. Other life-supporting activities such as burial societies and stokvels have the same tendencies mainly because of the measure of mutual trust inherent in close contact neighbourhood relationships' (Zulu, 1993: 3).

In a description of hostels in the East Rand, Ari Sitas maintained:

> 'Inside the bricked and tawdry walls of the hostels, a complex informal form of association was always in existence, deflecting and responding to urban pressures. These associations or defensive combinations spawned a variety of cultural formations that co-existed alongside each other. My study of the experiences of migrant metal workers revealed that on the East Rand, in the so-called Nguni hostels, most cultural formations (55 per cent of the cases) subsisted on an area or regional basis; people from a specific rural area (e.g. Xolo, or Phongola), interacted actively after work. To a lesser extent, such forms of association had an ethnic basis, e.g. Zulu, Xhosa or Shangaan (25 per cent)' (Sitas, 1996: 237).

Sitas concludes by saying 'These cultural formations, I would like to argue, deflect pressures and regulate behaviour within defined social spaces' (Sitas, 1996: 237).

What transpires clearly from both Sitas' (1996) and Zulu's (1993) works is the extent to which informal rural connections determine present social arrangements in hostels, notwithstanding the current requirements of urban life. It is this unequal coexistence of two cultures that marginalises and simultaneously equips hostel residents to adapt situationally. Sitas expresses this situational dilemma aptly: 'There is very little in the institutional life of hostels and factories that facilitates reciprocity, save through the efforts of ordinary people to generate binding norms and values and systems of socialisation' (Sitas 1996: 237). Alienated from the township, first by the material conditions that, by their very nature, exclude hostel residents and from the hostels themselves by the harsh administrative and regulatory environment, hostel residents experience both marginalisation and powerlessness and seek refuge in pragmatic situational selectivity. In Segal's (1992) words, migrants joined unions to get better pay and to make sure employers respected them.

Historically Recorded Manipulation of Hostel Conditions

Writing on violence in hostels in the gold-mining industry since the beginning of the 20th century through to the 1980s, Moodie (1992) details several incidents of what was commonly known as tribal violence, where migrants, organised along ethnic or regional lines, fought among themselves. However, knitted into this form of organisation was the reward system in the form of occupational ranks and remuneration in the mining industry, an imposed order and a determination which fell within the powers of mine management and outside of the resolve of migrant workers. For instance, the dominance of Sotho-speaking workers in the Free State gold mines in the 1970s was a result of legislation by the South African government forbidding Basotho workers from working anywhere in South Africa except in the mines. The restriction necessitated Basotho migrants to commit more to working in the gold mines. Therefore, Basotho workers worked in the mines for longer periods, thus gaining more experience than their South African

counterparts, mainly from the Eastern Cape. The result was that Basotho workers built occupational seniority, becoming supervisors and 'boss boys'. Hence, conflicts between supervisors and workers at work developed into communal ethnic conflicts in the hostels.

McNamara's (1988) analysis of the labour structure in one mining group in 1985 shows a strikingly skewed occupational hierarchy in favour of foreign migrants, where foreign employees from Lesotho, Mozambique, Botswana, and other countries dominated the higher wage bands by 7:3 when compared with South African workers. This led to two separate major conflicts, one involving a violent ethnic confrontation between South African and Mozambican hostel residents, and the other a general labour strike at ten gold mines by South African workers complaining of differentials in awards between mainly South African workers and supervisors who happened to be foreign migrants. On two of the striking mines, strikers launched attacks on Mozambican team leaders in reprisal for non-participation in the strike. It became apparent that the unionisation of workers would add a new dimension to the violence in hostels.

A combination of social, economic, and political conditions, all conspiring to exploit the marginal situation of hostel residents, was at play, resulting in a one-sided interpretation of violence in the hostels. Hence, commenting on the Vaal Reefs Xhosa Sotho violence of 1986, Moodie (1992) concludes that structural conditions in the industry, rather than ethnicity or tribalism, were responsible for the violence, and insists that evidence drawn from more detailed testimonies refutes the explanations of hostel violence rooted in tribal expressions. He contends 'Indeed, violent strategic choices are often made out of moral outrage at entrenched injustices which are often themselves violently enforced' (Moodie, 1992: 613).

The violence between residents from the East Rand hostels and the adjacent townships is illustrated in detail by Sitas in his previously cited paper (1996) as well as in this volume. Without directly referring to marginalisation theory, Sitas maintains that political forces fuelled an ethnic consciousness by exploiting social arrangements in hostel life, thereby creating both organisation and the euphoria that drove hostel residents against their township and shack compatriots on the East Rand during the early 1990s. This position is attested to by Zulu (1993) in his account of the violence in KwaMashu and Umlazi hostels ostensibly driven by the political hostility between the Inkatha Freedom Party and the United Democratic Front (UDF), and yet orchestrated by the mysterious Third Force with full knowledge by high-ranking functionaries in politics and in government. In both instances, outside actors have capitalised on the marginal situation of hostels, exploiting and manipulating specific variables inherent in hostel life to further ambitious projects that serve these actors rather than the hostel residents themselves. While it is not in dispute that the political economy of migrant labour has long been responsible for the marginal situation of hostels under colonialism and Apartheid, what has not been clear is the continuity in the new political dispensation.

The New Dispensation

As early as the beginning of the 1990s, the South African government had come to realise that with the demise of influx control, hostels had ceased serving the old order, and that if nothing was done to halt the rapid decline of these massive edifices of segregation, hostels would rapidly develop into slums. These fears were exacerbated by the violence that engulfed hostel-township relationships in the so-called 'black-on-black' violence, aided and abetted by the state's security forces acting as the Third Force. Accordingly, in 1991, the state promulgated the Hostels Redevelopment Programme (HRP) which was an attempt to improve public hostels and encourage sustainable and humane living conditions. Three aspects were to mark this programme: a) improving living space in the hostels; b) converting hostel units from single-sex dormitories into family units; and c) integrating hostels into the neighbouring communities. Operational models developed from three broad strategies included:

■ physical upgrades, thus improving living conditions and making them more acceptable without fundamental changes, as was the case in Kranskloof near Pinetown in KwaZulu-Natal;

■ creating self-contained units through partition and adding extra facilities, as was the case in Bokomo in the Western Cape; and

■ conversion into self-contained units and de-densifying by building extra units, as was the case in Martin and East in the Western Cape.

Physical upgrades included renovations of the dormitories and de-densifying by reducing the number of occupants in a given space. For instance, in Kranskloof, upgraded dormitories had to house five instead of six occupants. Basic furniture was provided, prepaid electricity meters were installed, and items such as light bulbs, plug points, a bed, a mattress, and a locker were provided. Upgraded hostels still remained single-sex and were not converted into family housing units. On the other hand, self-contained units entailed expanding, partitioning, and converting shared space into individualised family occupancy. Where facilities such as ablution blocks, doorways, and passages had been shared, these had to be blocked, and space expanded to incorporate the added facilities such as geysers and electricity and water meters. Finally, conversion into self-contained units and de-densifying by building extra units entailed breaking down some structural aspects and creating extra rooms, thereby expanding space. Costs entailed in the upgrading and conversion processes increased with the amount of work and materials needed to accomplish each model. The three delivery models had been predicated on the three pillars, i.e. economic, environmental, and human development. While the models demonstrated the practicality of improving living conditions, none met the standard of integrating hostels into the neighbouring communities and, therefore, reducing experiences of marginality.

The Hostels Redevelopment Programme of 1991 metamorphosed into the 2004 Policy of the Department of Human Settlements which referred to 'well-managed entities in which economic growth and social development are in balance with the

carrying capacity of the natural systems on which they depend for their existence and result in sustainable development, wealth creation, poverty alleviation and equity' (Mvuyana, 2023: 2). Notwithstanding the lofty ambitions in the policy, empirical observations demonstrate a rapid decline in the quality of hostels as residential spaces. Besides very poor maintenance of the existing physical structures, there has been very little, if any, increase in the number of new units to accommodate the influx of new migrants. The result is further densification, this time not only causing overcrowding in existing buildings but also an exponential increase in the number of shacks that newcomers have constructed either as accommodation or as informal trading centres against a backdrop of increasing unemployment. Given the poor administrative capacity of local governments, together with the culture of lawlessness in the new political dispensation, a free-for-all norm exists, as will be shown in the case study of Glebelands hostel below.

Glebelands Hostel

The conflict in Glebelands hostel is intricately interwoven into the fractious factions in the African National Congress (ANC), which, in this instance, are expressed in the politics of the eThekwini City Council, exacerbated by the ineptitude and the politics in the administration of the city. The ANC has two contending factions, which have become prominent since the appointment of the Commission of Enquiry into State Capture, where submissions have revealed gross corruption by the ANC elite, particularly in government. Embarrassed by the revelations, the ANC National Executive Council passed a resolution which, if adhered to, would disqualify those implicated in corruption. Consequently, a faction formed, mainly comprising 'fugitives from justice', constituting themselves purportedly into an ideological clique, pursuing Radical Economic Transformation (RET). The factionalism has bedevilled the politics of the ANC in general and Glebelands in particular. The position is aggravated by the incompetence in the workings of the police services, also a function of the politics of the province in this instance.

Further, the position of Glebelands is a typical demonstration of how political entrepreneurs exploit social organisation, including the marginalisation of hostel residents. Hence, the story of Glebelands hostel is a microcosm of political power relations, administrative ineptitude, corruption, and, in particular, the exploitation of the social marginality of hostels. The plotting and intrigue are reminiscent of what happened earlier in the 1990s when political entrepreneurs from Apartheid and the KwaZulu homeland had exploited the same marginalisation during the so-called black-on-black violence in the early 1990s. The difference now is that a constitutionally integrated, instead of a segregated, regime is responsible for the destruction. Whereas hostel violence during Apartheid expressed itself in the conflict resulting in violence between hostels and the surrounding communities in the townships, the present violence in Glebelands, and, to a lesser extent, in the KwaMashu hostel, is internal to the hostels and is more devastating to the lives of residents within the hostels. Vanessa Burger (2018) maintains that the relationships

and connections cultivated during the Apartheid-sponsored conflict remain intact and that these have created a political-administrative culture of normlessness and mayhem. In essence, the decision by the post-Apartheid government to 'normalise' hostels, either through physical improvements of existing structures or by converting them into residential units, has seen very little, if any, significant changes in the lot of migrants living in hostels.

The Physical State
When the Public Protector conducted an in-loco inspection of Glebelands during her official visit in 2015, her observations were:

- most of the older buildings were dilapidated and poorly maintained, with broken windows, doors, and walls that were cracking;
- the grounds were not well-kept, the grass and other vegetation was not cut, and there was rubbish that was strewn around;
- poor lighting both inside and outside the blocks;
- uncollected refuse, blocked drains, water leakages, leaking sewer pipes, and informal structures like shacks that are reportedly used as business premises (Public Protector of South Africa, 2016).

The above observations are substantiated by Burger (2018), who went to the extent of taking photographs of various areas within the hostel, demonstrating both the state of neglect and the disregard, or rather the absence of regulations concerning the planning and management of the hostel. It was precisely this state of affairs that had led to block committees usurping administrative powers in the hostel away from the eThekwini Municipality and, in the process, becoming a law unto themselves. To restore a semblance of order, Ubunye Bama Hostela, an association of hostel residents seeking improvements in hostels, came into existence.

Political Alliances and Administrative Incompetence
Glebelands hostel has a capacity of 13000 occupants, yet by 2015, there were 19000 occupants, prompting not only overcrowding but also room for corrupt elements from the hostel, especially in the block committees, to exploit the situation, given the fierce competition for space. The Provisional Report on Glebelands by the Public Protector (2016), as well as the reports by De Haas (2016) and Burger (2018), point to administrative incompetence leading to anarchy where a) there was no registration of residents of Glebelands hostel, and b) because of this, block committees admitted and charged would be inmates as well as evicted residents at their whims. Ineptitude by the eThekwini Municipality in the administration of hostels had led, in the case of Glebelands, to block committees usurping power and functioning as quasi-administrative bodies. Some among them charged fees for admitting new migrants into rooms or expelled occupants from their rooms in order to create space for their preferred new entrants. The fact that membership in block committees was associated with political relationships with the councillors complicated the issue and introduced a political dimension which, because of Glebelands' political history, automatically drew the politics of the ANC into the

politics of the hostel. It could be argued logically that part of the problem in the administration of hostels lies in the blurring of boundaries between the ruling party and the state. For instance, the Provisional Report on Glebelands by the Public Protector (2016) refers to an instance when representatives from the hostel reported an incident when the Provincial Secretary of the ANC had promised but failed to honour a meeting with them. Several such instances occurred when this overlap led to confusion of roles rather than ameliorating the situation.

Factually, Glebelands carries the scars of the political conflict that tore KwaZulu-Natal apart during the so-called black-on-black violence of the 1990s. An ANC stronghold, Glebelands hostel was to become an ANC base in the battle between warring ANC factions in the new dispensation. Glebelands falls within Ward 76 in the eThekwini Municipality, and this locates it squarely in the factional politics of the ANC. The genesis of the problem lies in the organisation of hostels into administration blocks informally organised to manage hostel life. Since these blocks are organised around the councillor, they assume political significance, particularly in the absence of effective administration by the city. Mary De Haas, an experienced academic researcher and monitor of the political conflict and violence in KwaZulu-Natal since the mid-1980s, maintains that conflict in Glebelands hostel started brewing in 2009 when Zweni, a sitting ANC councillor representing the hostel, joined the Congress of the People (COPE) (De Haas, 2016). He had proceeded to join an all-hostel organisation known as Ubunye Bama Hostela, whose primary objective was to lobby for improvements in hostels (De Haas, 2016). Naturally, this pitted Ubunye Bama Hostela against the municipality as it was the same municipality that was responsible for the poor state of hostels.

De Haas (2016) attributes the violence in Glebelands hostel to the opposing factions that existed in ANC politics in the second decade of the millennium. She begins in 2013 when Glebelands hostel residents marched against a sitting city councillor representing Ward 76 (into which Glebelands falls). The Provisional Report on Glebelands by the Public Protector (2016) dates the genesis of the conflict to 2011, from a dispute regarding the selection of the candidate for Ward 76 into the local government elections. The dispute had led to several protest marches led by Ubunye Bama Hostela, the South African National Civic Association, and the South African Communist Party. It thus becomes clear that by 2013, factional tensions had already existed for some time.

In the municipal elections of 2011, the new councillor, Mzobe, also a member of the ANC, replaced Zweni, the councillor who had defected to COPE. Soon the sitting councillor marginalised erstwhile supporters of the former councillor, and some of them were in the block committees. Then in 2013, residents accused the sitting councillor of irregular allocation of RDP houses in the hostel, and of discriminating against anyone associated with the previous councillor. Matters got worse. The conflict went as far as the branch meeting of the ANC in the hostel in 2013, where residents demanded that the sitting councillor stand down from his position, a

demand that he refused. Following this meeting and the march against the sitting councillor, Hlophe, a known warlord, joined the sitting councillor, and a reign of terror ensued, resulting in a number of people being killed. Among them were four known critics of the sitting councillor, personalities who had openly criticised him at the ANC branch meeting, demanding that he resign from his position. The reign of terror also included the eviction of a number of residents from the hostel, and their rooms were allocated to supporters of the councillor. From the outset, residents accused the police of complicity with the ANC faction supporting the councillor. De Haas (2016: 48) concludes 'It has become clear that the violence at the Glebelands hostel is intertwined with the municipal and provincial politics.' Both Mzobe and Hlophe ended up being killed at various stages of the violence.

The Politics of Crime in Glebelands

The Provisional Report on Glebelands by the Public Protector (2016) refers to the statistics on cases of murder reported to the South African Police Services between 2014 and 2015, provided to her when she visited Glebelands. Of the 44 reported murder cases, 16 arrests had been made, 32 of the cases were under investigation, four trials were already ongoing in court, three cases were filed, and five were undetected. There were no convictions yet. Much ink has been spilt on the performance of the police when cases have a political dimension. As indicated above, the Public Protector based her report on the figures provided by the police. De Haas (2016) puts people murdered at 55 by 2015, a figure which is 11 more than that provided by the police. De Haas is scathing on the role of the police in the violent conflict in Glebelands hostel. She states:

■ From the outset the police were accused of being complicit with the ANC faction supporting the councillor. The first casualty at the hands of the police was Zinakile Fica, who died while being tortured by the Umlazi police on 13 March 2014. A further ten cases of torture, most involving tubing (near-suffocation with a plastic bag), have been documented by Burger (2018). In addition, a number of residents were maliciously arrested, only for charges to be subsequently withdrawn. Since the onset of the violence and in our interaction with the police, Burger and I have requested regular patrols and for the investigation of cases to be undertaken by detectives from elsewhere in the province.

■ We have also made police management aware of the vulnerability of specific residents who had been threatened. One of them, Sipho Ndovela, was a witness to a murder in which he alleged Hlophe was implicated. Ndovela was subsequently shot dead outside the Umlazi court. A second vulnerable resident, Richard Nzama, who had also complained of a cover-up in an attempted murder case, was arrested in July 2015, charged with attempted murder, and brutally tortured. The charges against him were withdrawn in November 2015. The response of provincial and municipal governments to this violence has been to dismantle the elected block structures and allocate R10 million for fencing and mast lighting (De Haas, 2016).

De Haas' assessment of the role of the police in politically-related violence (and the violence in Glebelands is riddled with heavy political overtones) is not different from what a number of academic researchers have also unearthed concerning the role of the police in taxi violence which carries similar political overtones (The Maurice Webb Race Relations Unit, 2013).

Conclusion

Lessons drawn from the case studies on violence in the hostels demonstrate how a situation can be exploited and manipulated intentionally to generate desired results. Admittedly, unintended consequences might outweigh the original intentions. In the case of the violence in the gold mines, the use of hostels as carceral locations of control, combined with the social organisation of migrants, was bound to result in communal violence expressed in regional or ethnic forms. Evidence from the case studies on communal violence in the gold mines across a number of decades suggests strongly that structural conditions in the industry, rather than ethnicity or tribalism, were responsible for the violence. The marginal situation of hostel residents facilitates communal tendencies where migrants, separated from their rural homes, find psychological and physical security in regional or ethnic social groupings. Further, migrants experience inconsistencies in the various ranking criteria in most of the situations that fall within the ambit of the hierarchy. For instance, notwithstanding that as workers they may be members of unions and politically they experience the same treatment as other black compatriots, their physical location in hostels, together with their perceived social status in the culture of the townships, exclude them from joining social organisations outside of hostels.

The exploitation of hostel residents by political forces presents two separate but strongly related dimensions. In the first, the hostel-township conflicts that culminated in untold violence during the early 1990s had one common feature: the mobilisation of ethnic sentiments among migrants using social organisation in hostel life as the launching pad. In the second, where Glebelands features prominently, hostel residents are used as proxies in the factional battles between political actors seeking to advance their broader agendas. In both instances, the marginal situation of hostel residents provides the vector for exploitation and manipulation. In the first, hostel migrants have to protect their well-being, including hostels as their immediate sanctuary. When faced with a real or perceived life-threatening attack, the natural response is to mobilise for an offensive or defensive counterattack. The ethnic lager mentality prevailed. Hostel residents mobilised in pre-emptive attacks believing that townships were on the offensive. In Glebelands, political entrepreneurs used conditions in the hostel to advance their personal agendas, but because of their location in ANC politics, the agendas determined the politics in the hostel. It was this relationship that clouded even the policing at Glebelands hostel, a function that was crucial in the restoration of normalcy. Burger's (2018: 4) commentary on Glebelands, that 'the impact of the Machiavellian machinations undertaken to retain this power and the ease of its accomplishment is nowhere more obvious than at Glebelands', is most appropriate.

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Chapter 9: Critical Reflections: Degendering and the Crisis of Social Reproduction in South Africa's Hostels

Bianca Tame

Introduction

South Africa's hostels were initially designed as housing compounds for single-sex migrant workers to ensure access to a steady supply of cheap labour during the colonial and Apartheid eras (Ramphele, 1993). In 2006, the post-Apartheid state embarked on a public housing initiative to address the housing crisis by transforming hostels into Community Residential Units (CRUs). This visionary initiative was noteworthy for addressing the housing crisis (Xulu-Gama, 2017; Mthembu, 2023) and undoing what Budlender and Lund (2011: 926) describe as 'the state-orchestrated destruction of family life.' At its core, the CRU initiative encapsulated the key tenet of redress in terms of advancing socio-spatial justice – 'fixing, undoing and or redressing the wrongs of the past' (Xulu-Gama, chapter 3 in this volume). However, the CRU redress initiative was doomed to fail. The CRU project was an example of a failed developmental project largely because the life chances of South African citizens could not be realised due to the knock-on effect of growing unemployment. The unemployment crisis diminished citizen's quality of life in terms of equitable access to health, education, transport, proximity to employment hubs, and housing (Thani et al, 2018; Mthembu, 2023; Xulu-Gama, chapter 3 in this volume).

Unsurprisingly, a vast number of studies suggest that the shift from Apartheid to the post-Apartheid era reveals growing class inequality and persistent workplace fragmentation because of different forms of work arrangements (Sitas, 2010; Barchiesi, 2011). Additionally, research on communities and/or households shows ongoing violence between young and old, women and men, employed and unemployed, which reproduces perpetual uncertainty as individuals struggle for social inclusion and their citizenship rights (Mosoetsa, 2011; Xulu-Gama, 2017). In relation to hostels, Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama's ethnography illustrates how access to living spaces and limited resources that are often stretched to capacity, have laid bare the state's failed promise of citizenship rights.

The struggle for citizenship rights were triggered when most of the redistributive goals espoused in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) economic policy were replaced with the adoption of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) macro-economic policy framework that was introduced in

1996. Despite attempts to broaden participation through the 2005 Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) economic policy that replaced GEAR, the challenge of increasing and structural unemployment persists (Francis & Webster, 2019). Given the relatively poor performance of these economic policies in addressing the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment, it was felt that a broader centralised planning vision was needed to progress along more equitable lines. This resulted in the 2011 National Development Plan (NDP). However, this plan also did little to increase growth and reduce unemployment because of poor support from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the troubling years following the 2008/2009 financial crisis (Francis & Webster, 2019). How, then, were women hostel-dwellers life chances to improve alongside efforts to redress socio-spatial injustices that separated families?

In this chapter, I argue that hostels as 'spaces of perplexity' (Xulu-Gama, 2017) require a deeper analysis of the process of 'degendering', a critical theoretical concept that forms part of the cultural formations approach Ari Sitas developed in the 1980s. Degendering is an expression of family-life disruption and the forced supportive networks that emerge in response to that disruption. More specifically, it refers to how the roles associated with the 'breadwinner' and 'caregiver' status among men and women become strained and stretch to other family members (immediate or extended) because of economic necessity and migrancy. These supportive networks may even include work friends that belong to the same village, who embrace and induct newcomers into harsh workplaces, including hostel life (Sitas, 1983; Xulu-Gama, 2017). For Sitas (1983), degendering explains how families are thrown into disarray because of the working of (racial) capitalism. It is important to state at the onset of this chapter that while degendering refers to changing men and women's roles, I specifically focus on women's role in the hostels. I draw on existing South African scholarship that may assist researchers in taking forward the link between degendering because of the inherent 'contradiction of capital and care' and the 'burden of care' among migrant women. Degendering and the 'burden of care' are discussed in relation to the lasting consequences of 'socio-spatial' inequality (Xulu-Gama, chapter 3 in this volume) that constitute and extend the crisis of social reproduction in South Africa's hostels. Here, I focus on literature related to public hostels rather than mine compounds (see Cooke, chapter 1 in this volume).

The chapter begins by explaining the cultural formations approach with an emphasis on the process of degendering during Apartheid and the post-Apartheid era. Second, I focus on the legacy of family-life disruption, which has had serious consequences on women who, as others have argued, continue to shoulder the burden of care. Third, I review two important contributions regarding hostels in the post-Apartheid era. These are Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama's 2017 book, *Hostels in South Africa: Spaces of Perplexity* and Khanyisile Busiswe Mthembu's 2023 study, 'The experiences, challenges and coping strategies of women living in Community Residential Units: Glebelands CRU case study'. I draw on their work to explore how

their research unravels the complex consequences of degendering and the crisis of social reproduction because of livelihood and housing struggles. Finally, I conclude with key observations and questions for future research concerning the experience of degendering.

Cultural formations as Expressions of Struggle and Resistance

An underlying thread in the vast literature on cultural formations across different disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, migration, or diaspora studies is the situated complexity that arises from inequalities within capitalist regimes that expose contestation regarding individuals' sense of belonging and identity politics (Sitas, 1983; Ong, 1997; Salman & Assies, 2017; Xulu-Gama, 2017). Within this framing, individuals' struggle against disparity reveals different forms of resistance because of the politics of belonging and their lived realities. Nevertheless, while much of the literature related to labour studies engages how cultural formations arise as collective undertakings among workers and their oftentimes militant action through trade union organisation (Sitas, 1983; Bonnin, 1987; Sitas, 2009; Bhengu, 2014), the informal modes of collective resistance are also apparent in community or migrant workers' everyday struggles as forms of material and discursive practices (Garba, 2017; Xulu-Gama, 2017). By focusing on the material and discursive practices of those affected by inequality, scholars have tried to capture working-class and marginalised communities struggles to understand social change in society (Xulu-Gama, 2017; Tame, 2023).

In the South African context, Ari Sitas's (1983 & 2009) theoretical and empirical contribution to an analysis of culture and working life (cultural formations) can be traced in studies that examine different forms of organising and resistance at the workplace (see Bonnin, 1987; Mapadimeng 2007; Bhengu, 2014) and in location-based community sites such as hostels/CRUs that represent a constellation of different groups such as migrant workers, families, students, and the unemployed (Xulu-Gama, 2017; Xulu-Gama and Lorgat, 2022). Scholars who have used the cultural formations approach have drawn attention to rural-urban connections and links between the productive (workplaces) and reproductive (households) spheres of class struggle (Sitas, 1983; Bhengu, 2014; Xulu-Gama, 2017). While there are various dimensions of cultural formations, I focus specifically on the notion of 'degendering' which 'refers to pressure on customary gender roles' that arise when migrant workers are dislocated from family life as they travel to seek work elsewhere (Sitas, 2009: 376). Further, due to family life disruption, gender roles and responsibilities are 'thrown into the mill and ground' (Sitas, 1983: 238). Hall & Posel (2019: 2) argue that family life disruption is 'one of the important legacies of South Africa's colonial and apartheid history.' Family-life disruption was firmly established through a variety of racialised policy strategies which included pass laws, creating homelands, and urban housing policies such as hostels to support the demand for cheap labour (Ramphele, 1989; Hall & Posel, 2019).

Focusing on degendering alone may be somewhat risky given that Sitas (1983) argues that there are multiple competing pressures that coalesce and give rise to migrant workers' cultural formation. Yet, scholars using the cultural formation approach have focused mostly on the other dimensions, namely alienation, disrolia[1], and devaluation more so than 'degendering' to explain migrant workers forms of resistance against their conditions of life (Sitas, 1983 & 2009). With much focus on male migrants (mine or factory workers) and their respective workplaces, the application of 'degendering' to hostels or specific workplaces is limited. There are two exceptions. Tame's (2023) research on Zimbabwean migrant domestic workers' cultural formations in Cape Town emphasises how they mobilise their intimate work culture to access decent work opportunities. Tame (2023: 58) argues that degendering should consider family-life disruption among parents. Therefore, when women migrate without their children, i.e., 'mothering from a distance' (Parreñas, 2001), their experience of degendering has serious implications for how they shoulder the burden of care (often as single parents relying on extended family members) and their emergent cultural formations in seeking better work. In relation to hostels, Xulu-Gama's (2017) research operationalises 'degendering' and the marginalisation of women in the hostels by explicitly focusing on the changing relations, interactions, and living conditions that notably include the presence of women and children in what was always constructed and perceived to be single-sex hostels for men.

Like Xulu-Gama, I use the term hostel and CRUs interchangeably since hostel dwellers continue to describe their place of residence as 'hostels' rather than CRUs. By focusing on women and children, utilising 'degendering' as a conceptual tool shows the importance of rural-urban linkages that remain central to understanding urban hostel-dwellers' lives and the politics of belonging and survival in South Africa. However, at the same time, the deepening unemployment crisis because of the working of capital and, hence, persistent socio-economic inequality continues to strain and 'fragment' the family. Consequently, economic migration in the context of rising unemployment has had serious consequences on social reproduction and undoing the legacy of family-life disruption. At a broader level, and in framing the transition from hostels to CRUs, Xulu-Gama argues that:

> '… hostel formations have now become "spaces of perplexity", as issues of migration, labour, employment, gender, sex, socially and geographically extended families (rural-urban links), housing and politics have gone through serious changes over the last twenty years. These spaces of perplexity reflect past plans and conflicts, as well as the hopes and dreams in the present post-apartheid transition' Xulu-Gama (2017: 2).

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1 Sitas (1983) describes 'disrolia' as new forms of communication or expression that arise when migrant workers' language and its meaning-generating capacities are disrupted or challenged when they enter new locations.

Xulu-Gama (2017) further notes that hostels are a microcosm of a national crisis which depicts 'plans and conflicts' and its dire consequence on social reproduction too. In reviewing the past (Apartheid architecture of social-spatial injustice) and the present (redressing social-spatial injustice through initiatives such as CRUs), Xulu-Gama's (2017) argument of hostels as 'spaces of perplexity' provides a unique vantage point for understanding the inherent 'contradictions of care and capital' as a critique of capitalist development (Fraser, 2016: 99). In other words, Bhengu's (2019: 93) critique of Xulu-Gama's research posits that 'locating the history of compounds' and livelihood struggles in relation to declining wage work because of capitalist accumulation is especially important for problematising the nature and 'intensity of struggles' in CRUs. Therefore, the following section traces debates regarding the 'crisis of social reproduction' and its link to the process and depth of 'degendering' within the context of capitalist accumulation.

The Crisis of Social Reproduction and Degendering

Fraser (2016: 99) summarises the salient points regarding social reproduction as 'a key set of social capacities: those available for birthing and raising children, caring for friends and family members, maintaining households and broader communities, and sustaining connections more generally.' In relation to care, Fakier & Cock's (2009) critical review of social reproduction highlights the need to shift away from collapsing paid and unpaid family care or care of others to draw attention to the embodied, physical, and emotional toil of care work. Fakier & Cock (2009: 354) note too, that the crisis of social reproduction is deeply rooted in 'patterns of violence and abuse' in African migrant households in contemporary South Africa. This is evidenced in Sarah Mosoetsa (2011) and Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama's (2017) research, in relation to intergenerational conflict and tensions that arise among men, adult children, and women. While social reproduction continues to rest primarily with women, Fraser (2016: 99), like others (Fakier & Cock, 2009; Benya, 2015), argues that affective and material labour, whether paid or unpaid, 'is indispensable to society'. Fraser (2016: 99) adds that without social reproduction 'there could be no culture, no economy, no political organisation. No society that systematically undermines social reproduction can endure for long.' It is these dilemmas, located in capitalist development, that have given rise to serious concerns regarding a crisis of social reproduction.

While the crisis of social reproduction is a global phenomenon, in South Africa, African households are severely affected (Fakier & Cock, 2009; Mosoetsa, 2011; Xulu-Gama, 2017). The pattern of capitalist development shows that the burden of workplace restructuring and the loss of stable or manufacturing jobs (see Sitas, 2010; Mosoetsa, 2011), as well as the devastating impact of HIV/AIDs on households (see Fakier & Cock, 2009; Xulu-Gama, 2017) rests mostly with women who shoulder the burden of care when facing food insecurity, health concerns, loss of partners, job insecurity, and unemployment. Benya (2015: 546) argues that, far too often, the 'symbiotic relationship between the productive and reproductive spheres of life'

marginalise and make invisible the crucial role women's reproductive labour plays in reproducing and sustaining capitalist development. Furthermore, as evidenced at Marikana before and after the 2012 strike, women, as wives or mistresses, witness and experience male mineworkers' exploitation in ways that 'drives, organises and orders their lives' (Benya, 2015: 549).

Writing on African migrant households in Emnambithi, Fakier & Cock (2009: 362) found that one response to poverty and declining employment included sending 'their most vital members to other provinces and, in a few cases, overseas to find employment.' While Fakier (2009) discusses global and local care chains, here I focus on the rural-urban care divide specifically, and that is evident in Xulu-Gama's depiction of hostel-dwellers' reality because of the process of degendering, which affects those left behind and those who offer practical and financial care to children and elders too. By making these connections, two key points are noteworthy. First, the issue of 'contradictions of care and capital' because one of the fundamental drivers of migration to urban areas and/or hostels is economic necessity and sacrifice (Xulu-Gama, 2022). It is, as Xulu-Gama (2017: 32 & 2022) argues, not simply a case of escaping patriarchal society (which some women may and do find appealing), but is also about how the intensity of their struggle is linked to survival circuits, sacrifices, and 'opportunities and possibilities.' Second, and in relation to the former point, Francis & Webster (2019: 799) argue that '[d]espite early progress in reducing poverty, post-apartheid South Africa has seen rates of poverty and inequality increasing in recent years, with inequality now higher than it was at the end of apartheid.' The growing rates of poverty and inequality suggest the life chances of a diverse group of women are affected by the same processes of exclusion because of the nature of capitalist development that disrupts family life, sometimes for shorter or lengthier periods of time.

Unsurprisingly, the transition of hostels to CRUs represented many key aspirations for democratic South Africa because it provided an opportunity for access to affordable public housing for women and children, and crucially, an opportunity for family life (Xulu-Gama, 2017; Mthembu, 2023). It is important to note too, that while Xulu-Gama's (2014 & 2017) research highlights the rural-urban care divide from a livelihoods perspective, Mthembu's (2023) recent study focuses explicitly on CRUs as sites for raising children. Both approaches, nonetheless, reveal the contradictions of care and capital in relation to the crisis of social reproduction because of the process of degendering. Below, I draw on specific examples that illustrate recurring themes related to the 'burden of care' because of the depth of degendering and the lasting consequences of socio-spatial inequality that exacerbates the crisis of social reproduction.

The Rural-Urban Care Divide

At the time of Xulu-Gama's (2017) fieldwork, the former KwaMashu hostel which was previously a single-sex male hostel was 'home' away from home to approximately 25000 men, women, and children. A close reading of the many

narratives shared by women pointedly reveal a persistent rural-urban care divide before the CRU initiative and after. For example:

> 'I live with my husband here at the hostel. I have three children. One of them lives in the village and two of them live with me here at the hostel. The one who lives in the village is the oldest; she takes care of the home and keeps on making babies while she is not married. Mama Hlengiwe Luthuli' (Xulu-Gama, 2017: 17).

> 'Mama Kheswa is 65 years old and is from Melmoth. She came to live at the hostel in the mid-1980s. Her first stop from the rural area was Umlazi Township, where she lived for a couple of years before she decided to come to the hostel to live with her new partner. She had to come to the city to look for job opportunities in order to be able to support her two children, especially since she was not married' (Xulu-Gama, 2017: 105).

Each of the narratives above reveal a pattern of separation between the parent/s and child/children. While the separation from children is sometimes temporary, for others it is not. In tracing Mama Hlengiwe Luthuli's life history and journey to the hostel, Xulu-Gama exposes the temporary nature of hostel visits in 1988 and resistance to the state mandated sanctions that were designed to keep the family separated. Similarly, Mama Kheswa's life story shows that by the 1980s women's presence in the hostels were typical but a story of separation from their children was similarly commonplace. However, even among those who found accommodation in the hostel in the post-Apartheid era (Nokulungu, Philile, Londiwe), the persistent theme of separation because of economic necessity reveals a pattern of separation between parents and children. For example:

> 'I started living here in 2007. I had initially come here to apply for the child's grant and then I never went back. I then looked after my young school-going siblings. I lived with my child as well. I dropped out from school at Standard 9. I did not go back to school because my parents would not support me. They were angry with me. I am not married, have one boy child, his surname is Zulu. His father is from Eshowe and we are not together anymore. We met here at the hostel when I was visiting my mother. My mother has never lived in a hostel, but she organised a room/shack for us and the children to live there while she lived in town close to where she works. Nokulunga Zungu' (Xulu-Gama, 2017: 24).

> 'Philile Ngcobo is from Eshowe and is in her mid-twenties and her husband is in his late thirties. She came to join him at the hostel, leaving their two children with his parents in the rural area' (Xulu-Gama, 2017: 98).

> 'Londiwe Mgaga, a mother of three children, is a 31-year-old single woman from Hlabisa. Her children have different fathers; her first

child lives with the father's family in Phuthaditjhaba (formerly Witsieshoek or Qwaqwa) in the Free State province. Her second child (eight years old) lives with Londiwe's mother in Hlabisa. The child's father passed away and the paternal grandmother lives in Johannesburg. Londiwe takes her third child (three years old) to and from the hostel. In 2014 she was not in a relationship with any of these men. She came to the hostel in 2008 to look for a job, following her female cousin and friends, and was unemployed for more than a year. She then got a dangerous job at a local factory, but found it difficult to quit because of her pressing circumstances' (Xulu-Gama, 2017: 101).

As the narratives above show, a further impetus to migrate to CRUs was to seek child support grants and search for often temporary (casual) work because of poor services and opportunities in rural areas. Here, the contradiction of care and capital shows how redistributive goals that underlie South Africa's welfare system and the need to supplement these important but limited resources separate families. Fakier (2009) argues that while access to state old-age pensions and child support grants help the working poor, it is often insufficient to meet all basic food needs[2]. A further notable point is that despite the state's efforts to extend welfare to children, elderly, and the disabled, caregiving as practice and through welfare support remains gendered (Fakier & Cock, 2009), subsidising the rising unemployment levels among men too. In the absence of fathers, declining livelihood opportunities, and wage work, scholars have shown that the financing of social reproduction is gendered but rests primarily with women (Mosoetsa, 2011; Moore, 2020). For example, Nokulunga Zungu's journey to the hostel, cited above, reveals how she gains access to cheap accommodation provided by the state, but the burden of care she shoulders includes supporting her child (through a child support grant) and her younger siblings while her mother lives closer to her workplace and not at the hostel. Therefore, CRUs become important sites for accessing resources from the state (child support grants and subsidised public housing) and potential work opportunities, which women struggle to find.

Undoing and Redoing Family-Life Disruption
While Xulu-Gama's (2017) research focused on hostels as spaces of perplexity in the post-Apartheid era more broadly, an underlying thread throughout her book is the significance of rural-urban links in the migration process. The rural-urban link unfolds as a story of separation and one that is deeply rooted in the 'state orchestrated destruction of family life' (Budlender & Lund, 2011: 926). However, regarding CRUs and its policy objectives, there is a notable silence in Xulu-Gama's (2017) research regarding raising children in hostels. Reference is made to family

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2   Currently, the child support grant amount is R530 per child. The food poverty line per person is R760 per month per person. This means that the child support grant is below the food poverty line by 30% (PMBEJD, 2024). While the old-age pension is above the food poverty line and is currently R2180 for individuals between 60 and 74 years old per month, it is important to note that most pensioners are supporting multiple dependents too (Mosoestsa, 2011; PMBEJD, 2024).

separation, or children that were raised in households. In particular, men and women complained about safety issues and a lack of privacy. Mthembu's (2023) recent study at the Glebelands CRU in Umlazi, however, shifts attention to hostels as part of a public housing initiative, that was the intended aim of the CRU policy framework. By focusing on the housing crisis and the state's public housing initiative, Mthembu (2023) provides detailed accounts of women's experience of raising children in CRUs. Almost all the women interviewed had lived in the hostels/CRUs for two or more decades at the time of her fieldwork and had one or more children living with them, either in a single room or a shared four-bedroom unit. The benefit of CRUs in an ailing economy is that women and children can live together, have access to affordable or 'free' accommodation (sometimes because of non-payment), with water and electricity that they are otherwise unable to access with no or low incomes.

Drawing on women's lived experience in the CRU or hostels that are yet to be converted into family units, Mthembu (2023) argues that the process of converting hostels to CRUs has largely ignored the housing needs of women and children for two main reasons. First, while access to affordable public housing rentals is a necessity, women's socio-economic status remains precarious. More than half of the women described themselves as unemployed and dependent on child support grants to support one or more children and, to a lesser extent, dependent on an old-age support grant. All the women described themselves as 'single' (which is left open to interpretation rather than defined explicitly by Mthembu), with a few women receiving ad hoc assistance from their former partner. Second, the housing stock available is limited, hence many experience overcrowding and lack of privacy which has a detrimental effect on children and women's safety. The persistent challenge of overcrowding and non-payment of services that affect access to services are noted elsewhere too (see Thani et al, 2018; Xulu-Gama, chapter 3 in this volume).

In relation to children's exposure to hostel environments and experience of 'domestic disruption', Jones's (1990) ethnography in the late 1980's on children's experience of living in hostels exposes degendering at play. Specifically, children's experiences are affected by their own migration journeys and bouts of separation from their parents affects their quality of education. In addition, Jones (1990) engages with the effect of living in hostels as violent spaces, a theme that emerges in contemporary studies on hostels from the viewpoint of men and women. As noted by Xulu-Gama (2017) and Mthembu (2023), violence remains commonplace in public hostels (see Mlamla & Makanishe in this volume). Media reports describe hostels as 'killing fields' or 'a vicious circle of violence' reiterating crime, violence, and fatality (see Burger, 2017). For example, Duduzile, a participant in Mthembu's (2023) study, elaborates:

> The only challenge for me was the experience of hearing fire shots.
> I have children who are boys. One is never sure if the shots were for
> your child until you are told who has been killed. It has been quiet for

some time, and it started again in November [2020]… We always hear that someone has been shot but it is not easy to know the real reason for that particular killing' (Mthembu, 2023: 162).

'We may not be getting things as women because of the situation we are living under and the violence that nobody can explain. The violence is cutting across, and we as women suffer the worst as our partners die a lot during these killings and we as the women are left with children without their fathers' (Mthembu, 2023: 163).

Mthembu explains further that the threat of violence is frequent because non-payment of rent is encouraged and those who can pay rent fear the consequence from those who refuse to pay rent. By focusing on women's experiences, concerns, and strategies to raise children, Mthembu (2023) discusses important themes such as violence and loneliness (often due to the loss of their partner at the hostel) and, hence, the burden of care they shoulder as single mothers too. Yet, in tracing their entry to the hostel, Mthembu (2023) provides critical insight into their dependence on men to access hostels for accommodation in a space men still lay claim to as theirs. In this regard, there are striking similarities between Mthembu's (2023) research and Ramphele's (1989 & 1993) earlier research on gender relations and the problematising of space and spatial inequality. For example, in light of women's struggle for work, the theme of the fluid nature of dependence and dependency on men, not only for access to the hostels/CRUs to live with their children, but also access to an income earner (or child support grant because of better services in urban areas – see Xulu-Gama, 2017), forms part of their coping strategy. For example:

'My children's father was no longer supporting me at home in Lusikisiki. I could not stand the situation anymore as we were starving. I had just given birth to our second child, so I decided to come to Glebelands CRU to join him. [Nandipha wanted to be closer to her partner so that their relationship could be saved and her children could also be maintained.] When I came here, I took my children along with me' (Mthembu, 2023: 157).

'I am from the Eastern Cape in Umtata. There was nothing wrong with my home and my family situation. I was staying with my mother and siblings at home. My dad died when I was very young. I only came to Glebelands as I agreed to my partner's request to move in with him, so that he could better take care of me and provide the necessary support closer to me as my partner as I was carrying his child. Ulwazi' (Mthembu, 2023: 159).

Similar to Xulu-Gama's (2017) research, Mthembu's work shows that women's precarious dependency hinges on their 'connections' to men (husbands or boyfriends, and, to a lesser extent, fathers). While Mthembu's (2023) and Xulu-Gama's (2017) research focuses on more recent trends at the CRUs, Ramphele's

(1989: 393) earlier research documented similar patterns in Cape Town's hostels where she found that '[u]nmarried women are even more insecure as they compete with one another and with wives for access, via male bed-holders, to accommodation essential to survival.' However, the slow progress of converting hostels into CRUs, governance issues that lead to violence, and the mismanagement of CRUs hinder providing women and children with a safe and healthy living environment independent of men. Furthermore, in practice, single women with children are not eligible to access CRUs and therefore remain in overcrowded shared units and in single rooms (Mthembu, 2023).

CRUs, in their complex entirety, have become intense sites of struggle and survival in dealing with growing poverty and inequality in post-Apartheid South Africa. Despite their dire situation, Mthembu (2023) notes that women tend to be silent, follow the CRU rules and avoid being involved in raising issues regarding their situation since silence is a safer option for them and their children's well-being, especially as men continue to lay claim to the hostel as their place. In relation to social reproduction and gender politics in CRUs, women remain 'domestic slaves' (Ramphele, 1989), cleaning and cooking for men and shouldering the burden of care as mothers struggling to maintain their 'household' and raise children (Mthembu, 2023). Given that single women continue to deploy 'ingenious' strategies of survival (see Ramphele, 1989; Xulu-Gama, 2017) and oftentimes rely on tradition to secure access to much needed assistance from husbands (Ramphele, 1989), they remain oppressed because of patriarchal conditions of life. Therefore, moments of solidarity among women (caring for each other when they are ill or require childcare support, offering emotional support if in abusive relationships, or when mothers have a newborn baby) are overshadowed by the inherent contradiction of care and capital because women's experiences are rooted in systems of oppression and competition amongst each other for limited resources. In as much as the process of degendering explains how men and women's traditional roles are disrupted as migrants, breadwinners, heads of households, and/or parents, the crisis of social reproduction in South Africa emphasises how little has changed for women managing households and caring for others, including men who lay claim to their unpaid reproductive labour in the hostels.

Conclusion

This chapter used the concept of 'degendering', that forms part of the cultural formations approach, to draw attention to the enduring tensions between men and women regarding social reproduction as a necessity in society, and that is under immense strain because of growing unemployment. Degendering exposes family disruption and, in particular, how women's role as caregivers has increased because of the contradiction between care and capitalist development. Policy frameworks and initiatives to redress past inequality have been unsuccessful in addressing women's socio-economic conditions because they are directly and indirectly affected by unemployment and the gendered nature of social reproduction. In

relation to hostels as 'spaces of perplexity' in the post-Apartheid era, two interrelated issues demonstrate the interplay between degendering and the crisis of social reproduction that women bear. First, the enduring legacy of rural-urban migration patterns because of the labour migration system that separates children from parents, who are in search of employment, illustrates the process of degendering as a consequence of crisis management among households. Second, and in relation to the former point, capitalist development challenges existing caring practices and support systems (financial or other) in ways that largely become women's responsibility as they take on the bulk of unpaid reproductive labour in the midst of declining employment opportunities and growing inequality in society. Therefore, when explaining the process of degendering, family disruption remains a persistent challenge in relation to the working of capital because of migration and unemployment trends in South Africa. Furthermore, hostels as spaces of perplexity, rather tellingly, expose not only the inherent contradictions of care and capital but also the longstanding issue of advancing socio-spatial justice because of migration and, hence, separation that ultimately deepens the crisis of social reproduction in South Africa's hostels.

While this chapter focused on two specific contemporary studies to demonstrate how the crisis of social reproduction has deepened in the post-Apartheid era, there is a need to explore and extend our research focus further to draw attention to degendering as a process between men and women as parents, and its consequences on children. Apart from Jones's (1990) study on children's experiences in hostels, there remains isolated snapshots from existing studies that have documented the transition from hostels to CRUs from the perspective of parents concerned about their children's upbringing in violent spaces (Xulu-Gama, 2017; Mthembu, 2023). In addition, while Xulu-Gama (2014: 2017) and Mthembu (2023) engage extensively with women's experiences as mothers, there is a glaring silence on men's perception of fatherhood and the role they play in raising children. Although one gains a glimpse through how 'married' couples raise children, or the concerns elders have regarding raising children in hostels, or references to ad hoc support from men who provide financial support and/or access to space in hostels, there is limited or no engagement with how finances are managed to care for children or the elderly.

In addition, given the growing literature on the meaning of fatherhood, and in the context of men (similarly to women) struggling to find secure employment, there is a research gap regarding fathering. For example, how do men construct their identity in relation to spaces of perplexity? What are their fears, hopes, and experiences of fatherhood beyond the breadwinner narrative? In the same way Xulu-Gama (2017) and Mthembu (2023) problematise their conceptualisation of African households, family (extended family), and the burden of care among mothers, there is a growing body of literature that interrogates changing perceptions and experiences of fatherhood that may occur in different ways other than as men perceived as merely economic providers (see for example Enderstein & Boonzaier,

2013; Malinga & Ratele, 2022). As Xulu-Gama (2017: 9) suggests, hostels as spaces of perplexity symbolises 'new spaces of migrancy' but despite vast changes in recent years, the hostel remains the same while still representing the hopes and dreams of hostel-dwellers. However, when focusing on the process of degendering and the crisis of social reproduction, these spaces are also sites of failed promises, despair, and resilience.

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Conclusion

Nomkhosi Xulu-Gama

Hostels continue to be important sites for research in South Africa. It is safe to consider them a microcosm for continuities and changes that take place in the country. It is important to note that from the various hostels that have been discussed in this book, none of the discussions should be understood as comprehensive because that would be limited and limiting. The book did not ground itself in international experience, and further research on hostels could look at countries from the Middle East and North Africa as examples. The individual chapters do not intend to be comprehensive but to be used as vantage points from which to look at hostels and what they represent in South African society. Hostels should not be homogenised, even if they seem to have a lot of shared traits, geographically, historically, and in the material conditions of the hostel dwellers.

In this book, we have insisted on calling hostels 'hostels', which are former single-sex workers' housing, established by the colonial and Apartheid regimes to accommodate black working-class men, and later women, from the rural areas in the cities and or close to the cities. The lack of positive changes in the lived realities of hostel-dwellers' lives justifies our insistence. We also posit that hostel dwellers are in the city but not from the city. The domination, isolation, marginalisation, lack of employment opportunities, human dignity, privacy, property ownership, safety, and security are some of the reasons why it continues to be difficult for hostel dwellers to identify themselves with the city. Informality remains a defining feature for a reasonable number of hostel dwellers as they live in either a shack, hall, or transit camp.

As part of racial capitalism, hostels were based at reasonable proximity to nodes of transport and places of work to facilitate the movement from a temporary residential (hostel) area to a contractual place of employment (workplace). The democratic government initiated a conversion process by demolishing, and or rehabilitating, or refurbishing and erecting totally new buildings. The housing was renamed 'Community Residential Units' (CRUs), allowing women and children to come in (in cases of men's only hostels), and attempting to make homes out of hostels. CRUs, on paper, target people who earn between R800 and R3500 per month; this is important to ensure that people could pay the rent as well as municipal bills. With this criterion, people were also supposed to apply to the municipalities in order to get housing at the CRUs, but this is not the case. Most of the hostel dwellers do not pay any form of rent to the municipality, (see Mthembu, 2023; Xulu-Gama 2017). CRUs are not meant for property ownership, with residents set to rent for life if they stay in this type of housing (Department of Human Settlements, 2009).

Several research studies attest that there were strong reasons why dwellers argued for the retention of hostels (Xeketwane, 1995; Payze & Keith, 1993). They

continue to be the only cheap or free-living spaces for thousands of people, other than shacks, which mostly have unstable shelters and are defined as informal settlements. The Department of Human Settlements, through the CRU programme, aimed at providing i) economic development, ii) homes and liveable spaces, and iii) affordable, reliable, and safe public transport (Department of Human Settlements, 2009). While these are also in line with the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development and the Development Bank of Southern Africa's recommendations (Makanishe in this volume), they are not a lived reality for the hostel dwellers.

It is documented that CRUs were supposed to address spatial justice, spatial sustainability, spatial resilience, spatial quality, and spatial efficiency (NPC, 2012). None of the research that has been presented in this book finds a successful implementation of the features mentioned above. It is fitting to argue that, while hostels form a tiny part of working-class housing in South Africa, it remains critical for understanding the state of the nation. There are some key features of our country that can be found in this place, i.e., service delivery protests, inequality, overcrowding, violent crimes, high unemployment, and overcrowding.

The continuity and change in hostels demonstrate a new kind of dependency, whereby the black working-class was dependant on the hostel for income, housing, and protection or 'safety', now the working-class continues to be dependent because there is free housing, water, and electricity. Makanishe, through his contribution, demonstrates the validity of this dependency based on access to basic resources by black working-class people. Despite all the various efforts by government to improve or change hostels to CRUs, lived experiences paint a bleak picture. The achievements of building new structures, freedom of movement for all, including women and children, making one of the hostels a heritage site, and other changes can be safely regarded as ceremonial transformation, as I argue in chapter 6 of this volume. These changes achieve nothing but the attention of both local and international media, without the appreciation from those directly affected, since their lives either do not change or get worse.

Continuity

The ways in which the hostel has remained the same is multifaceted. Regardless of the government initiatives to normalise hostels as residential spaces, social, economic, and political exploitation and marginalisation persists in the lives of the dwellers. Hostel dwellers are marginalised from all sides: ethnicity, gender, material conditions, administration of hostels, migrant status, class, employment opportunities, etc. The stereotyping, which was intentionally fostered by the previous white government which saw hostel dwellers perceived as backwards, uneducated, and uncultured, continues to date.

The design or architecture of the hostels that render them non-places (see Cooke in this volume) during the Apartheid regime continues and has been worsened by

the lack of proper hostel administration by the local municipalities and provincial housing departments. The living conditions induce a sense of inferiority and shame for anybody who resides there. Most of the infrastructure is old and unmaintained: there are leaking pipes, blocked drains, overflowing sewerage systems, uncollected refuse, and irregular cleaning services. While hostels mostly have lights, there are problems with illegal connections leading to electrical overload, disruption in the power supply, faulty switches and plugs, unsafe connections/installations, and blackouts.

Hostels continue to be far from what people can voluntarily call home – as it improves – it gets worse. While the constitution attests to the inherent human dignity of all people, the racialised dispossession of certain important resources and rights continue, and Lwandle hostel has presented a good example of this. From Cooke and Zulu's chapters in this volume, we understand that they continue to be spaces of violence, oppression, and control. From Sitas's chapter in this volume, we realise that they continue to be 'places of sorrow.'

Rural-urban migration continues to see hostel dwellers doing intensive labour and menial jobs. The employed are characterised by low-income levels through occupying positions as general workers, security guards, self-employed, or workers in retail, healthcare, hospitality, transport, and manufacturing sectors. In the context of rising unemployment, economic migration has had serious consequences on social reproduction. The process of undoing the legacy of family life disruption has been disrupted itself. In this volume, Tame critically examined the continuous disruption, and the resultant disadvantages experienced by children and women. She further highlighted the critique of the existing scholarly work's minimal focus on the role and implications of having children in former temporary residence for workers.

Violence and criminality continue to be big problems in hostels for a few reasons. The argument that Ramphele made in 1993, that hostel conditions which the dwellers are living under are a form of violence on its own, is still valid today – violence by the state directed to the marginalised hostel dwellers, through the lack of maintenance of physical property and the way in which administration of property was handled. Zulu, in this volume, argued that when criminals see a vacuum in the management of hostels, they take over the management process, i.e., rental of beds and rooms. Sitas, in this volume, argued that the hostel became a place to go to if you wanted something done, and hostels became associated with xenophobic attacks and hitmen. The subculture of violence in hostels was and is a result of inadequate resources and the elimination of wages. Xulu-Gama (2017) argued that people are hungry to make money to take care of themselves and their families, and they are fighting for the limited resources. Mlamla, in this volume, argued that informal settlements make it easy to hide criminals and evidence like stolen cars or weapons. The fact that there are no streetlights and no street names makes it difficult to patrol, hence making it easy to get away if

you are a criminal. Mlamla proposed Crime Prevention through Environmental Design as one potential solution to the hostel criminality. He argued that the built environment is a key factor in determining whether crime is likely to occur or not in hostels. On the other hand, Toshę Mlambo, Zanazo, and Zulu discussed the role of ethnicity in the violent nature of hostels. They argued that violence is not only classed and gendered but deeply political and ethnicised. The weaponisation of Zulu nationalism is arguably a key factor in both historical and contemporary violence in hostels.

Change

One of the biggest changes in hostels is that living in a hostel meant that one had a job and a bed, and losing a job meant losing a bed in the city. Post-1994, this is no longer the case. Secondly, regardless of all CRU problems discussed in this manuscript, at least children have the possibility of growing up with both parents in some cases, with electricity, running water, and being closer to schools and malls. Thirdly, while the administration of hostels was facilitated largely by municipal police, known as blackjacks, this is no longer the case, and that arm of police ceased to exist post-1994. Fourth, with high unemployment, men no longer represent paid labourers and women unpaid workers. Finally, as has been documented by Cooke and Sitas, the stated and unstated intention of the way hostels were built, i.e., prison-like, was to control the inhabitants and contain 'unrest.' From the experience of the 2021 July unrest, as highlighted by Toshę Mlambo and Zanazo, we know that the hostels are now unable to contain the unrest.

The value in this book is bringing senior scholars (Ari Sitas, Julian Cooke and Paulus Zulu), who did exceptional work before 1994 on hostels, together with emerging scholars (such as Ntsika Mlamla – completing his PhD on hostels; Yonela Toshę Mlambo – doing a PhD on hostels; Timothee Makanishe – a hostels-focused doctoral candidate). This variety allows the reader to see how scholars have conceptualised hostels in the past versus in the contemporary period, especially because the senior scholars have drawn on their earlier research on hostels and compounds. In various ways, that has served as a synthesis of their work in this research area. This volume has also been able to draw on the work of women working on hostels, having started with Dr Ramphele's foreword, the poem written by myself in honour of the women and children associated with the hostels in many ways, and Bianca Tame's and Zukiswa Zanazo's work on gender, social reproduction, and migration research areas.

Through this book, we argue that improving existing community experiences means prioritising material conditions of hostel dwellers. This would, in turn, improve feelings and experiences of safety, address marginalisation, stigmatisation, and isolation, and bring back the dignity of the people, as documented in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). Practising a bottom-up approach in hostel decision making, rather than imposing new ideas developed by people who do not live in hostels, might improve the unequal power relations

between hostel dwellers and external stakeholders. At this point, the conditions in which the hostel dwellers exist are truly not of their own making, and this manuscript has demonstrated that in different ways.

The paradox in hostels is that the upgrading, which started post-1994, was meant to address the overcrowding, but numbers have more than doubled. The government has tried to fix the way that hostels look through the incomplete refurbishing processes taking place across the country. This has, however, resulted in a mismatch between aspirations and lived experiences. It is difficult to point out the change in hostels' purpose between the Apartheid and post-Apartheid regimes. What it was, and continues to be, is accommodation for the black working poor who move from rural areas to seek better employment opportunities in urban areas.

In response to whether hostels should be improved, transformed, or eradicated, based on the evidence provided by this book, I argue that hostels should not be eradicated but transformed and improved. Hostel dwellers should be given an opportunity to name or call hostels what they experience hostels to be. There are five key points which I posit should be taken into account in the decision to retain but transform the hostels. i) There needs to be (continuous) provision of free housing, water, and electricity (and other municipal services) for all hostels. ii) There needs to be development of infrastructure suitable for children of all ages. iii) There needs to be expansion of the physical space to prevent overcrowding and release the pressure from existing infrastructure. iv) Hostel housing should facilitate socio-economic upward mobility of black people through educational, entrepreneurial, and employment opportunities. v) Hostels needs to be free of violent crimes and political violence because all of the above points will be meaningless if hostel dwellers do not feel safe in this place.

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