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XHOSA IN TOWN REVISITED:
FROM URBAN ANTHROPOLOGY TO AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF URBANISM

DISSERTATION

Presented for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Department of Social Anthropology

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By

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ABSTRACT

The primary aim of this study is to revisit and update the *Xhosa in Town* Trilogy, which was based on research in the African locations of East London in the 1950s, and produced the three influential urban ethnographies, Reader's *The Black Man's Portion* (1960), Mayer's *Townsmen or Tribesmen* (1961) and Pauw's *The Second Generation* (1963). Collectively, these studies became known as the *Xhosa in Town* Trilogy. The main aim of this project was to explore the social and cultural consequences of urbanisation on the Xhosa-speaking African residents of a South African city. In mapping out the social and cultural responses of Africans to urbanisation in East London in the 1950s, these studies suggested that the African population of the city's locations were divided into two relatively distinct social components. On the one hand, there were those who were generally receptive to European cultural influences and broadly identified themselves as School people (*abantu basesikolweni*), while on the other, there were considerable numbers of labour migrants who rejected the European values and life-styles. These people, known as Reds (*abantu ababomvu* or *amaqaba*), were said to remain committed to a conservative, rural-oriented Xhosa life-style and identity. Although these studies have become classics in the field of urban anthropology and were at the centre of heated theoretical debates in the 1970s and 1980s, no anthropologist has ever revisited the research sites around which the original arguments of the thesis were constructed.

This dissertation aims to fill that gap by returning to Duncan Village township of East London and updating and revisiting the work of the Trilogy researchers in the city itself. It takes the old East Bank location, which was remodelled into a new apartheid township called Duncan Village in the 1960s and 1970s, as its unit of analysis, and seeks to explore how urban social life and identity politics changed in this urban area since the 1950s. The period covered by the dissertation extends from the 1950s into the post-apartheid period of the 1990s, when the field-work for this study was undertaken. The central focus of the study is a historical ethnography of the social and cultural impact on a single urban community in a South African city. It attempts to achieve this by constructing what I call an anthropology of urbanism that provides a framework both for the re-interpretation of the work of the Trilogy, as well as for the analysis of processes of cultural change that have occurred since these studies were completed. By taking the Trilogy as a critical reference in my work, this study fits into the growing genre within southern and central African anthropology of revisiting and updating earlier anthropological studies of urban and rural communities. This trend has recently been particularly evident in Zambia (formerly

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Northern Rhodesia) where a rich vein of new anthropological studies have been built on the foundations laid by colonial anthropologists in the 1940s and 1950s.

In developing a conceptual framework for the study this dissertation attempts to shift away from urban anthropology, which has historically focused on social groups in the city, to the anthropology of urbanism, which is centrally concerned with the relationship between space, power and identity in the locale of the city. The anthropology of urbanism, then, cannot simply be an anthropology of social groups and identities; it must be able to self-consciously cross spatial boundaries, not only between town and country, but also within the city itself. This implies that, amongst other things, anthropologists themselves need to reflect critically on their own spatial practices as field-workers and researchers. It also means that closer attention should be given to the relational aspect of identity formations within the spaces of the urban. This means connecting space not only to identity, but also to questions of power. For the anthropology of urbanism, neighbourhoods and localities never simply exist: they are always socially produced and consequently have to be constantly defended from competing claims and demands. In the work of the Trilogy, locality was not conceived of in these terms, rather it was considered as a field-work site located in a regional cultural context within which the meaning and desirability of western modernisation was under critical scrutiny. In the study of urbanism, it is the urban locality itself that is the primary point of reference. In thinking about space in relation to urbanism, I use Lefebvre's (1991) distinction between "spaces of representation" and the "representation of space" as a useful point of departure.

My analytical reconstruction of East Bank urbanism in the 1950s provides a different foundation to that found in the Trilogy. I proceed to not only tackle questions of social and cultural change over time, but to interpret the spatial and social meanings of apartheid restructuring in the city. The central analytical challenge, following on from my analysis of the urbanism of the 1950s, is to characterise the new forms of urbanism associated with apartheid urban restructuring programmes in the city in the 1960s and 1970 and also with the collapse of apartheid planning in the 1980s and 1990s. In order to implement my theoretical framework the dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the evolving forms of urbanism that emerged in Duncan Village from the 1950s and the 1990s in three chapters: Chapter 2 deals with the 1950s and the account of the Mayers of the urban dynamic in the city; Chapter 3 with the apartheid restructuring in the 1960s and 1970s, which is analysed against the lense of modernist planning and restructuring; and Chapter 4 with the period after the Duncan Village Massacre of 1985, which marked the beginning of the post-apartheid period of the 1990s. These chapters focus on urban experience and the evolving nature of urbanism in this township over time, paying careful attention to the themes of space, gender and identity.

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The second part of the dissertation is devoted to a detailed exploration of the way specific social groups and categories experienced the evolving urbanism described in the previous three chapters. It focuses on youth (Chapter 5), migrants (Chapter 6) and women (Chapter 7) by tracing their involvement in the changing identity politics of the township from the 1950s through to the 1990s. These chapters are all specifically interested in the two main sets of dichotomies, which govern the thesis: that between the urban and the rural and between the private and the public. In the final chapter (Chapter 8), I leave the city for a rural location on the fringes of East London to investigate the changing meaning of Red and School outside the city. This chapter picks up on the main theoretical themes of the dissertation and relates them to the space of the village. The Conclusion reflects on the meaning of the findings presented in the dissertation for the current phase of post-apartheid restructuring, where many of the same divisions and contrasts, which characterise older periods, have re-emerged. In all the chapters, the thesis specifically engages with the work of the Trilogy and Philip and Iona Mayer to ensure that the theme of revisiting is constantly present.

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The idea for this project is a decade old. In 1992, while working as an anthropology lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), I taught a first-year (freshman) undergraduate anthropology course on migrancy and social change. South African first-year anthropology courses at the time were usually offered in two semesters; the first covering the major thematic disciplinary areas (kinship, economic anthropology, religion and belief, etc.), and focussing on some classical anthropological texts and debates; the second requiring students to consider South African anthropology and the analysis of social change. Conventionally, part of the latter course included the *Xhosa in Town* trilogy, especially Philip and Iona Mayer's, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*. The Mayers' work was taught alongside some of the Copperbelt studies and was presented as an example of southern African anthropological engagement with urbanisation and social change.

Working systematically through the texts in the early hours of the morning, I began to develop a new appreciation for the importance of the project and the richness of their detailed accounts of Red and School lifestyles in East London. And I found the absence of long tracts detailing political economic change quite refreshing. By the time had I finished, I found myself regretting having to move onto other topics. My own sense of disappointment was reflected in the students' responses to my lectures. The class included a number of Xhosa-speaking students from the Eastern Cape and East London in particular. Their response to the material was less concerned about the Mayers' failure to adequately situate their work within a broader political-economic context, than with the failure of anthropologists to update the cultural content of that work. Why, they asked, did the course focus on old divides and cultural distinctions when so much had changed in East London and the Eastern Cape? Did I know about the 1985 Duncan Village Massacre, and the rise of the *amaqabane* (comrades), with their new and progressive vision for the future? Why, they demanded, was the Eastern Cape always presented as a conservative backwater when so many current ANC political leaders came from the area? If everyone there was so traditional, where had this leadership come from? Their questions emphasised my own perception of an urgent need for the field sites of the *Xhosa in Town* trilogy to be revisited and for an assessment of what had changed since the Mayers' and their colleagues had been there in the 1950s.

This dissertation is a response to both those students and to my intellectual re-engagement with this work, starting at the Wits in the early 1990s. Its main aim is to update the *Xhosa in Town's* work, paying particular attention to the impact of the 1980s political events to which the students alluded. To do so, I have had to return to the 1950s - the period of the Mayers' engagement with East London's old East Bank location - and to re-assess that period and its importance in the longer - term cultural history of the city.

The journey I have travelled to realise this objective has been long and sometimes lonely. It has led me down many side avenues and cul-de-sacs after the good start of 1992, when shortly after teaching the Wits course, I took a contract research job at Rhodes University's Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER). The Mayers had worked through the ISER when they initiated the *Xhosa in Town* project 40 years earlier, and it seemed the ideal place to embark on a re-study of their work. However, as a contract researcher I became more involved in applied development related research and gradually shifted away from my initial focus. Between 1995 and 1999, I became involved in a wide range of urban and rural research, which centred around the city of East London, although non of it specifically dealt with issues of culture and social change. The most significant was a longitudinal study of household energy use in low-income households in the city. I chose Duncan Village as my focus area and, between 1995 and 1997, followed the lives and energy practices of members of 60 households from a variety of social backgrounds and residential areas in the township. This and other projects provided me with the

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opportunity to engage in periods of prolonged and intensive fieldwork in Duncan Village, focusing primarily on domesticity and household consumption patterns. The energy project also gave me access to the hostels, where single migrants, who had had been so central to the Mayers' original project still lived in the 1990s.

In 1998 another project, which explored rural livelihood strategies in the former 'black spot' of Mooiplaas, took me out of the city. The project allowed me to connect the village to the city through the life histories and experiences of those who were looking at the city from the outside in, rather than from the inside out. Many striking aspects of the lives and experiences of the people I worked with in Mooiplaas helped me refocus my project on the urban-rural interface and the associated politics of identity. But it was only in 1999 when the Eastern Cape Land Restitution Commission approached me to investigate the restitution claims of residents of the former East and West Bank locations that I was able to return to my original aim of updating the *Xhosa in Town* trilogy. The work involved establishing the legitimacy of urban land claims made by families who had been forcibly removed from established African locations in the city during the 1960s. Soon, therefore, I was back in the 1950s, working with claimants who had lived in the neighbourhoods and on the streets trodden by the Mayers, Pauw and Reader between 1954 and 1960. Now I was revisting the trilogy in a very direct way, through the lived memories and experiences of people who had lived there prior to the 1960s forced removals.

The restitution project allowed me to 'stand outside' the trilogy and look back at it from yet another perspective, one that brought the 1950s into focus and allowed me to reflect more clearly on changes in Duncan Village since then and on the significance of those changes. It was at this point that I began writing this dissertation. My road to Duncan Village and back to the *Xhosa in Town* trilogy has thus been long and interrupted. Each project has enabled me to work with township residents and students living in the city. They have assisted me with many aspects of my work, from fieldwork to translation and the sharing of ideas and understandings about the meaning of what we discovered together. Many still work with me at the ISER in East London.

The assembling of this dissertation differs significantly from the ordinary practice of Ph.D. level anthropological research, having not been marked by either a clear point of 'entry' into the field nor a clear point of 'departure', where the researcher returns 'home' to write up the findings. It has been constructed within the interstices of an ongoing dialogue and series of development-related engagements, few of which have been directly structured round the intellectual project, which is at the center of this dissertation. This dissertation has therefore been characterized by many detours and interruptions, which have occurred from the time of its initial conception in a classroom at Wits University to its completion in East London a decade later.

As the research and writing on this thesis has extended over a long period, a large number of people and institutions have given me valuable assistance and insights for which I am extremely grateful. Within the ISER itself, I am particularly grateful for having been able to work closely on various projects with Mzolisa Bona, Ntobeko Jack, Bongi Mlomo, Phumeza Lujabe and Linda Qambata, who have assisted me in many ways, especially with interpretation and translation of Xhosa text and interviews. However, it has been the current group of researchers at the ISER, who worked with me on the Land Restitution project, who have made the greatest contribution to this study. I specially thank Landiswa Mqasho, Mcebisi Qamarwana, Adrian Nicholas, Langa Makubalo and Ayanda Tyali for their ongoing enthusiasm and committment. I am also greatly indebted to Gary Minkley who has read and commented on numerous drafts of my work and with whom I have taught various courses on issues of space and culture; Andrew Bank, my brother for his encouragement and incisive comments on many of the chapters presented and my Supervisor, Andrew Spiegel for his thorough reading and commentary on my work. Special mention should also be made of Deborah Bryceson, who afforded me the opportunity of spending two productive periods as a research fellow, at the Afrika Studiecentruum in Holland, during 1998 and 2000 and for consistently supporting my work. I would also like to thank Inge Twenten for inviting me to the Chr. Michelson Institute in Norway during April/May 2001, where I spend a productive month working on this dissertation.

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CHAPTER ONE

OLD DICHOTOMIES, NEW PERSPECTIVES: FROM URBAN ANTHROPOLOGY TO AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF URBANISM

Introduction

Zakes Mda's recent award-winning novel, *The Heart of Redness* (2000), suggests that the contemporary politics of development in South Africa has re-ignited old divisions between traditionalists and modernisers in Eastern Cape villages, that are rooted in the deep ideological schisms that emerged during the 1856–1857 Xhosa Cattle Killing. This apocalyptic episode was a direct response to the prophecies of a young woman, Nongqwawuse, who claimed that her ancestors had told her that, if the Xhosa killed their cattle, the white settlers would be driven into the sea, and harmony, prosperity and peace would be restored to their lands (Peires 1989). Mda's novel portrays these events as driving a deep wedge in rural Xhosa society between pro-westernisation "believers" and traditionalist "non-believers", collaborators and resistors, which continues to be a salient social cleavage in Eastern Cape rural communities. Set in Kentani, in the Transkei home of the Xhosa prophetess, the novel tells of the power of tradition as an alternative to western style modernisation and as a social force in contemporary rural South African communities. It tells of how the restless soul of a highly educated and urbane man finds peace, tranquillity and meaning in the "heart of Redness" on the Transkei coast. The novel's focus is one man's journey and personal transformation away from an enchantment with western-style modernity and rationality to a discovery of his African roots. It is a powerful and captivating story in that it speaks directly to debates and concerns with notions of an African Renaissance and possible meanings of such a concept in contemporary South Africa.

By stressing the historical continuities in rural identity formation and the opposition between believers and non-believers, he adopts a position not dissimilar to that presented by the anthropologist Philip Mayer in his monograph, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*. In 1961, Mayer wrote that

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there was a fundamental and essential divide in the Xhosa countryside of the Eastern Cape between the so-called Red (*abantu ababomvu*) and School (*abantu basesikolweni*) people:

> That two dramatically different sets of institutions exist within the Xhosa countryside is not hard to see. One becomes aware of it before a word is spoken, through the glaring contrasts in dress and personal appearance. There are women – Red women – who go about like a commercial photographer's dream of picturesque Africa, their arms and shoulders bare, their brightly-coloured ochered skirts swinging, their beads, brass ornaments and fanciful head-dresses adding still more colour. And there are others – the School women – who go in cotton print dresses in sober colours, with neat black head-dresses and heavy black shawls, looking as proper as mid-Victorian or as sombre as Moslem wives. To see a dance for Red youth and a "concert" for School youth, a sacrifice in one homestead and a prayer meeting in the next, or even a Red and a School family meal, is to realise that these belong to two different worlds, in spite of the language and the peasant background being one (Mayer [1961] 1971: 20).

Mayer went on to state that rural Xhosa themselves "think of this division as bisecting the entire population" and view it "in terms of cultural differentia", where "Red people do things this way while School people do them that way". He also claimed that this division was marked, not only in dress styles and social institutions, but in deeper cultural values, which are kept in place by "a kind of self-imposed aloofness" where each segment of the rural population firmly believed in the superiority of their "own way of life" (*ibid.*: 21–41). But, Mayer later revised this position by arguing that the Red and School cultural orientations were not, in fact, essential cultural identities in the Eastern Cape but evolving rural resistance ideologies (Mayer 1980). He proposed that the social, political and economic conditions that underpinned these ideological formations in the early and mid-twentieth century had been destabilised in the Eastern Cape by the 1970s, resulting in this division gradually fading away.

But, if these identities have indeed fallen by the wayside, what then are we to make of Mda's insistence on their current salience in rural communities? Is he simply mistaken in assuming that Eastern Cape rural communities are still split along these lines? How might it be possible that a style of cultural identity politics, which was associated with a bygone era, can re-emerge after a period of absence? Is it perhaps a product of globalisation and increasing poverty of many urban and rural African communities who now seek to anchor identities in past identities and cultural practices? Is the militant localism of Mda traditionalist, not typical of a broader trend in post-colonial identity formation? The novel, which has now won several international awards, has certainly placed questions of cultural continuities and change in South Africa in sharp relief. How far, it might be asked, can the durable images and narratives of Red and School, of believers and non-believers, really map out the contours of cultural identity formation in the contemporary Eastern Cape? Or is this distinction simply a facile binarism,

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Source: www.anc.org.za/List/maplist.html

Map 1 South African Map indicating provincial boundaries and major cities.

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based on outmoded stereotypes? And how significant is it that it was not in the countryside, but in the city that anthropologists found that the distinction between Red and School was most sharply contrasted?

To address these and other questions related to cultural change in contemporary South Africa, this dissertation returns to the anthropological work of Philip Mayer and those of his colleagues in the South African coastal city of East London. It was here that the distinctions *Red* and *School* were most fully explored ethnographically, and around which much of the academic debate concerning these categories has revolved. The primary aim of this study is to revisit and update the *Xhosa in Town* Trilogy, which was based on research in the African locations of East London in the 1950s, and produced the three influential urban ethnographies, Reader's *The Black Man's Portion* (1960), Mayer's *Townsmen or Tribesmen* (1961) and Pauw's *The Second Generation* (1963). Collectively, these studies became known as the *Xhosa in Town* Trilogy. The main aim of the project on which they are based, was to explore the social and cultural consequences of urbanisation on the Xhosa-speaking African residents of a South African city, i.e. East London. It set out to achieve this by firstly providing a detailed social and demographic profile of the Xhosa-speaking residents of the city's African locations, paying particular attention to household composition, residential patterns, and participation in the urban-industrial economy of the city. This territory was covered in Reader's book, which provided the sociological foundation on which the other two studies were constructed. Reader's study indicated that the urban population was divided into two main social types, townsmen, the permanently-urbanised section of the population, and migrants, who worked in the city but had homes in the rural areas. In the second book in the series, *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Philip and Iona Mayer concentrated on social and cultural adaptations of migrants to urban life; while Pauw focused, in the third book, on the urban-born component of the location population, the so-called "second generation".

In mapping out the social and cultural responses of Africans to urbanisation in East London in the 1950s, these studies suggested that the African population of the city's locations were divided into two relatively distinct social components. On the one hand there were those who were generally receptive to European cultural influences and broadly identified themselves as School people (*abantu basesikolweni*), while on the other, there were considerable numbers of labour migrants who rejected the European values and life-styles. These people, known as Reds (*abantu ababomvu* or *amaqaba*), were said to remain committed to a conservative, rural-oriented Xhosa life-style and identity. They rejected "Western values" and Christianity and viewed their participation in the urban economy merely as a means of securing the economic resources needed to build up their rural homesteads, and to protect themselves from sinking further into the nexus of the cash economy. The studies showed that while virtually all the urban-born so-called

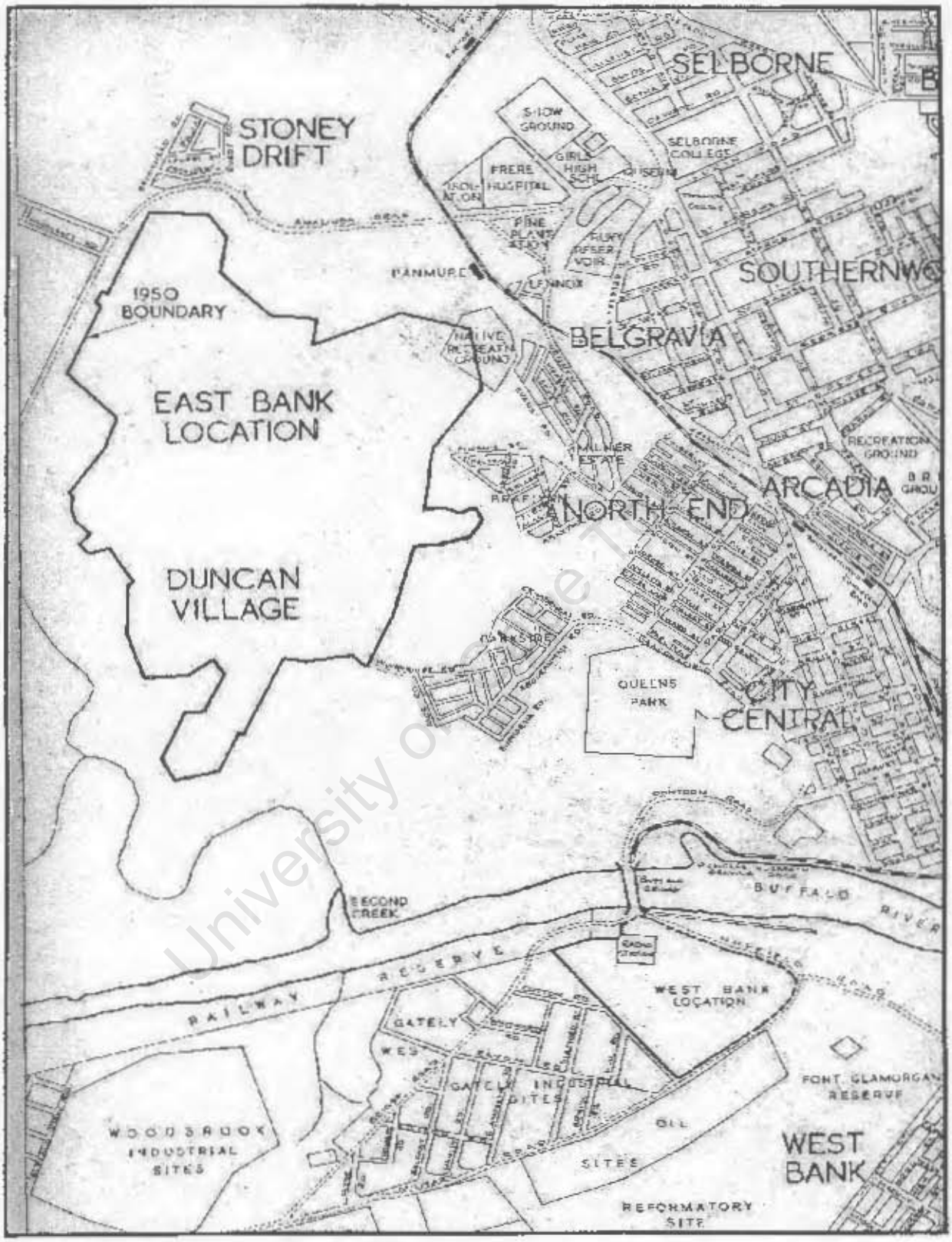
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"second generation" families were receptive to European social and cultural influences; the migrant population of the city was divided into distinct Red and School segments. The former category were said to come mainly from the farms and the Transkei reserves, while the latter were associated with the more mission-influenced Ciskei reserve territories. In the studies as a whole, particular attention was given to the institutional foundations, attitudinal framework and social dynamics of the above social categories (see Map 1 and Map 2).

As a result of the widespread interest and fascination in the field of urban anthropology and sociology during the 1960s – with the *Xhosa in Town* trilogy and especially Philip and Iona Mayer's account of Red migrant life-styles in East London – a decision was taken to update the work of the Trilogy. A further reason was that a new apartheid-driven urban-planning regime had been introduced in East London in the 1960s, which aimed to relocate the majority of those living in the old locations, such as East Bank, into a new mega-commuter township located in the Ciskei homeland. In 1971, the Mayers visited this township, where many of the migrants they had interviewed in East London in the 1950s had ended up, to conduct follow-up research. They centrally explored to what extent the relocation process had disrupted Red and School social networks and sub-cultures in this latter study. Pauw also conducted follow-up research in Mdanstane in 1973 to update his monograph. The results of the additional research undertaken in the new Ciskei township were published in the second editions of *Townsmen or Tribesmen* and *The Second Generation*, which appeared in 1971 and 1973 respectively. However, during the follow-up research, none of these authors returned to East Bank, which was now also in a process of transformation from a "native urban location" to a new "apartheid African township". As a result, the revisions made to the original studies in the early 1970s did not reflect social and cultural changes that were occurring in the city itself, they merely reported on the fate of those forcibly removed from the city. There is consequently no record in the updated Trilogy monographs of the impact of apartheid on social identity and cultural life in the city itself.

This dissertation aims to fill that gap by updating and revisiting the work of the Trilogy researchers in the city itself. It takes the old East Bank location, which was remodelled into a new apartheid township called Duncan Village in the 1960s and 1970s, as its unit of analysis and seeks to explore how urban social life and identity politics changed in this urban area since the 1950s. The period covered by the dissertation extends from the 1950s into the post-apartheid period of the 1990s when the field-work for this study was undertaken. The central focus then of the study is a historical ethnography of the social and cultural impact on a single urban community in a South African city. It attempts to achieve this by constructing what I call an anthropology of urbanism that provides a framework both for the re-interpretation of the work of the Trilogy as

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Map 2: Central East London and Locations, c. 1958. (Source: D. H. Reader 1960)

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well as for the analysis of processes of cultural change that have occurred since these studies were completed.

By taking the Trilogy as a critical reference in my work, this study fits into the growing genre within southern and central African anthropology of revisiting and updating earlier anthropological studies of urban and rural communities. This trend has recently been particularly evident in Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia) where a rich vein of new anthropological studies have been built on the foundations laid by colonial anthropologists in the 1940s and 1950s. Some of these studies have picked up on earlier themes in the anthropological literature, such as Hansen's analysis of the changing meanings of dress (2000) and Ferguson's work on modernity and migrant identity politics in colonial and post-colonial Zambia (1999). Others such as Moore and Vaughan (1994) followed the trajectories of individual anthropologists by revisiting their work at both a theoretical and empirical level. Yet others, such as Schumaker (2001), have looked at groups of anthropologists, in this case those attached to the Rhodes Livingstone Institute, and interrogated their methods and conclusions in relation to current trends within the discipline. My work fits most clearly into the middle category, because it is specifically focused on updating, reassessing and developing the contribution of a particular set of ethnographies conducted by a small group of anthropologists in one area.

By way of introducing this study, I will, firstly, consider the relevance and influence of the Trilogy as a series of anthropological texts on the current focus and direction of the discipline. Secondly, I outline the theoretical perspective adopted in the study, which places the concepts of space, power and identity at the centre of analysis as part of what I will call an "anthropology of urbanism". Thirdly, I will contextualise the study within a critical review and analysis of regional anthropological literature on social and cultural change.

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Southern African Anthropology and the Relevance of the Trilogy

One important reason why it is interesting and relevant to revisit the work of the Trilogy at this time is that there has been a general trend in African anthropology in recent years to re-engage with urban cultural studies. The interest in the discipline in urban experience and cultural identity formation has been associated with attempts by anthropologists to understand the social and cultural impact of globalisation and structural adjustment on the continent. In many of these studies the issue of the rural in the urban, which so pre-occupied the Mayers and their colleagues in the 1950s, has re-emerged as a central theme. In many post-colonial African countries where the promise of urban and industrial development has failed to materialise, anthropologists and

other scholars have noted a growing tendency of urban residents not only to remain connected to rural areas, but to continue to actively invoke rural identities in the city.

Ferguson, for instance, notes that Zambia's failure to produce the conditions necessary for the emergence of a large and stable urban working class has resulted in a growing tendency for urban residents to emphasise rural identities in the urban context – a tendency he calls localism (Ferguson 1999). He argues that, in the urban context, localism should not be seen as a "total way of life", as in the Mayers' "tribesman in town" thesis, but rather as a cultural style or disposition that signifies rural identification and attachment. He views localism as signalling a readiness to accept responsibility for rural kin and allies and the desire to return to a rural "home" community, without necessarily implying the importation of rural cultural forms or "traditions" into the city (*ibid.*: 220). Van Binsbergen (1997) notes a similar trend in his work in Zambian urban areas and in Francistown in Botswana. In the context of globalisation, he claims that the village has become increasingly "virtualised" in the urban, where it serves as a trope allowing disaffected urbanites an anchor of meaning and identity. Van Binsbergen's notion of the "virtual village" thus complements Ferguson's idea of localism as a style that *signifies* the rural in the city.

In his work on Kinshasa, Devisch (1995, 1996) states that the failure of modernisation to create the conditions for a stable, modern urban existence has led urban inhabitants of this city to create new urban communes which emulate matricentral, rural village structures (1995: 581). These communes, he argues, actively oppose the "alienating project of whitening and christianising", and reconstruct migrants' sense of belonging through reinforcing a longing for solidarity, support and genuine communal identity in a hostile urban environment:

> ... villagisation [in the city] undermines and dismantles Western myths of progress or technocratic modernisation. It questions the legitimacy of the (post-) colonial hierarchy of opposing the urban citizen and the villager, the political elite and the people, the educated *evolue* [elite] and the unschooled peasant, the Christian and the pagan ... [It] can be said to be a culturally endogenous domestication of modernity in which local and often subordinate groups structure themselves along the lines of communes (1996: 584).

For Devisch (1996), the rural is now not only signified in the city, but is reclaiming African cities like Kinshasa through a counter-hegemonic urbanism, based on models from the village that restructure urban neighbourhoods into rural-type communes, and re-enchant urban spaces and capitalist transactions with anti-modernist ideologies (also see Mbembe & Roitman 1995; Simone 1999). What Devisch (1995, 1996) describes is therefore very similar to what the Mayers (1961)

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called "encapsulation", the process by which rural-orientated migrant cut themselves off from western cultural influences.[1]

In the new urban cultural anthropology of the 1990s it has also been noted that, alongside various urban localisms, there is a growing enchantment amongst African urban residents with Western commodities and cosmopolitan life-styles. Friedman's (1990) and MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga's (2000) work on the elegantly-dressed *la Sape* urbanites seen on the streets of Brazzaville and Paris highlights this trend. Ostentatious cosmopolitanism style-making is also described by Ferguson (1999) in his work on Kitwe in Zambia, and especially by Hansen (2000), in her fascinating analysis of the social life of *salaula* (second-hand) clothes in contemporary Zambia.[2] One of the questions posed in these analyses is whether the adoption of such styles reflects an acceptance of western life-styles, or whether they are not better understood as a form of resistance to domination.[3] This new literature presents urban Africans now as skilful cultural *bricoleurs* and innovators, rather than as mere imitators of European life-styles as they were seen in the Trilogy. This work highlights the complex and multiple influences involved in the construction of new urban styles and uses concepts such as "creolisation" (Hannerz 1992; 1996) and "hybridity" (Hall 1996; Gilroy 1987, 1993; Bhabha 1994, 1997; Bhaktin 1981) to explain cultural identity formation in urban centres. One of the important outcomes of these new engagements with urban culture and identity is that scholars are now speaking of a plurality of "African modernities".[4]

These debates, like those that surround discussions of the rural in the urban, pose important and challenging questions for my re-assessment of the work of the Trilogy. They suggest that the assumption that urban-born Africans who adopted western-style dress and life-styles were simply emulating Europeans needs careful interrogation and re-analysis. They also pose critical questions of what the possible meanings of the representations of the rural in the urban might be in the current context of globalisation. How, it might be asked, have the rather different economic and political conditions that prevail South Africa affected the way in which

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1. In a non-African context, Friedman (1997) has referred to the tendency of Hawaiian village residents to engage in what he calls *endosociality*, a process where village residents actively set out to simplify their lives and social relations by resisting the complexities of globalisation and by re-asserting a sense of local place and identity in the rapidly-changing world. Friedman's *endosociality*, which he sees as one among many responses to the pressure of globalisation, is a similar concept to the Mayers' concept of "encapsulation". See Friedman 1997: 287–291; Mayer 1971: 90-111.
2. Engagement with studies of consumption and commodities, Bourdieu (1984), Miller (1994;1995;1998) Appadurai (1986; 1996), Burke (1996).
3. Bhabha's discussions (1994) around the meaning of mimicry in colonial and post-colonial contexts has attracted much attention here, as has Fanon's work (1968) on consciousness and colonisation.
4. As a cautionary note, Ferguson (2000) has expressed concern about the ideological consequences of using the concept of "modernity" to describe situations where the economic foundations, facilities and opportunities associated with the modern condition are conspicuously absent.

such identities are conceptualised and expressed, and how do they relate to the current theoretical concerns about plural urbanisms and modernities?

In terms of the development of South African anthropology, the Trilogy, and particularly *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, has remained a central text. In the 1960s, it was the flagship of an emerging South African urban anthropology and inspired others, most notably Wilson and Mafeje (1963) to conduct similar studies in other urban areas. However, in the 1970s, *Townsmen and Tribesmen* was heavily criticised, and this signalled the start of a retreat in South Africa from social anthropological engagement with urban areas and culture identities. It marked the beginning of a new period when neo-Marxist perspectives dominated South African anthropology, and the discipline became an adjunct to the revisionist social history movement (cf. Gordon & Spiegel 1993; James 1997; Kiernan 1997; Sharp 1997). In the new intellectual division of labour in South Africa, which was dominated by a "struggle agenda", anthropology was lauded for its capacity to document resistance to apartheid and to provide micro-level details of the impact of broader political and economic processes on ordinary people's lives. In adopting this role, social anthropologists deserted the cities in favour of a re-engagement with processes of social reproduction, class formation and poverty in the rural periphery (cf. Murray 1981; Spiegel 1980; De Wet 1989; Sharp & Spiegel 1985; James 1984; Bank 1987; Niehaus 1994; van der Waal 1996; Segar 1989). Gordon and Spiegel (1993) have called this period one of "expose` analysis" in South African anthropology. They suggest that the main aim of the discipline at this time was to focus on the struggles of ordinary people under apartheid and to deconstruct the categories used by the state to classify people and to show that apartheid was a deception, a lie and a gross distortion of social reality.

By the early 1990s then, South African anthropology had helped to develop a powerful critique of apartheid and its consequences on the lives of ordinary people, especially those who lived in poor households in the rural periphery. During this period, anthropologists were not entirely absent from the urban areas (West 1975), but their re-engagement with the urban context only effectively occurred after the repeal of the influx-control laws which saw rural households moving into urban areas in large numbers in the mid-1980s. Anthropologists followed the new arrivals into informal settlements and hostels, where many of the techniques that had been honed in the rural areas, such as household analysis, were now applied in the urban context. The result was that the issues related to poverty, domestic fluidity, household formation and socialisation came to dominate this urban field. Some of the best work done during this period was based in Western Cape hostels, where "expose` analysis" was used to reveal the trauma and inequalities that apartheid had caused and were still plain to see (cf. Ramphele 1993; Jones 1993). In this new work issues of cultural identity formation have not been strongly emphasised, but there has been

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considerable new interest in the issue of the matrifocal family, which was documented and analysed by Pauw in *The Second Generation* (1963) (cf. Jones 1993). The other point of intersection in this literature is the new emphasis on social networks, a theme that featured strongly both in the work of the Trilogy and in other urban anthropology studies of this time (cf. Ross 1993; 1996).

But the influence of the Trilogy and the Mayers' work, in particular, is probably most powerfully represented in the rich vein of recent literature on migrant consciousness in South Africa. The contrast between the city as a place of alienation and the village as a site of meaning and fulfilment, which was central to the conceptual project of the Trilogy, is picked up in the work of the Comaroffs (1987; 1992) and others on migrant consciousness and cultural resistance. The Comaroffs argue that Tswana migrants, located on the rural periphery of the South African industrial complex, have historically constructed their identities around narratives that oppose the world of *setswana* (Tswana ways) to that of *seghoa* (white ways). This construction, they argue, is constituted, reinforced and overlaid by a series of binary narratives opposing cash and cattle, town and country, work and labour, black and white, similar to those made by the Red Xhosa migrants in Mayer's *Townsmen and Tribesmen*. These narratives of contrast, the Comaroffs argue, have allowed the Tshidi-Barolong to create cultural spaces of resistance in a context of colonial and capitalist exploitation and degradation. Coplan (1987; 1991) similarly notes the salience amongst Basotho migrants of binary schemes contrasting the tranquillity, peace and stability of the countryside with the violence, drudgery and chaos of the city and the mine. He explores how Basotho migrants gave meaning, direction and hope to their lives through what he calls "fictions that save", focusing, in particular, on the role of migrant performance and song in the construction of narratives starkly contrasting town and country life.

James (1999) has also recently shown how the construction of oppositional categories, such as between tradition and modernity, Christian and non-Christian, educated and uneducated, are manipulated by Pedi women migrants in order to position themselves socially to define their own, autonomous cultural spaces. James (1999) builds on the earlier work by demonstrating how migrant women perform constructions of *sesotho* (Sotho ways) that are constantly adapted. She shows how they appropriate western-style clothes and domesticate them, declaring them part of *sesotho* tradition, and how they manipulate notions of place and space to re-territorialise the world of *sesotho*. But, unlike previous studies of southern African migrant identity, James's work shows that migrant performers skilfully re-inscribe *sesotho* with new sets of meanings in a process of continual cultural appropriation and gendered re-definition. She thus demonstrates how *sesotho* is constructed, not so much as a nostalgic defence of pre-capitalist values, but as an ever-changing social form actively engaged with modernity. What also separates and defines James's work is her interest in cultural production as a discursive

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formation and as a set of everyday life experiences, practices and adaptations. Her attention to the latter enables her to show how modernity and tradition are lived as mutually inter-dependent, rather than opposed categories.

In comparing the recent central African urban anthropology with that reviewed above, it is interesting to note how the different bodies of literature have engaged with different but connected theoretical concerns which track back to those which dominated the Trilogy. In the case of the Zambian and Zairian literature, the main theoretical focus has been on the relationship between the local and the global, while in the South African case questions of resistance to the apartheid state have dominated. What is also striking about this literature is the continued concern of anthropologists with migrants, and the dualism between town and country, a fascination they share with the Mayers, who devoted considerable academic energy to this issue both in their contribution to the Trilogy studies and thereafter. It is only since very recently that anthropologists have started to engage more actively with other categories of urban residents. By restricting themselves largely to the study of migrants, contemporary anthropologists working in urban areas have found it extremely difficult to break out of the old binary oppositions that dominated the scholarship of the *Townsmen and Tribesmen* generation. This has made it difficult for them to make the transition from urban anthropology – the study of specific social groups and categories represented in urban areas – to what I want to call the anthropology of urbanism. This anthropology of urbanism, I suggest, is centrally concerned with the politics of cultural identity formation in the city itself. Put slightly different, the urban anthropology produced in southern and central Africa in recent years has largely been an anthropology in the city, rather than an anthropology of the city.

Many of the studies referred to above demonstrate very high levels of theoretical and analytical sophistication and engage directly with many of the key debates that are now current in anthropology and cultural studies. However, I would argue that they have generally struggled to move beyond the persistent dualisms that dominated an earlier generation of work, precisely because of their inability to engage with the "politics of difference" within the urban itself. None is more acutely aware of this than Ferguson (1999), who sets up a compelling analytical framework for the analysis of competitive style-making and identity in urban Zambia, but is restricted in his ability to deliver on the theoretical promise of his work by his limited focus on migrants. James (1999) is another scholar whose work shows considerable theoretical sophistication, especially in relation to conceptualisations of space and identity, but it is not the space of the city that she deconstructs, but rather the space of the countryside. Devisch's accounts of "villagisation" in the city (1995; 1996) probably comes closest to making the transition suggested above, from urban anthropology to the anthropology of urbanism, although there are

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strong echoes of older theoretical models in his work, of which the "tribesmen in town thesis" was part.[5]

Why is it necessary for anthropology to make this shift? The most compelling reason for me is that for anthropology to make an effective contribution to debates about changing forms of citizenship, modernity and power in the urban context, it has to deal more centrally with the *relational* aspects of cultural politics in the urban itself. In order to understand how African cities can be changed, it is necessary to know how they work, not only at an economic level, but at a social and cultural level as well. I believe that anthropology has a great deal to offer in these processes of understanding, but struggles to make an influential contribution because of its inability to transcend the methodological and theoretical foundations of urban anthropology, as it has been defined a sub-discipline within anthropology. In South Africa, I have often been struck by the contrast between the positive contribution that anthropological research has made in the fields of rural land reform and development and its lack of impact in the urban arena (cf. James 2000; 2001; De Wet 1995; Cousins 2000; Murray 1987; 1995; 2000). In the latter field, political scientists, geographers and sociologists have dominated debates and set the policy agenda. In order to broaden our contributions, we need to once again embark on comprehensive urban social and cultural studies of the kind initiated by Philip Mayer in the city of East London in the 1950s, without losing touch with the expertise already developed around the urban-rural nexus. It is only when comprehensive urban cultural studies, situated within regional cultural histories and political economies are undertaken, that anthropology will find a voice in the debates about the future of South African and African cities. Part of my motivation for undertaking this project is therefore to contribute to this broader process.

Having set out my rationale for revisiting the work of the Trilogy, I would now like to turn more specifically to some of the key conceptual and theoretical considerations that inform the anthropology of urbanism that I attempt in this dissertation.

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Towards an Anthropology of Urbanism

The first and most critical concepts in the "anthropology of urbanism" are those of space and place. In the past, anthropologists tended to take space or place as a given, as the site in which they conducted their field-work. Urban anthropology as a sub-discipline of anthropology was thus defined not by a specific theoretical agenda, but rather as a site of study. The study of

5. See Lucas's (1995) work on Alexandra for a shift in this direction.

urban-based social and cultural groups, such as migrant associations, trading guilds, religious or ethnic groups, emerged as the major focus of this sub-discipline (Sanjek 1990). Urban anthropologists have generally paid careful attention, as the Trilogy researchers did in their work, to how such groups form and dissolve by focussing on social institutions, networks and identities, especially those that cut across the urban-rural divide (Mitchell 1987; Hannerz 1980). One of the reasons that *Townsmen or Tribesmen* became such an influential study in anthropology in the 1960s was because it was such a good example of just such a study of urban social groups, which were directly connected to the cultural rural hinterlands from whence they came. Obviously, as the influences of functionalism waned in social anthropology, the range of topics addressed by urban anthropologists broadened considerably, but this did not fundamentally transform the ways in which this sub-discipline was initially conceived as a field or site of study (cf. Hastrup & Olwig 1997).

To consider space as a flat stage on which research subjects act out their complex lives might still adequately serve the interests of certain kinds of urban anthropology, but it cannot underpin the anthropology of urbanism. In such an anthropology, place and space must be critically re-examined on the basis of the understanding that, as de Certeau (1986: 117) puts it: "space is a practiced place". Appadurai (1996) has also made this point when he suggests that neighbourhoods and localities never simply exist, they are always socially produced and consequently have to be constantly defended from competing claims and demands. He argues that locality production always involves "a moment of colonialization, a moment both historical and chronotypic, where there is a formal recognition that the production of neighbourhood requires deliberate, risky even violent action" (*ibid.*: 183). In such a process, "the assertion of socially (often ritually) organised power over places and settings that are viewed as potentially chaotic and rebellious" occurs (1996: 184). In the work of the Trilogy, locality was never conceived of in these terms, rather it was considered as a field-work site located in a regional cultural context within which the meaning and desirability of western modernisation was under critical scrutiny. In the study of urbanism, it is the urban locality itself, rather than the cultural region, that is the primary point of reference. My case study is an examination of the constitution, conflicts, meanings and representations of the "native space" of the African urban location. In this thesis, I explore this process of constitution by identifying two historical and chronotypic moments of the kind referred to by Appadurai, as seminal moments in the making and remaking of Duncan Village as a particular kind of urban locale.[6]

6. The use of critical historical moments to mark the construction of locality has been particularly effective in the analysis of twentieth-century urbanism in Los Angeles (cf. Davis 1990; Soga 1985;

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In recognising the relationship between the social and spatial, the urban neighbourhoods within which we work cannot be taken as predetermined sites through which people with pre-established identities pass unthinkingly. They need to be considered as spaces that are themselves constituted and constitutive of social identities and cultural processes. Space in this context is both a transformative force and a field that is transformed by the interactions that occur within it (Papastergiadis 2000). In thinking about space in relation to urbanism, Lefebvre's (1991) distinction between "spaces of representation" and the "representation of space" provides a useful point of departure. For Lefebvre, spatial relations emerge through a process of dialogue between "representations of space" (constellations of power, knowledge and spatiality), people's own spaces of representation (counter-spaces of spatial meanings and understandings that emerge from located social life) and the spatial practices (which refer to time-space routines and the spatial structures through which social life is produced and reproduced). There are also echoes in Lefebvre's work (1991) of Raban's *Soft City* (1974), based on a reading of London's cityscapes. Raban divides the city into hard and soft elements. The former refers to the material fabric of the built environment – the streets and buildings that frame the lives of city dwellers. The latter, by contrast, refer to the way the city is perceived and interpreted by those who live in it.

But in the analysis of spatial relations and spatial practice, it is necessary not only to consider the locality as a whole, but also the micro-segmentations, configurations and spatial politics that occur within particular localities. In the study of urbanism, special attention must always be given to the division between public and private space and the changing definitions and forms that such spaces take on. Jacobs's *Life and Death of American Cities* (1961), famously explored the complexity of these relations in New York. By using an extended metaphor of a ballet, Jacobs was able to capture the open sociability and accessibility of the public sidewalk, which she contrasted with the private, enclosed space of the home. Jacobs' analysis of the integral relationship between public and private space emerged as a central component of her overall understanding of urban experience in American cities in the 1950s (Jacobs 1961; also see Whyte 1989; Duncan 1996).

The anthropology of urbanism, then, cannot simply be an anthropology of social groups and identities; it must – as in Jacobs – be able to self-consciously cross spatial boundaries, not only between town and country, but also within the city itself. This implies that, amongst other things, anthropologists themselves need to reflect critically on their own spatial practices as field-workers and researchers. It also means that closer attention should be given to the relational

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1995, Dear 1996, Keil 1998). In this case, particular attention has been given to the Watts riots of 1965

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aspect of identity formations within the spaces of the urban. This means connecting space not only to identity, but also to questions of power. In this dissertation, de Certeau's (1986) notions of spatial "tactics" and "strategies" are adopted to explore and highlight how space and power is constituted, lived and experienced, as well as with how spaces and the social practices and identities associated with them are connected and contested.

My analytical reconstruction of East Bank urbanism in the 1950s provides a different foundation to that found in the Trilogy. I proceed not only to tackle questions of social and cultural change over time, but to interpret the spatial and social meanings of apartheid restructuring in the city. The central analytical challenge, following on from my analysis of the urbanism of the 1950s, is to characterise the new forms of urbanism associated with apartheid urban restructuring programmes in the city and the "representations of space" contained within this new urban regime. In other words, how did urban apartheid in East London set out to remodel existing relationships of social power and identity in the city? Existing analyses of the impact of apartheid planning on African identity formation has focused largely on the ways in which Africans were forced and cajoled into adopting ethnic or tribal identities in reconstructed ethnic "homelands". Little attention has thus far been given to the cultural content of the new apartheid township plans of the 1950s and 1960s and the ways in which they set out to "norm and form" African subjectivities and identities. Here, I attempt to fill this gap by connecting apartheid urban planning directly with the social and cultural imperatives of the international modernist town-planning movement of the post-war era.[7] I argue that apartheid planners aimed to create new forms of urbanism by adopting universal modernist town plans, which were adapted to the local South African context. These new planning regimes were essentially predicated on fundamentally restructuring two sets of relationships in the city: those between migrants and urbanites, spatialised in the new division between hostels and public housing estates; and those between the public and the private, spatialised through a sharp separation of the street from the home.

In reflecting on the history of modernist planning, it is interesting to note that it has always been centrally concerned with the relationship between the urban and the rural. The "modern movement" in urban planning and architecture emerged as a response to the perceived social pathologies of the smog-ridden, coke-towns of the industrial revolution, many of which were seen to result from the absence of positive values of country life in the city. As a result, all major twentieth-century "modern movement" thinkers and planners were centrally concerned

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and the 1992 uprising as markers in the shift between modernist and post-modern urbanism.

7. In dealing with the apartheid period I have found the work of Rabinow (1989; 1995) to be particularly relevant for the analysis of apartheid planning. For further discussion see Chapter 3.

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with finding ways of bringing the countryside into the city. From the garden city designs of Howard, through the "radial city" of Le Corbusier, to the suburban models of Lloyd Wright, urban modernist plans always incorporated the rural – whether in the form of household gardens on pavilion-style plots or as open parks alongside high-rise buildings and busy city streets. In South Africa, the situation was really no different, the reconstructed black township of the 1950s embodied precisely such a desire to maintain the rural in the urban, only here the design of planners worked with multiple notions of the rural (to segment rather than to integrate these forms). It is this evolving framework of the apartheid city and its gradual implementation in East London that fundamentally shaped the way that rural identities were reconstructed in the city in the post 1950s period.

But the reconstruction of South African cities in this period was not only shaped around restructured notions of the rural and the urban, they were also, as with modernist plans everywhere, predicated on reshaping the relationship between public and private space. Driven by ideas that "function should follow form", modernist planners set out to remodel streets and houses. Elsewhere they argued that street plans should be better suited to their function of ferrying workers quickly and efficiently around the city, while the space of the home should allow the new urban working classes to be shielded from the noise and distraction of the street (Fyfe 1998; Holston 1989). Modernist architects, for their part, paid close attention to remodelling public housing estates to ensure that spaces were functionally separate, yet effectively integrated (Jeremiah 1999; Taylor 1998). These imperatives were also reflected in the township planning models of the 1950s and 1960s, although as in many other colonial cities, careful attention was also given to political control (*inter alia* Edensor 1998; Robinson 1990; 1998). The remodelling of urban space during this period consequently had profound implications for the forms of urbanism that emerged in South African cities, and in Duncan Village in particular. To effectively explore the impact of apartheid restructuring in a place like Duncan Village I argue that it is imperative that the anthropology of urbanism not only focus on public spaces, such as streets and bars, where identities are performed and contested, but also on the private spaces of the home (Jacobs 1961; Caldeira 2000; Morley 2000). In engaging with these spaces, attention should, however, not only be given to the way these spaces are constructed but to people's responses to this and to the resultant spatial practices that emerge.

In reflecting on the remaking of the house, it also needs to be noted that many feminist scholars have rejected the modernist planning movement as a thinly-veiled attempt to entrench patriarchal power and privilege in cities and suburbs. Hooper (1995), for example, explores how this form of planning, in the moment of inventing itself as master, as known, as producer of order in disorderly cities, also took on the baggage of the dominant cultural tradition, a Euro-centric

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patriarchal tradition. Therefore, planning came to function not as the emancipatory practice it theorised, but as a participant in new forms of control directed at women. Hooper "rereads" the plans of Baron von Haussmann and his contemporaries, and of Le Corbusier, as "poems of male desire" and as "fantasies of control" of the modern city. These plans, she argues, are written against the fears and anxieties associated with the seemingly uncontrolled sexuality and assertiveness of women on the streets and in public spaces (Sandercock & Forsyth 1992; Morley 2000). It was precisely the same fears and anxieties, I suggest, that attracted white apartheid bureaucrats and officials to the modernist township plans of the 1950s. It was the ordering and control of women that the new models offered, that seemed to offer a solution to the myriad of social problems, such as juvenile delinquency, that officials attributed to unmarried women. The impact of patriarchal underpinning of the township plan, I argue, was fundamental in rewriting the scripts of gender relations in South African cities. From an analytical point of view, the feminist critique of modernist planning alerts us to the hidden scripts of gender relations implied in these plans. It is for this reason that gender should be considered in relation to space and identity as a key concept in an anthropology of urbanism.

In the following part of my analysis of evolving forms of urbanism in the city, I tackle the post-1985 period in East London, when the ordered modernism of urban apartheid planning collapsed in the wake of political rebellion and massive new transfers of people from the rural areas into the city. In the larger history of modernist planning, historical geographers have argued that in certain cities in the west, notably Los Angeles, the period after the 1970s witnessed the emergence of what they call "post-modern urbanism". This form of urbanism has been variously described[8], but is generally associated with the emergence of the post-Fordist economic regimes and the growth of new consumption patterns linked to globalisation (Harvey 1989; Jameson 1991). Relph (1987) was one of the first geographers to catalogue the material forms that comprise the places of post-modernity. He describes post-modern urbanism as a self-conscious and selective revival of elements of older styles, though he also cautions that post-modernism is not simply a style but a frame of mind. He observes how the confluence of many trends, including gentrification, architectural and design fashions, conservation and participatory planning caused the collapse of the modernist vision of a future city filled with skyscrapers and other austere icons of scientific rationalism. In contrasting the universal rationalist models of modernism with post-modern urbanism, Relph (1987) highlights new cultural trends, notably the re-emergence of chic and affluent cosmopolitan styles that now come to co-exist with a retreat into localism, seen specifically in the drives towards conservation and heritage. This is

8. See Dear and Flusty (1999) for a broad-ranging review of the literature.

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interesting, especially in view of the emphasis noted earlier of the growing contrast of localist and cosmopolitan styles in many African cities experiencing the effects of globalisation.

A more pessimistic and politicised view of the post-modern is presented in the work of Davis on the evolution of "ecologies of fear" in Los Angeles. For Davis, one of the central features of the collapse of modernism has been the erosion of public space, which is seen in the increasing polarisation of city dwellers into rich and poor segments, which are separated from one another socially and spatially. The LA rich now live in private compounds that are patrolled by private security guards and surrounded by high walls, while the poor are confined to inner city ghettos. Davis's notion of "fortress LA" where urban form now follows fear, rather than function, has also been applied to South African and other Third World cities, where crime and economic inequality are on the rise (cf. Bremner 1999). Caldeira (2000) presents one of the most interesting ethnographic applications of Davis's pessimistic post-modernism in her recent book on São Paulo called *City of Walls*. She argues that the implosion of modernism there has created highly reactionary and undemocratic forms of urbanism, dominated by escalating violence, crime and authoritarianism. In a provocative section of the book Caldeira argues that when the spatial segmentation of modernism implodes and economic opportunities deteriorate in places like São Paulo, those who are confined to the urban ghettos increasingly find that they are unable to defend themselves from increasingly violent forms of urbanism that surround them. In this context she argues power is no longer mediated through the segmented space of the locale and through the intersections between the public and private, but is rather expressed directly on the body.

In my characterisation of post-apartheid urbanism in Duncan Village in the 1980s and 1990s, I suggest that aspects of both the above perspectives can be detected in the new forms of urbanism that emerged after apartheid planners and officials were driven from the township in the mid-1980s. As the straight lines and ordered spaces of the apartheid era faded with the influx of new families into the township, so the nature and experience of urban life changed. The post-apartheid urbanism of Duncan Village in the 1990s, I argue, is in many ways as frightening as that presented by Caldeira for the ghettos of São Paulo. It is an urbanism in which crime and violence have been left unchecked and where the physical framework of urban existence – Raban's "hard city" – is no longer able to easily sustain earlier spatial segmentations, such as those between the hostel and the housing estate and the street and the house. As shack areas expand into former housing estates, and closed compounds are politically destabilised, existing social and spatial divisions are either eroded or recast in new spaces under a new political and social regime. In the densely-settled shack areas of Duncan Village, where cohorts of comrades and criminals have dominated the public spaces since the mid-1980s, a new "ecology of fear" has

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set in, undermining former social loyalities and identities. In Duncan Village, this "ecology of fear" had many dimensions, one of which is the repeated and persistent reality of shack fires, which can destroy entire neighbourhoods and families in a single afternoon. And as earlier segmentations of space collapse, so too does the coherence of the groups and social categories that were set up to define and defend these spaces, such as the male-headed nuclear family and the hostel-based migrant groups.

But the period of post-apartheid urbanism is not simply defined by the collapse of older social groups and categories and the advent of an increasing anti-social and violent individualism of the kind described by Caldeira. In my analysis of the "post-modern" urbanism of the 1980s and 1990s, Duncan Village also came to reflect what Relph refers to as the "self-conscious and selective revival of elements of older styles" (1987: 112). In analysing this period, I was struck not only by the increasing levels of interpersonal violence and rape and by the erosion of personal and private space and the deepening poverty, but also by the re-emergence of many older social forms and identities associated with the urbanism of the 1950s. I comment in depth on the re-emergence of matrifocal families, the resurgence of cosmopolitan styles, the reconstruction of older notions of rural youth identity, and on the reinvention of conservative migrant identities in the city, many of which have supposedly disappeared long ago. The revival of these older styles and social forms presents a set of interesting ethnographic puzzles for the study as a whole and raises key question of cultural continuity and change.

Embedded Tales: Red and School, Rural and Urban

If the first part of the dissertation is devoted to writing the cultural history of urbanism of an East London township, conceived against the backdrop of Lefebvre's (1991) theorisation of "spaces of representation" and the "representations of space", the second is concerned with embedding this narrative within a regional context. In many contemporary studies of urbanism there is a tendency not to relate the urban to the rural or the regional, and rather to present it within the framework of a local-global nexus. Processes of globalisation and the associated deepening of consumer culture often provide the frame within which the urban is re-conceptualised. The central thrust of much post-modern writing on the city is to distil and reveal what Williams (1981; [1973] 1993) would call the "structures of feeling". These are essentially the social and emotional contents of being located in particular places at a particular moment in time. In a review of contemporary trends in cultural anthropology, Knauft (1997: 289) argues that in the current moment of theoretical experimentation, where globalisation, space and mobility have

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emerged as key concepts, a great deal of anthropological work has become "historically and ethnographically thin". He suggests that:

> The fluid nature of contemporary identities requires greater documentation in social as well as in imaginary terms. And they require finer connections to past continuities as well as to contemporary disjunctures. If the analytical demand of late modern practices are more complex than the people once thought to be without history, they remain as important on the social ground and in mundane experiences as in the airwaves of affiliation (*ibid.*).

To counter these tendencies, Knauft (1997) calls for a renewed commitment to ethnography within cultural anthropology, but at the same time he warns that we should be careful of a retreat into neo-empiricism. He suggests that the temptation to take "reactionary refuge" either in the comfort of an "experience-near immersion in disorientated fragmentation or disempowered pain", or to re-engaging with "the experience-far descriptivism of political economy" should be avoided (1997: 290). Knauft's review does not provide any easy answers for the route ahead. Nevertheless he suggests that a general process of ethnographic and historical thickening is required, if anthropologists are to consolidate and further develop some of the new insights and theoretical perspectives being developed in relation to globalisation, space and mobility.

To deepen our understanding of urbanism in the South African context, we should also be careful of neo-empiricism as well as not to fall back into the potholes of "experience-far" political economy and an "experience-near" expose` analysis. The answer, I believe, lies in our ability to rethink and reconstruct our regional ethnographies in such a way that the relationship between the urban and the rural can be reconnected in new and imaginative ways. It was Fardon (1990) who argued that we should be wary of embracing new theoretical developments in the discipline at the expense of continuing to develop regional expertise in social and cultural analysis. He claimed that the "ethnographer's magic" can easily fail to charm in an anthropology that is "devoid of mastery over regional literature" (1990: 25). Appadurai (1986: 360) makes a similar point but in a more general way when he notes that:

> The central fact here is that what anthropologists find, in this place or that, far from being independent data for the construction and verification of theory, are in fact a very complicated compound of local realities and the contingencies of metropolitan theory.

To properly contextualise cultural change in the urban we must avoid moving too quickly between the local and the global, and thereby fail to adequately situate urban social forms and cultural expressions within their regional context. This is especially critical in the African context where, with the exception of a handful of mega-cities such as Johannesburg and Lagos, urban

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social and cultural forms are still profoundly influenced by their regional contexts. In fact, Thornton (1996) has gone as far as to conceptualise major southern African cities as "city states", which are tightly integrated into distinctive rural hinterlands. His observations remain relevant, despite current tendencies towards increasing population mobility and an engagement with the cultural content of globalisation. The case of East London presents a classic example of this. In the 1960s, the Trilogy researchers explained that one of the reasons they were so concerned with the urban-rural nexus was because the vast majority of the city's African population were Xhosa-speaking and were born and brought up in a radius of a few hundred kilometres of the city. This reality has changed little in the past 40 years, despite the collapse of apartheid and the increasing levels of transactional population flows in southern Africa. In fact, in the 1980s and 1990s over 95 % of the new "immigrants" into East London have come from the Eastern Cape, which now includes the rural hinterlands of the former Xhosa homelands of the Transkei and Ciskei (cf. Bank 1999a).

The general recognition of this reality is reflected in the sustained empirical and theoretical treatment given to the rural-urban divide in southern African anthropology, as we have seen above in the review of literature. The persistent reflections of the rural in the urban are, however, not only related to the parochial character of many African towns and cities. They are also centrally related, as Mamdani (1996) has so eloquently explained, to the way in which the urban and the rural, as representations of the customary and the civil, have been constituted within the political machinery of the colonial and post-colonial African states (including the post-apartheid state). The bifurcated African state, he argues, continues to protect and entrench rural identities based on customary entitlements in rural areas. As long as this is the case, Mamdani asserts, the rural will always play a part in the politics of the urban. From his point of view, the actual material changes that prevail in rural areas, or the nature of the connectivity between the urban and the rural, are far less significant to the survival of the rural identities than the rights and entitlements attached to rural identities by such states. In terms of this perspective, one would expect little change in the ways rural identities have been constructed and expressed in urban areas like East London since the 1950s. We would anticipate finding the old categories of the Trilogy, those of townsmen and tribesmen, still firmly in place. But the problem with Mamdani's analysis is that he underplays the role of African agency. In Mamdani's analysis, rural identities are imposed from above, rather than made from below.

With regard to the Eastern Cape, the anthropological literature – in contrast to Mamdani's perspective – presents a perspective from below, from the daily cultural practices and attitudes of those living in rural communities. In this literature, a great deal of attention has been focused on the conditions under which older cultural practices and beliefs have been retained or

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substituted by new values and orientations. The dominant narrative of cultural change in Eastern Cape rural areas presented in regional ethnographies has been one of cultural loss, where pre-existing cultural traditions and practices have fallen away in the face of a weakening rural resource-base and the entrenchment of migrant labour. From the time of Monica Hunter's (1936), *Reaction to Conquest*, anthropologists have identified a dual process of cultural breakdown and resistance in rural areas. The former process has been noted with regret and has been used to explain a host of contemporary social problems (cf. Hunter 1936; Hellman 1948). For many anthropologists of this generation one of the great dangers of rapid urbanisation and regional industrialisation was the tendency of modernisation to trap people in between the modern and the traditional. For the Trilogy researchers, it was the "half-Reds" and the "urban riff-raff" who had not been properly integrated into the modern, that were thought to be culturally the most in danger. As neither "townsmen" nor "tribesmen", caught somewhere in between these two ideal types – in a space Malinowski (1961) disparagingly referred to as the "skokiaan culture" of South African cities[9] – they apparently suffered the most. Much has, of course, changed in anthropology since these days and it is indeed ironic that it is now precisely those who are caught "in between cultures", the cultural hybrids, that become the new heroes of the anthropology of the 1990s (cf. Hannerz 1992; 1996; Moore 2000).

In the theoretical context of the 1950s, however, it is not surprising that the Mayers became so fascinated with the Red migrants of East London and celebrated their capacity to resist being drawn into the shady world of the *amatshipa* (lapsed migrants), the *amakhazana* (unmarried mothers) or the *amatsotsi* ("city slicker" youth) – the new kings and queens of the "skokiaan culture" of the city. But the Trilogy showed equal respect for the new breed of smart, clean-cut, respectably-dressed and well-mannered Africans, who had seemingly successfully made the transition from tribesmen to townsmen, from the traditional to the modern. In his introduction to *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, Philip Mayer declared that the main purpose of the Trilogy was to describe rather than analyse. And this is exactly what these studies did by filling in the cultural and social content of different urban cultural styles in East London. The focus of Mayer's work, in particular, was on describing the basic social institutions and values that underpinned Red and School life-styles. By the 1970s the conceptual framework that separated the urban and the rural as opposing cognitive and cultural systems was being challenged with the rise of dependency theory which stressed the functional integration of the urban and the rural within a single social, political and economic system. The Mayers responded to critiques of their original projects (see Chapter 2) by suggesting that Red and School were, in fact, historically constituted forms of

9. *Skokiaan* is a potent home-brewed alcoholic beverage, which is made from a mix of ingredients.

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resistance to colonial and racial domination. In his conceptualisation, the Red ideology was associated with a pre-existing "folk-culture", which had survived processes of social change, while the School ideology was constructed more as a blend of the old and the new. However, in revisiting their earlier work, they noted that the Red-School divide which had existed in the Eastern Cape since the nineteenth century was fading rapidly by the 1970s, as a result of deepening industrialisation and the further erosion of traditional cultural values and practices. Earlier resistance ideologies, they claimed, were collapsed, as cultural identities blurred in the city and increasing secularisation swept through the countryside.

Philip Mayer's essay (1980) on Red and School as "rural resistance ideologies" set the agenda for the next generation of anthropologists to re-enter the cultural landscape of the Eastern Cape. This time their point of access was not the urban but the rural areas where considerable new research was undertaken during the 1980s. The two leading figures to emerge during this period were de Wet (1989; 1995; de Wet & Whisson 1997), who followed Monica Wilson into the Keiskammahoek district, and Pat McAllister (1985; 1989; 1991; 1997; 2001), who followed Philip Mayer into Shixini in the Willowvale district of the Transkei. Both scholars did most of their field-work in the 1980s and these points of entry mark their work. One major difference between the Keiskammahoek of the early 1950s, when Monica Wilson worked there, and the one visited by de Wet, was that large parts of the district had been restructured and reshaped by agricultural betterment planning and Ciskei homeland development. De Wet's work focuses mainly on the impact of agricultural betterment and resettlement on the lives of rural householders. It documents how apartheid planning affected rural households, social networks and cultural institutions, and tells a bitter tale of deepening poverty, declining access to rural resources, social fragmentation and rising rural unemployment. McAllister, on the other hand, worked in an area where betterment had not been properly implemented and where a strong and co-operative communal agrarian ethic prevailed. To understand how this communal ethic was maintained in a context of labour migration and homeland development, McAllister focused mainly on the field of ritual and the way in which these social dramas were used to construct meaningful social relationships that served as a buffer against exploitation (1985; 1991).

In trying to explain cultural change, these authors continued to work within the old retention-substitution model of cultural change. In the de Wet case, the dominant narrative was that of substitution. With forced resettlement, he argues, communal values and practices were quickly eroded as people drifted apart socially, and an increasingly individualistic ethos, the secularised *gemienschaft* of which Mayer spoke in his 1980 essay, took hold. In de Wet's analysis,

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the newly restructured households of the resettlement areas do, however, emerge as points of resistance, units of struggle, forever manipulating their size, shape and geographical reach in order to grasp hold of scarce material resources and retain their social coherence (de Wet 1985; 1995; de Wet and Holbrook 1997). In McAllister's work, it is the unbettered homesteads of Shixini, the scattered *imzi* on the ridges, that emerge as the focal points of resistance. In this case, however, they insert themselves into a wider web of communal relations and social obligations forged through co-operative labour, beer drinks and ritual. While both these sets of ethnographies provide detailed accounts of the areas under investigation and have proved to be important studies in a number of ways[11], they are nevertheless firmly located within the resistance paradigm elaborated in Mayer's 1980 account of the dynamics of regional cultural change. The image we are left with is one of continuing resistance, but in a context where the recovery and reinvention of an earlier communal agrarian ethic has become increasingly difficult, if not impossible. In terms of this framework, the notion of Redness is associated with retention and resistance, apparently typifying a point of original authenticity (as in Mda's account) from which rural communities either depart, or towards which they continue to struggle in the face of social change.

Another way of looking at the issue of Redness would be to see it not as something standing outside of the modern, as a beacon of authenticity and a point of departure, but rather as a historically-constituted cultural hybrid established within modernity itself. Garcia Canclini (1995) in his recent work on modernity and cultural hybridity in Latin America argues that the linear substitution-retention model of rural cultural change is not particularly useful for the analysis of cultural change in Latin America. He sees Latin American modernisation not as an alien and dominant force that works through the substitution of tradition, but rather as a project of multidirectional renovation from the inside. He locates the Latin American modernisation process at the intersection of what he calls "heterogeneous temporalities", which involve complex processes of "intercultural hybridisation" and "hybrid sociability". He argues that one cannot just "enter or leave modernity" since we are all defined within it. The most one can hope for, Canclini argues, is to radicalise "the project of modernity". According to Canclini, "Latin American countries now are the product of the sedimentation, juxtaposition and intercrossing of Indian tradition, of colonial Catholic hispanism and of modern political, educational and communicative practices (1995: 71). But this, he argues, does not occur through conventional processes of cultural syncretism, where different cultural elements are separated out so as to then – and only then – be

11. De Wet's Keiskammahoek work has been particularly instrumental in establishing a precedent that agricultural betterment be recognised as a legitimate basis for land restitution and has contributed directly to the settlement of the Chatha land claim in 2000/1.

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mixed together. Rather, this takes place through a dynamic process of trans-cultural exchange where the modern often fails to "substitute" the "traditional", which is itself constantly being reworked and re-articulated, in relation to the categories of the dominant classes. Canclini describes the latter process as one of "truncated innovation".

In Canclini's view, identity formation is an ongoing process of negotiating difference, oscillating between fixity and openness, and for our purposes it provides a useful framework for the re-interpretation of Red and School as hybrid cultural forms caught within the interstices of modernisation. By using the notion of "truncated innovation", we could, for instance, begin to explain why such a determined culture of resistance, with such oppositional notions of identity, is itself infused with many aspects of western material culture, ranging from Dutch cooking pots to paraffin stoves. But perhaps more importantly it allows us to see how the articulations and re-articulations of Red identities were themselves shaped by the dominant classificatory discourses that defined the rural and urban locations of the Eastern Cape.[12] The fact that rural Africans defined each other as Red and School in their official correspondence with government officials and agricultural extension officers is indicative of the extent to which Red and School was as much part of the classificatory regimes of the dominant classes as of the dominated. Seen in this light, the decline of Red and School can never simply be seen as a consequence of the material changes that undermined older cultural practices and forms of social coherence. Rather, it must be viewed in the context of the changing representational order to the dominant classes as well (cf. Kahn 1993). A reading of the post-1950 apartheid representations of the village as a social space in the Eastern Cape suggests a shift away from Red and School as common-sense forms of classification and identity formation within rural locations. In the betterment era, as James's work (2001) seems to suggest, the space of the rural was collapsed within official discourse into a singular category, which was seen in contrast to the urban (cf. Ashforth 1990). To allow newly-established rural closer settlement villages to function effectively and the new political framework of ethnic nationalism to take hold, it was also seemingly not in the interests of the homeland state that rural communities were divided on these grounds. This is, of course, not to suggest that such distinctions did not remain crucial to the ways in which Africans themselves came to interpret change, as is explored below.

Two crucial points emerge from the above discussion with regard to reconstructing our regional ethnographies of the urban and the rural, of Red and School. Firstly (as I have already suggested for the anthropology of urbanism), we need to deal with the notion of identity formation as a *relational* process, as ongoing cultural dialogue between spaces of representation

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and representations of space. The recognition of the relational aspects of identity formation has encouraged some cultural theorists to argue that identity is always formed in a "third space", a zone between the familiar and the foreign (Bhabha 1994; Soja 1995). It is never then a retreat into a pre-existing form, but always in some sense a hybrid. As Papastergiadis (2000: 98) points out:

> Identity is neither in the interior space of already known experience nor doomed to the exteriority of an experiment with the unknown. Cultural identity is thus never confined to a space of an enclosed segment, nor is it projected onto an open plane, but is formed through the practice of bridging both differences and similitudes between the self and the other. Bridging involves the performance of two tasks simultaneously: it requires memory and experience. To know where the self has come from is to gain a sense of belonging that enables one to risk the journey ahead.

The other point that emerges from the above is that we need to look rather more critically at the urban-rural binary that underpins Mamdani's (1996) account. While it is not difficult to recognise historical continuities in the "representational order" of the customary, we also need to note that the ways in which officials interacted with local populations and the categories they used were also often regionally specific. In the Eastern Cape, Red and School emerged as a significant social division, as did other categories in other parts of the country (cf. James 1999; 2001). The tendency amongst some historians, like Mager (1999), to ignore the notion of Red and School because it is associated with an outdated colonial political paradigm is thus also unwise.

Ethnographic Refusals: Gender and Generation

Ortner (1995), in recent review of historical and ethnographic studies of resistance, commented on the failure of many anthropologists to highlight internal division and conflicts within dominated communities in their accounts of resistance. She refers to this as a matter of "ethnographic refusal". She states that attention to the complex "ambivalences and ambiguities" that inevitably emerge from "the intricate web of articulations and disarticulations that always exist between the dominant and dominated" will always reveal internal divisions (1995: 190). Like Knauft (1997), she calls for a "thickening of resistance ethnography". In the Eastern Cape, where notions of Red-School, retention and substitution, have provided the master narrative for the understanding of cultural change, there has been evidence of a certain degree of "ethnographic refusal" in relation to the topics of gender and generational conflict. Analyses of gender-based struggles of the kind produced by Ferguson (1985) in his work on the "bovine

12. Compare Kahn's (1993) work on colonial and peasant forms of classification and identity in Indonesia.

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mystique" in Lesotho, or by Webster on the way in which men and women in KwaZulu-Natal utilise ethnicised discourses to compete for resources, are conspicuously absent from the Eastern Cape ethnographic record.[13] Similarly, there are relatively few recent studies of youth masculinities and rising male inter-generational conflict as documented in the 1980s and 1990s by Delius (1996), van Kessel (1999), and Niehaus (2001) for rural communities in the former Lebowa and Gazankulu homelands.[14] This omission is unfortunate, because the question of youth identities, masculinities and organisational politics featured prominently in the Mayers' post-trilogy Eastern Cape research in the 1960s and early 1970s (cf. Mayer & Mayer 1970; 1972). The impression left in this work, most of which still remains unpublished, was that the rapid fading of Red and School identities in rural areas was associated in the 1970s with escalating male generational conflict (cf. O'Connell 1980).

These ethnographies, like those of Red and School, also need to be contextualised in order to understand their influence on the urban. Mager's important recent book, *Gender and the Making of the Ciskei Bantustan* (1999), provided some clues. In her analysis, she suggests that in the 1950s and 1960s, apartheid was attempting to overlay their categorical distinctions between the urban and the rural with a new gender order. Mager (1992; 1999) convincingly argues that agricultural betterment planning and the restructuring of traditional authorities in this period were principally concerned with reconstituting patriarchy in the countryside. This process, as I have suggested in my earlier discussion, was mirrored in the urban planning regimes that were adopted in the new townships of East London. For women in the Eastern Cape, the apartheid period saw a fundamental change in their position as their identities and social positions were recast within the ideology of the state. Doreen Massey (1994: 147) has argued that space and time are often presented as a dualism, the latter defined in opposition to the former. Massey argues that the coupled concepts of space and women are frequently located as the subordinate position upon which the dynamism of time and man rest. They constitute the passive and static template on which the agency of men through time is inscribed. My reading of the apartheid period, following Mager (1999), suggests that it reconstructed such a position between gendered space and time, and in the process tried to deny women agency in their own subordinated history.[15]

By inserting senior African men within changing positions of power within their own communities, that were directly underwritten by state power, these men were placed in an ambiguous and contradictory position in relation to apartheid, being both beneficiaries and

13. One exception here is Liebenberg's study (1997) of the way married women deal with inequality in a "traditional" village in the former Transkei.
14. McAllister youth study – there were many of these studies in the 1960s and 1970.
15. My analysis of this period owes greatly to Mager's (1999) insightful regional history of the 1950s and 1960s and her own theorisation of the relationship between space and gender.

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subordinates at the same time. They were beneficiaries in the sense that the state entrenched their power and control over women and youth and gave them certain entitlements to land and property, while simultaneously subordinating these same men to new forms of racial domination and exploitation as workers within a cheap labour economy. By the 1970s, rural ethnographic research suggested that this contradiction had already begun to unravel with rising evidence of male-generational conflict in both urban and rural areas in the Eastern Cape. It is interesting to note here, and as I show in this study, that it was in the rural rather than in the urban areas that some of the most intense generational struggles began to unfold in the late 1970s and into the 1980s. At the centre of these struggles were competing notions of masculinity. Here, I show that the period of the 1980s was one in which social and political power within the city and in parts of the surrounding countryside was transferred from older men to younger men. It was a period in which men struggled amongst themselves for loyalties of women, for the control of resources and for the power to run their own communities. Mamdani (1996) misses this crucial dynamic in his analysis and therefore fails to show that the politics of the urban and the rural in the 1980s were largely an expression of another contradiction, that which had emerged in African male generational politics.

If apartheid modernists' plans, as Hooper (1995) would have it, can also be read as a series of "poems of male desire", "fantasies of control and domination" written against men's fears of the power of independent women, then political liberation offered women an escape route from these regimes. It offered new possibilities for them to re-enter and occupy public space, to exert power within the home and form social networks that express new aspirations. In this dissertation I write the history of the 1994 post-election period as one in which women struggled to re-emerge from underneath the mantle of two generations of apartheid-style male domination. The prioritisation of gender equity within the post-apartheid political system has contributed greatly to this process, especially in rural areas, where government grants and development agencies are now explicitly targeting women's rights in development, service provision and income generation. But it is also a central feature of the urban scenario as well. Only here women had to rely much more on their own resources, networks and skills to open new spaces of relative power and identity. In searching for new opportunities, I suggest, women have actively narrowed the urban-rural divide. I suggest that as the former tactics of women (to again invoke de Certeau 1986) have evolved into strategies, they have encountered increasing difficulties in their relations with men. It is not surprising then, that in so much of the "home-made" urban South African anthropology of the 1990s discussed later, scholars have repeatedly noted the lack of moral cohesion of urban household units and have stressed rising levels of gender-based conflict, discord and violence. Indeed in the 1990s, rape and violence against

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women have emerged, alongside HIV/Aids, as the most serious social problems in South African cities.

In this study, I attempt to go beyond recent "ethnographic refusals" in Eastern Cape ethnography by situating gender and generation relations, alongside the urban and the rural, as central axes of social cleavages and political struggle that cut across spatial boundaries, and constitute themselves as major social contradictions. In constructing an account of the unfolding forms of urbanism that have characterised life in an African township in one South African city, I have therefore not confined my commentary and analysis to the city alone. My aim has been to "thicken" the ethnography, not by simply adding, as Knauft warns, a cacophony of new voices of "disorientated fragmentation and disempowered pain" or more experience-far political economy, but by "thickening" the layers of regional analysis within which my anthropology of urbanism is constructed. I attempt this by devoting separate chapters to youth styles and politics in the city, to migrants and their identity politics and to the women and gender relations in the city. In my final chapter, I leave the city for the space of the village to explore the contemporary significance of Red and School in the rural context.

In developing my arguments, I consciously attempt to transcend the "ethnographic refusals" of the earlier Eastern Cape ethnography of resistance, while at the same time trying to avoid the temptation of moving too quickly and uncritically between the local and the global. My study also responds to Ortner's (1995) call for new types of resistance ethnography that carefully link the politics of external domination with the internal politics within subordinated groups. In order to make these connections, I argue that southern African anthropologists need to move beyond their narrow concerns with the rural-urban divide and with linear and mechanistic models of cultural development. Like Canclini (1995), I wish to retain notions of process and directionality, and warn against reading too much into the re-emergence of older practices and social forms, which often re-appear as "truncated innovations" that cast their shadows across time. Like many other studies of urbanism, I try to define the central social and cultural dynamics at work within my periodisation of urbanism and constantly compare and contrast these in order to establish differences and similarities.

In conclusion, the study attempts to tell embedded tales which work within a theoretically self-conscious historical anthropology of space, but does not forget the rural reach of anthropological research and seeks to include that in the anthropology of urbanism. The thesis also attempts to construct its narrative of cultural change and identity within the framework that constantly refers back to the main themes and concerns that defined the work of the Trilogy and the Mayers' subsequent ethnographic research in the Eastern Cape. It also embed its larger

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narratives within the stories of specific social groups and categories – such as youth, migrants and women – which cover the period between the 1950s and the 1990s.

Methodological Considerations

The process of attempting to update and restudy earlier anthropological work, as many authors have noted, is far from unproblematic. One serious problem encountered is related to the silences of these researchers on issues of methodology and field-work strategy. Another problem, which Moore and Vaughan (1994) encountered in their re-analysis of the work of Audrey Richards among the Bemba of the Northern Province of Zambia, is that field-work strategies themselves often are determined by theoretical interest. In the case of Richards's work amongst the Bemba, it was discovered that not only had Richards been highly mobile in the field, making it extremely difficult to locate her work geographically, but "her mobility had been of a particular kind" (Moore & Vaughan 1994: xiii). Being primarily interested in the Bemba chief system, she moved from one politically-significant village to another, to enable her to draw significant contrasts between the settlements she visited. Moore and Vaughan (1994) conclude that they were never in a position to directly follow in Richards's footsteps, but had to settle rather on putting her observations into context, both in time and space (*ibid.*).

I experienced similar problems in attempting to track exactly where in East Bank, now Duncan Village, the Mayers and their colleagues conducted their original field-work. The discussion of research methodology in the *Xhosa in Town* Trilogy is brief and fails to provide a comprehensive picture of how the research was undertaken. I obtained greater clarity on this when I visited Philip Mayer in Oxford in 1994, when I was starting to undertake research in East London to discover more about their methods. However, even when more precise information was available on research methodology, the option of directly following in the footsteps of the Mayers and their colleagues in East London was impossible because of a different order of mobility: the kind that results from forced removals. In the 1950s, when the "Xhosa in Town" team worked in East London, they worked mainly in East Bank location, the city's largest black residential area housing approximately 60 000 people. After 1964, virtually the entire old location was razed to the ground in a prolonged series of forced removals, which lasted for twenty years. This meant that when I first revisited the location in 1994, it was a completely different place, although some of the same people lived there.

The research for this project has been undertaken over a prolonged period and has involved three main phases. My first period of engagement after a preliminary exploration of the area in 1994 occurred in 1995–1996, when I conducted a detailed household survey in key areas of

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the location. The survey set out to update the social and demographic data collected by Reader (1960), in particular, in his 1954 household survey of the same area. Some of the main findings of this survey are reported in Chapter 4, where I engage with Duncan Village in the 1990s and seek to reflect on changes and similarities between this period and the 1950s. Direct comparison are, of course, difficult because of the way the urban residential ecology has changed over the past 50 years, but this work nevertheless gave me a socio-demographic profile of the area in which I now started to conduct my own interviews and observations. During this period I also conducted 50 extensive interviews in informal settlements in the location. These interviews focused on the life histories of the residents who lived there and their relationship to urban and rural resources. During this period I worked closely with a local student, Mandisi Jekwa, who lived in the area and also served on the Duncan Village Residents Association. Some of the findings of this work were published in two previous studies (Bank 1997; Manona, Bank & Higgenbottom 1996).

My second major phase of research in Duncan Village started in 1996, when the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) was commissioned to undertake a longitudinal study of energy-use practices in the low-income households of the location funded by the Department of Energy and Mineral Affairs. In terms of the project proposal, the team was to follow 60 households in a range of formal and informal settlements as well as additional interviews in the hostels. It was during this period of the research that I firstly worked extensively in B-hostel, where I collected a further 30 life histories and explored a range of issues not only related to energy use, but also to questions related to migrant aspirations, cultural practices and identities. While I was doing this work, various mother-tongue Xhosa-speaking research assistants, notably Ntobeko Jack, Bongani Mlomo and Phumeza Lujabe, attached to this project, continued to collect household, life and energy histories in various formal and informal settlements. This work was not restricted to Duncan Village (Proper), but extended to C-section as well, which was undergoing electrification. Aspects of their research has been drawn on in this dissertation and has informed the argument in important ways.

After completing my work in the hostels, I worked with Phumeza Lujabe in the formal housing sections in Duncan Village (Proper), especially the areas around Sandile and Florence streets (which was adjacent to the areas where I had explored informal settlements). But it was during this period that I started to work much more "outside" the framework of household surveys and life histories. My interest in shack fires, which was partly related to aspects of domestic fuel-use practices, emerged as a major topic of fascination, and I spent large amounts of my time on the streets and at fire sites exploring this theme. Here I worked with street committees and other structures to assist victims, but also learnt a great deal about how these committees worked, who ran them and how issues of identity and fear dominated the public

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politics of the street. During this period, I worked closely with Mandisi Jekwa and Bongani Mlomo. A lot of the information that I gathered at this time has been fed into Chapter 5, which deals with youth politics and identity. In writing up the energy material, I focused heavily on issues of consumption and explicitly reviewed and applied anthropological insights from the field to our analysis of household fuel-use practices as well as to issues of identity (Bank 1999a; 1999b; 2001; Bank *et al.* 2000).

The third and perhaps the most critical phase of the research undertaken for this project occurred through my appointment as a researcher on the East and West Bank land restitution claims, which were lodged in 1995 but were only researched between 1999 and 2001. These projects brought me into contact with former East and West Bank residents who were scattered around the city and surrounding rural areas after the forced removals of the 1960s and 1970s. This work took me back to the 1950s and entailed the collection of life histories and street histories from the old locations, and particularly East Bank location. In the process of collecting these histories and learning about the old location, extensive oral interviews were conducted and these oral narratives inform this study in many ways. Extensive use was also made of a technique called photo-illicitation (Banks 2001). The local photographic culture of the old location was such that most urban-born families kept some photographs of themselves and their families. The interest in photograph portraiture and other personal photographs kept at least two photographic studios in business in the old location of the 1950s. Over the past two years the ISER in East London has collected over 1000 images from individuals and the former owners and photographers from these studies. The images are rare and valuable in themselves, especially since they document lives, activities and aspirations of urban-born families, about which the work of the Trilogy says little. Excursions to the beach, activities at the dance-halls, events such as the Bantu Advertising Trade (BAT) Fair and other public events, and the fascination and engagement with modernity and with cosmopolitan dress and style-making are all imaged as highly meaningful and significant vehicles of experience, self-representation, and personal acts of memory and identity. These representations and meanings were markedly different from those found in the *Xhosa in Town* trilogy. The photographs thus provided a visual and vernacular archive and narrative of the 1950s and beyond, that was also an alternative baseline of urbanism and identity in the city and on which I draw in this dissertation.

In my attempt to understand style, both in the 1950s and later, I have also made extensive use of these and other photographs by using them as points of discussion. In my re-analysis of Red and School in the rural areas outside East London, which appears in Chapter 8, I have also used photographs as a device in data collection. The field-work for this chapter was done in 1998 and 2001 in the Mooiplaas rural location 50 km. outside East London. Although there is not

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sufficient space in this study to fully analyse and explore the scopic regimes and photographic cultures and contexts within which these images were produced, I have nevertheless used a large number of them for the arguments I make in relation to style-making and identity politics in general. In crucial respects they are narrated by the visual. Working with the visual and with photographs in particular, I have come to realise that it is an extremely valuable resource for the analysis of urbanism. I only regret having stumbled on it at a fairly late stage in my own research - how much richer would my own field research of the 1990s have been had I used images as a point of entry into people's lives and experiences? At a methodological level, my argument about the shift from urban anthropology to the anthropology of urbanism requires not only a re-assessment of spatial strategies, but also implies a shift from the textual to the visual (cf. *inter alia* Banks 2001; Pink 2001).

Organisation of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the evolving form of urbanism that emerged in Duncan Village from the 1950s and the 1990s in three chapters: Chapter 2 deals with the 1950s and the account of the Mayers of the urban dynamic in the city; Chapter 3 with the apartheid restructuring in the 1960s and 1970s, which is analysed against the lens of modernist planning and restructuring; and Chapter 4 with the period after the Duncan Village Massacre of 1985, which marked the beginning of the post-apartheid period of the 1990s. These chapters focus on urban experience and the evolving nature of urbanism in this township over time, paying careful attention to my three major themes of space, gender and identity.

The second part of the dissertation is devoted to a detailed exploration of the way specific social groups and categories experienced the evolving urbanism described in the previous three chapters. It focuses on youth (Chapter 5), migrants (Chapter 6) and women (Chapter 7) by tracing their involvement in the changing identity politics of the township from the 1950s through to the 1990s. These chapters are all specifically interested in the two main sets of dichotomies, which govern the thesis: that between the urban and the rural and between the private and the public. In the final chapter (Chapter 8), I leave the city for a rural location on the fringes of East London to investigate the changing meaning of Red and School outside the city. This chapter picks up on the main theoretical themes of the dissertation and relates them to the space of the village. The Conclusion reflects on the meaning of the findings presented in the dissertation for the current phase of post-apartheid restructuring, where many of the same divisions and contrasts, which characterise older periods have re-emerged. In all the chapters, the

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thesis specifically engages with the work of the Trilogy and Philip and Iona Mayer to ensure that the theme of revisiting is constantly present.

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CHAPTER TWO

HOME-MADE ANTHROPOLOGY: REVISITING THE *XHOSA IN TOWN* TRILOGY

Introduction

The notion of "the field", as classically constructed within social and cultural anthropology, is a site or space away from "home". Clifford (1997) has located and analysed field-work within a long and increasingly contested tradition of Western travel practices. Gupta and Ferguson (1997a) have also interrogated field-work as a set of spatial practices that have defined hierarchies of values and meaning within the system of knowledge of anthropology. They argue that:

> The very distinction between 'field' and 'home' leads directly to what we call a hierarchy of purity of field sites. After all, if the field is most appropriately a place that is not home then some places will necessarily be more not home than others, and hence more 'field-like'. All ethnographic research is done 'in the field', but some fields are more equal than others – especially those which are understood to be distant, exotic or strange (Gupta & Ferguson 1997a: 13).

They show that the manner in which "the field" is hierarchically constructed has resulted in a similar grading of the intellectual worth of different topics, themes and objects of anthropological research. Things that are "different" and "local", they suggest, become defined as more suitable anthropological objects than those that are similar to "home", or deemed more familiar (*ibid.*: 25). As a result, remote rural villages in distant parts of the globe became highly valued sites of anthropological enquiry, while urban neighbourhoods, by virtue of their physical and cultural familiarity and proximity to "home" were generally less valued. In the 1950s and 1960s, it was widely believed that only once anthropologists had cut their teeth on "real" field-work, could "tamer" topics like urban research be considered. Gupta and Ferguson (1997a) conclude that the spatial practices of field-work played a critical role in perpetuating an idea of culture as a territorially contained and bounded entity, as the practice and theory of anthropology remained closely intertwined.

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In terms of field-work as spatial practice – as a process of spatial occupation, discursive mapping and embodied practice – Duncan Village in East London has been constituted as a highly charged anthropological site: a well-defined space of cultural knowledge and production. In the 1930s, Monica Hunter conducted field-work there as part of her classic *Reaction to Conquest* (1936). Written up as part of an exploration of the cultural impact of urbanisation on the Pondo people (in a broad sense a subset of Xhosa-speakers), she left it to the end of her monograph, offering a "culture contact" perspective. Twenty years later, the Mayers embarked on extended field-work in the old East Bank location (subsequently called Duncan Village). Their 1950s engagement with East Bank people proved to be much longer and more significant than Hunter's, and resulted in three anthropological monographs (Reader 1960; Mayer [1961] 1971; Pauw 1963). The Trilogy's centre-piece as we have seen in the previous chapter, was *Townsmen or Tribesmen* with its famous exploration of migrant life and a Red/School cultural divide in the city's locations. An instant urban anthropology classic, it was reprinted four times. In 1971, the whole Trilogy was updated, each with a postscript detailing changes since the original. The series has left a strong legacy in the themes and perspectives of South African anthropology (cf. Spiegel & McAllister 1991).

The primary aim of this chapter is to revisit the 1950s *Xhosa in Town* research, which has already been introduced in Chapter 1. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first deals with the evidence and arguments of the Trilogy and evaluates them against oral and visual histories collected among former East Bank residents during 1999 and 2000. Close attention is given to the field-work strategies of the Mayers and their colleagues, and to the broader conceptual framework, which they used for analysing their data. I argue that by confining their field-work to the home, "the household" and the backyard, the Mayers and their colleagues ignored key public sites of cultural production beyond the house and consequently missed critical aspects of the location's changing cultural dynamic.[1] In particular, they overlooked the extent to which cosmopolitan styles of various kinds, rather than rurally-oriented Red styles, dominated East Bank's cultural scene during the 1950s. I also suggest that their focus on providing cultural and institutional content to *Red* and *School* as social categories, directed attention away from points of intersection and processes of hybridisation in identity formation and style-making in the city's location. Their work pays inadequate attention, I argue, to the power relations between those involved in Red and

1. In this dissertation, I make a distinction between the term "location", which I use to refer to the black residential areas in East London, such as the East Bank, West Bank and Cambridge locations, which pre-date the apartheid era. I use the term "township", on the other hand, to refer specifically to the new black urban residential areas of the apartheid era. The distinction attempts to highlight the marked differences in urban planning and political management that governed black urban residential development in the pre-1950 and post-1950 periods (see Robinson 1998 for further discussion).

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School identities in the city, and I also question the extent to which the adoption of one or other of these identities was a matter of "personal choice" as their work implies.

The second part of the chapter draws on the narratives and photographs of former East Bank residents to explore how a different set of spatial practices and field-work strategies might have created opportunities for an alternative reading of the location's 1950s cultural dynamics. I suggest that, had the Mayers and their colleagues ventured into the more public spaces of the veranda, street, dance-hall, the public square, the beach, and sports ground, they would have encountered a very different set of social and cultural dynamics. By adopting different spatial practices in their field-work, the Mayers and their colleagues would have been able to escape the binarism of their theoretical approach and describe a far more fluid and dynamic situation than the one encountered in their essentially "home-made ethnography". The chapter's main aim, therefore, is not to provide an ethnographically detailed re-analysis of East Bank in the 1950s, but rather to revisit critically the Mayers' work in view of the theoretical and methodological concerns raised earlier. It provides a foundation for my own ethnographic explorations of a historical anthropology of urbanism, which is centrally built around the exploration of space and involves an engaged contrast between East Bank in the 1950s and Duncan Village in the 1990s.

The *Xhosa in Town* Project

As an intellectual project, the *Xhosa in Town* series emerged in the wake of burgeoning scholarships on urbanisation and social change on the Zambian Copperbelt from the Rhodes Livingstone Institute (RLI), established by the British government in Northern Rhodesia in 1937. Godfrey Wilson's path-breaking study of the mining community at Northern Rhodesia's Broken Hill (1942) laid the foundation for a new tradition of urbanisation studies, which became the RLI's hallmark. Within the colonial milieu there was much discussion and concern around the concept of "stabilisation" – a term used to refer to the length of stay of Africans in the city, and to the increasingly permanent urban settlement of African workers and their families. According to Ferguson (1999), RLI anthropologists aimed to challenge the prevailing wisdom in colonial government circles that a "tribesman" in town remained a "tribesman". They intended to counter the assumptions of colonial administrators and mine owners that African townsmen constituted "a very primitive population" (*ibid.*: 24–37; Brown 1973; Werbner 1984; Shumaker 2001).[2]

2. Compare Crehan (1997: 52–65) who argues that the RLI scholars working in rural areas remained committed to the conceptual framework of the "tribe study". In her work, she stresses the theoretical and political conservatism of the RLI.

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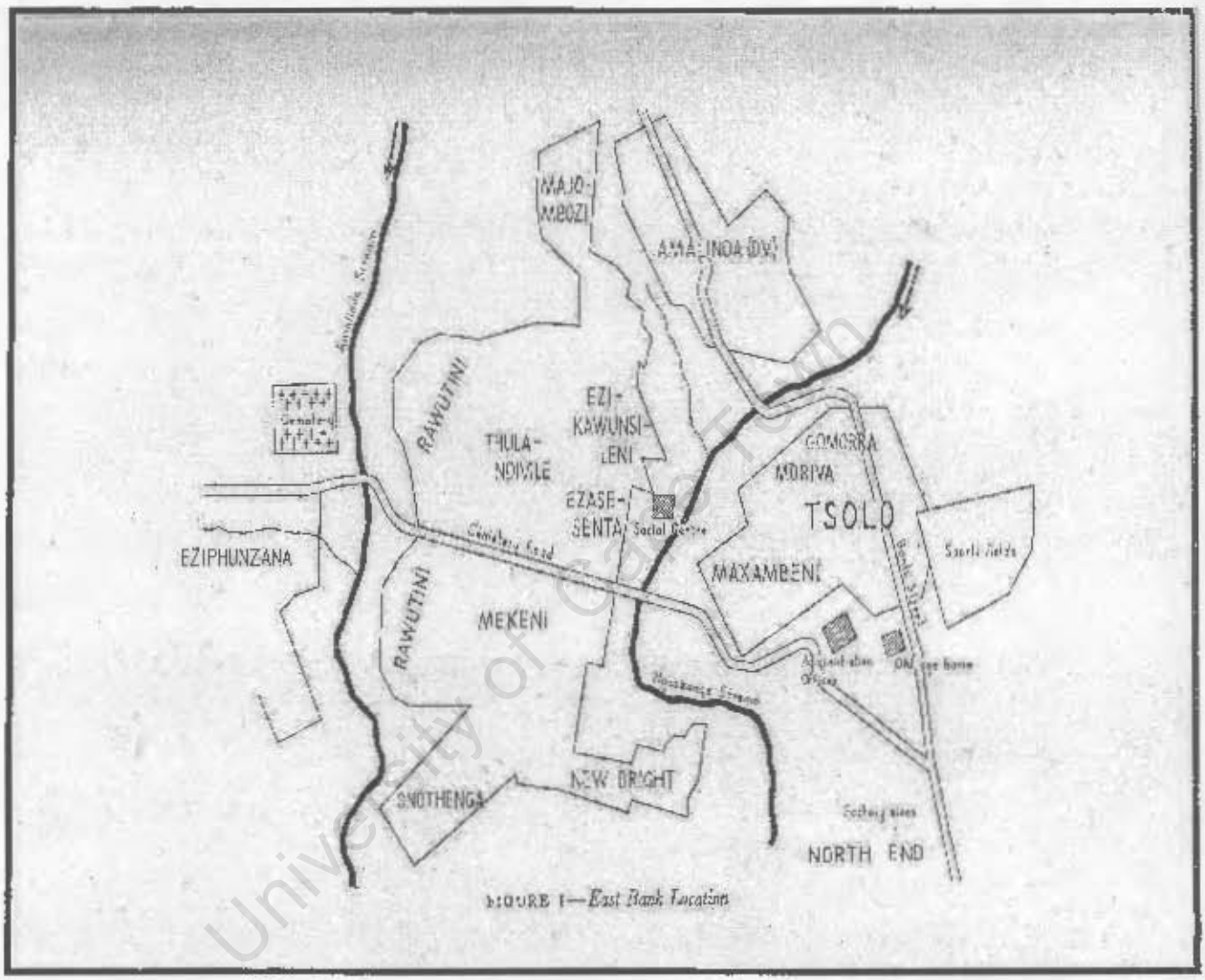
This political context led liberal anthropologists at the RLI to establish the extent to which the colonial regime had underestimated the capacity and speed with which Africans entering urban areas were able to adapt and absorb essential aspects of modernity, and western values and life-styles. They argued that Africans responded to urbanisation and social change by shedding their rural "tribesmen" identities and adopting new urban identities. This thinking was captured in Gluckman's famous phrase, "the African townsman is a townsman" (1960: 55). In the multi-ethnic mining towns of what is today Zambia, the RLI's anthropologists stressed the capacity of Africans working in towns to change their identities and behaviour to fit the situations in which they found themselves. Their observations formed the basis of what became known as "situational analysis", which emphasised the ability of individuals to shed older identities and adopt new ones as the situation demanded. However, as Ferguson (1999) has argued, this emphasis on the capacity of urban workers to define themselves situationally was embedded in a wider narrative of modernisation and progress, in terms of which urban Africans were inevitably en route to civilisation and modernity:

> ... Anthropological liberalism in southern Africa has depended for its sense of purpose and direction, on a modernist narrative that said where Africans were going and why it was necessary that they should go there ... Southern African anthropology has thus been committed from the start to the political narrative of white liberalism, and to an associated narrative of African emergence and modernisation (1999: 20).

These ideological currents also framed the *Xhosa in Town* project. Philip Mayer and his colleagues were interested in showing "how some Xhosa during the course of their East London careers undergo the transition from migrant to real townsmen and others do not" (Mayer in Pauw [1963] 1973: xvii). They defined the process of urbanisation, as on the one hand, a slackening of ties with the former rural home to the point where the migrant no longer felt the pull of the hinterland, and on the other, a simultaneous acquisition of western values and cultural forms. The point at which a person's "within-town ties" came to predominate over their "extra-town ties" could be revealed, they suggested, by a study of their relational network, while their changing socio-cultural orientations were explored through assessment of changing norms and values in town (*ibid.*).

Philip and Iona Mayer distinguished the quantitative process of urban "stabilisation", equated with "length of time in the city", from the qualitative process of "urbanisation", as the acquisition of a westernised life-style, norms and values. They argued that there was no reason to assume, as some Copperbelt studies had, that staying for long periods in the city necessarily led to loss of tribal identity and cultural orientation. Mayer's comment (1971: 14) was that a large segment of East London's migrant labour force had become "stabilised" without being

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Map 3: East Bank Location. The map shows the various sections of the location as they were named by the residents themselves. These names later made their way into official discourse. One section was ironically named 'New Brighton' (after the new Port Elizabeth municipal location); Tulandiville ('keep quiet, I have understood'); Maxambeni (after sugar pockets hidden during police liquor raids); and Gomorra or Gommora ('place of sin'). (Source: Reader 1960)

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"urbanised" (that is, without adopting western values). He suggested that this was not simply due to apartheid's enforced migrant labour, but was also a product of a deep-seated rejection by many migrants of western culture and Christianity. In East London, *amaqaba* (Red) migrants in particular, showed little interest in socialising outside a narrow group of home mates (*abakhaya*) in town. Moreover, they focused their energies on saving money to send to rural homes to build up their homesteads (*imizi*) for retirement. These men, according to the Mayers, were tribesmen in town. Their strategy and orientation was to defend and maintain their tribal cultural values and identities. Rather than picking up or discarding identities at will, as suggested by the Copperbelt studies, the Mayers argued that the *amaqaba* identity was a relatively fixed, total identity that had become internalised in town through a process of "incapsulation"[3].

To ensure that the Trilogy focused not only on migrants, Philip Mayer commissioned a study of urban-born, second-generation families in the East Bank location. Undertaken in the late 1950s, it constituted the third volume in the series – Pauw's *The Second Generation*. Pauw extended the Mayers' insights by gauging the level of East London-born Africans' absorption of western values and life-styles. Pauw worked with a series of categories or "social types" based on a combination of criteria including household material, culture, education, income and level of "westernisation". He concluded, that while second-generation families were considerably more "westernised" than those of most migrants (for instance, they were less inclined to use witchcraft), their transition to "full urbanisation" was incomplete and disparate. He particularly noted the continued adherence of many second-generation families to traditional Xhosa religious beliefs (1963: 170–174). Pauw thus developed a further typology to place second-generation urban households on a scale from "semi-Red" to "fully westernised".

In his analysis, Pauw drew particular attention to the position of female-headed, matrifocal households, which were amongst the most striking examples of households committed to urban residence, but which showed no progress toward the western norm of the nuclear family.[4] However, these matrifocal households were not a mere aberration, rather they represented an increasingly stable urban social form. Whilst most of the women who headed them had broken ties with the countryside, their domestic arrangements showed no signs of gravitating towards the ideal urban norm of the nuclear family. The women seemed determined to retain their independence and to establish families without a regular male presence. Thus without male

3. Mayer (1971: 90), "incapsulation" refers to the process by which Red migrants maintain their rural home ties in the city by restricting their fields of social interaction to an all-Red circle in town, comprised mainly of close kin and *amakhaya* (home mates). These patterns of social interaction allowed Red migrants to keep up an unbroken nexus with the rural home and to restrict their social interactions in the city (*ibid.*: 91–110).

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permission or men's involvement, they built up their own households, pursued their own careers, and accumulated property. He argued that their achievement of freedom and independence were only possible because of a structural disarticulation of domestic and public power in the city. In other words, Pauw suggested that this domestic group's legitimacy and access to economic resources were not connected to wider systems of patriarchal power and authority, as was the case in the rural areas (Pauw 1973: 139). Therefore, it was this structural anomaly created by the jural and political status of women in the city, which allowed urban matrifocal families to flourish.

Acceptance of *Townsmen or Tribesmen* as an anthropological classic had much to do with how arguments presented fitted into the dominant themes and conventions of disciplinary knowledge at that time. As Clifford (1997) explains, it was common in the 1950s and 1960s for the "cleared spaces" of scientific work in anthropology to be "constituted through the suppression of cosmopolitan experiences, especially those of the people under study" (1997: 201). The complex, fluid and seemingly unbounded creolised dynamics of city life, he argues, was not exactly what anthropologists working in the dominant paradigm wished to encounter. As Mintz (1971) explained in relation to work on the Caribbean, it was an anthropologist's nightmare then to find "... houses constructed of old Coca-Cola signs, a cuisine littered with canned corned beef and imported Spanish olives, rituals shot through with the cross and the palm leaf, languages seemingly pasted together with ungrammatical Indo-European usages, all observed within the reach of radio and television" (quoted in Gupta & Ferguson 1997a: 21; also see Hannerz 1992).

The Mayers' "discovery" and skilful representation of the secret and socially insulated world of conservative Red migrants in East London cleared well-understood and respected ethnographic space. Finding "the village in the city', with bounded rural cultures surviving in a rapidly industrialising urban centre, generated enormous interest in a discipline increasingly pre-occupied with issues of cultural insulation, closure and survival. Consequently, *Townsmen or Tribesmen* provoked none of the methodological criticisms associated with urban studies, many of which were accused of lacking "depth" and being based on inadequate or inappropriate field-work techniques (Gupta & Ferguson 1997a; Clifford 1997). None of the reviews of these works queried the absence of the normal spatial practices of intensive dwelling, social immersion, and long-term separation from "home".

The study became an immediate classic partly because it was so easily recognisable within the dominant perspective in the discipline. The fact that the Trilogy employed a two-culture model which ignored complex hybrid cultural forms and spaces, contributed to its success, since it confirmed many key points of departure then conventional in the discipline. It was only in the

4. Compare Smith (1996) who associates matrifocality not with female-headedness but with the tendency of

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1970s, with a growing influence of neo-Marxism and dependency theory in South African anthropology that the Trilogy, and particularly *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, came under criticism.

Bernard Magubane (1971; 1973), a black South African scholar, challenged the Mayers on two main grounds. First, he criticised them and other urban anthropologists, including those from the RLI, for failing to situate their analyses within a broader political economy of labour migrancy and colonial exploitation. He argued that the Mayers and their colleagues seemed to assume that social identities, like Red and School, were constituted as timeless and a priori. Secondly, he rejected the linear models of cultural development proposed in these studies because they constituted European civilisation and westernisation as the desired end-point of African cultural development. Magubane argued that urban African cultural processes did not seek to mimic the West: they were constantly adapting, re-interpreting and reworking western cultural influences through the prism of the local. Building on Fanon's work (1968), Magubane added that Africans who imitated European forms had been psychologically damaged by colonialism.

Others who challenged the Mayers' work during the 1970s also emphasised their failure to locate processes of cultural resistance in East London's locations within the political economy of racial capitalism in South Africa (van Onselen 1975). In response to these criticisms, Philip Mayer reworked the analysis of Red and School, presenting them both as "rural resistance ideologies" in a context of colonial domination (Mayer 1980; also see Spiegel & McAllister 1991).

Despite this reanalysis, in a recent review of African anthropology, Sally Falk Moore (1994: 57–62) has again challenged the Mayers' early work for its theoretical and political conservatism. At a theoretical level, she criticises the adoption of two functionalist (tribal– modern) "total-systems models", similar to those proposed earlier by Wilson and Wilson (1945), who viewed social change as a loss of culture: a movement from one total system to another. This was a perspective, she argues, that many RLI anthropologists tried to avoid by postulating that the spheres of the rural and the urban, the modern and the tribal, exist "conjointly". At a political level, she suggests that the Mayers' analysis also lacked the critical "expose`" qualities of the RLI work. Moore argues that their references to "accidental" deaths in 1952 riots and their assumption that urban Africans operated within a free-choice paradigm, suggests an analytical complicity with the apartheid government's policies. Moore (1994) thus asks whether the Mayers' "total-system models", and their seeming obsession with tradition in the city, precluded them from seeing other social and cultural dynamics in East London's locations.

This brings us back to the question of field-work and the construction of anthropological knowledge. In the discussion below, I address these issues by revisiting the Trilogy from the

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the mother figure to become the focus of relationships in the household.

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perspective of former East Bank residents, whom I interviewed between 1999 and 2001. Most of these individuals, who are now between 60 and 80 years old, were in their twenties or thirties in the 1950s and presented their own recollections of 1950s location life in East London. But first I return to Monica Hunter's (1936) field-work in East Bank location in the 1930s.[5]

Revisiting East Bank

Moore (1994) associates the Mayers' work with that of Godfrey and Monica Wilson, especially in their *The Analysis of Social Change* (1945), which she describes as: "surely the most ambitious (but theoretically conservative) attempt to reconcile the Malinowskian functional model with the study of social transformation in Africa" (1994: 58). Here the Wilsons argued that colonisation brought together two distinctive kinds of society - the primitive and the civilised - each of which had been a functional whole and capable of operating in "equilibrium" in its pure form. Colonial contact and urbanisation thus served to disrupt the equilibrium of primitive society and destroy its functioning totality. Moore argues that because of the very negative slant the Wilsons placed on "detribalisation", "they remained pre-occupied with questions about 'tribal' survivals" (1994: 60). At this point she sees a convergence between the Wilsons' and the Mayers' work.

Yet, it is striking how different Monica Hunter's (1936) account of the cultural dynamics of 1930s East Bank location life is from that presented in the Trilogy twenty-five years later. Unlike the Mayers, who were struck by the extent to which migrant workers, who had spent large parts of their lives in the city, still embraced and defended rural cultural values and orientations, Hunter was struck by how rapidly people's outlooks and orientations were changing (see Map 3 for view of the location). She was alarmed at the enthusiasm with which township residents, some of them in the city only briefly, desired money and modern things, and were prepared to do just about anything to obtain them. She noted that, "in town it is smart to be as europeanised as possible. In their dress men and girls follow European fashions - 'Oxford bags', berets, sandal shoes. Conversation is interlarded with European slang ... Houses, furniture, and food are as European as earnings permit" (1936: 437). She also noted that "raw tribesmen" were increasingly finding themselves in a marginal position in the city, since:

> ... The values in town are European, not tribal. Status depends largely on wealth and education and these entail europeanization ... Knowledge of tribal law, skills in talking, renown as a warrior, and even the blood of a chief's family, count for comparatively little

5. Monica Hunter subsequently married Godfrey Wilson and wrote under her married name, Monica Wilson.

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> in town. These conditions make for the speedy transference of at least the superficialities of culture (1936: 437).

Even in terms of social life and entertainment, Hunter argued, tribal influences were on the wane. She observed that tribal rituals were not held in town and that:

> There is little Native dancing ... Young people gather in private houses, particularly on Friday and Saturday evenings, for parties, but here European fox trots (*sic*) were more often performed than the old Bantu dances. And the music is European or American ragtime. About the street one more often hears ragtime hummed than an old Bantu song (1936: 455).

In highlighting this appetite for western-style entertainment, she notes that by the 1930s the location could sustain its own cinema, "at which there are two evening performances and one matinee a week" (1936: 467). She also notes, with regret, that there were new values in the location associated with a strong desire for money and material wealth:

> Money gives power to obtain so many of the desired things of European civilization – better clothing, housing, furnishing, food, education, gramophones, motor-cars, books, power to travel – all the paraphernalia of western civilization is coveted. Again and again old men spoke to me of how intense was the desire for money in the younger generation (1936: 455).

Hunter also provided a detailed inventory of the wide range of social clubs, societies and churches operating in East Bank. They included dancing clubs and musical societies specialising in European and American styles, savings groups, tea clubs and a wide variety of sports clubs. Her Xhosa fluency, and her close connections with the township elite, ensured her access to these associations. During her three months in East London, Dr WB Rubusana[6], leader of one of the location's largest Christian churches and a founding member of the African National Congress, hosted her. Through Rubusana, she appears to have had easy access to the location as a whole and was able to walk the streets and enter households, almost at will. Consequently she encountered a fairly broad spectrum of township life and developed a perspective, which encompassed both the private and the public. Her view was framed, however, within a model of "culture contact" and "detribalisation" that precluded her disguising her concerns about the social consequences of rapid social change.

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6. Walter Benson Rubusana was born in Mnanadi in the Somerset East district in 1858. He attended Lovedale College and in 1884 was ordained in the Congregational Church and became a minister in the East Bank location. Rubusana played a significant role in the early politics of the African National Congress and remained active in ministry and politics until his death in East London in 1936 (*Daily Dispatch* 10/06/2001).

The strong cosmopolitan influences on location life, which she had highlighted in the mid-1930s, emerged again as a key theme in former East Bank residents' 1999–2000 narratives of 1950s location life. Many said the post-war period was one of significant cultural change – the location having been awash with optimism, new ideas, styles and fashions of kinds never seen before. Some attributed the changes to the influence of returning Second World War servicemen. Others associated them with the opening of new factories and the growth of the local urban working class. Yet others referred to events on the Reef and the popularity of South African magazines like *Drum*, *Bona* and *Zonk*, which kept location residents abreast of the latest cultural developments in larger cities and abroad. Whatever the reasons, general consensus emerged that the post-war period signalled the beginning of what one former East Bank resident called "a local cultural renaissance" that had raised cosmopolitan influences in location life to new levels. It initiated an explosion of new music groups, sports clubs and dancing styles, and brought a succession of musical, sports and dance acts to the city. As another former resident explained:

> It felt like we had become the Sophiatown of the Eastern Cape. We had the jazz bands, the politicians, sportsmen and the style. We were up with all the new trends. Here in the location we did not have much time for tradition and tribal culture. The guys had come back from the war with a new confidence and there was a great expectation of change.[7]

In writing the history of *Drum* magazine, Michael Chapman (2001: 187) points out that when the magazine had started in the early 1950s, it carried stories about tribal customs and dance, which attracted such negative readership response, that the stories were soon dropped. As one reader stated:

> 'Ag, why do you dish out this stuff, man?' said the man with the golliwog (*sic*) hair in a floppy American suit, at the Bantu Men's Centre. 'Tribal Music! Tribal history! Chiefs! We don't care about chiefs! Give us jazz and film stars, man! We want Duke, Satchmo, and hot dames! Yes brother, anything American. You can cut out this junk about kraals and folk-tales ... – forget it! You are just trying to keep us backward, that's what! Tell us what is happening here, on the Reef!

Such a view was common in East Bank too. People did not want stories about tribal culture so much as to keep up with metropolitan styles, to watch American movies and engage in dynamic new urban cultural forms and styles-in-the-making. They recounted to us stories about the notorious shebeens on Ndende and Camp Streets; of the *tsotsi* gangs, including some called the Vikings and the Italians; of jazz events at the Peacock Hall and political meetings on Bantu Square. They also remembered Coca-Cola fashion shows and ballroom dancing at the Social Centre, B-

7. Kenny Jegels – Interview, East London, 20 March 2000.

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Plate 1 Cosmopolitan Styles. The images above illustrate public style-making in the East Bank. Photo 1, Oobrighty youths display their styles in the streets; Photo 2, Older men dressed in Italian-style gangster suits; Photo 3, Youths posed in East Bank tearoom with fashionable cardigans and hats; Photo 4, Women at the Cinema with taffeta skirts.

grade American movies at the local Springbok bioscope, and exciting sports and social events hosted at Rubusana Park. As in Sophiatown (Coplan 1985; Glaser 2000; Hannerz 1997; Mattera 1987; Themba 1985), East London's urban youth increasingly fed on images of black America, developing a myriad of new styles and fashions, all displayed on the streets and at the dance-halls.

Reflecting on the mood of the old location in the 1950s, Pule Twaku recalled a new feeling in the township, which made it increasingly difficult for rural migrants to move around freely: "We would spot them a mile off just by looking at the way they walked, at the awkward fit of their jackets, at the way they wore their trousers and at their shoes. We could see they had no style, that they were outsiders."[8] Twaku explained that these country bumpkins (*imixhaka*) were mercilessly preyed upon by *tsotsis*, who quickly relieved them of their cash and possessions (see Chapter 5).

But, as others explained, not only *tsotsis* occupied the streets. Starting in local tearooms and on the household verandas, where people would listen to the radio and read magazines, and at the cinema where American movies played all week, almost everyone was out there experimenting with new fashions and styles. Youths copied imported styles, adapted them and put them on public display on the streets, whilst at the dance-halls on Saturday night everyone was dressed to the nines. Mrs Mthimba recalled that:

> Dressing up became a big thing. There was always talk about what was new in the shops on Oxford Street [East London's main shopping precinct]. Many of us bought outfits from 'La Continental', a fashion shop, which had good Italian gear in the North End. Some of the older men would not buy off the shelf. They preferred to have their suits made up by a tailor, of which there were many in the location and the North End.[9]

For men, Panama hats and light Palm Beach suits became very popular after the war. But soon darker Christies "rollaway" 16-gallon hats, the doubled-breasted suits, neckties and Italian shoes came in. Ladies wore brown golf shoes, stockings, shiny knee-length dresses and white blouses, often with a colourful cardigan (see Plate 1). New youth styles were displayed in local tearooms and on the streets, and young men sat for hours polishing their shoes and chatting on the verandas of their homes. Mrs Macanda recalled that:

> For the ladies, Saturday was always a busy day. Sometimes we would change three times. First, to do some housework, then to go out to the sports fields to watch rugby or soccer, and then into our evening dresses for the Peacock Hall. Even on Sundays, we would dress up for church and then get ready for social get-togethers in the afternoon.[10]

8. Interview, East London, 21 August 2001.
9. Interview, East London, 28 January 1999.
10. Interview, East London, 22 September 1999.

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There was also competitiveness about dressing and style. Everyone wanted to look good, especially in American styles. The ultimate local symbol of success was the automobile, especially a big American car, which in the 1950s was frequently used as a photographic prop in a variety of settings. The radio was also seen in many of the studio and portrait photography at that time and like the automobile was used to symbolise peoples' connections to the modern "world out there".

The unkempt street ruffians described by Hunter in the 1930s, had evolved into *tsotsis* by the 1950s and had begun to embrace the quest for style.[11] They no longer just wore a checked cap, a rough blazer and broad trousers. As on the Reef, their trademark was narrow-bottomed trousers called "zoot-suits". They, too, experimented with new outfits, as seen in this description by Ronnie Meinie of how two famous *tsotsi* gangs honed their styles in the 1950s:[12]

> The Vikings suddenly became very style conscious. They would wear Oxford bags ('toffs') and two-tone shoes. They also took to wearing caps with the peaks cut off and baggy (European) Italian-style jackets, gathered up at the waist. The Italians (another gang), on the other hand, wore tight-fitting stovepipes, Embassy jackets and Crockett and Jones shoes. The other brands of shoes they liked were Saxons and Freemans. They also wore button-down shirts and were sometimes seen with carnations in the lapels of their jackets. The most distinctive feature of the Italians, however, was the way they modified their shoes. In order to make them look long, sleek and sharp, they used to cut off the heels so that the toes would point up in the air.
>
> On Saturday nights, the gangs would gather at the dance-hall and social events. They were no longer ruffians. They were dressed to kill. I remember watching in trepidation as they gathered on opposite sides of the halls. When both gangs gathered in numbers, there was sure to be trouble. It often started as an argument about a lady.[13]

In the midst of the infatuation with American styles and the increasingly predatory *tsotsi* street cultures, a few local individuals stood out in the narratives gathered. Most famous was the flamboyant Peter Ray Nassua, a trade unionist who claimed to be related to the great ICU leader, Clements Kadalie, and to be an American, although locals said he came from Johannesburg – a trickster who lived by his wits. In East Bank, his impact was through his stylish dress, rather than his union work, and he came locally to epitomise the flamboyance of prevailing American style. He wore Al Capone black-and-white suits, with two-tone shoes and a necktie. He drove a black

11. Glaser (2000: 47–52) notes that the term "*tsotsi*" only emerged on the Reef in 1943–1944, and referred to a style of narrow-bottomed trousers that became popular amongst the urban youth. As the style evolved, it became associated with its own hybrid language, *tsotsitaal*. The term seems to derive from the Southern Sotho word *ho tsotsa*, which means "to sharpen". The current meaning of *tsotsi* in South Africa associates this category more with crime than with fashion and style.
12. Glaser (2000: 78–86) makes a distinction between the high-profile "hot-shot gangs" and "street-corner gangs" on the Reef in the 1950s. In East Bank, the Vikings were the local equivalent of a "hot-shot gang" as they dominated in the location and held sway over many of the small-time street gangs in the 1950s.
13. Interview, East London, 10 September 2000.

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Daimler with his name inscribed on the side. He had his own chauffeur who wore a white suit. To complete the image, he employed a bodyguard, a man called Ngonyama ("lion"), who looked out for him and fought his street battles. As Reverend Hopa recalled:

> I remember this guy in town. He would always come strutting along with his whippet dog on a lead. He liked to cross Oxford Street at the OK Bazaars and walk over to the Netherlands Bank, swaggering in his iron-tipped shoes and his Texan tie. Ordinary people were so impressed with him that they would sometimes clap as he crossed the road. He loved that![14]

To this Mbhuti Adonisi added:

> Peter Ray liked to drive his car around the location, leaning out of the window and greeting people as he went. He would often suddenly stop the car and get the children to push it to the ICU hall. When they reached the hall, he would reach into his pocket and toss a few coins for them.
>
> He was a real showman who was always involved in some money-making scheme. I remember in 1952, Peter Ray was featured in *Drum* magazine. He was on a crusade to sue the state of Israel for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. There seemed to be no money-making venture that slipped Ray's eye.[15]

Other more sinister characters were also on the streets. One was Bortjies from Ndende Street. It was said that Bortjies' father had died when he was young and that his mother had brought him up. Always stylishly dressed in an Italian suit, he worked as a dancer at night at East Bank's "Moon Nightclub", and also performed as a part-time musician. Bortjies, it was reported, thought of himself as the king of Ndende Street – a tough guy regularly involved in street fights whom everyone feared.[16]

The deepening of cosmopolitan influences in East London's locations, especially in the 1950s, is unsurprising given the far-reaching economic changes in the city during that period. The 1940s and 1950s saw East London's economy grow rapidly, following the critical introduction of secondary industry in the 1940s. New industries brought new jobs and more money for consumption. The growth of the city's SA Railways depot increased travel possibilities, and opening new avenues for cultural flows into and out of the city. The new transport network enabled a stream of new musical bands and shows to visit the location in the 1950s. Local sports teams were also able to participate in regional and national tournaments. New department stores on Oxford Street brought in new consumables, cosmetics, newspapers and magazines.

14. Group interview, East London, 14 May 2001.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*

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For East Bankers, a most significant consumer event in the 1950s was the week-long Bantu Advertising and Trade (BAT) Fair, sponsored by cosmetics conglomerate Lever Brothers. Set up at the location's Rubusana Park sports grounds, it was a lavish affair with literally hundreds of stalls displaying new consumer products and offering demonstrations, entertainment events, beauty pageants and fashion shows (see Plate 2). Sybil Hans, who was in her thirties at the time and lived in the Tsolo section of the location, recalls:

> The range of products at the BAT Fair was bewildering. There were stores for various skin lighteners, Laurel perfume, Ponds skin cream and Cashmere perfume. There were a lot of salespeople and everyone had a chance to try and buy the new products. There were also demonstrations. I remember the 'Mr Power-Foam' campaign for Omo. We were so impressed with the way this detergent could make clothes whiter and brighter with less rubbing and scrubbing. [17]

Sybil Hans also explained that one problem in the locations was people's poverty, which precluded their affording all the new products they wanted. But this did not stop them trying to absorb new commodities and cultural practices within their budgetary limits. Sybil remembers that "(m)any of us could not afford the expensive polishes, like Sunbeam, and would make our own cheap equivalent by mixing candle wax and paraffin to clean our floors - some of us also made do with blue soap, instead of the more expensive products like Omo and Sunlight".[18]

The kind of enthusiastic engagement with the "world out there" that these kinds of images convey was combined in East Bank with a deepening culture of resistance. In 1952, political riots shocked the location as urban youth and political activists pitted themselves against gun-wielding police and army troops (see Chapter 3). The 1950s saw ordinary people engaged in constant cat-and-mouse struggles with police and government officials wanting tighter political control in East Bank. Corruption in the police force and among officials at the location's municipal offices, known as *Kuzal.loyd* after an early location administrator, helped people navigate their way around the laws and technicalities.

The breadth of the legal regulations and the frustration of the location authorities at people's ability to subvert law enforcement, meant that no one felt safe when municipal police embarked on their regular pass raids and document checks in the location. A frequently repeated story concerned an incorruptible black municipal police sergeant, called Manci, who oversaw pass arrests. Manci was greatly feared for his door-to-door raids and would reportedly brag that he could drive his victims "like cattle" to the police station. However, Manci had one major weakness. He was illiterate and as soon as it became widely known that he could not differentiate between

17. Interview, East London, 30 May 2001.

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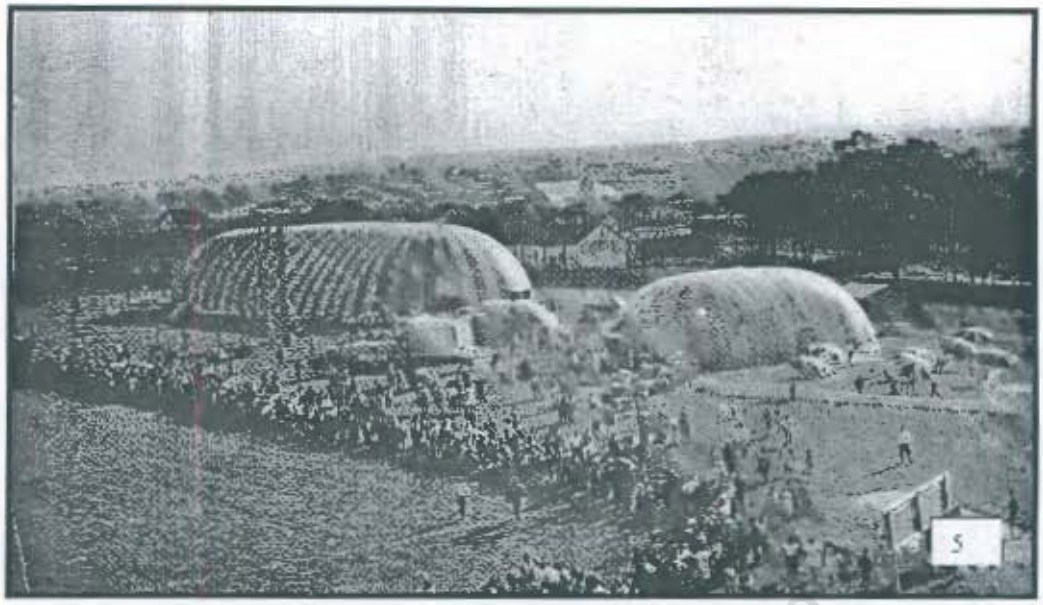










Plate 2: Rubusana Park. Rubusana Park, named after the prominent political figure, Walter Rubusana, comprised several playing fields, tennis courts and a swimming pool. This complex was used for a wide range of sporting and public events. The images above indicate the various uses of this public facility. Photo 5, Aerial view of display tents during annual BAT fair, 1957; Photo 6, Coco-Cola East Bank beauty queen pageant, 1965; Photo 7, Local residents select new products at BAT fair; Photo 8, Standard weekend rugby fixture; Photo 9, Family picnic in the 1950s.

the standard orange lodger's permit and a similar looking dry-cleaning slip, people took advantage. In fact, it was said that you were safe in "Manci's location" as long as you had an orange-coloured dry-cleaning receipt in your pocket - something that has remained a standing joke amongst old East Bankers.

Migrants' participation in this street-wise, and at some levels playful, culture of resistance was limited. Political activists and urban-born youths said that often the migrants could not be trusted and were inclined to reveal incriminating information if arrested. Particularly *amaqaba* migrants' unwillingness to participate in either the growing culture of resistance or to embrace the new cosmopolitanism sweeping through the location's streets, increasingly marginalised them and led to them frequently being ridiculed and abused as spoilers, unprepared to come to the party (cf. Ntsebeza 1993).

Old East Bankers' narratives suggest that Red migrants were much more on the defensive in the 1950s than the Trilogy's accounts suggest. The solidarity they forged in East Bank at this time appears to have had as much to do with the way they were treated in the city, as with their own desire to remain separate. The Mayers' failure to adequately contextualise Red migrant responses does leave the impression, as Moore (1994: 58) notes, that Red identities and styles were always selected, cultivated and maintained as a matter of choice. The evidence of old East Bankers suggests that it was actually the persistent and relentless victimisation of these migrants that increasingly drove them into the defensive spaces of the backrooms and yards, of the location's wood-and-iron shack areas.

On closer inspection, the dominant cultural forms in 1950s East Bank were created through neither simple imitation nor rejection of "westernisation". Ulf Hannerz (1997) developed this point in his reflections on Sophiatown's urban culture in the 1950s. He argues that locations like Sophiatown were places where new and dynamic "creolised cultural forms" emerged through the blending of local and global influences. He suggests that urban cultural cosmopolitanism was less often about compliance and imitation than an expression of local resistance: "Accepting New York could be a way of rejecting Pretoria, a way to refuse the curtailments of any sort of 'separate development' " (1997: 169). The dynamism of cultural forms in Sophiatown was related to their being situated at neither the cultural centre nor the periphery, but "somewhere midway where cross-currents are strongest and where the interactive processes of creolisation bring the most strikingly new results"[19].

19. Glaser (2000: 61–71) argues that *tsotis* and other fashionable youth on the Reef in the 1950s were constantly corrupting the dominant narratives of civilised behaviour and respectability to develop their own unique styles and identities.

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In her work on fashion, dress and identity in Zambia, Hansen makes a similar point when she suggests that, for Africans, imitation was something very different from wanting to be "like Europeans". She argues that when anthropologists interpret westernised "dress practices as imitation, only the familiar is brought into view, that is, 'Europeanness' while the local drops out of sight" (*ibid.*). In Zambia, she sees the seemingly insatiable desire of Africans in the 1940s and 1950s to dress up in fashionable western clothes as representing a "disjuncture, embedded in the late colonial political economy, between African aspirations and possibilities" (2000: 52). She concludes that, while European-style clothing was widely adopted from the 1930s, it did not take long before "Africa made western-style clothing their own" (2000: 53).

The "domestication" of cosmopolitan influences in East Bank is a theme to which I shall return. In the next section, I wish to explore why these cosmopolitan influences were given so little attention in the work of the Mayers and their colleagues.

Home-made Ethnography

So why did the Mayers and their colleagues fail to pick up on all of these social and cultural dynamics? Did they not see hybrid cosmopolitan forms because, as Clifford (1997) argues, they were committed to clearing *ethno*-spaces that conformed to the dominant models in the discipline at that time, or were there other reasons? It appears that a series of other factors should be considered and that these relate to the spatial practices employed by the Trilogy researchers. Moreover, both the Mayers (1971: 319) and Pauw (1973: 230) explicitly denied that they were overly influenced by theoretical models, emphasising rather that their main aim was "simply to record" and to present "first-hand factual knowledge" about the urban African society.

What are these other factors? First, we should note that when the *Xhosa in Town* researchers first visited East Bank in the mid-1950s, the township was in political turmoil. In 1952, the location had been wracked by political violence when police and army troops violently dispersed a mass meeting held on Bantu Square in the location's Tsolo section (Mager and Minkley 1993). When the crowd did not disperse, police and army personnel opened fire with Sten guns, rifles and revolvers. Chaos ensued as people ran for cover, and fighting broke out in the streets. By nightfall when the army withdrew, at least nine people had been killed – one a white Roman Catholic nun working and living in East Bank – and scores of others injured. During the night of violence, youths and political activists went on the rampage, looting and burning church property, community halls, business premises and government installations. In the "mopping-up" operations that followed, the police arrested hundreds and deported thousands of "idle and undesirable" youths from the city. Some single women were also returned to rural areas. In

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subsequent court cases, five youths were convicted and two sentenced to hang for the nun's murder, while hundreds of others were jailed and detained for public violence (cf. Mager and Minkley 1993: 229-36). These events also ignited further political action and labour protest, and set the scene for escalating political tension in the township later in the decade.

It was in the shadow of these events that the *Xhosa in Town* project was conceived and undertaken. Unlike Monica Hunter, who came to East Bank with the blessing of one of the location's most senior political leaders, the arrival of the Mayers and their colleagues in the location was mediated mainly through white clerics and officials. When I interviewed Philip Mayer in his home in Oxford in 1994 about the field-work method they employed in East Bank, he recalled the difficulties they had experienced as white, non-Xhosa speakers and as anthropologists with no local reputation, nor political connections with the township elite. He also reflected that his work commitments at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, 160 kilometres away, precluded his sustaining his presence in the field. As the research project wore on, he was evidently increasingly forced to rely on local research assistants to stand in for him, and to administer pre-designed questionnaires aimed at gathering information about household dynamics and social attitudes. In 1994, he showed me some of the questionnaire schedules he had supplied to his assistants as a means of gauging "urban commitment". They included questions about issues such as clan affiliation, frequency of home visits and religious beliefs, while others focused on migrant views of economic resources, such as fields and livestock.

This methodology was also a key feature in Pauw's work. It appears that his research was based mainly on the administration of formal structured questionnaires, coupled with occasional field visits. He explains that:

> Liberal use was made of the services of Bantu (*sic*) research assistants, but the author made a point of taking part in different phases of the field-work himself so as to be able to evaluate properly the information collected by assistants. Mr S. Campell Mvalo must be mentioned for having done the lion's share in collecting raw material ... Mr Enos L. Xotyani also gave assistance at various stages and his contribution of reports rich in detail was particularly valuable (1963: 230).

The field-work and survey techniques used on the *Xhosa in Town* project were not, however, unique. They seem very similar to those adopted by both Epstein and Mitchell on the Copperbelt (Mitchell 1956; 1987; Epstein 1958; 1981). Mitchell made a conceptual distinction between what he called "urban involvement", understood in terms of social networks (social and cultural practice), and "urban commitment", understood as the "cognitive aspects" of urban life (perceptions). In his extended review of the Copperbelt studies, Ferguson (1999: 104) has noted that this distinction was essentially one between what happened "out there" in society and what happened "in the heads"

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of individuals. By contrasting society and the individual, Ferguson argues, Mitchell managed to avoid engaging with culture as a field of socially negotiated and continually contested frameworks of meaning that mediate between the individual and society (*ibid.*). The same could be said of the Mayers, who combined a general concern with "urban involvement" through their interest in the workings of social groups and institutions (like *iseti* beer drinking groups or *intanga* room groups), and "urban commitment". The latter involved measuring the cultural perceptions, orientations or attitudes of Red and School as general social categories.

In my 1994 interview with Philip Mayer, I was struck by the limited extent to which he and his colleagues had engaged in what some anthropologists now call "deep hanging out" (Rosaldo 1989), simply circulating in the research area, speaking to people informally and gathering information on an *ad hoc* basis. In retrospect, it appears that the *Xhosa in Town* researchers employed a two-pronged strategy by combining structured household interviews with attitudinal surveys generally conducted by their assistants. This strategy's use is clearly evident in the text of *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, where attitudinal information is often presented without any detailed contextualisation, such as life histories or the strategies adopted by particular individual migrants or families. Instead, attitudes generally appear as detached from people's experiences. They are presented primarily as apt illustrations of Red or School outlooks or orientations. This style of presentation, which closely followed the field methods used, almost inevitably over-determined the categorical distinction the Mayers made. Consequently, *Townsmen or Tribesmen* gives the reader very little sense of the blurred and complicated nature of the Red and School cultural categories in people's varied and complex everyday interactions. Thus, as rich and detailed as the Mayers ethnography is of migrant urban life in the city, there is nevertheless a disjuncture: a sense of distance between cognitive maps of migrants and embedded social and cultural practice. Such a disjuncture leaves an impression that "the cultural" and "the social" have been separated out, and then – and only then – mapped and overlaid each other (also see Fay 1996).

While there were similarities in the research methods of the Trilogy and those of the RLI anthropologists, it is significant that the Trilogy lacks any sustained analysis of public events and occasions of the kind seen in Mitchell's *Kalela Dance* (1956). This silence is indicative of the limitations of the spatial strategies the Mayers and their colleagues used for accessing the public sphere. It is also indicative of the extent to which the Trilogy's ethnographers confined themselves largely to the relative safety of peoples' homes and yards. This spatial confinement blunted their sensitivity to developments beyond the house, and especially to the then new cultural dynamics in the streets and dance-halls. By the same token, one of the main reasons for the comprehensiveness of the Mayers' own account of *amaqaba* cultural forms and of Pauw's detailed account of the social dynamics of the matrifocal household, was that these forms were largely contained within the

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spaces of East Bank homes. In the case of the *amaqaba* migrants, the social forces in the 1950s were such that they were marginalised to the extent that they were virtually imprisoned in their backyards – that is, until they burst out onto the streets in 1958. It was here that they socialised and organised beer drinks. Indeed there was very little of the *amaqaba* style on view on the streets and in other public places, since urban youths and other social groups performing new urban styles and identities dominated these.

In the case of Pauw's (1963) account of matrifocality, the situation was a little more complicated because the influence of single mothers did extend beyond the confines of their homes. In his analysis of the "second generation", Pauw noted that the matrifocal family form was becoming increasingly common in the location and had emerged as a new and distinctive type of domestic social grouping. He suggested that, while there were similarities between the matrifocal households in the East Bank and those observed by anthropologists like Smith in the Caribbean ([1956] 1996), the former tended to insulate themselves from the patriarchal world outside. Pauw claimed that a prevalence of a strong patriarchal ideology in the location led urban matriarchs to draw a sharp distinction between their domestic worlds inside the home and the patriarchal world outside. He noted that matriarchs' ability to consolidate their economic positions had much to do with their ability to bypass patriarchal relations outside the home.

This notwithstanding, Pauw seems to have grossly underestimated the influence that women tried to garner on the street and in public. In a recent historical analysis of urban matriarchs in East London in the 1950s, Minkley (1996) has provocatively suggested that women not only owned more than half the residential properties in East Bank, but that they "owned the location" as well. To support this argument, Minkley shows that these independent women were both visible and vocal on the streets and were the focus of continuing debates about social disorder and juvenile delinquency in the city. He notes that they were constantly accused of encouraging juvenile delinquency and *tsotsism* by mothering "fatherless children" by location elites and city officials. The public profile of these *amakazana* women, Minkley (1996) argues, was confirmed by their willingness to take to the streets with *tsotsis* during the 1952 riots. Although Minkley (1996) perhaps overstates the social power of East Bank matriarchs, his analysis does suggest that matrifocality was much more than a mere domestic or household type. It appears to have been a fully-fledged cultural style that involved complex intersections between public and private power and influence. The fact that Pauw, during his field-work, did not pick up on the extra-domestic circuits illuminated in Minkley's (1996) analysis, is suggestive of the extent to which his own focus was confined to the home (see Chapter 7 for further discussion).

I am not suggesting that the only field data and observations used by the Mayers and their colleagues in the Trilogy was gathered on residential sites in East Bank. This is clearly not the case,

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especially in *Townsmen or Tribesmen*, where large amounts of additional information were brought into the text from the Mayers' field-work in rural areas and on farms outside the city. My point is rather that the representations of social life in the location presented in this work was based primarily on research undertaken on residential sites, through observations and discussion with migrants in the backyards or interviews with second-generation families in the main house. The field-work strategy pursued by those involved in the *Xhosa in Town* project, I argue, generated an anthropology that was essentially "home-made".

Might a different spatial strategy have led the Mayers and their colleagues to different kinds of conclusions from those they reached? In the section below, I further explore the spatial dynamics of the 1950s East Bank and trace the active circuits of connection between the house and the street, the veranda and dance-hall, and beyond. Let me begin with the street.

Spatial Circuits

Edensor (1998) has recently contrasted the streets of colonial "native quarters" with those of the West, where streets emerged as "strongly classified spaces" constructed out of "an aesthetics and rationale which fears mixing of functions and the disintegration of boundaries, such as those between public and private, holy and profane, and backstage and front stage" (1998: 206). In colonial "native quarters", by contrast, streets were often multi-purpose spaces allowing diverse and combined activities and serving as sites of social and cultural compression. Edensor draws on Foucault's concept of "heterotopia" to come to terms with the social and political dynamics of such streets:

> In heterotopias, the random juxtaposition of disparate objects, activities and people not normally found together challenge hegemonic modes of regulating and presenting space. The convergence of such miscellaneous and discordant sights erodes epistemological and ontological security, disrupting the commonsense meanings of space. This transgressive potential of heterotopias continually speaks back to dominant modes of power-in-spacing, interrogating their normativity of their disciplinary regimes and functional purpose (1998: 218).

An image of the street as discordant, prone to juxtaposition and challenging the "ontological security" and spatial commonsense of the dominant "modes of power-in-spacing", is directly relevant to an understanding of the street in the old East Bank location (cf. Atkinson 1998; Crouch 1998; Jackson 1998). Those streets were created, at the turn of the twentieth century, as wide public thoroughfares associated with neatly fenced-off residential sites. But as the population of the location increased and residential densities grew, people spilled out of their overcrowded houses

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and the streets emerged as important sites of public interaction and everyday community life: they were no longer simply mono-functional thoroughfares. Having been taken over by the location's residents, they became a key site for recreation, and the making and contesting of identities and reputations. It was here, therefore, that various categories of youth were able to show off their styles.

The process whereby East Bank's residents claimed the streets was slow and geographically varied. As the location grew, new streets were added, some outside the original grid pattern, making them and their associated neighbourhoods relatively invisible to the purview of officials. Areas like "Gomorrah" and 'New Brighton" became infamous for their drinking houses, *tsotsi* gangs and prostitution, as well as for the absence of any official presence, as did Camp and Ndende Streets.

But it was not just everyday occupation of the streets that occurred. In some areas, as many former East Bank residents we interviewed explained, older public thoroughfares had been blocked off and thus their spatial layout changed with time. Ronnie Meinie said:

> As it became very overcrowded, people had nowhere to build extensions to their properties, and this sometimes led them to build into the streets. You really had to know your way around, because some streets just came to a dead-end because people had built houses and rooms across them. In my case, you had to know that you couldn't get to Coot Street from Fredrick Street, where I lived, because there were dwellings in the way. It was like this all over.
>
> I remember clearly during the 1952 riots when we were running away from the police, how we would use these dead-ends and detours to trick them. We knew that they would not be able to get vehicles through in certain places and darted for those streets where the police would be trapped and have to turn back. This is how we played cat and mouse with them.[20]

The extent to which the state lost control of the streets was a main reason why white local officials increasingly insisted, from the 1930s, that the location should be demolished (cf. Nel 1990).

In connecting the space of the street to that of the house, the intermediate, almost liminal space of the veranda proved to be a critical conduit for transactions. The veranda constituted a sort of social membrane between street and house: between public exterior and private interior. In many East Bank houses, the front rooms were blocked off from the street by heavy drapes, while the front door was left open to allow access to the house's main living rooms. One reason for shutting off the street was that residents did not want officials surveying their house interiors from the street. With police raids a regular occurrences and families often harbouring "illegals", either as tenants or visitors, it was inadvisable for a house's interior to be visible from outside. The veranda

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thus became a critical space from which threats of raids and official surveillance could be monitored. Shouts of *kobomvu* (literally, "it is red") hailed out from the slightly elevated verandas, warned people of impending police patrols. The warnings were not only to assist the queens of larger shebeens and urban "illegals", they were important too for ordinary townsmen and women, travelling without one of the multitude of documents required by the state.

The veranda, usually above street level, was also a space from which women made their presence felt. East Bank's verandas can in some ways be likened to the Dutch window, which according to Cieraad (1999), allowed women who were expected to remain indoors and attend to domestic pursuits, to extend their gaze and influence onto the street.[21] In the East Bank, where female domesticity was not as spatially confined and women were generally more visible on the streets, the veranda proved to be an important site from which women could command a hearing on the street. One former East Bank resident explained:

> Women were always on the verandas, chatting and going about their business, but their eyes were on the street watching everything that was happening. They were always the first to know if a stranger was hanging around or whether something significant had happened.[22]

Other ex-residents remarked on how women would lean over the veranda and communicate with people on the street, especially children after whom they were often shouting, and with other women. Just as nineteenth-century Dutch women placed indoor plants at the window as a pretext for keeping an eye on the street (Cieraad 1999), so the practice of clothes washing on the veranda allowed East Bank mothers and matriarchs to exercise surveillance of the street, while pursuing their domestic chores. We were told that it was common practice in some areas that, every morning before they had left for school, the children of the house would collect two tubs of water, one for washing and one for rinsing, and leave them on the veranda for their mothers. It was also their job to dispose of the dirty water when they returned from school.

The veranda was also a primary space from which urban mothers and matriarchs created solidarities and extended their influence beyond the home. It was from here that independent women solicited migrants and lured men into their drinking houses. They also used the veranda as a relatively secure, albeit liminal, space from which to comment on, criticise and engage the street without having to occupy it physically. The veranda was also a space from which women could quickly disappear when threatened. It allowed them to be simultaneously on and off the street.

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20. Interview, East London, 10 September 2000.
21. Cieraad (1999) argues that the emergence of window prostitution in Holland was a product of women asserting their agency through the space of the window to solicit men outside.
22. Group interview, East London, 30 May 2001.

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Plate 3: Verandahs. These "in-between" spaces are well documented in the photographic collections of the 1950s, where they are either associated with groups of men socialising or with groups of women relaxing there or attending to domestic duties; Photo 10, Young women observing the street; Photo 11, Mother and child; Photo 12, Young and old men chat.

Occupying the veranda was a statement of wanting to develop a street profile and presence. The veranda was, therefore, a critical conduit in allowing women to exert a presence on the street and to escape the confines of the house. But the veranda was also a contested space. Men and youths found they had to compete with women for the right to be there. Youths liked to sit on the veranda smoking and chatting. New musical groups even practised on the verandas of houses, using them as a testing ground for artists with ambitions of making it to the Peacock Hall or the Community Centre (see Plate 3).

Behind each house's veranda lay its more private space, not readily seen from the street. Yet despite the use of drapes to hide the interior of a home, the sharp distinction between the house and the street, between the private and the public (as noted by authors such as Cieraad (1999) in her account of nineteenth-century Dutch life), was not so very evident in the East Bank where overcrowding limited the capacity of households for privacy. Many wood-and-iron houses were extended by building backrooms, to accommodate tenants. In some cases backrooms were allocated to overflowing family members, but more often than not they were rented to migrants for extra cash. Township rentals were high and proved to be a good source of income. The physical location of migrants in these backrooms, with their activities spilling out into the yards, created a distinction in many houses between the front and back sections. The distinction between migrants and townsmen in East Bank of the 1950s was thus often a distinction between front rooms and backrooms – house owners generally used front rooms, while migrants lived in backyards. Backroom-living was always more acceptable for migrants than living on the street fronts and streets. As the Mayers (1971) describe, it was in those yards where migrants gathered to socialise over weekends and *iseti* beer drinks took place.

The other key circuit of public power and cultural exchange was one that connected the community halls, sports grounds and other recreational areas to the street. Productions of regular musical, dance, sports and entertainment events at places like the Peacock Hall, the Community Centre and the Rubusana Sports Grounds made these important sites for cultural production and performance. They emerged as definitive spaces in the construction of cosmopolitan styles, fashions and an East Bank economy of prestige. The latest fashions and styles were displayed there and people from East Bank, West Bank and North End socialised and engaged in processes of competitive style-making. Rubusana Park and the Peacock Hall were particularly significant, the former because it was the city's major sports venue for blacks, the latter because it was the main live music venue for East Bank, West Bank and North End residents. Given the limited access blacks had to public space in the white city, 1950s location residents treasured and made the most of their segregated public facilities, by hosting a wide range of events that drew massive popular support. As one former East Bank resident remarked, "if you wanted to hire the Peacock Hall you

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Plate 4: Beyond the Location. The photographic record indicates that the Beach was the most popular place for socialising outside the location. It was common practice for families or groups of youths to organise outings to the Beach on a Sunday as seen in Photos 13 and 14; Photo 15, Group of East Bank youths return after a day at the motor race track; Photo 16, represents a rare image of a police pass arrest on Oxford street and serves as a reminder that entering public spaces in the white city was always associated with the possibility of harassment or arrest.











Plate 5: Music and Dance. This plate features some of the major musical groups of the 1950s, as well as local interest in ballroom dancing. Photo 17, African Quavers perform at Peacock Hall; Photo 18, Havana Hotshots at Makambi Hall; Photo 19, the Cuban Stars from North End perform at the Peacock Hall; Photo 20, East Bank social at the Peacock Hall; Photo 21, Ballroom dancing at the Community Centre.

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would often have to wait more than a year for a booking".[23] The venues' annual calendars were full of public events and carnivals: Santa Day, the Bat Fair, the Hobo Show, Mfengu Day, music concerts, fêtes, ballroom and other dancing competitions, and sports tournaments. Rugby was the main sports activity and there were many teams, such as Swallows RFC, Winter Roses, Black Lions, Storm Breakers, Bushbucks, Tembu United, Early Roses, Busy Bees and the Boiling Waters (*ayabila*), each with its own following. Great excitement marked meetings of rival teams.

The cultural exchanges and interactions at these events were critical to the way East London's cosmopolitan styles were made. Other spaces outside the township, such as the beach, the city centre, the West Bank racetrack and other places, also became focal points for socialising and style-making, with the swimwear displayed at fashion shows and beauty pageants in the locations being paraded there in public (see Plate 4). As Mrs Majavu explained:

> The thing that made the beach such a wonderful place for us was that it was out of the location. It was not cramped. There was open space, clean air and the sea all around. The beach was especially popular on Sundays after church when we used to pack a picnic and go down there for the day. It was really great fun. It gave the young guys a chance to check out the girls and for people to meet old friends and socialise ... You can imagine what a shock it was when the apartheid signs went up: 'Whites Only – *Net Blankes*'.[24]

Analysing such events, Arjun Appadurai (1986) coined the term "tournaments of value". Using the classic anthropological example of exchanges of prestige goods in the Trobriand *kula* rings, Appadurai suggests that "tournaments of value" be seen as "complex periodic events that are removed in some culturally defined way from the routines of economic life" (1986: 21). He argues that they contain a "cultural diacritic of their own" (*ibid.*) and are involved not only with the quest for status, rank, fame and reputation among different actors, but the disposition of the central tokens of value in a given society. This is precisely how the sports, dance, music, beach or cinematic events were constituted in the 1950s East Bank. They created an air of expectation and exhilaration, especially when top local bands like the Bright Fives, the African Quavers, the Bowery Boys, the Havana Hotshots or one of many other local bands was performing. As new styles and influences came into circulation in the dance-hall, for example, so they found their way onto the streets through imitation and alteration (see Plate 5).

Appadurai uses the concept "diversions" to explore the ways that the politics of value is domesticated, appropriated and altered to carve its way along different paths of value and meaning. This concept is useful for trying to make sense of how the dance-hall, the beach and sports stadiums were connected and re-connected to the street and the house. It again invokes

23. Mr Foster, Interview, East London, 20 October 2000.

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Hannerz's (1987; 1992) notion of creolisation as a complex marriage of cultural flows and transactions between various spatially defined sites of cultural production, as well as between locations and wider cultural processes.

In terms of an understanding based on the application of these ideas, the 1950s emergence of cosmopolitan styles in East Bank was clearly more than a simple imitation of European cultural forms. It necessarily involved an active process of cultural appropriation and reworking. As new fashions, styles, and cultural forms went on display at these "tournaments of value", so they were absorbed, appropriated and reworked to create new constellations of value and meaning for the streets (also see Hansen 2000). The cultural circuits created between the streets and the dance-hall enabled a constant process of appropriation, re-appropriation and transformation, as cultural forms and styles moved back and forth, blending cosmopolitan and local elements along the way. One example of this was the way in which the *tsotsi* youth would focus their attention on the villains rather than the heroes they encountered in B-grade American movies and imitate and add to their styles on the streets. As Pule Twaku explained:

> We were always watching out for something new, where the style was going. Like when the Vikings came first to the Peacock Hall in their gangster style. Suddenly, everyone was checking them out and it was not long before other youths on the streets were trying to imitate them. The same happened with the Panama hats ... it was a fashion for a time, then people got tired of it and looked for something new. [25]

Exploring these and other cultural circuits and "diversions", makes it possible to see differing forms of cosmopolitanism emerging through a constant process of creolisation, which raises important questions about the construction and meaning of style in 1950s East Bank.

Cosmopolitanism and the Meaning of Style

What then was the meaning and definition of cosmopolitanism in 1950s East Bank? Hannerz (1992) defines cosmopolitanism in terms of what he calls a "certain metacultural position" that involves a willingness to "engage with the Other, an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent cultural experiences" (1992: 252). He also sees it as a matter of competence:

> There is the aspect of a personal ability to make one's way into cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting, and reflecting, and there is cultural competence in the stricter sense of the term, a built-up skill of manoeuvring more or less expertly within a particular system

24. Interview, East London, 18 November 1999.
25. Group Interview, East London, 14 May 2001.

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> of meaning. In its concern with the Other, cosmopolitanism thus becomes a matter of a variety of levels. Cosmopolitans can be dilettantes as well as connoisseurs, and are both at different times (1992: 253).

Ferguson (1999) offers a contrasting definition of cosmopolitanism in the African context. He understands it less in terms of a quest for the "world out there" than as a rejection of localism. In the urban Zambian context, he argues, "localism" might be used to refer to cultural styles or dispositions that *signify* rural identification and attachment, that identify a readiness to accept responsibility for rural kin and allies, and the desire to return to a rural "home" community (1999: 220). Ferguson explicitly states that this is not about the importation of rural cultural forms or "traditions" into the city as in the "tribesman in town" thesis, but rather about *signifying* rural identities in the city. And he presents cosmopolitanism as a distinctively urban style, based on a rejection of rural allegiances and conventions. As he explains:

> Many of those best versed in cosmopolitan style are more local than any localist, focused as they are on the 'here' of town life rather than the distant rural 'there'. And there is no necessary requirement that those who reject the demands of localism must exhibit any special 'involvement with the plurality of contrasting cultures on their own terms' ... Cosmopolitanism, in my usage implies nothing about travel and cultural competence, it is less about being at home in the world than about seeking worldliness at home (1999: 212).

Ferguson's (1999) understanding of cosmopolitanism is particularly useful for considering urban matriarchs in 1950s East Bank. Most lived modestly, supporting their families on small incomes. Most showed little interest in embracing the "world out there" or developing a "certain metacultural position" in the sense implied in Hannerz's (1992) usage. Yet many had indeed come to the city to escape patriarchal domination and violence at the hands of fathers and husbands in rural areas. They consequently had little interest in maintaining links with "home areas" and generally devoted their energies to securing a livelihood and a permanent residential base in the city. They were "cosmopolitans" in Ferguson's sense, despite having very little knowledge of or interest in the broader, multicultural world. Their strategy was rather to avoid being conspicuous or fashionable in the city lest they draw too much attention to themselves, and in the process put their urban security at risk. It is also important to note that, although these women were often vocal in their rejection of rural areas as homes, they drew on housekeeping values and practices they had learned in rural areas as daughters and young wives. They consequently occupied a contradictory space where they rejected the limitations that rural life placed on women, at the same time embracing many of the values and ideas associated with women's roles in the rural homestead (*umzi*).

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The same sorts of contradictions were evident among better-off urban residents and the emerging middle class who came to the city from the heavily mission-influenced rural areas of what became the Ciskei bantustan. These people were, as the Mayers (1971) suggest, engaged with the "world out there". But their own identities were not disconnected from a rural social map and set of associations with rural areas and identities. Such links were often actively cultivated in town by *School* families who kept close links with rural kin. The links were central to the functioning, for example, of urban sports clubs and musical groups and choirs: some of which were associated with a specific rural area (cf. James 1999). The clubs recruited new talent from among people associated with the relevant home area and thereby created a basis for *amakhaya* linkages among School people of various economic and social categories.

Wilson and Mafeje (1963) also noted this tendency in their work on social groups in Cape Town's Langa Township. They observed that, while people from one rural area differentiated themselves for some purposes into Red and School segments, they also stood together in support of their sports clubs (1963: 115–130). Similarly, in East London, talent scouts sought recruits for their teams, without necessarily paying attention to cultural orientations. Seeking access to sports clubs and other regionally-based recreational activities was also seen by marginalised rural youth as a means of earning greater acceptance in town (see Chapter 5). These sorts of ambiguities and ambivalences complicate the use of simple binary models of acceptance and rejection of an outside world. They direct attention towards processes of blurring in the construction of identities that fall outside typical localist (Red) or cosmopolitan (School) orientations. In the case of East Bank people, it is clear that, although they used the urban/rural divide as a basis for identity formation, the styles they constructed often disguised complex processes of creolisation, which even they were not prepared to acknowledge.

In his analysis of the Copperbelt material, Ferguson (1999) makes a useful distinction between sub-cultures and styles. He argues that, while the former implies a fairly coherent set of values, attitudes and orientations, the latter is better understood in terms of "cultivated, performative competence". He sees cultural styles as modes of signification, which allow actors to position themselves in relation to other social categories. Ferguson's (1999: 96–101) notion of style implies that all those who perform a particular style do not necessarily share the same total identities, values and orientations. Moreover, they need not have been socialised the same way. Just as 1980s British punk rockers were not all from working class backgrounds, the 1950s town youth in East Bank were not all school going and urban-born. While emphasising that style is always a matter of cultivated competence, Ferguson also indicates that access to particular cultural styles is never simply a matter of choice. To perform a style convincingly, it has to be practised over time: practice of performance limits access to particular styles. It is as difficult for a street

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gangster to perform the style of university professor, says Ferguson (1999: 53), as it is for a professor to convincingly perform the stylistic competencies of survival in the gangster's social world.

Although not phrased in the terms Ferguson uses, the Mayers were acutely aware of the difficulties new migrants had in developing the range of urban cultural competencies to perform adequately on the township streets:

> As to dress and style of life, superficially every Xhosa in town has to make himself appear more urban than he might appear in the country. Even a blanket-wearing Red man knows well that he must dress in town. But still there are degrees. The real East Londoner can often detect people who are of the country by details such as the fit of the jacket or the length of the skirt, the arrangement of the women's *doek* (turban) or the earrings or bracelets. Further, one can mention a difference in manners and expression, which is far easier to feel than to describe (Mayer 1971: 10).

It was precisely these stylistic constraints that impaired *amaqaba* migrants in town and exposed them to the *tsotsis'* attentions on the streets. Their inability to perform within an accepted range of urban styles set them apart, making them easily identifiable as country bumpkins. Various old East Bank residents recalled how, as urban youths, they had laughed at rural migrants in their clumsy oversized shoes or too-short trousers. They explained that these were signals for the *tsotsis* to move in. Given such stylistic vulnerability, it is unsurprising that many migrants hid in the backyards, immersing themselves in *amakhaya* groups off the streets.

Recognising different stylistic postures and how they were opposed to each other should not, however, distract us from the way cosmopolitan styles competed as much with others that were equally cosmopolitan, as with localist styles. Diverse urban and not-so-urban youth styles competed with one another for space and voice on the streets. The street space generated multiple overlapping styles: not one essential urban style opposing another equally essential rural style. It is clear too that some individuals were able to switch codes when necessary. Like their Copperbelt counterparts, many East Bank residents could draw on a repertoire of cultural styles, some transcending any Red/School, urban/rural divide. Access to upper-class parties and events, of course, required stylistic competencies that many working people lacked. The ability to play certain sports, to perform certain dance styles, to know certain people and to speak knowledgeably about certain topics defined the parameters of competent performance.

But styles were never simply performed in general. They were adopted and honed in particular social and spatial contexts. Access to the veranda, street, and dance-hall was not equal. Entry and the right to perform were structured by diverse factors including age, gender, and economic status. Factors such as class also affected spatial access. Property owners, for instance,

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had access to certain spaces, which non-property owners did not. Those who controlled the house controlled the veranda and through it had direct access to the street. The link between spatial practice and style was critical in the old East Bank location.

Conclusion

The Mayers' construction of a linear, two-system model for East London has major limitations. At one level, the employment of this binary perspective, as I have attempted to show, submerged the multiplicity of hybrid identities and social forms that were created through complex processes of cultural production and reproduction in East Bank. These were processes mediated through circuits of imitation and diversion that traversed diverse spaces: interiors of houses to verandas, verandas to streets, streets to dance-halls, sports grounds, beaches, public meeting-places and carnivals. At another level, application of the Mayers' two-model system creates an impression of a neatly bifurcated system of cultural orientations that balance each other out, with migrants choosing between membership of one or other more or less equally-weighed cultural form. But this hides what I have shown is the central cultural dynamic of East Bank in the 1950s – the enormous ascendancy of cosmopolitanism, and the consequent increasing marginalisation of *amaqaba* cultural forms.

A central limitation of the Trilogy was that it failed to penetrate effectively the public spaces of cultural production and performance in East London's location. As I have argued, this is because the Trilogy comprised "home-made" ethnographies: ethnographies that displayed limitations of vision largely because of the researchers' spatial practices in the field. Given the politically charged nature of 1950s East Bank, these were difficult practices to have avoided. But we cannot ignore their having been consciously selected. The ethnographies constituting the Trilogy, and subsequent southern African urban ethnographic work, has generally struggled to make meaningful connections between the cultural circuits of the home or household and the wider circuits in other spaces of cultural production within towns and cities.

The central problem then is not, as Magubane (1971; 1973) and other critics (Moore 1994) have argued, that southern African urban anthropological studies have ignored the broader political economy of colonial and apartheid exploitation. Rather, I would argue, it is that they have been unable to unravel the complex cultural dynamics of urban life. Continued reliance, to the present, on binary models of cultural resistance, as suggested in Chapter 1, indicates the extent of the problem. Embracing the fashionable new "multi-sited" field-work doctrines proposed by scholars like Marcus (1998), is also insufficient medicine for overcoming the methodological problems and addressing the theoretical challenges facing South African urban anthropology. We

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must now also be prepared to review the spatial practices we employ during field-work in the fixed localities that constitute our urban field sites. Such multi local field strategies that allow us to cross over between public and private spaces to begin to develop an understanding of the relational dynamics of urban style making and identity formation, as a critical component of what I have called the anthropology of urbanism.

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CHAPTER THREE

TOWARDS A NEW URBANISM: MODERNISM, SPACE AND IDENTITY IN EAST LONDON

Modernist planners became thieves of memory. Faustian in their eagerness to erase all traces of the past in the interest of forward momentum, of growth in the name of progress, their drive-by-windscreen surveys of neighbourhoods that they have already decided to condemn to the bulldozer, have been, in their own way, as deadly as the recent drive by gang shootings in Los Angeles. Modernist planners embracing the ideology of development as progress, have killed whole communities, by evicting them, demolishing their houses, and dispersing them to edge suburbs or leaving them homeless. They have killed whole communities by not understanding the loss and grieving that go along with losing one's home and neighbourhood and friends and memories (Sandercock 1998: 208)

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Introduction

In 1952, the East Bank location, the largest black residential area in the coastal city of East London, was torn apart by political violence. The violence erupted on Sunday, 9 November, when 1500 residents from the city's locations came to a mass meeting at Bantu Square in the location. The meeting took place under the banner of the African National Congress, and followed in the wake of rioting in Port Elizabeth and Kimberley and of numerous arrests of Eastern Cape political leaders (Mager & Minkley 1993: 229). The police were expecting trouble and had brought in truckloads of reinforcements for the weekend. According to former East Bank residents, the troops gathered at the old police station on the hill overlooking adjoining Tsolo section, where they relaxed on the lawns at the station under an old fig tree, playing *boeremusiek* (Afrikaans folk music), talking and eating *biltong* (dried meat).[1] When the crowd gathered for the Sunday meeting, the troops marched down the hill into Bantu Square and ordered the crowd to disperse. The crowd refused to move and police opened fire on them with Sten guns, revolvers and rifles.

1. Ronnie Meinie, Group Interview, East London, 12 November 1999.

Chaos ensued. The crowd dispersed hysterically as the police pursued individuals and groups around the location, firing at random up and down alleys and in between streets and houses. The police struggled to keep track of youths as they darted in between wood-and-iron shacks and lured police into blind alleys where they beat them with sticks and stones. Street battles raged throughout the afternoon. By nightfall, when the police withdrew from East Bank location, nine people had been killed and scores of others were injured. Among the dead was Dr Elsie Quinlan, a Roman Catholic nun who had lived and worked in the East Bank. During the night the youths and political activists went on the rampage, looting and burning down church property, community halls, business premises and government installations. In the mopping-up operations that followed this night of destruction, the police made hundreds of arrests and deported thousands of "undesirable youths", who were believed to be responsible for the trouble. Many single women were also sent away to the rural areas. In the court cases that were brought against members of the East Bank community, fifteen people were charged with the murder of Dr Quinlan: five were convicted and two were hanged, while hundreds of youths and other activists were jailed and detained for public violence.[2]

The riots of 1952 proved to be a decisive turning point in the history of the East Bank location. They marked the beginning of a new regime of planning in the city and the end of the era of location management by neglect for the people of East Bank, who by 1950 numbered over 50 000. Prior to the 1950s, the white authorities had viewed the locations of East London as a necessary but an undesirable part of the city. The white East London city council's attitude was one of neglect and containment (Atkinson 1991; Tankard 1990; Nel 1990). It aimed to spend as little money as possible on the locations. Between the 1920s and 1950s, there was constant talk of location upgrading and improvement, but virtually nothing was done (*ibid.*). In fact, although the population of East Bank trebled between 1930 and 1950, it has been noted that "the city did not build any new houses or other services between 1927 and the mid-1940s, and by 1950 had only built 629 new houses" (Minkley 1996: 140). Some visiting officials to the city described the living conditions in the location as amongst "the worst in the Union" (*ibid.*).

In the wake of a systematic policy of municipal neglect, the violence of 1952 shocked the white community to the core, galvanising the authorities into action and ushering in a new era of planning. By the mid-1950s, a range of new schemes had been proposed by the city council to de-densify or demolish the old locations by creating residential options on undeveloped land in and around the city. This debate was eventually resolved in favour of mass forced relocations of all

2. *Ibid.*, Pule Twaku, Interview, East London, 21 August 2000.

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Plate 6: Forced Removals. The pictures above depicts the story of the removal of the Meinie family from Tsolo section in the old location. Photo 22, depicts the dismantling of their family home with municipal officials looking on; Photo 23, Family photograph of Ronnie Meinie, his grandfather and in the frame above, his great-grandfather, all former residents of 32 Coot Street, East Bank; Photo 24, depicts Ronnie's brothers and sisters sitting on their furniture waiting for removal. The extended Meinie family was eventually dispersed between three different township in the city, Duncan Village, Parkside and Buffalo Flats.

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"surplus" Africans out of East London into the new Ciskei township of Mdantsane, which was to be built 25 km. outside the city (cf. Nel 1990; Atkinson 1991).

The aim of this chapter is to reflect on the forced removals of the 1960s and 1970s and to explore the social and cultural consequences of middling modernism in the city. Existing research into the demolition of East Bank has focused exclusively on the fate of individuals and families, forcibly removed to Mdantsane, and has therefore ignored the changing position of those who were left behind during the forced removals. The chapter seeks to fill this gap in the literature on urban restructuring in East London by exploring the transformation of East Bank location into the new Duncan Village township, built on the old East Bank site to accommodate permanently urbanised Africans in the city (see Plate 6).

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part concerns the process of residential reconstruction in the city. Following Parnell and Mabin (1995), I suggest that there has been an over-emphasis on race issues in historical studies of the urban transformation in twentieth-century South Africa. This has led to a situation where the uniqueness and particularity of urban apartheid planning has been stressed at the expense of an understanding of the relationship between apartheid urban planning and broader trends in the history of international modernist urban planning (also see Robinson 1990; 1992; 1998). In my analysis, I suggest that the new urban planning regime adopted both within and beyond the city mirrored a planning regime, which Rabinow (1989; 1996) calls "middling modernism". For Rabinow, this generic form of modernist urban planning is defined by the attention it gives to housing as the primary agent for the construction of new working-class neighbourhoods and identities.

In the second part of the chapter, I investigate the social and cultural consequences of "middling modernist" planning first in Mdantsane and then in Duncan Village. I begin by returning to the Trilogy, which was updated in the 1970s with the publication of new research findings documenting the experiences of individuals and families moved from East Bank to Mdantsane. In the revised editions, the Mayers and Pauw speak of the "end of Red and School" life-styles in the city, of the "blurring of identities", and the emergence of a new, depressing urbanism in the Ciskei township. I assess their arguments and those of other scholars, but suggest that their analysis remains incomplete without an assessment of developments inside the city. This leads back to Duncan Village and to the lives and experiences of those who remained behind. Here, I argue that, while Duncan Village was reconstructed along very similar lines to Mdantsane, the experience of those who stayed on in the city proved to be significantly different from those who left. I suggest that the reconstructed Duncan Village emerged as a more varied and spatially segmented urban environment than Mdantsane with its own distinctive urban

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dynamic, social fabric and cultural politics. By filling in a missing piece in the puzzle of urban restructuring in East London, I hope to deepen our understanding, not only of the consequences of apartheid in the city, but also of the social, cultural and political changes of the 1980s and 1990s.

"Middling Modernism" in East London

In trying to reconceptualise the spatial and social transformations associated with apartheid development in East London between the 1950s and the 1980s, I have found Rabinow's (1989; 1996) concept of "middling modernism" a useful starting point for analysis. Rabinow (1989) develops this concept on the basis of his analysis of French modernist urban planning in the inter-war years. He argues that the key departure of "middling modernism" is that it no longer focuses on "regulating and ameliorating a locale and its inhabitants, but rather on treating both as a matter to be formed and normed at will" (1989: 345). It is no longer concerned with "the isolation and rectification of islands of pathology" but instead with providing "a blueprint for the scientific administration of modern life" (*ibid.*: 344).

As the influential French modernist planner, Louis Boulonnois, explained, the aim of the exercise was "to bestow on the allotments a city plan (*plan de ville*) and, symmetrically, on assisted families a life plan (*plan de vie*)" (in Rabinow 1989: 332). The intention is to create abstract sites where "all reference to older modes of life, to history, to the sedimented place of memory, and to sociability had been eliminated" and where "the central point of the city had been reserved for public administration" (Rabinow 1989: 358). According to Rabinow (1989; 1995), "middling modernism" imposes itself from the outside as a universal grid onto an existing situation without taking cognisance of local conditions, values and practices, which are regarded as "beyond reform". In this sense, he sees it as different from other planning traditions, especially in the colonies, which aimed to work through pre-existing cultural, social and aesthetic institutions, spaces and meanings. "Middling modernist" regimes, he insists, set out to "create New Men freed, purified and liberated to pursue new forms of sociality which would inevitably arise from correctly designed spaces and forms" (Rabinow 1996: 60).

For Rabinow (1996), "middling modernism" is defined not only by its drive to eliminate pre-existing urban social forms and its quest for a new universal grid for modern life, but also by its emphasis on housing as the central locus for the interaction of macro- and micro-knowledge and powers. Unlike "high modernism" with its focus on grand transformations in the public space of the city centre, Rabinow (1996) views "middling modernism" as working through housing as the main vehicle for social transformation, where the establishment of technical

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standards could be linked to a set of normalising criteria for usage. Referring again to French planners of the inter-war years, he notes that:

> These norms of sociability were based on *la famille normale moyene*, a stable and rational household. The norms not only classified families but also served as the basis of intervention to hasten their creation and stabilisation ... Families who failed to qualify for housing were not definitively eliminated from the pool but, rather, offered the possibility of consulting with social workers and reapplying. Once they aligned their practices with those of the scientifically defined and selected normal community, they might qualify for housing (Rabinow 1996: 76).

In South Africa, it appears that housing was similarly elevated in the restructuring of black residential areas in urban areas in the 1950s and 1960s. The new 51/9 and 51/6 house designs that became the blueprint for township redevelopment during this period, were based on precisely these universal (Western) standards (Japha 1999; Mabin 1999; Mabin and Smit 1997).

In 1951 the National Building Research Institute began work on experimental housing projects at Witbank and KwaThema in the Transvaal. According to Japha (1999: 423), "these projects provided a rigorously theorised planning framework for the "native township" of the 1950s and 1960s that did so much to define the form and the character of the apartheid city, as well as providing designs for the houses in them and the practical demonstrations of the technical methods that had been devised for their realisation". By the mid-1950s, the local authority in East London was presented with boxes of material from Pretoria on the new format for township and housing design.[3] These materials encouraged local authorities to adopt the new models to avoid the spatial chaos, disorder and moral degeneracy associated with the old location strategy. The materials also provided officials with guidance on the intended functions of the rooms of the new housing design:

> The technical plan of the new township house defined the normal use of such a shelter, making this a condition of occupation. The functions of the rooms were specified - 'bedroom, kitchen-dine, living-sleeping, bath rm., passage'; and the proper furnishings for the interiors sketched in - 'bed, table, chairs ...' The spatial requirements were also specified according to 'the type and the size of the dwelling, based of course on the average family size of 5 persons'. A residential plot must also 'house the dwellings and provide space for (i) privacy (ii) laundry and clothes drying (iii) children's play (iv) cultivation (v) sufficient overall area to fresh air and uninterrupted light" (Minkley 1999: 212).

3. See Cape Archive, 3/ELN, Boxes 1150–1165, Correspondence, Location General, 1947–1956 for an account of the debates about African housing in the city and the NBRI materials supplied to the city by Pretoria.

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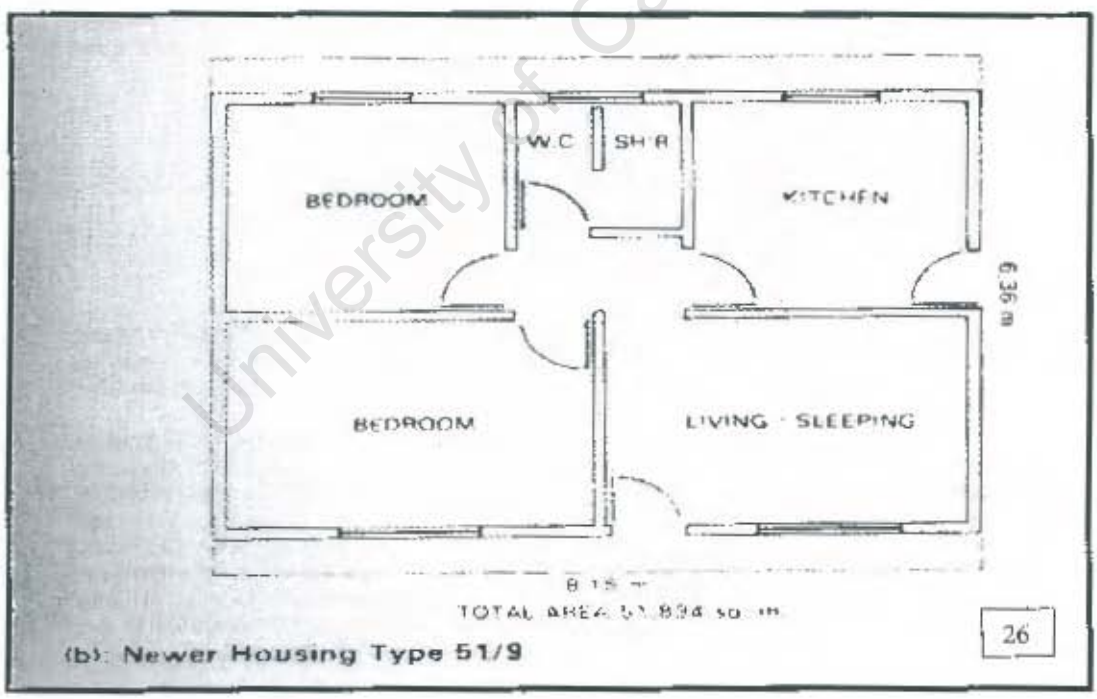


Plate 7: Modernist Plans. Photo 25, Aerial view of Duncan Village (proper), 1967, showing township reconstruction; Photo 26, Floor plan of the 51/9 house plan used in Duncan Village and Mdantsane

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Reading through the East London municipal archive of the 1950s, one is left with no doubt as to the centrality of housing in the minds of officials as a vehicle for the reconstruction of East Bank as a modern working-class community in the city designed to serve industry. With the Transkei and Ciskei homelands situated close to the city, there was little emphasis on the need for elaborate hostel complexes to house a massive migrant population. The focus was instead on the rapid construction of households of 51/6 and 51/9 family dwellings for the accommodation of a new urban working class. But it is also clear from this documentation that by the mid-1950s the authorities increasingly came to view the new African working class not as a unified grouping, but as divided between a commuterised segment living outside the city and a permanently-settled component located in the city. This ensured that, from the outset, "middling modernism" in East London developed along two different but parallel tracks.

By the 1950s, the East and West Bank locations in East London were widely regarded in official circles as islands of pathology, "irredeemable slums", which had little potential for proper regulation and incremental redevelopment. In fact, from the 1940s it had been suggested to the city council that the locations be razed to the ground and rebuilt.[4] White ratepayers also consistently argued that the place was an eyesore and that it only contributed to the chaos and depravity of black lives in the city (Nel 1990: 123). The events of 1952 shocked the white city fathers out of their inertia and brought a new urgency to discussions concerning township upgrading and development.

One of the ways in which the authorities attempted to deal with their fears and concerns about the locations was by arresting and deporting political activists, "urban illegals", and unruly and deviant Township elements. After 1952, approximately 6000 women and youths were deported to the rural areas in a campaign to clean up East Bank. However, a year later, one official estimated that more than a quarter of the population of the location was still in the city illegally. In 1957, another official estimated that there were over 7000 women illegally living in the city (Atkinson 1991: 364). In 1958, in a desperate attempt to bring the situation under control, police officials galvanised conservative migrants to chase and beat boys who were lingering on the streets (see Chapter 5). The reign of terror lasted several months and provided no lasting solution to the problems in the location.

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Having exhausted other options, the East London city council, in consultation with the Department of Native Affairs, embarked on a major residential restructuring and relocation programme in the East Bank. The programme was predicated on a two-pronged strategy, which involved the demolition of the East Bank "tin towns" (see Plate 6). The idea was to progressively demolish the wood-and-iron houses and move the inhabitants either to the new dormitory township of Mdantsane in the Ciskei, or to accommodate them in an orderly manner in Duncan Village or elsewhere in the city. In Duncan Village, families were settled in four-roomed 51/9 municipal houses and were expected to "urbanise on a family basis" in "modern workman's cottages". Those who did not qualify for permanent urban residence under the Section 10 regulations, were either relocated to Mdantsane, or housed in a limited number of new male hostels in Duncan Village.

In terms of the new planning regime, the new township was to be clearly divided between "urban spaces", represented by the 51/9 workmen's houses, and "rural spaces", characterised by the rows of fenced and guarded single-sex hostel blocks. In Duncan Village, the highway served as a natural barrier in keeping these different socio-spatial categories apart. The construction of a beer hall inside the B-hostel complex, as well as the provision of a range of services to the migrants, including free coal, minimised their need to make contact with the township world outside. In the minds of the apartheid planners the hostels were modelled on the idea of a "kraal" – the village space in the city (see Plates 7 & 8).

Access to the "urban" component of the new township spaces was clearly regulated and it was stipulated that housing would be restricted to "fit and proper persons" who were employed in the area and had a legal right to reside there. The regulations defined a "fit and proper person" as:

> ... any person who is of good character and can produce proof that he is married either by Christian rights or civil law or that a customary union subsists between himself and the women who he describes as his wife, or that she is a widow or a widower or a divorcée and living with his or her family.[5]

In terms of the regulations, it was technically possible for widows to retain sites after the death of their husbands, but it was not possible for them to acquire new houses in their own right. In Duncan Village, these regulations were strictly imposed. In fact, the location superintendent was not at all in favour of widows taking over the houses of their deceased husbands, and routinely

4. See the Thornton and Welsh Commissions of the 1930s and 1940s appointed to investigate socio-economic conditions and housing needs in East London's locations; also Reader (1960: 15-20).
5. The Native (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, No 25 of 1945.

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evicted widows from these houses to make way for new nuclear families.[6] It was this "fatherless family", he claimed, that bred the "juvenile delinquents" who had gone berserk in the city in 1952 and who needed to be deported to rural areas to calm the situation down.[7]

Technical and administrative capacity and the will to enforce "the plan", Rabinow (1989; 1996) suggests, is a key ingredient in the implementation of modernist planning projects. The seeming absence of political will and technical capacity in the East London Native Administration Department (NAD) structures prior to 1952 was a matter of concern to the state. Thus, in 1960, Mr F. W. C. Buitendag, a new apartheid city manager from the Transvaal, was appointed to investigate and overhaul the functioning of East London's NAD in the city. He was also to consider ways in which the city might better manage its African population.

Buitendag was shocked at the lax manner in which the local African population were controlled and at the chaotic state of the influx-control system in the city. He recommended far-reaching changes to modernise and rationalise the functions of Native Administration. Buitendag suggested that both bureaucrats and Africans had to be disciplined to ensure that apartheid laws on the statute books were enforced on the ground. He recommended that new personnel be found who would control the locations and to clear "illegals" out of the city.[8] Atkinson (1991) views the Buitendag report as a key turning point in the management of the city, claiming that it served to shift the local administration from a system of relatively "benign paternalism" to a regime of "disciplinary power". And it was precisely this kind of power, capacity and efficiency that was required to administer mass forced removals in East London in the 1960s.

From 1960 it was declared that those families living in East Bank who did not meet the stringent requirements for residency in Duncan Village, were to be directed either to their home villages outside the city or to Mdantsane, the new homeland town located only 25 km. outside the city. However, it was soon realised that the construction of Mdantsane would take time and that there was an urgent need for temporary housing for those displaced by the demolition of the East Bank "tin town". To address this problem, 3500 temporary one-roomed emergency houses

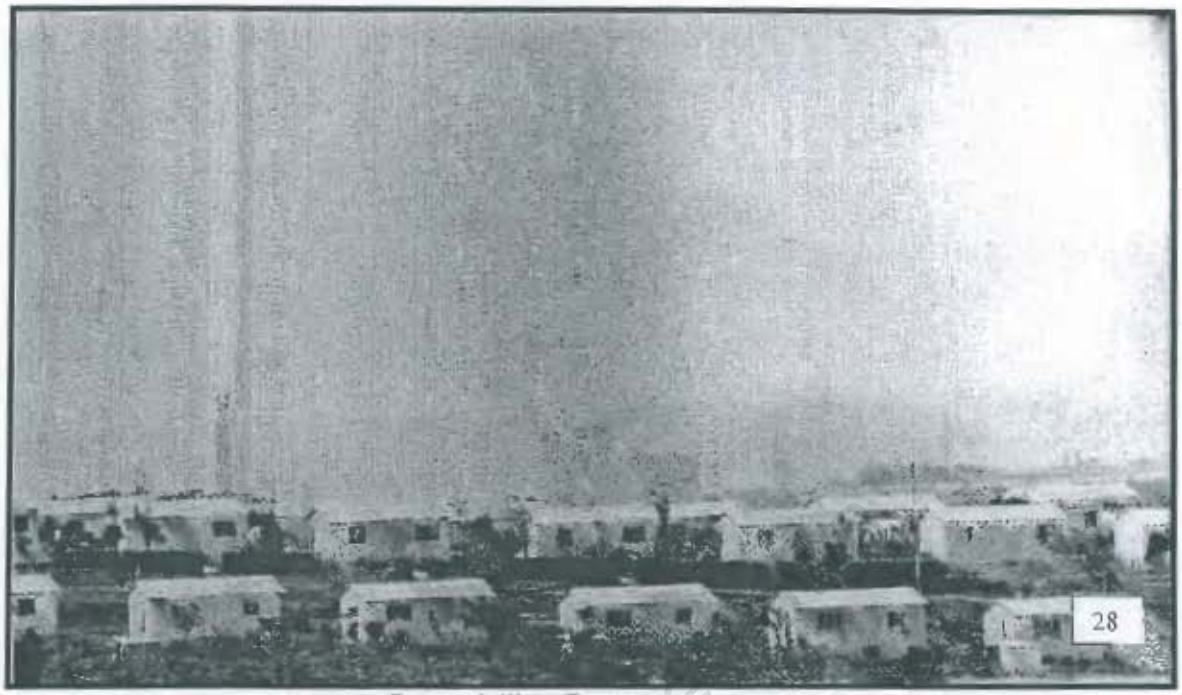
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6. Maria Ramokazi of house 1020 in the new municipal housing estate was, for example, instructed to vacate the house after the death of her husband. The eviction order was enforced in 1954. The Location Superintendent said that he opposed the "scourge of fatherless households" in the city. See correspondence between the East London attorney, P.R. Schiender, and the Location Superintendent, November 1958, in Cape Archives, 3/ELN, File 50/1487/3.
7. Compare Welsh Commission's report on the "juvenile delinquency problem" in East London. It is interesting to note that the Mayers shared official concerns about the moral degeneracy of the urban youth, referring to them as "riff-raff" in *Townsmen or Tribesmen* (cf. Mayer 1971: 21–19). Also see Chapter 5 to follow.
8. By 1958, it was estimated that there were more than 7000 "illegals" in East Bank alone. Officials also estimated that "illegals" were now entering the city at a rate of more than 1000 a year (cf. Atkinson 1991: 185).

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Plate 8: Duncan Village (Extension). Photo 27, Aerial view of the new residential ecology where the family housing of Duncan Village Extension was separated from the transit housing of C-section and the hostel accommodation of D-section and B-hostel.



Duncan Village Extention

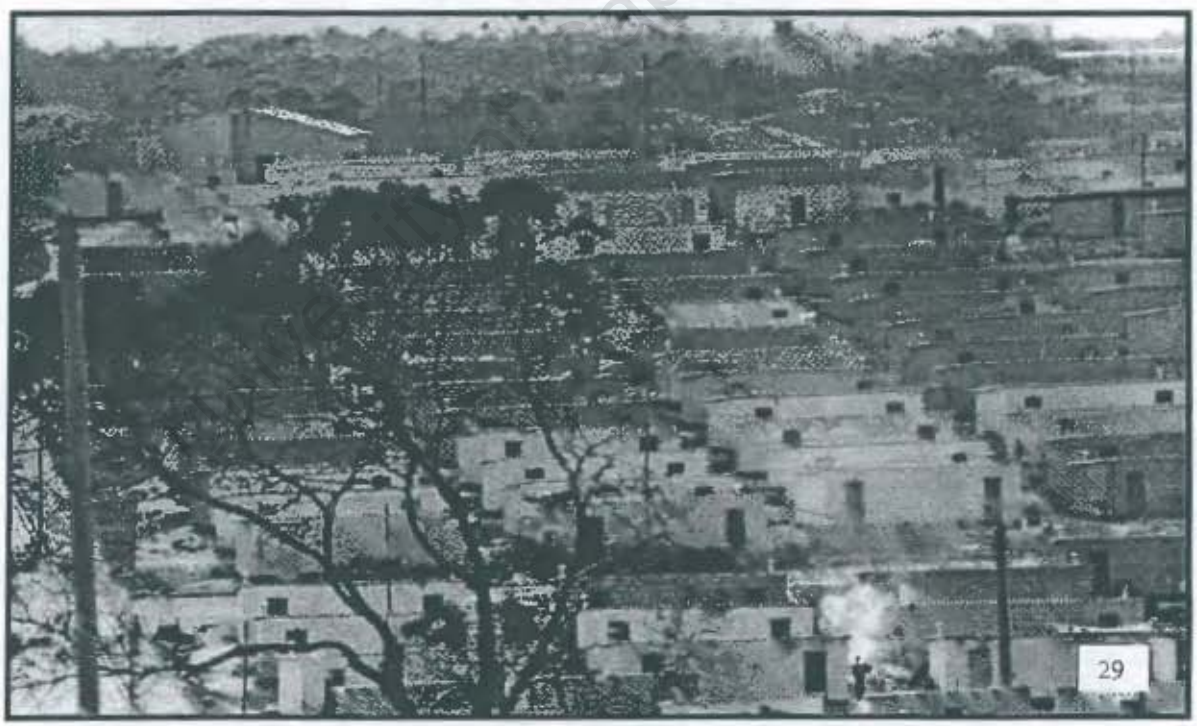


Plate 9: Duncan Village and C-section. Photo 28 and Photo 29 contrast the residential environments of Duncan Village (Extension) and C-section, highlighting the windowless transit bungalows with the new four-roomed family houses on pavilion-style plots.

were constructed on land adjoining the old location. The new administrative efficiency in the city was demonstrated by the fact that from mid-1961, these temporary houses were erected at a rate of approximately 100 a month. During the 1960s, these houses were used as transit houses for those individuals and families en route to Mdantsane. This part of Duncan Village became known as C-section. The idea was that C-section would eventually be destroyed once the relocation process had been completed. In the new spatial hierarchy, C-section was seen as a transitional space – a space where people could begin to socially and morally adjust from the chaos and degeneracy of the slums and prepare themselves for a new life in the orderly, "garden city" of Mdantsane.

As expected, the layout of Mdantsane mirrored many of the new township developments that were now springing up in urban areas across the country. But in planning this township, adjustments were made to the National Building Research Institute models of the 1950s to accommodate the fact that Mdantsane was intended to eventually emerge as a fully-fledged town in its own right and was also supposed to house a more rurally-oriented population. To create a semi-rural feel to the township, planners drew on notions of the "garden city" – a concept developed by the turn-of-the-century British modernist planner Ebenezer Howard. Howard argued: "There are not in reality only two alternatives – town and country life – but a third alternative in which all the advantages of the most energetic and active town life, with all the beauty and delight of the country may be secured in perfect combination" (quoted in Taylor 1998: 124).

It was this image that state planners embraced when considering urban development in the homeland. They wanted to create semi-autonomous, inter-linked urban commuter communities that were politically detached, but economically integrated into white urban areas. The "garden city" concept with its emphasis on open spaces and semi-rural environment, officials hoped, as Howard did half a century earlier, would address the social pathologies associated with the "tin towns" and "slums" of East London. However, when state planners eventually sat down to finally design Mdantsane in the late 1950s, they were already able to draw on other local examples of "garden city" homeland towns, such as Zwelitsha situated about 50 km. from East London on the outskirts of nearby King William's Town. This township was planned in 1947 to accommodate rural households rendered landless as a result of betterment planning in the Ciskei.

In her study of the creation of Zwelitsha in the 1950s, Mager (1999: 46–71) has shown that the new settlement not only bore the imprint of garden city planning, but also reflected an almost obsessive concern with the house as an instrument for "norming and forming" of African families. She argues that the Zwelitsha project:

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> ... opened up the discursive space for remodelling "the African family". NAD [Native Administration and Development] displayed enormous faith in the ability of tight administration; decent homes and industrial work to fashion westernised families. Their zeal reflected not so much the functionality of the nuclear family to capital but the convergence of an idealised view of white, middle-class notions of morality, family and work in segregation-developmentist thinking. It was tied to a belief that social engineering could repair the ravages of social change (*ibid.*: 49).

This is precisely how state officials viewed Mdantsane. They believed the scheme was capable of undoing some of the damage of uncontrolled urbanisation and had the potential to remove many of the pathological social and family forms associated with this process. It intended to do this, not through the "detribalisation" model of the village and the hostel, but through the application of the mainstream modernist urban planning regime of the "garden village", and through the implementation of the new 51/9 domestic dwelling. It was anticipated that the new spatial and domestic regime would produce the social and moral results that would allow the people of Mdantsane to "normalise" and evolve into a working-class outpost of the city.

In the minds of white politicians and planners, the single mothers and matriarchs of old "tin town", the *amakazana* (unmarried mothers), were anathema to order, discipline and progress in the city (cf. Minkley 1996). They provoked fears and anxieties in city officials who saw these women and their bodies as tempting and threatening to male order, male self-discipline and to their ability to discipline the city. In the local municipal offices these women used their bodies to extract favours and rewards from willing white bureaucrats, who would break the rules for their own satisfaction. As one woman explained: "Those white men in the offices liked our nice thighs, we gave them what they wanted to get houses and permits." The willingness of single town women to use their sexuality for personal gain and to spawn "fatherless families", horrified senior bureaucrats like Buitendag, fuelling demands that these menacing sexualities be brought under control and that bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency be routed. For the new officials, the preferred destination for single women, the notorious *amakazana* of East Bank, was back in the rural village where they could be placed under the control of male headmen and chiefs (cf. Mager 1999: 112-118).

However, there were many single mothers who could not return to the villages, and they were sent to Mdantsane, where they were accommodated in family houses. As in Zwelitsha, officials believed that the new environment in Mdantsane would be conducive to their rehabilitation and domestic reorientation. Thus, unlike Duncan Village, female-headed households were allocated houses in the new Ciskei township in the hope that they too would eventually evolve into "proper nuclear families". In theory, then officials and planners believed that the physical and spatial environment of the 51/9 house situated in a modern environment

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would serve to reform African outlooks and identities. The logic of the Mdantsane resettlement scheme was thus not simply to displace Africans from the economic centre of East London and ultimately to deny them South African citizenship, nor was it an exercise in "retribalisation"; it was more subtle and far-reaching than this. It was part of a broader scheme to remould African subjectivity and identity in ways that were appropriate and functional to modernisation (see Plates 9 & 10).

If we accept that apartheid urban restructuring in East London was not only racial in character, but centrally modernist in orientation, then it is necessary to ask: To what extent did the forms of urbanism that emerged in Duncan Village and Mdantsane after relocation fulfil the expectations of the planners? Did these areas develop along similar lines? Did they come to reflect a new universal, male-centred urbanism that revolved around the nuclear family? Was the social and cultural dynamic that emerged in these areas really so fundamentally different from that which had existed in East Bank? What happened to the older distinctions between Red and School and to the cosmopolitan influences that swept through the East Bank in the 1950s? In the discussion below I reflect on these questions in an effort to assess the impact of forced removals and resettlement on the urban social fabric of the city's African residential areas.

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Relocation and Blurred Identities: Mdantsane

In the early 1970s, the *Xhosa in Town* series, which had already gone into several reprints, was updated to reflect the changing situation in East London. Between September and November 1970, the Mayers embarked on follow-up fieldwork in Mdantsane, where many of their former interviewees had ended up after relocation. For the Mayers, the main aim of their follow-up research was to assess whether Red cultural life had survived the removals. Their findings were published as a postscript to the 1971 edition of *Townsmen or Tribesmen*. Two years later, Pauw, who had been working on a book on Xhosa Christianity in Port Elizabeth, also visited Mdantsane, where he conducted a further survey research and tracked down some of the households he had previously interviewed in East Bank.[9] These findings were also published in a second edition of his book, which appeared in 1973.

In conducting this new work, both the Mayers and Pauw relied on field assistants whom they had used during their original studies. The fieldwork was largely impressionistic and combined information gleaned from interviews and social surveys, with facts and figures supplied by government officials. While the Mayers concentrated mainly on the fate of the Reds,

9. Pauw surveyed 77 households in two zones in Mdantsane (Pauw 1973: xv).

Pauw focused on the family structure and the changing socio-cultural orientations of Mdantsane townspeople.

Both Pauw and the Mayers were critical of apartheid resettlement in the city. Like many British and European scholars who challenged the impact of comprehensive modernist planning in these areas, they applauded the *physical* aspects of the resettlement, but generally lamented the social consequences of the forced removals, especially the loss of community and the breakdown of pre-existing social ties.[10] In East London, the Trilogy researchers acknowledged that Mdantsane created a healthier and more hygienic environment than that of the overcrowded East Bank where the housing stock was in poor condition and garbage littered the streets. They also remarked on the pleasure that many relocated families derived from the spaciousness and greater privacy offered by their new four-roomed houses. The houses were said to be "decent and solid", and Pauw (1973: 209) also noted that the larger residential plots allowed families to start keeping gardens in their backyards. It was a development, he felt, that not only provided households with additional resources, but added a charming semi-rural, garden-village feel of the new township.[11]

On the other hand, there were also many aspects of the Mdantsane re-housing scheme that these authors disapproved of. The first was the absence of adequate employment and community facilities for local residents. Unemployment levels in Mdantsane (although not enumerated) were said to be very high – interviewees complained that, "here we are without employment"; "we are starving here" (Mayer 1971: 302). These problems were compounded by the distance of the township from the job market in East London and the rising cost of transport, which remained high despite state subsidisation (Swilling 1987; also see Plate 10). Behind the new façade of suburban respectability lay real hardship and poverty, which was far greater than what they had encountered in the old East Bank location.[12] One of the consequences of this situation, as the Mayers noted, was that the level of crime and violence increased dramatically in Mdantsane. Gangs of unemployed youths roamed the streets: "(T)he rule of the *tsotsi* element after nightfall is generally more frightening than it ever was in Duncan Village. Even vigorous men rarely dare to venture out at night" (Mayer 1971: 298). In Mdantsane, they argued, "boredom, poverty and alcohol encourage thuggery and crime" (*ibid.*). Pauw claimed that crime and gangsterism was exacerbated by the absence of adequate policing. He indicated that, while

10. A classic British sociological critique of comprehensive planning is provided in Young and Wilmot 's (1957) urban ethnography on Bethnal Green in London; for a similar analysis of the restructing of working class districts in Middlesbrough see Glass (1948). Taylor (1998) provides a general overview of this genre of work.
11. For fuller discussion, see Mager (1999: 47–67) on the creation of Zwelitsha township outside of King William's Town.
12. According to Reader (1960: 61–62), approximately 80 % of men and 36 % of women were employed in the East Bank location in 1954.

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Plate 10: Mdantsane. Photo 30, shows the new 51/9 houses clustered around the Mdantsane Community Centre, while Photo 31, indicates the location of the new township relative to the urban centers of East London and King Williamstown.

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the relocation process itself was highly bureaucratic and tightly controlled, people were largely left to fend for themselves once they had been allocated their new houses (Pauw 1973: 214).

The new urban environment was also seen to lack key facilities, such as proper shops, schools and places for entertainment and recreation. The few shops that did exist only carried a limited range of goods and their shelves were reportedly "often empty" (*ibid.*). This offered opportunities for some residents to run informal shops from their homes to supplement their income, but it also denied residents access to the wide range of shops and businesses in the city. The Mayers (1971: 299) note that in Mdantsane there were consequently few opportunities for residents to engage in "a kind of vicarious participation in the shiny complex world of the whites". Pauw, on the other hand, was more upbeat, suggesting that despite the lack of shops in Mdantsane, local residents nevertheless remained fashion and style conscious:

> Judging by the women's fashions, the cultural variety in Mdantsane is no less than it was in East London twelve years ago. The same long-established dress of Red women from the country – large woollen turbans, long skirts, shawls around the shoulders, garments tied around the waists as a sign of respect, and rough bare feet – is still there, while Euro-America fashions of the last decade, like miniskirts, slacks and modern shoes, have appeared at the other end. Black and brown wigs in Western and Afro styles are another addition (1973: 214).

He also pointed out that old recreational, social and entertainment activities were also re-appearing:

> The musical companies, which featured prominently in East London, are gradually becoming active in Mdantsane, but more halls are needed if they are to flourish. Sporting activities are also increasing. The first attempt to offer a regular film show in the community hall has been abandoned (1973: 206).

Despite Pauw's optimism, the truth of the matter is that none of these activities were ever recreated with the same intensity, social influence and impact as before. Music groups did use the new community hall in Mdantsane, and band members from Duncan Village travelled there for performances, but these occurred infrequently and were not supported as they had been in East Bank. Music tastes also changed and there were few new groups to replace the old ones. The collapse of the Boy Scout movement, the Welsh High School choir and the frequent street musical parades, which had been a feature of East Bank life, also played a role. The vibrant rugby scene of the old location was also never recreated, as rugby quickly lost ground to soccer, which was now being preferred amongst the youth. The only sports code that travelled well was boxing, which became entrenched in the schools. The International Boxing Club from Duncan Village also started up again as the Golden Gloves Boxing Club in Mdantsane in the 1960s, and under new

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leadership produced some excellent talent. In the 1970s, Happyboy Mgxaji became a national champion in the featherweight division and laid the foundation for the current crop of Mdantsane-based national and world champions.[13]

In relation to cultural style, both Pauw and the Mayers agreed that the sharp oppositions that they had seen between those who emulated western dress fashions and life-styles and those who adopted traditional outfits and outlooks had begun to erode in Mdantsane. Pauw (1973) argues (perhaps more because of a change in his own thinking than in the empirical realities he described) that the cultural orientations of the permanently urbanised and better-off families in Mdantsane were somewhat at odds with the modern urban environment in which they now lived. In deference to Mitchell's situational analysis framework, he suggests that there was much evidence of code switching amongst the elite, who remained committed to Xhosa cultural values and beliefs. He viewed the almost universal adherence to male initiation amongst the youth as somewhat surprising, as well as the continued commitment of elites to Xhosa ritual and beliefs. He suggested that the urban African experience in Mdantsane involved a synthesis of tradition and modernity (Pauw 1973: 217). The Mayers also noted that the influence of "the rural" in "the urban" was strong in Mdantsane because residents felt more insecure there and now actively sought to re-establish or regain customary rights in the rural areas (1971: 305).

In their writing on Red and School in the Ciskei Township, the Mayers focused their attention on what they called the "torn social fabric" of the new township. They reported on the way in which relocation had served to break up the entrenched Red networks of East Bank, and undermined the institutional foundations for the reproduction of this sub-cultural form. They identified several factors that made Red life unsustainable in the new township.

First, they noted that since the forced removals were administered in a bureaucratic manner, which took no cognisance of social networks, formerly close-knit *amakhaya* groupings were scattered to different corners of the new location. Through this process, irreparable damage was thus done to *amakhaya* networks. Secondly, they explained that the urban spatial ecology of the new township made it virtually impossible for *amakhaya* roommates to regroup after relocation. The new four-roomed houses were isolated from one another and located on pavilion-style plots designed to accommodate families. To be sure, in some of the new houses, landlords did rent out rooms to groups of migrants, but with a formal restriction of seven people per dwelling, the scale and intensity of the old room-sharing practices could never be replicated.

13. For a social history of boxing in Duncan Village and Mdantsane see Qamarwana and Bank "Golden Gloves & City Slums", *Daily Dispatch*, 21 March 2001.

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Thirdly, they argue that relocation broke down the subtle distinctions of social class and status that had been embedded in the East Bank urban ecology. Clergymen, nurses and teachers were randomly relocated next to poor migrants or unemployed people. This further inhibited the reconstitution of older *amakhaya* networks in Mdantsane (cf. Mayer 1971: 302–15).

The consequence of these developments was the disintegration of migrant networks and sub-cultural styles. This was seen in the formation of new types of drinking groups in Mdantsane. The Mayers (1971: 304) note that the composition of *iseti* beer drinks changed from serving close-knit *amakhaya* migrant groups to serving a mixture of migrants and townspeople. The social basis for association at these mixed *iseti* was no longer merely home ties, but included a range of other associational links, including clanship, friendship, work-links and neighbourhood ties. The new mixed *iseti* simultaneously lost their distinctive focus on rural issues and began to take on board other concerns, such as raising money for abandoned urban children or helping neighbours in times of difficulty. Relocation, the Mayers argued, had manufactured a general shift away from *amakhaya* home-ties to the looser and more informal networks of clanship, kinship and neighbourliness, as the primary basis of migrant sociability in the town. They conclude that the net result of these new developments was a rapid blurring of the old Red/School migrant cultural divide and a general erosion of "Red confidence", as access to education was increasingly seen as the road to economic security. In this process of transition, new categories and self-definitions began to emerge – such as *ilumlwane* (literally, "bats"), or "those who were neither bird nor animal" – to define formerly Red migrants who had lost their identities and who began to switch their codes of interaction and social behaviour.

In his 1972 Mdantsane research, Pauw (1973) commented on the fate of the matrifocal family, which he had identified as a major feature of the East Bank social scene in the 1950s. His research in the new location showed that more than one third of the new households in these areas were female-headed, with the majority being mother-and-children households rather than the extended, multi-generational matrifocal units common in East Bank. Pauw found that the officials in Mdantsane, unlike those in Duncan Village, were prepared to classify unmarried mothers as "fit and proper" heads of families, which was the legal requirement for allocating houses. He also notes that, while the female-headed households in Mdantsane were much smaller than in East Bank, some mothers and daughters were allocated houses next door to each other. Pauw concludes that the trend towards matrifocality thus continued in Mdantsane, with unmarried women still constituting their own families without an effective male presence.[14]

14. One interesting cultural indicator mentioned by Pauw (1973: 211) in relation to matrifocality in the Mdantsane township was the tendency of female household heads to communicate with ancestors who were their matrikin rather than patrikin.

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The general assessment of social and cultural life in Mdantsane provided by the Mayers and Pauw was that it was not only characterised by increasing poverty and violence, but that the whole place was socially barren and sterile. As the Mayers described it: "a heavy, lonely boredom that descends over weekends" and engulfs this "cheerless new community" (1971: 298).

These conclusions are supported by Minkley's (1999) more recent work on "native space" in East London. Like the Trilogy researchers, he notes the initial optimism of many of the new residents moving to Mdantsane from East Bank and West Bank in East London: "It is like having four houses in one. I have got a garden and everything to myself ... I have a lavatory"; "Here I have four rooms which belong to me"; "The house is airy and light compared to the stinking shacks we lived in at Duncan Village ... Altogether it is a pleasant place to live"; "We are no longer crowded and all on top of one another" (Minkley 1999: 216). In fact, Minkley argues that by 1982, approximately half of those who had moved to Mdantsane, especially those who moved there from rural areas, were initially in favour of moving there. They wanted to participate in something new and different. They had dreams of a new life, of access to a modern suburban existence that provided them with an escape from the hardship and drudgery of rural life. By the 1980s, Minkley claims, these dreams had been shattered by unemployment, poverty and loneliness. Mdantsane residents, he argues, had become like "corpses behind screens": the screens of racial modernism. For Minkley, Mdantsane thus emerged as a "paradise lost", a place of shattered illusions, a monotonous space "marked by uniformity and separation, by loneliness and hardship, by starvation and unemployment and distance" (1999: 217). It had failed to live up to the expectation of both the modernist planners who created it and to the residents who inhabited it. Yet, despite these failings, it nevertheless remained a space of African urban settlement that could be contained politically (cf. Swilling 1987).

Resettlement and Social Difference: Duncan Village

One of the intriguing aspects of the literature on African urban life and apartheid planning in East London, is the extent to which the relocation process from East Bank and West Bank to Mdantsane followed after the 1960s. This applies not only to studies of location life but also to those of industrial development and political protest (Hirsch & Green 1983; Swilling 1987; Mager 1989). In fact, one might be forgiven for thinking that the removals of the 1960s had succeeded in leaving the city without an African population. But, as Pauw (1973: 201) points out, while 64 870 people, or 11 916 family units, had been moved to Mdantsane from the former East and West Bank locations of East London during the 1960s, in 1972 there were still 46 103 people living in Duncan Village.

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Besides a tiny minority that lived in the few small clusters of wood-and-iron shacks still standing in Thulandiville (see Map 2), the majority of the population there was either housed in Ziphunzana (Duncan Village Extension) or in the transit houses at Juliwe (C-section). In the 1960s, 3500 temporary transit dwellings were erected on the outskirts of Duncan Village to accommodate families that were earmarked for relocation to Mdantsane. In 1971, the Mayers visited the Thulandiville wood-and-iron houses and reported no significant erosion of Red and School identities there (1971: 314). But besides a few passing comments and the suggestion that some former East Bank migrants were now housed in hostels in the city, neither Pauw nor the Mayers made specific reference to the situation inside the city.

What happened to those left behind? Did they endure the same difficulties experienced by relocated families in Mdantsane? Did urban life in the expanded Duncan Village also become a drab and soulless affair characterised by grinding poverty, the blurring of difference and a lack of cultural and social vitality? These questions are left unanswered by the Trilogy, and present an important gap in the existing literature. Even Minkley, in his recent analysis of location space in the city, ignores Duncan Village after the 1950s and characterises "native space" in the city on the basis of a reading of urban life in Mdantsane. In the discussion below I therefore attempt to address the lacuna by focusing on the nature of the urban experience and identity formation in Duncan Village between the 1960s and the 1980s.

The first and most obvious difference between Duncan Village and Mdantsane during this period was that Duncan Village was designed as a segmented township space, with two additional spatial zones, besides the sprawling new 51/9 and 51/6 four-roomed housing estates (see Map 3). It contained two hostel complexes and a large transit housing area. Neither of these areas was constructed in terms of the spatial logic of "middling modernist" impulses that characterised Mdantsane.

Secondly, after relocation, the population of Duncan Village was fundamentally in a different economic position to that of the new Ciskei Township. During the 1960s and the 1970s, adult male employment rates in Duncan Village consistently exceeded 80 % of the adult male population.[15] In fact, in the case of the hostels, access to accommodation was dependent on being fully employed. This meant that the township population as a whole was considerably better off than that of Mdantsane and was generally spared the chronic poverty that prevailed there.

Thirdly, and due to the proximity of Duncan Village to the East London Central Business District, residents there continued to have relatively easy access to a wide range of shops and services that did not exist in Mdantsane.

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Fourthly, it is also important to note that the new Duncan Village was considerably more tightly controlled by the state than Mdantsane. In the 1960s, the responsibility for township management in East London was given to the Eastern Cape Administration Board, which was notoriously repressive and interventionist in its management style (Atkinson 1991: 230–45). In Duncan Village, state agencies had little appetite for informal businesses or groups of idle youth hanging around on the streets, which were regularly patrolled by the police.

Of the three residential zones in Duncan Village, C-section was the least tightly managed and it was here that the social networks and cultural dynamic of the old location survived the longest. In the new spatial geometry of urban restructuring, C-section constituted a transitional space: a space that was not meant to be part of the new Duncan Village nor of Mdantsane. It was a place where people were supposed to be in-transit and could begin to adjust socially to the prospects of life in Mdantsane. The physical layout of C-section and its houses reflected these imperatives. Like the rest of the new township, it was symmetrically laid in rows of windowless, rectangular one-roomed dwellings, which were arranged in compact rows. No provision was made for yards or proper streets (see Plate 9). In C-section, four or five dwellings consumed the same amount of space as one new family plot in Duncan Village. Moreover, and because of the perception that these dwellings would be destroyed once families had move out, the township authorities paid little attention to the careful management and control of this area. It was a bit like Mdantsane in this regard. It was also noted that families from particular streets in the old location were given houses next to each other in C-section, and were not mixed up to the same extent as in Mdantsane. This meant, as one former East Bank resident explained, that "we still had the taste of the old location in our mouths, we were still together, although we faced an uncertain future". Others explained that the lack of tight police control in this area kept the spirit of East Bank alive.

Audrey Tjali from Mekeni in the old location recalled that the move to C-section had been less traumatic than she had expected because both her neighbours had been relocated next to her. Although life in C-section was very different from what she had been used to, she said, at least some of her old social network was still intact "to see her through hard times":

> The C-section houses had a room with no windows, just a door. It was a big shock for us. It was cramped and dark and there was no space to socialise – no verandah, no backyard. But we were close to our neighbours and friends from Mekeni. They were all around us, helping out. This allowed us to find some joy in all the misery of forced removals ... We

15. This estimate was provided by Mr Nel, the township superintendent of Duncan Village during the 1960s and 1970s.

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> could still share jokes and remember the good old days. Between us we recreated a little bit of the magic of Mekeni in our new concrete boxes.[16]

Others recalled that people, when separated, sometimes defied the municipal authorities and exchanged houses to be closer to their friends and relatives. It was also noted that, although families were supposed to move into the one-roomed houses, some houses were taken over by small groups of migrants, who lived together as single men in *intanga* (age-mate) or *amakhaya* (home-mate) groups. The continuation of Red migrant life-styles in C-section was reflected in the presence of numerous *iseti* beer drinking groups there, long after the 1950s. As Banzi Jabu explained:

> We lived next door to a house that just had migrants living there. It was just like in the old location where they lived together. These men were from Bola village in Gatyana and they liked to drink their *mqomboti* beer. At the weekends, there were often ten or fifteen of them in the house, drinking and talking. In those days they still used to dance until late at night at their beer drinks.[17]

Banzi Jabu also recalled how everyone laughed one Saturday afternoon when the same group of migrants brought a stolen cow into the location and, using mirrors, herded the beast into their concrete house, where they hid it away from officials. Over the weekend, the men called together their *amakhaya* (home-mates), slaughtered the cow and had "a huge feast". It was events like this, Banzi remarked, that "made us think what life used to be like in East Bank". Still, the relocation process also undermined the social networks built up in C-section, as many people moved on again just as they had begun to settle in.

But former East Bank residents also commented on the negative aspects of life there. They were, for instance, quick to point out that crime became a big problem in C-section in the 1970s and that new groups of *tsotsis* preyed on the vulnerability and insecurity of people in the transit houses. They often noted that the "eyes upon the street" that had previously helped to quickly identify strangers and criminal elements did not exist in the same way in C-section (cf. Jacobs 1961). This allowed crime to rise and many stories were heard of families who lost many of their personal possessions long before they arrived in Mdantsane. Crime was also fuelled by unemployment. As an area, C-section was defined by the fact that the people living there were considered to be "surplus" to the labour requirements of the city – they were the "idle and the undesirables".[18] This ensured that many were without full-time employment for long periods

16. Interview, East London, 10 September 2000.
17. Interview, East London, 15 September 2000.
18. Compare Bonner (1988; 1990; 1995); also see Glaser (2000: 95–110) for a discussion of government policy in relation to unemployed youth in Soweto during the 1960s.

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and were forced to explore other options to raise money. In many ways, the whole area was characterised by the same sense of desperation and poverty described for Mdantsane, but with one important difference, namely that the people generally had greater access to their old social networks and support structures.

The conditions that prevailed in the new housing estates of Duncan Village Extension, also known as Ziphunzana, and the old Duncan Village (Proper) created a different social dynamic. Here people were located in pavilion-style residential plots with gardens surrounded by wide streets and public thoroughfares. The physical environment here was identical to that of Mdantsane, but the socio-economic profile of the new housing estates were different in the sense that virtually every household was headed by a male breadwinner. In Duncan Village "middling modernism" came with a wage, which although small, nevertheless laid the foundation for a new kind of urbanism in the city. It was an urbanism, which was focused on the house and its potential evolution into a private space of modern suburban residence. In these houses, new forms of domesticity emerged as residents lived in smaller domestic groups and attempted to transform their houses into modern suburban spaces. In my interviews with Duncan Village residents, I found that the kitchen and the lounge were given particular attention and became closely associated with the forging of new identities.

The stories of the families who moved into these houses in the 1960s speak of the desire, especially amongst urban housewives, to translate the modern consumerist aspirations built up in the old location during the 1950s, into reality. They wanted to fill the "empty rooms" of their new houses with a repertoire of modern furnishings and appliances, which would be indicative of their status within the new urban spatial ecology. To the dismay of many, the municipality announced that it would not supply on-site electricity in Duncan Village as it was doing in many of the new Coloured townships on the Buffalo Flats. In the case of Africans, access to the electricity grid was reserved for those with the financial means to pay for the cost of laying cables from their houses to the street, where street lights lit up the new neighbourhoods. As a result, only a small minority of residents opted for electricity. But at the same time, very few households returned to paraffin as their main domestic fuel, preferring instead to invest in movable coal stoves, which became key symbols of upward mobility. Many also acquired modern kitchen cabinets, appliances and tables to furnish this space and to improve "the look" of the kitchen, which was the main reception room for informal visitors. In Duncan Village, people now seldom used their front doors, which led onto the street. Visitors usually entered through the back door and sat in the kitchen. It was only police officials and furniture salesmen, one woman explained, that would bang on the front door for attention.

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The other space that was given careful attention was the lounge, which often stood empty for some time after families had moved in. For those with the means it was, however, a priority area for investment and upgrading. The general aim was to fill this space with expensive-looking modern furniture, items like lounge suites, dressers and gramophones that were available in the 1960s to the mass market at city stores like Lewis and Russels. The old dark-wood dressers, tables and cabinets that had been popular in the old location were cleared out to make way for a flood of new products now available on the market that were specifically designed for 51/6 and 51/9 houses. Many of these products were relatively cheap and could be purchased on a hire-purchase system, allowing households to acquire items before they had saved enough money to pay for them. However, the art of creating a lounge or sitting-room remained a long-term project that could take years to complete. And, when completed, it was a space that was seldom used on an everyday basis. The lounge was usually reserved for the reception of formal visitors or used on occasions when the household head received visitors, or wanted to enjoy a relaxing drink with friends. It was not a space in which women spent much time, often serving as a symbolic marker of the status and standing of the *male* head of the household, and by extension of the household as a whole.

Although the pace and intensity with which people converted and segmented the internal spaces of their houses varied in Duncan Village, the socio-spatial logic associated with the new 51/9 and 51/6 houses inverted key aspects of the dynamics seen in the wood-and-iron houses of East Bank. In the new housing estates, the social centre of gravity of the house shifted from the front to the back, from the street to the yard. This social shift seems to have been more exaggerated in Duncan Village than in Mdantsane, and was related to the way in which the street was reconstituted under apartheid. The streets of the new township were no longer the multi-purpose, heterotopic spaces of the 1950s. They had been transformed into functional axes of control and movement: carrying workers to work and back, allowing consumers to walk between the homes and local shops and officials to move around freely. Moreover, because taps and ablution facilities were now on individual sites, women and children no longer needed to leave their yards to do their washing, to go to the toilet or to collect water, thereby undermining the significance of public spaces for community interaction. "Loitering" on the streets was, in any case, discouraged, something that led to the disintegration of youth cultures based on the use of the street as a public arena for style making and display. As Pule Twaku explained:

> The streets of the new location were wide and empty. You couldn't just shout across the road for a bottle of paraffin, call a kid to run to the shop on an errand, or sit out on the pavement or verandah and watch the world go. There was nothing going on to watch! There were no street hawkers, minstrels or gangs like the Vikings to watch out for – no

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> noise to distract your attention. The streets were quiet and orderly. It felt like a depressing, deathly silence had fallen over a place that was once alive and vibrant (Interview, East London, 21 September 1999).

The street was also more generally associated with police patrols and the gaze of officialdom.[19] To be off the street and out of the view of passers-by meant that it was less likely that officials would stop you to ask questions, require identification, and meddle in your daily life. In this context the house was used as a physical barrier between the street and the yard. The death of the street as a social space of public interaction and creativity in the 1960s was therefore not just a product of the absence of verandahs or the imposition of new house designs – it was a function of the nature of power and control. In the new Duncan Village, the street belonged to the state and the house to the residents, who were not prepared to compromise their autonomy by exposing themselves to unnecessary harassment and control. As a result, the backdoor and yard emerged as new semi-public spaces, where families would socialise and where urban housewives would communicate with one another across garden fences. As Sybil Hans remarked, "When I think of those days, I think of sitting and chatting in the backyard, of tending the washing on the line and of spending hours in the kitchen ironing and listening to the radio."[20]

But, despite the greater sense of space afforded women in the yards, many complained of a strange sense of confinement in their new homes. As Mrs Majaka explained that she felt more cramped and uncomfortable washing in her own backyard than she had waiting in the long queues at the taps in East Bank. Other women also spoke of a sense of "loneliness" and "separation", of "social disconnection" and "isolation" not dissimilar to that already mentioned for Mdantsane.

But it was not only the separation of the street from the house that created a sense of confinement in the new township, but residents' lack of access to public facilities like the Peacock, Makambi and ICU halls, the Rubusana sports grounds, Bantu Square, city beaches and cinemas. Many former East Bankers claimed that problems with alcoholism in the township in the 1990s were rooted in the closure of recreation facilities of earlier decades. As Bongani Jack explained, "By stealing our recreation facilities, they stole our souls and left us with little else besides the beer at the municipal beer halls to drown our sorrows – it is little wonder that so many distinguished citizens ended up as drunks!" Many of those with talent and education, who were

19. Modernist planners generally rejected earlier notions of the "corridor street", which was associated with walking, browsing, shopping and socialising. They viewed modern streets as axes for movement, where form followed function. In the modern city it was important for streets not to be cluttered, noisy and dirty so that they were suited for their intended use – in this case surveillance and the ferrying of workers to and from the factories (cf. Atkinson 1991; Fyfe 1998; Holston 1989; Jackson 1998; Robinson 1998).

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able to resist the pull of the beer halls, left Duncan Village in the 1960s. Some went into exile, others pursued careers overseas, and yet others were drawn into new jobs and life-styles in the nearby Ciskei and Transkei homelands. By the 1970s, as Jack remarked, there was "nothing left for people in Duncan Village besides anger, bitterness and a great sadness at what had been lost". As musicians, politicians, teachers and lawyers left, the cosmopolitan dynamic that had been such a distinctive mark of cultural life in the old East Bank disappeared.

In terms of identity formation, there is little evidence to suggest that Red and School identities were reconstructed in the new housing estates of Duncan Village. This was due largely to the fact that the construction of these neighbourhoods was predicated on the exclusion of migrants in general. After 1964, male migrants in Duncan Village were either relocated to the Ciskei or placed in single-sex hostels. The new housing estates were also reserved for Section 10 1(a) and (b) permit holders, which as a category were defined by the fact that they had limited rural links. The situation that emerged was markedly different from Mdantsane where relocation thrust people from Red and School backgrounds together in new neighbourhoods, allowing old identities to "blur". In the Duncan Village housing estates there was no blurring of identities in the sense of Red and School identities being mixed together to create new hybrid urban-rural identity, since the residents here had always associated themselves with the city and with urban identities. What occurred here was that people's urban identities changed as they lost contact with the wider world beyond the city. They became more parochial and focused on the here and now of city life than with the world out there. This shift in identity politics was seen in the toning down of dress styles and lack of flamboyance and self-confidence in the youth, who had lost access to the public space in which they had previously experimented with style and fashion. In the late 1960s and 1970s, certain cohorts of youth, as the images in Plate 11 suggest, did continue to connect with developments across the Atlantic, but these groups formed a small and largely silent minority.

Yet by shifting their attention to matters local, those living in the housing estates became acutely aware of the difference in living and working conditions amongst urban residents in the city. From the mid-1960s, and especially in the 1970s, there is strong evidence to suggest that the African urban working class of East London had begun to develop class-consciousness. In the 1950s, Minkley (1992) argues that the "double-rootedness" of many of those belonging to the urban working class in East London created problems, not only for city employers who had to deal with high levels of absenteeism and "target working", but for workers as well. The split loyalties of many African workers made it difficult for them to organise, and stunted the

20. Interview, East London, 30 May 2001.

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emergence of a working class, as they remained focused on their rural responsibilities. By the mid-1960s, the tendency of workers to exit the city at will had been greatly diminished by tighter labour laws and stricter controls on mobility (Atkinson 1991). This meant that workers had less room to manoeuvre and that their interests became increasingly firmly focused on issues such as wages, overtime pay and working conditions. This trend resulted in the rise of labour unionism in East London in the 1970s, which started modestly in the early 1970s but gained momentum as the decade wore on (Hirsch & Green 1983). The increasing assertiveness of African workers in the city culminated in a wave of strikes in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which brought the motor, food and textile industries in the city to a standstill (cf. Swilling 1987).

In this period of labour unrest it was nevertheless evident that clear divisions existed between the migrant and permanently urbanised segments of the African working class in East London. The cautious approach of migrants to unions and strike action was indicative of their different situations and experiences of urban life in the township since the 1960s. In 1964, when the bulk of the urban working class were being shifted into family housing estates, several thousand migrants were allocated to bed spaces in the new municipal hostels in Duncan Village. The new hostel complexes housed approximately two thousand migrants (see Plate 11).

In the B-hostel, two groups of migrants came to dominate: the Bhaca migrants from Mount Frere and the Gceleka migrants from Kentani. Most of the Bhaca men accommodated in B-hostel worked for the municipal sewerage department. Other township residents saw their work as dirty, menial and of very low status. As one man pointed out, "No-one else except the Bhaca would touch it." As a result, there was hardly any competition for this work, allowing Bhaca migrants to completely dominate this niche in the job market. Between 1959 and 1980, there were always at least 150 Bhaca migrants in the B-hostel complex. Similar numbers of Gcaleka migrants from Kentani also stayed in the hostel on a continuous basis over this period. They were employed at East London's Model Dairy, which had a standing order with the municipality for 15 hostel blocks from 1965 to 1987. The dairy only recruited workers from the Kentani district, and like the municipal sewerage work, dairy work was widely regarded in the township as low-paid, undesirable and dirty – best left to migrants. Construction and other workers on short contracts in the city filled the remaining blocks in B-hostel.

Migrants living in B-hostel were also segregated from the rest of the township population because the complex was fenced and guarded and placed under curfew, which prevented migrants from leaving the complex at night. *Izibonda* (headmen) structures were put in place to police the hostel and make sure that hostel workers did not go out. To minimise interaction with other township residents, services and entertainment were provided inside the hostel – workers had access to free coal and a beer hall in the complex. The lack of freedom and mobility

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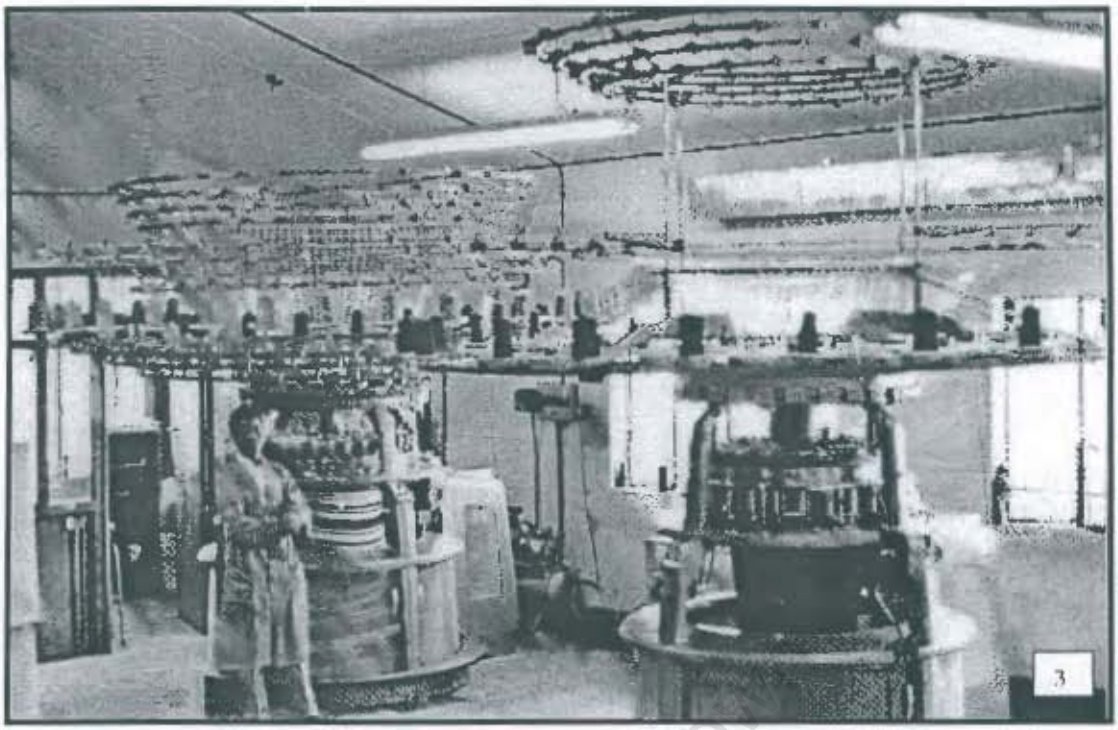






Plate 11: The New Working Class. Photo 32, depicts a worker on the shop floor in the newly mechanised textile industry of the 1960s. Photo 33, Portrait of migrant worker in B-hostel; 1964. Photo 34, Workers in the emerging motor industry.

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experienced by B-hostel migrants meant they relied on township youths to run errands for them and to purchase items at the shops. However, over weekends some of these workers managed to travel to C-section and to Cambridge to seek out *amakhaya*, and to attend *iseti* beer drinks.

D-hostel, which was made up of several hundred small one-roomed structures that each housed four migrants, was less tightly controlled than B-hostel. It was, for instance, never fenced off as a separate spatial unit, and in the 1960s served the same purpose as C-section, being temporarily used as transit housing for families waiting to be relocated to Mdantsane. However, by the mid-1960s, these families had been cleared out and the facility was exclusively used by migrant workers. Like B-hostel, two regional-ethnic groups also came to dominate this complex: Mpondo migrants from the northern Transkei and Bomvana migrants from the southern Transkei coast. Most of these migrants arrived in Duncan Village from the West Bank location near the harbour, where they had a long tradition of working at the Buffalo River docks as packers, labourers and fishermen. Within D-hostel, the different groupings congregated in different areas and constituted themselves as tightly-knit groups of *amakhaya*, who remained loyal to their rural homesteads and their areas of origin.

Like their Bhaca and Gcaleka counterparts in B-hostel, many D-hostel residents followed a Red life-style by working for their homesteads and for each other, and by minimising their interaction with township residents. But the Mpondo and Bomvana migrants did not set themselves apart from township residents to the same extent as B-hostel migrants. This was partly because D-hostel was not fenced off, and opened up onto C-section, allowing for some integration across the Douglas Smith highway. The migrants from this complex also formed their own soccer team, the Bachelors, and participated in the new township league.

In interpreting the social world of the hostels in the 1960s and 1970s, it would, however, be wrong to conclude that the forms of association found there were completely disconnected from wider circuits of identity politics in the township. In fact, close investigation of the networks of Bhaca migrants revealed that the B-hostels' migrants were closely connected to other groups of Bhaca migrants who lived in the small Cambridge location. Cambridge contained a population of a few thousand inhabitants in 1970 and was known for its large Bhaca minority, which was well-organised and kept in close contact with their homes in Mount Frere. During the period of homeland development in the Transkei, these migrants organised themselves into a tribal association that linked migrant workers to their tribal authorities in the rural areas.[21] During the 1960s and 1970s, the association was active in monitoring customary issues in town and supported migrants in various ways.

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Money was also regularly collected for gifts to chiefs and Transkeian dignitaries. On one occasion in the 1970s, I was told that the East London Bhaca donated ten prime oxen to be slaughtered to celebrate a visit to Mount Frere by the Transkeian Prime Minister, Kaizer Matanzima.

While migrants in the hostels continued to stress their specific "tribal" identities, the tendency in the township was for people to adopt more generic ethnic identities. In Duncan Village, the term *Gcaleka* no longer referred specifically to people who came from the southern Transkei, but was increasingly used to refer to all those in the township with Transkeian connections. Earlier references to "tribal" identities were gradually replaced by a simple two-way distinction between *Gcalekas* ("those who came from the Transkei") and *Ngqikas* ("those who came from the Ciskei").[22] These labels were apparently used in a variety of contexts. For instance, I found that the hostel migrants who came almost exclusively from the Transkei often referred to all other township residents simply as *ngqika*, and used a common set of characteristics to define them. Many said that the *ngqika* were reckless spendthrifts who were unable to manage money, paid little attention to their rural relatives, and were unable to hold their liquor. Township residents, by contrast, often remarked that the *gcalekas* tended to be stingy, ignorant and were always badly dressed. In Duncan Village, these stereotypes appear to have emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s and followed the contours of the internal spatial divisions of the township, which entrenched older divisions between townspeople and migrants.

This period was also marked by increasingly tense relationships between Coloureds and Africans in the city. In the 1950s, about 10 % of the population of East Bank was made up of Coloured families.[23] Most of them were concentrated in the Tsolo and Moriva sections of the old location (see Map 3). They were remarkably well integrated into the location community: they belonged to a range of local sports clubs, they were actively involved in the music scene, and virtually all spoke fluent Xhosa. However, when the relocations started, the Coloured families were separated out from the African families and were allocated houses in their own areas. One of these areas, known today as Pefferville, was built on the ruins of the old Mekeni and New Brighton sections of East Bank. It was also common practice at this time for Coloured families to be moved to houses occupied by Africans. These practices generated conflict and animosity between Coloured and African families, and at various times in the 1960s the Coloured residents

21. Compare Delius (1989; 1996) and James (1997; 1999) for discussion of migrant associations in the Northern Province.
22. Ngqika succeeded Mlawu as the paramount chief of the Rharhabe at the end of the 18th century and is seen to be one of the founding fathers of the Rharhabe royal house, which later found representation in the newly constituted Ciskei homeland. See Anonymous (1989: 395–414).
23. See Maqasho and Bank (2001) for further discussion.

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of Pefferville made deputations to the city council for protection from the reprisals that they feared would follow in the wake of the removals.[24] Oral evidence suggests that there was actual physical fighting between Pefferville and Duncan Village residents in the mid-1960s, and the relations between these communities remained tense throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The use of the derogatory term, *mlawu*, meaning "those without custom", was now widely applied to Coloureds by Duncan Village residents, who referred to them as drunks and gangsters who had no respect for family values and traditions.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the apartheid restructuring of East London's locations in the 1960s and the consequences of these interventions for the creation of new socio-spatial relations and identity politics in the city. I have argued that the planning regime adopted in East London was essentially a "middling modernism" one, which attempted to use housing as a means of constructing new men and women liberated from forms of identity and sociality associated with the old location. I suggested that this planning regime, which was also underpinned by notions of the "garden village", not only provided the framework for Mdantsane in the Ciskei, but for the remodelling of Duncan Village as well. The only significant difference between the way in which the two townships were planned was that the latter plan made provision for the creation of "tribal spaces" in the city through the construction of migrant single-sex hostels. But, while the theory that underpinned planning practice set out to create two similar, but spatially separated, modern working-class communities serving white businesses and industries in the city, in practice the two areas, Mdantsane and Duncan Village, evolved into very different communities.

In Mdantsane, the reformist potential of the modernist plan was curtailed by the absence of a viable economic base to support the modernising project of the state. Without access to secure urban employment, the residents of Mdantsane looked to other options, such as participation in the informal economy and to the surrounding rural areas for security and stability. This encouraged a blurring of identities: in the Mayers' terms, many of those who lived in Mdantsane were no longer clearly townsmen or tribesmen, but "bats", people who were neither completely one nor the other. They neither had enough purchase on the economic resource of the city to transform into a fully-fledged urban working class nor could they easily retreat into rural identities associated with country life. They became stuck in-between, locked in lonely, soul-destroying urbanism, which produced a largely undifferentiated landscape of poverty, boredom and alienation. In fact, Pauw (1973) even wondered whether their original

24. *Ibid.*

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formulation of diametrically opposed identities in East Bank had not over-drawn and whether they had perhaps missed the extent to which African urban identities were hybrid forms all along. In his more recent research into the nature of native space in East London, Minkley takes the Mdantsane story into the 1980s and confirms the basic conclusions arrived at by the Trilogy researchers. He suggests that, despite the modernist underpinnings of apartheid planning, "native space" in the city remained segregated, undifferentiated and alienating.

In this chapter, I note that the characterisation of township life in East London after the 1950s has tended to project the Mdantsane experience onto the city as a whole, and in the process, has ignored changes that were taking place in African urban communities inside the city. Using material from Duncan Village, I suggest that here a slightly different urban dynamic emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, which was not characterised by cultural blurring and sameness. The new Duncan Village was not an undifferentiated space, but was divided into different ecological zones, which were controlled in different ways, and each developed their own particular socio-cultural dynamics. In the case of the transit housing area of C-section, I argue that something of the social character of the old location was retained as people resisted relocation and rebuilt older social networks. But these networks, however carefully reconstituted, only provided a partial shield against poverty and alienation and it was not long before criminality, violence and fear started to engulf these neighbourhoods too. In the sprawling new housing estates of Duncan Village, which now included Ziphunzana, I suggest that "middling modernism" achieved some results as residents here used their access to employment, which Mdantsane residents lacked, to entrench themselves in the city and embrace the promise of "black suburbia".

The last ecological zone described in the chapter was that of the municipal hostels. In the township plan, this space was designed to encourage a reconnection with rural life and tradition, and has been described as a model for the creation of the "kraal" in the city (Mabin 1999). I suggest that in Duncan Village the hostels certainly achieved this objective, as they became sites for the reconstitution of a variety of Red migrant sub-cultures, which were hostile to modernisation and cultural change. In their reconstituted form, these sub-cultures became deeply entrenched as migrants increasingly turned to their chiefs and headmen in the rural areas to shore up their interest. Indeed, by the 1970s, township-identity politics in East London had become along the lines suggested by Mamdani (1996) between those who embraced migrants and those who embraced urban identities. And it was precisely these processes of segmentation and differentiation that politicised Duncan Village into a very different "native space" to that of Mdantsane. The new Duncan Village was not a space of undifferentiated monotony and blurring, but rather one of fraught and sharpening social and political difference – between the space of the

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house and the street, the location and the factory, the hostel and the housing estate, the rural and the urban.

By the 1970s, the regime of "middling modernism" had done well to perform its Faustian tricks of erasing memory and transforming identity. Within a decade, all traces of the East Bank were effectively erased from this urban landscape and had been replaced by a new social and cultural dynamic. The new dynamic was not only encouraged by the changing physical form of the township, but also by the way in which residents lost all meaningful access to public space. This had a fundamental impact on the city. First, it stripped the township of the cosmopolitan dynamic which, as I argued in the previous chapter, used public spaces as testing grounds for cultural change and creativity. The social death of the street under apartheid, the closure of recreational facilities and the restrictions on mobility, stunted creativity and ushered in a bland parochialism to urban life. In the new Duncan Village, peoples' engagements with modernity were now effectively confined to home, where the low-budget consumer catalogues of Lewis Stores and other mass-market furniture stores washed through the township, producing a dull sameness of experiences and aspiration in the housing estates. Secondly, the closure of public space sharpened and intensified the politics of difference. Without access to public space to negotiate differences, social and cultural divisions were intensified behind fences and buffer zones, shutting out possibilities for hybridity, inter-section and co-existence. Thirdly, domestic patriarchy was entrenched via "middling modernism", which marginalised women who were driven off the street and into the house, where they had no choice but to operate as the obedient wives and daughters. Their dependence on men for survival changed their position from the days of the old location where many single women enjoyed social and economic independence and operated as autonomous agents in their own right.

In the next chapter, I follow the story of Duncan Village through to the 1980s and trace the collapse and implosion of "middling modernism" in the township. I explore the process by which comrades in Duncan Village reclaimed the street, and explore the remaking of social and cultural identities in the period 1985 to 1995.

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CHAPTER FOUR

BACK TO EAST BANK? REBELLION, COUNTER-TENDENCIES AND IDENTITY POLITICS

Introduction

On Saturday, the 13th of August 1985, the politics and planning of the apartheid era in Duncan Village came to an abrupt end. It was the weekend of the funeral of slain United Democratic Front activist and prominent lawyer, Victoria Mxenge, who was buried near King Williams Town. The funeral attracted thousands of sympathisers from all over the Eastern Cape, including Duncan Village. On that day, numerous speeches delivered by prominent ANC and UDF activists urged the crowd not to allow Victoria Mxenge to have died in vain. They asked the crowd to deepen the struggle against apartheid and spread the message of resistance throughout the Eastern Cape. By late afternoon, when the buses arrived to take people back to East London, the atmosphere at the funeral was politically highly charged. And, as the Duncan Village people mounted the buses, they sang freedom songs and *toyi-toyied* in the aisles. On arriving in Duncan Village, the youth spilled out of the buses and onto the streets where they set up barricades, stoned cars, ransacked schools and looted municipal buildings.

To restore order, the police and army moved in to quell the rebellion and indiscriminately opened fire on the protestors, killing 35 people, including an 18-month-old toddler, and injuring hundreds of others. The violence of the police and the reaction of the crowd echoed the tragic events of November 1952. Spurred on by police violence, gangs of youths now moved through the township destroying all symbols of authority and power: they started by burning down the houses of community councillors and then moved on to torch schools, administration blocks, clinics and libraries. They also destroyed infrastructure, including electrical installations and a substation (see Plate 12).[1]

1. The information presented here was supplied by Mtetelele Pobane, Joe Jordaan and Mandisi Jekwa in a group interview at the DVRA offices on 14 August 1995. Further accounts of the events of August 1985 were presented at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's East London hearings in 1997.

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The riots of August 1985 spilled over into sporadic incidents of violence, which lingered on throughout 1985 and into 1986 and ultimately contributed to the declaration of a State of Emergency in South Africa on 12 June 1986. This effectively amounted to an acknowledgement by the state that the townships had become "ungovernable". In this chapter, I consider the period between 1985 and 1995 when the control of Duncan Village slipped out of the hands of the state and the day-to-day running of the township was taken over by the Duncan Village Residents' Association (DVRA). I explore how Duncan Village was transformed from a "dominated space", shaped by the imperative of racially-determined modernist planning, to an "appropriated space", redefined by the populist civic structure, the DVRA. From a socio-spatial perspective, I argue that this dramatic shift in political power enabled the creation of new spatial practices, what Lefebvre (1991) would call "spaces of representation": counter-spaces and subaltern spatial conceptions and practices that imaginatively challenge the dominant spatial regime. During this phase of popular planning and urban management, the dominant "representations of space" – reflected in earlier plans to enforce distinctions between public and private, between urban and rural, and between subject and citizen – were reworked and redefined in response to new spatial and social practices. The changes that I document in Duncan Village had a great deal to do with the DVRA decision to open up the location for immigration from surrounding rural and urban areas. This effectively resulted in a doubling of the township population between 1984 and the first democratic election in 1994, and fundamentally changed the socio-spatial dynamic of the township.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the changing relationship between the DVRA and the various official local authorities in East London during the post-1985 period. In this section, I attempt to show how apartheid state agencies set out to first destroy and then to co-opt the civic, in order to push forward with its own modernist planning agenda. I suggest that it failed in both instances and that the DVRA's open settlement policy and political strategy fundamentally undermined and, in many ways, reversed thirty years of "middling modernism" in the township. In the second part of this chapter, I explore the consequences of these counter-tendencies in terms of social, demographic and spatial configurations that emerged in Duncan Village in the mid-1990s. This section is based on the results of a household survey undertaken in 365 Duncan Village (Proper) homes in 1995. The results of the survey, which was modelled on the one undertaken by Reader in 1954, highlights socio-demographic similarities and differences between the pre-relocation East Bank and the post-apartheid Duncan Village. Here I pay special attention to the structural similarities in domestic group formation, as well as other changes in the social and economic composition of the township between the 1950s and the 1990s. This section also explores the impact of shack fires on domestic groups and social relations in Duncan Village in

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Plate 12: Duncan Village Massacre, August 1985. Photo 35, shows a street scene in the wake of the August riots; Photo 36, taken at the burial of victims of the riot at Ziphunzana (Duncan Village) Stadium.

the 1990s and highlights some of the social and economic consequences of these disasters for township residents.

This analysis sets the scene for a discussion of my initial observations and impressions as a field-worker entering Duncan Village in 1995 almost forty years after the Trilogy researchers had left. In view of the dramatic political and social changes that characterised the decade prior to my arrival, I speculate to what extent the cultural dynamics of the new Duncan Village of the 1990s had come to reflect those of the old location of the 1950s: Was there any evidence to suggest that Red and School life-styles and identities had re-emerged with the rural influx of the 1980s? Had the achievement of political freedom in the 1990s brought about a renewed interest and engagement with cosmopolitan cultural influences? How did migrants relate to the youths that now ruled the township? Did men and women adapt differently to the social and political changes of the 1980s and 1990s? And what did it really mean to live in a "liberated zone" in a city that had been so profoundly marked by apartheid planning?

These are some of the questions that inform my discussion in the final section of the chapter, where I reflect on issues of identity and cultural change in Duncan Village in the 1990s. The argument I develop here is that, while divisions based on urban and rural identities lingered on in the Duncan Village of the 1990s, the township was characterised by other social divisions and cleavages, notably those based on gender and generational identities. In concluding the chapter, I highlight differences between youth, migrants and women as social categories with divergent interests, economic profiles and identity politics that require further historical and ethnographic investigation.

Rebellion, Influx and Re-development

The political tide in Duncan Village had already begun to turn in the early 1980s with a series of crippling strikes in the motor, food and textile industries (Swilling 1987). The growing confidence of city workers in challenging their employers was translated into growing civic activism and political awareness inside Duncan Village itself. In 1982, residents boycotted the elections for a new Gompo (Duncan Village) Community Council (GCC) and gave their support to the old anti-removals committee, which now transformed itself into the DVRA. By 1984, the DVRA was well-organised and opposed to the development agenda of the new GCC, which managed the township in partnership with the East Cape Development Board (ECDB). DVRA and its political allies, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the African National Congress (ANC), rejected the Gompo Town councillors as "puppets" of the white state and urged township residents to resist

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their authority and their "illegitimate" development schemes.[2] To express opposition to the GCC they instituted a rent boycott and set up their own alternative structures for the management and control of the township. By 1984 DVRA was firmly in control of Duncan Village and was able, not only to mobilise resistance to the state, but also to contain the interventions of apartheid planners and GCC officials in the location.

In the face of mounting resistance to government structures, Dr Piet Koornhof, then Minister of Co-operation and Development, announced in 1984 that the state would no longer forcibly remove township residents to Mdantsane (*Daily Dispatch*, 16 October 1984). The announcement was interpreted as a major victory for the DVRA, who now stepped up their defiance campaign by instituting a rent boycott. By the beginning of 1985, 1755 municipal tenants in Duncan Village were already not paying rent, and the GCC – which was meant to replace the ECAB as the official manager of the township – was powerless, bankrupt (without rental income) and ineffectual (*Daily Dispatch*, 15 August 1985). Thus, when youths took to the streets in August 1985, the scene was already set for major political upheaval and disruption. The events of this weekend merely confirmed the reality that the Apartheid state had lost control of the township.

One consequence of the weakening hold of the state over the township was its inability to stop new population influx into Duncan Village. After 1984, C-section, designated as a transit housing area, was one of the first areas to experience residential densification. During the early 1980s, increasing numbers of "illegals" had started moving into this area, but the trickle of new arrivals soon turned into a flood as the DVRA endorsed this right of new arrivals to built shacks on all available vacant land. After the August 1985 riots, the DVRA pushed its policy further by allowing shacks to be built in the backyards of formal 51/9 and 51/6 houses as well. Before long, Duncan Village (Proper), which included some of the oldest municipal houses, was rivalling C-section as the most densely-settled part of the location.

In December 1984, Duncan Village was said to officially only house a population of just over 17 000 people: 11 161 adults and 6279 children (*Daily Dispatch*, 9 April 1986). Given the growing suspicion of officials in Duncan Village at this time, this figure is likely to have been a conservative estimate. However, by the end of 1986, unofficial estimates placed the population at over 50 000 and by 1990, there were approximately 80 000 people in the township. In other words, the population of the township more than doubled in less than 10 years.

2. These were the terms used by DVRA representatives in their discussions of the Gompo Community

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In Duncan Village, the right to squat was controlled by the DVRA. People who wished to build their own shacks had to apply to the DVRA branch or area committees for permission to occupy a site. It was also common for the DVRA to allocate sites in the backyards of municipal houses. In Duncan Village (Proper), street committees would often intervene in the allocation of residential sites by instructing families living in formal houses to accept backyard shack dwellers on their sites, as a "contribution to the struggle". Moreover, shack dwellers that were evicted by the occupant of the main house had the right to apply to the street committee to prevent them from being evicted. In many areas, the DVRA also set the rent in the backyard areas to prevent landlords from exploiting tenants. These interventions greatly angered landlords, but were supported by many rent-paying young adults living in backyard shacks. One of the very few areas where shack erection was not permitted was within the premises of B-hostel, where hostel migrants refused to tolerate the DVRA policy on settlement. Conservative migrants said that it was inappropriate to have young families living in the precinct of a single-sex hostel. The hostel dwellers even insisted on keeping their own wives and families out of the hostels, despite the breakdown of influx control in the township.

By permitting new settlement in public spaces and by denying private tenants the right to control settlement on their own sites, the DVRA fundamentally redefined the socio-spatial dynamics of the township. They interfered with the orderly layout of streets and public spaces, with the carefully-planned division between rural and urban segments of the location, with the separation of public and private space, and with the norming and forming of nuclear families on fenced pavilion-style plots. Moreover, by shifting the control over the allocation of residential space in backyards from private individuals to street-level civic representatives, the DVRA reconstituted private, single-household sites into multi-household yards, which were semi-private and semi-public spaces. By penetrating these spaces, the DVRA hoped to create moral communities that were connected together within a broader, unified political community. The DVRA imagined that semi-public yard communities would combine to form street communities, which would in turn combine to form broader political communities that could act in unison against the injustices of the state.

At each level, disciplinary structures were set in place, which dealt with cases ranging from political dissent to domestic disputes as these spheres inter-penetrated each other. Under the new regime, the power and authority of household patriarchs was undermined as senior men found themselves having to obey "comrades" twenty or thirty years their junior. They found themselves being told what to do and where to go and how much rent they could charge lodgers

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and tenants. The comrades also told their wives where they could or could not shop during the consumer boycott, which was instituted after the declaration of the State of Emergency in 1986.

The central divide – that between urban and rural space in the township – was destabilised with the influx of literally thousands of individuals and families from rural areas. After 1985, rural migrants, for instance, increasingly found accommodation not in the hostels, but in the backyards of municipal houses or in the free-standing shack areas. It was also common for young comrades born within the township to move away from their parental homes and into the new shack areas, where they lived cheek by jowl with new arrivals from various parts of the Eastern Cape. The mixing together of urban and rural-born youths had a profound effect on the political culture in the township, which relied as much on western notions of individual civil rights as it did on communalistic and customary ideas about discipline, respect and justice.[3] The rise to power of the DVRA as a political formation dominated by youth and the policies they adopted towards settlement in the township introduced a new socio-spatial dynamic, which was in some ways reminiscent of that which existed in the old wood-and-iron neighbourhoods of East Bank.

The response of city officials, white ratepayers and the media to developments within Duncan Village was one of shock and horror. During the 1970s they had developed an image of Duncan Village as a modernising township, which was home to an increasingly stable and sedentary urban working class. They felt that it was a place that the city could be proud of. But as new informal settlements opened up and started engulfing and surrounding the planned, formal residential areas, the old discourse of the "septic fringe" and the "irredeemable slum", which had been so prevalent in the 1940s and 1950s, began to re-emerge in the city. In the 1980s and 1990s, officials and the media once again constructed Duncan Village as a site of infection, disorder and innumerable pathologies. White East London ratepayers were especially vocal, as they had been in the 1950s, in demanding that decisive action be taken by the state to bring the situation under control. They demanded that the city authorities stop the "unacceptable, indiscriminate shack and hovel erection" that threatened their families and the city. They also argued that the new squatters were "backward tribal people" who lacked a "commercial culture" and as such, had little to contribute to the development of the city. The narratives of white ratepayers and city officials constantly contrasted their own respectability, diligence and moral superiority to what they regarded as the disreputable, slothful and property-endangering behaviour of the squatters (cf. Ratepayers AGM Minutes 1992).

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The voice of white dissatisfaction brought action, as it had done in the 1950s. But this time there could be no talk of removals and displacements. In trying to address the situation in Duncan Village, the state now favoured the carrot over the stick. In 1986, when the severity of the political situation was clearly evident to the state, Chris Heunis, a National Party Cabinet Minister, announced in parliament: "The whole area [that is, Duncan Village] will have to be replanned and upgraded and the 99-year leasehold system will apply. Residents still wishing to relocate in Mdantsane will be helped to do so but no forced removals will take place" (*Daily Dispatch*, 15 May 1986). He suggested that the levels of congestion in the location were now unhealthy and that new land might be required to develop a new township in the city. Business joined in the fray by donating R2 million for the construction of classrooms that could later be converted into houses. Shortly after these announcements, the National Party MP for East London, Mr Peet de Pontes, unveiled a new plan for "the complete redevelopment and upgrading of Duncan Village". The plan aimed to stabilise the township population at around 30 000 people and to move about 12 000 people to a new township located on the West Bank of the Buffalo River. The local newspaper heralded the plans as a break-through, which could restore community peace "by allowing blacks to set down permanent roots and become pillars of the society in which they live" (*Daily Dispatch*, 13 January 1987). The editorial stated that such "progressive plans" finally dispelled fears that blacks would still be forcibly removed to Mdantsane, or other parts of the Transkei and Ciskei homelands. It noted that the new township, which was to be situated near the airport on the West Bank, might eventually house as many as 100 000 residents by the end of the century (*ibid.*).[4]

This announcement was twinned with other projects such as the proposed development of a new middle-class housing estate to the west of Duncan Village, as well as the promise that housing and infrastructure backlogs would finally be attended to. But the work undertaken by the state to placate Duncan Village residents was soon undermined by the Gompo Community Council (GCC), who wanted to claim credit for new development plans and reassert power in the township. In an effort to unlock revenue flows for township development, the GCC demanded an end to the rent boycott. And when residents refused to pay, the GCC moved in to evict municipal tenants. The tenants took the council to court in February 1988 and won their case (*Daily Dispatch*, 25 May 1988). The court ruling against the council proved to be a turning point, but the GCC ignored the rising militancy and insisted that, for its plans for the redevelopment of

3. This theme is explored in greater detail in the next chapter and will therefore not be dealt with in any detail here.

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Duncan Village to succeed, at least 5000 squatters would have to be removed from the area. The DVRA rejected this move, and in January 1990, 12 000 township residents marched to the city centre in an action reminiscent of the lodgers' protest marches of the 1950s. The protests resulted in violent clashes with the police that left at least 28 people injured (*Daily Dispatch*, 15 January 1990).

The squatter march marked the beginning of a new cycle of violence and protest that deepened in May 1990, when youths went on the rampage in the city, after news broke that the Ciskeian dictator, Chief Lennox Sebe, had been toppled in a coup. Shops were looted and dozens of youths were arrested. Later in October 1990, the power of the "comrades" was demonstrated at a huge public gathering in Duncan Village, when a group of alleged informers were beaten within an inch of their lives. The release from prison in 1989 and 1990 of many of those detained under the Emergency regulations of 1986 also gave the DVRA a boost, as its old leadership took up the reigns and steered the ship back on its revolutionary path (Switzer 1993; see Plate 13).

The re-establishment of the DVRA executive, with its full leadership contingent, served to ensure that the development plans for Duncan Village, proposed by GCC mayor Mr Eddie Makeba and Mr Peet de Pontes of the Nationalist Party, were scuttled. In 1994, when I first visited Duncan Village, the only evidence of the Makeba and De Pontes redevelopment plan was a large vacant site-and-service scheme, which had been built next to the highly-congested and politically unstable C-section. The site-and-service scheme sported generous pavilion-style plots, set out on a neat rectangular grid with flush toilets and full street lighting. The sites stood empty despite chronic overcrowding in the township. They served as a symbol of the power of DVRA, which had decreed that anyone who moved onto this land would be seen as a "traitor to the revolution". Every night the streetlights in the complex burned brightly in an effort to lure in potential clients. These bright lights, set amongst the dim paraffin lamps of the surrounding shack areas, were intended to give direction to those who wished to leave the "darkness" of their congested shack existence. But such was the resolve of the people of Duncan Village not to be fooled by the promises of apartheid development that it was only in June 2002, almost a decade after the ANC has come to power, that the first low-cost, formal houses were erected there.

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The Demographics of Implosion

By 1990, the era of "middling modernism" was over, as a township planned for 30 000 people now housed a population approaching 100 000. Shacks that sprawled out in all directions had

4. See Reintges (1992) for a fuller discussion of the various official initiatives to replan Duncan Village

engulfed the neatly planned and laid-out streets and houses. In the two most densely-settled areas – Duncan Village (Proper) and C-section – population densities exceeded 3000 people per square kilometre. In these areas, there was no place for the orderly street and site plans. Shacks were packed together like sardines, with a spacing of less than a metre between them, and threaded their way through the formally-planned areas. Residential sites that were planned to accommodate one male-headed nuclear family suddenly became home to four or five families, some of which were headed by single women or rural migrants. In 1993, an urban planning NGO reported that there were 5083 backyard shacks and 7854 free-standing shacks surrounding the 3564 formal municipal dwellings in Duncan Village as a whole (Afesis-Corplan 1993). In other words, there were now four shacks for every formal dwelling and approximately two backyard shacks per formal house. Moreover, due to the persistent problem of shack fires, this population had become highly mobile and was constantly moving around seeking more secure accommodation.

In 1995, I conducted a household survey of 365 homes in Duncan Village (Proper). The survey was modelled on the one undertaken by Reader in 1954, where he interviewed one in every five households in East Bank and gathered socio-demographic data for households located in both shack and formal residential areas. The aim of the survey was to allow for an assessment of similarities and differences between the pre-relocation East Bank and the post-apartheid Duncan Village situations.[5] The spatial and social transformation of Duncan Village referred to above was reflected in the survey results where it was found that rural and urban families were now integrated in the same residential area. In 1995, 26 % of household heads in Duncan Village (Proper), which did not include the hostels, said that they had a second home in rural areas, while over 40 % of them claimed to be sending cash and goods home on a regular basis. Those with rural linkages were now also relatively evenly spread across the different housing classes: with 19 % living in municipal houses, 25 % in backyard shacks, and 31 % in the free-standing shacks. The result of this process was that migrant and non-migrant sections of the population were once again living in the same neighbourhoods as they had done in East Bank. But, the 1995 survey also revealed that, unlike the 1950s, there were now more women than men sending cash and groceries to the rural areas. This tendency presented an interesting inversion of the old male-orientated migrancy patterns reported by the Trilogy (see Chapter 7 for further discussion).

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between 1985 and 1992.

5. The survey was undertaken with the assistance of the DVRA and was administered by research assistants appointed from different branch and street committees in Duncan Village (Proper). The household survey was followed up in 1996 with a survey of the migrant population of B-hostel. For a fuller discussion of the 1995 survey results, see Manona, Bank and Higginbottom 1996 and Bank 1998.



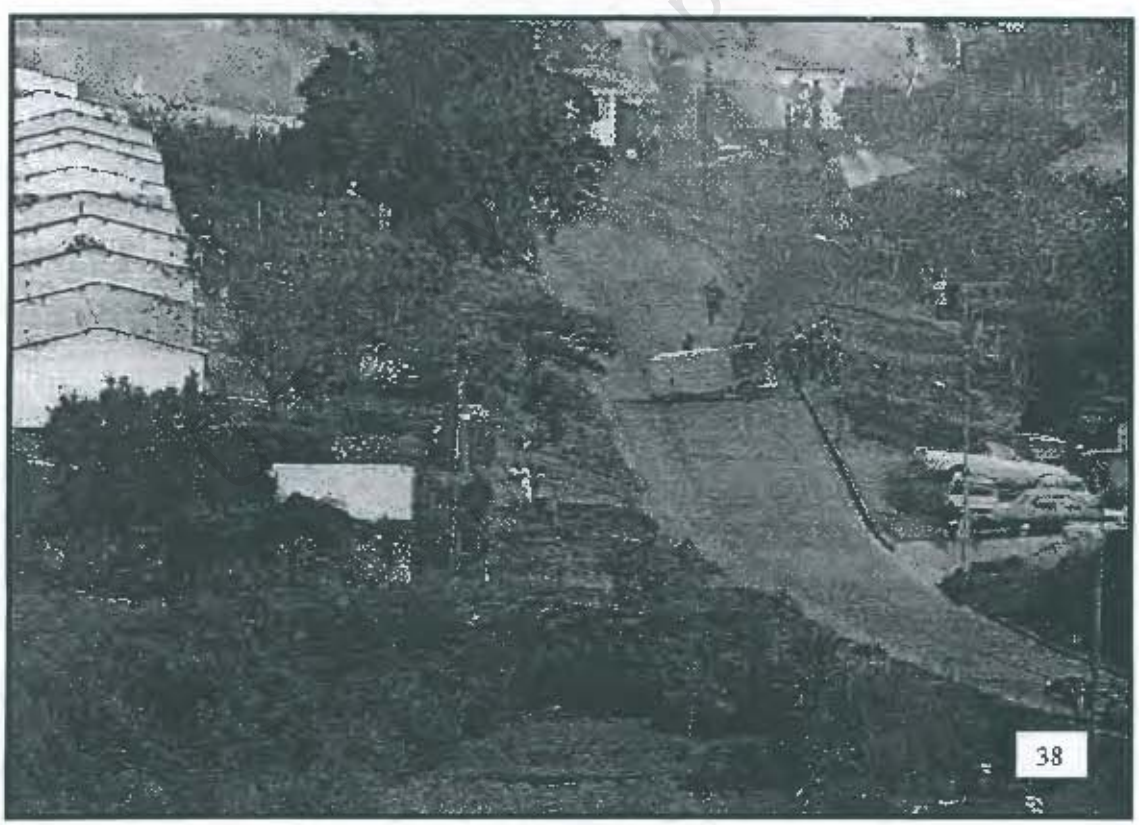
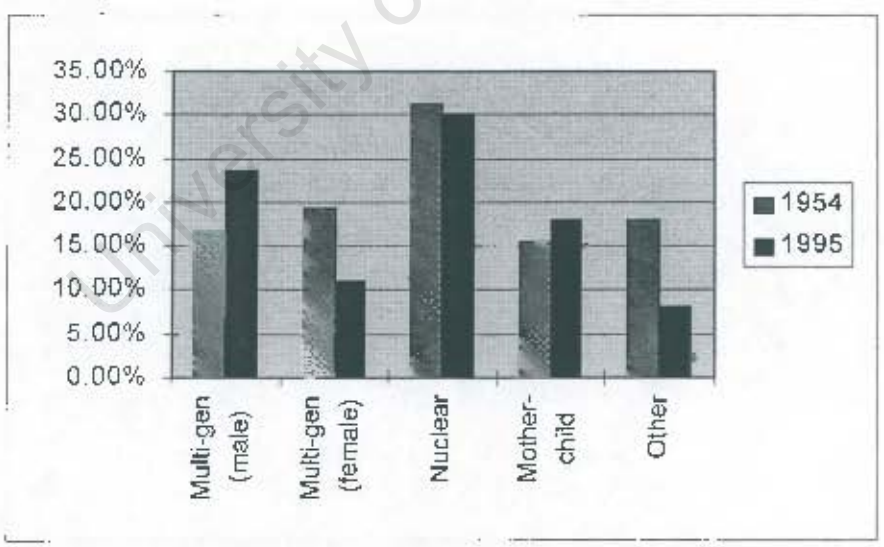


Plate 13: Struggle for the Street. Photo 37, routine army patrols were introduced in the township after 1985; Photo 38, Burning vehicle blockading the Street.

Another interesting feature of the congested formal residential areas was that they were no longer dominated by male-headed nuclear families as stipulated by government policy in the 1960s and 1970s. By 1995, there was a wide range of new family forms in these areas, which reflected some of the patterns of domestic group formation noted by the Trilogy researchers in the 1950s. In comparing my findings with those of Pauw (1963), I found that there were striking similarities in the distribution of different types of households in the formal housing areas, although average household sizes were much smaller in 1995 than they had been in the 1950s (see Table 4.1). What was particularly surprising, especially in view of the state's policy in relation to the allocation of formal households to male-headed nuclear households, was that there were fewer male-headed nuclear households on formal plots in 1995 than there had been in the late 1950s. This was partly due to the large number of mother-child households that had been set up as separate households in the backyards of formal houses. The survey did, however, reveal that the state's attack on large, independent female-headed households had been successful and that there were far fewer of these units in the 1990s than there had been in the 1950s. In the formal house and backyard shacks, the number of multi-generational female-headed households had dropped from nearly 20 % of the total in the 1950s to about 10 % in the 1990s, while the proportion of large male-headed units increased from 15 % to almost 25 %.

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Table 4.1: Comparison by Household Types, 1954-95



Source: Pauw (1963: 149) and 1995 ISER Duncan Village Survey

In terms of the relationship between house owners/tenants and lodgers, Reader (1960: 117) found that the majority of those living in multi-roomed wood-and-iron houses in the 1950s were

unrelated to the owner of the dwelling. Only 36 % (or 8780) of the lodgers in these houses were related to the owner, while 64 % (or 15 830) were unrelated to the owners. Among the unrelated lodgers, over 37 % (or 9000) of them were male. This confirms the Mayers' observation that large numbers of male migrants lived in these areas with their *iintanga* (male age mates) or other male *amakhaya* (home mates). The remainder of the backrooms were inhabited by an assortment of other domestic groups, ranging from nuclear families, single-parent units, young couples "living together", sibling groups, and so on. The occupancy rate for wood-and-iron rooms ranged from 1–12 people, depending on the standards set by the house owner. Reader suggests that the average room occupancy rate was about 4,5 people per room (*ibid.*: 118).

In 1995, the average room occupancy rate in the shack area in Duncan Village was under 4 people. Household sizes were generally smaller in the backyard shacks than in the free-standing shacks. It was also found that closer to half (as opposed to roughly a third in the 1950s) of those living in the backyards of formal houses were actually related to the owners/tenants of the formal houses in 1995. But the 1995 figures significantly revealed that very few shacks were inhabited by groups of male migrants. In the 1990s, migrants either lived with girlfriends/lovers or lived alone. This indicates that the old Red migrant residential patterns, described by the Mayers, had fallen away. In fact, the shack areas (both backyard and free-standing) were dominated by single parents and young couples living together, rather than by groups of male migrants. Single women with children, living without a male presence in their households, preferred to live in the backyards rather than in the free-standing shack areas, because it was safer there and they could often rely on the support of other women in the yard to look after their children. By contrast, the free-standing shack areas were dominated by young couples living together, outside of wedlock. Young couples chose these areas because they gave them independence and freedom from parental control. The full breakdown of household types by residential areas is presented in Table 4.2 below.

Although certain similarities existed between the domestic structures of the 1950s and the new households in Duncan Village in the 1990s, there were nevertheless significant differences in the economic position of residents between these two periods. In the 1950s, Reader found that 83 % of the male population of working age in East Bank was employed, while 7 % were unemployed and 1 % unemployable (1960: 62). Among women he found that only 36 % were employed.

These rates of employment, as I have already suggested, actually increased in the 1960s and 1970s, but by 1995 the picture had changed dramatically. Firstly, female participation in the labour force had risen to about 40 %, as women were now strongly represented in all categories of employment. They comprised 49 % of all labourers, 52 % of machine workers, 66 % of

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professionals (mainly nurses) and 75 % of the township's informal sector operators. Male employment, on the other hand, had dropped very significantly, and in 1995, only about 45 % of men in the township were employed in stable formal-sector jobs. The remainder were either unemployed, self-employed or infrequently employed as casual labourers. Close to 40 % of the economically-active population in the township was unemployed compared with the 10 % - 15 % of the 1950s. The rate of unemployment among household heads was also very high and stood at approximately 25 %.

Table 4.2: Types of Household by Residential Area in Duncan Village (Proper) in 1995

	Municipal	Percent	FS Shack	Percent	BY Shack	Percent	Total
Multi-generation	**25**	**35 %**	**14**	**10 %**	**11**	**7 %**	**50**
Male head	17		12		8		37
Female head	8		2		3		13
Nuclear units	**22**	**31 %**	**32**	**24 %**	**39**	**25 %**	**93**
Male head	22		31		38		91
Female head	0		1		1		2
Living Together	**6**	**8 %**	**32**	**24 %**	**32**	**21 %**	**70**
Male head	4		22		20		46
Female head	2		10		12		24
Single Parent	**13**	**18 %**	**23**	**17 %**	**33**	**22 %**	**69**
Male head	3		1		1		5
Female head	10		22		32		64
Sibling Units	**5**	**7 %**	**16**	**12 %**	**14**	**9 %**	**35**
Male head	2		6		5		13
Female head	3		10		9		22
Single Units	**1**	**1 %**	**17**	**13 %**	**24**	**16 %**	**42**
Male head	1		13		13		27
Female head	0		4		11		15
Total	**72**	**100 %**	**134**	**100 %**	**153**	**100 %**	**359**

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The generalised poverty in Duncan Village was also reflected in the fact that in 1995, over 45 % of household heads in Duncan Village (Proper) earned less than R500 a month. A further 40 % of household heads earned between R500 and R999 a month in 1994. This meant that fewer than 10 % of household heads were earning more than R1000 a month in 1994. The low levels of employment and poor earning capacity of household heads were also reflected in the generally poor levels of education. Over 50 % of the household heads had less than a Standard 5 education,

while less than 10 % had more than a Standard 9. The low levels of education were also reflected in the types of jobs held by household heads. In Duncan Village (Proper) over 70 % of workers held jobs as manual labourers, while between 15 % and 20 % worked as machinists, supervisors or in some semi-skilled capacity. In Duncan Village, unemployment and economic marginalisation was disproportionately high amongst the youth, who struggled to find jobs in the 1990s.[6] Older migrants, by contrast, generally managed to hold onto their jobs and this was reflected in the high rates of employment in B-hostel in the 1990s more than in other housing areas.[7]

In the 1990s, poverty in Duncan Village was compounded by the old problem of fire, which had also plagued those who lived in the overcrowded wood-and-iron sections of the old East Bank. Only now the problem had become much more severe. Fire also contributed directly to the movement of young couples away from their parental homes and into the shack areas in the 1980s and 1990s. In the decade between 1985 and 1995, a total of 312 residential fires broke out in the shack areas of Duncan Village, and collectively destroyed a total of 1925 homes. In other words, during this period, fires in Duncan Village rendered about 8000 people homeless. The problem of fire was not only related to the high residential densities and use of wood in shack erection, but was also related to the very high level of dependence on cheap paraffin lighting and cooking appliances. The destruction of electrical cabling and infrastructure during the 1985 riots, and the lack of access to coal supplies, meant that township residents had reverted to paraffin and candles as their main domestic fuel. The fire statistics show that over 90 % of fires resulted from domestic accidents involving candles or paraffin stoves. In shack areas, the danger of fire was compounded by the presence of hundreds of spaza shops that kept large quantities of paraffin on site for resale.

It is difficult to summarise the impact of fire on Duncan Village in a paragraph, but two points need to be emphasised. First, the reality of fire in the shack areas had a profound impact on the way many of those living in these areas viewed the city and on the spatial layout of the shack areas. Faced with the prospect of their homes and their possessions being burnt at any time, many shack residents made sure that they kept their most valued possessions outside the city. This encouraged urban-rural linkages, especially amongst women, who seemed determined not to endanger their young children unnecessarily. Once weaned, they often sought places of refuge for them outside the city. The second significant social consequence of fire was that it encouraged domestic fluidity and mobility. When shacks and houses burnt down, families often

6. The position of the youth and their responses to the economic situation in the township are explored in greater detail in the next chapter; also see Bank (1998).
7. For fuller discussions, see the Bank report (1997) on the upgrading of B-hostel.

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split with young members seeking to get their own sites. This encouraged residential densification as township youth used the generous donations made by welfare organisations and city businesses to build their own shacks.[8] Fire thus contributed directly to the movement of young couples away from their parental homes and into the shack areas in the 1980s and 1990s (cf. Bank 2001). But it also served to destabilise social relations because fires brought quarrelling, tension and conflict to the new shack neighbourhoods of Duncan Village.

Anthropologist as *Flâneur*: Impressions from the Street

The notion of the *flâneur* in urban studies is associated with the work of Walter Benjamin on 19th century Paris and his descriptions of the voyeuristic tendencies of men who took to the sidewalks to survey and consume the pleasures and public spectacles of the city (Tester 1994; Morley 2000; Wilson 2001). In this section, I cast myself as *flâneur* by presenting my initial impressions of the social and cultural world that I encountered in Duncan Village during my first phase of field-work there in 1995 and 1996.[9] By the 1990s, the streets of Duncan Village had once again become busy, multi-purpose social spaces rather than mere public thoroughfares for workers and consumers. By reclaiming the streets, the comrades had also opened up new avenues for public expression and engagement. In 1995, however, the township still lacked proper sports and recreational facilities like those that had provided the residents of the 1950s an escape – however momentarily – from their impoverished and congested daily lives.

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8. In response to the modernist dictum "form follows function", many scholars of mega-cities such as Los Angeles and São Paulo have added that since the 1980s *form* in these cities have increasingly followed *fear*. Davis (1990), in particular, has argued that Los Angeles has become a "carceral city" where police blockages, private security fences, and segregated ghettos have come to dominate the urban landscape. Caldeira (2000) has made a similar set of observations for São Paulo, where the fear of crime and violence has also shaped the urban form. In Duncan Village itself, segregated by virtue of similar ecologies of racial fear, form in the shack areas in the 1980s and 1990s seemed, however, to follow fire, which was one of the major vectors of residential densification. In virtually every case, the residential areas left behind because of fire had more shacks that were more closely spaced together than before. The demand for residential space in these areas outweighed all other considerations, resulting in shack zones with no public space at all – no streets, no fields, no parks – only a compact maze of make-shift houses.
9. According to Tester (1994), one of the characteristics of the male *flâneur*, who was said to be conspicuous on the streets of European cities at the dawn of modernism, was that he was meant to be "invisible". In classical terms, the *flâneur* is a stroller in a crowd, who observes but is not observed. He is invisible precisely because of the maleness of the street and his ability to blend in with other men. In the 1990s, the streets of Duncan Village were still largely male spaces, but as a white male anthropologist in a black neighbourhood I was far from invisible to local residents. My presence on the streets and in other public spaces was therefore also different from that of the *flâneur* in the sense that, while I gazed at the world around me, I was also being gazed at. It was a gaze that was often so intense that I was sometimes made to account for my presence. When I returned to the field later in the 1990s

As I moved around the streets of Duncan Village Proper in the mid-1990s, I wondered whether the township had not regained some of the social and cultural characteristics of the old location: Had the infiltration of new migrants into the shack areas resulted in the re-establishment of *iseti* beer drinks and Red cultural life? Were single mothers who set up their own households again able to re-emerge as independent matriarchs who controlled their houses and made their presence felt on the streets? Did the opening up of public space bring back a new cosmopolitan "feel" to the township? Had political transformation broken down the exaggerated distinction between the street and the house and opened up new spaces for identity formation and cultural expression? And, were there now greater levels of tolerance and acceptance amongst different socio-cultural groups in Duncan Village? Did the polarised identities of the apartheid era begin to blur as they had in Mdantsane, where people escaped the noose of tight state control? In short, was Duncan Village of the 1990s anything like the old East Bank?

As I first walked down Florence Street, in the heart of the oldest part of Duncan Village, I still got a strong sense of the old location as described in the Trilogy. The road was lined with brightly-coloured one-roomed municipal houses, interspersed with shacks, all crammed together, filling every inch of available space. The street was old, dirty, busy and lively, bustling with young children playing, youths socialising, women going about their domestic routines and a range of street hawkers selling their wares. Some old one-roomed municipal houses had been converted into old-style home-brew shebeens, still known as *imbarha*. These liquor outlets were identifiable by the rows of migrants sitting on benches outside, and on closer investigation, I saw many large 40-gallon (200-litre) drums in the yards used for cooking and to prepare beer. In the 1990s, there was no need to hide drums of beer under floor-boards, as had been common in the 1950s, nor was there any need to shout *"Kobomvu, Kobomvu"*, when the occasional police van turned the corner. It was not the police but the comrades who now ruled the streets and they had no problem with home-brewed beer.[10] But, as in the 1950s, the migrants were not conspicuous on the streets. They kept to themselves in backyard shebeens, hung around together in small groups in the shack areas, or tended to their urban gardens on the fringes of the township. Many gravitated to the hostel precinct during the day where they would socialise with *amakhaya*, attend burial society meetings or while away the time chatting about work opportunities.

Migrants were also not as immediately identifiable by the clothes they wore and the way they walked anymore. They certainly did not wear ochred blankets or walk around the township without shoes. In terms of dress codes, there was little distinguishing these men from others

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and was better known in Duncan Village Proper, I was less conspicuous on the street and able to work with fewer questions being asked of why I was there.

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except, perhaps, for their preference for overalls, heavy workmen's boots and use of formal jackets in public places - something regarded as conservative and "old-fashioned" by many urbanites. Their dress codes did not expose them to the kind of ridicule that "Red" migrants experienced on the streets of East Bank in the 1950s. For self-proclaimed migrants, their association with "the rural" and with rural life-styles had come to be symbolised in other ways. Many who now lived in the shack areas and wished to demonstrate active links with the countryside adorned their shacks with maize cobs, ostensibly left out to dry and form seeds. Given the very limited possibilities for urban farming in the shack-filled township, these maize cobs were used mainly for decoration and symbolic purposes, as were wreaths and herbs over their shack doors, said to ward off evil spirits. Migrants and ex-migrants also marked their identities by cooking and washing for themselves: tasks considered women's work in the township. By insisting on doing this work themselves, they set themselves apart from others in the township.[11]

Construction and performance of rurally-oriented identities among male migrants in the city was also largely confined to middle-aged and older men, living in hostels and backyard or free-standing shacks. Very few younger men openly embraced such rural identities. In fact, I found that many younger migrants went to great lengths to disguise their rural connections, as they did not want to be seen as part of this conservative faction of the older generation. Many even said they were not really interested in rural life or agriculture, being obliged only to send money home to support struggling parents and siblings. The more I encountered such responses, the more I realised that a migrant life-style was a source of embarrassment for young men in Duncan Village. This was not necessarily because they rejected rural life and social relations, or because they aimed to embrace a new kind of cosmopolitanism along the lines suggested by Ferguson (1999) for Zambia; it was more that they felt the "encapsulated" life-styles, which previous generations of migrants had created, were both politically and socially limiting. The identities of 1980s and 1990s youth in Duncan Village, as I argue in the next chapter, were constructed around a wish to break from the norms and values associated with the narrow notions of obligation and respect, characteristic of an earlier migrant life-style.

In the hostels, which I visited for the first time in 1996, I also discovered that the closed and committed Red social network life-styles that had been reconstituted there during the 1960s and 1970s had also begun to unravel. Some migrants in B-hostel remained adamant that they had not changed their outlooks and orientations, despite admitting that they now hardly ever visited

10. The DVRA banned the sale of liquor in the township in the mid-1980s, but these regulations had relaxed by the 1990s.
11. I explore these symbolic circuits in more detail in Chapter 5.

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the rural areas and were hoping to collect their pensions in town. Others still identified strongly with their *amakhaya* and identified themselves in terms of their former "tribal" labels, such as Bhaca, Bomvana or Mpondo, but were much more open in the social networks they constructed than they were prepared to admit. There was certainly no evidence of the cultural process described by the Mayers as "encapsulation", which lingered on in the hostels into the 1980s (see Chapter 6). It was as if many migrants regarded their identities more in terms of a set of performative qualities, as one among many urban cultural styles, than as an enclosed space: as a distinctive sub-culture characterised by specific norms, values and shared experiences. In the past there were specific kinds of migrants, from specific rural areas, with specific sets of experiences that tied them together. Now there were just migrants, who defined themselves as culturally conservative and rurally-oriented, but who failed to give these commitments any specific cultural context. On reflection, the category of migrants in Duncan Village in the 1990s seemed more like a situational political ethnicity, reflecting a broad older-generation Xhosa conservatism, rather than something that was culturally fixed and specific (see Chapter 6).

In terms of the performance of rural identities in town, rural women were again the most flamboyant in their dress styles, often wearing black turbans and colourful, voluminous dresses, rather than the plain headscarves and pinafores common among urban housewives. Many of these women came from the Transkei and explained that they were in the city only for a limited time: to go to hospital, for administrative reasons (pursuing a welfare grant or a pension), or on domestic business involving urban-based relatives. They added that they intended returning to the rural areas as soon as they had completed their business, and they took pride in their rural identities, expressing no desire to stay in the city any longer than necessary. They hung around the hostels or shack areas where their husbands or brothers lived, and attended *imbarha* beer drinks. While in these male-dominated environments, they assumed the deferential roles conventional in rural areas. Groups of rural women in traditional dress were often seen basking in the sun outside the hostels. They sat alone or in groups smoking their pipes in full public view. Because of their lack of commitment to urban life, these women generally did not care what others thought of them. They confidently occupied the street and were prepared to voice their disapproval of the life-styles of young urban women in public. For young male migrants in the shack areas, the arrival of a mother or aunt from the rural areas could prove disastrous as she often tried to boss her son or nephew's live-in lover around as if she was a *makoti* in her own house. The arrogant, abrasive and opinionated attitudes of some of these women, as we shall see in Chapter 7, often caused serious domestic rifts in newly-established shack households.

Besides the continued visibility of migrants in the township, the other striking feature of township life in the 1990s was the general filth and poverty evident on the streets. In the 1950s,

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many visitors to East Bank commented on the stench that engulfed the old location due to the lack of garbage removal and bucket toilets that were emptied into street drains. In this period, the city council argued that the unhygienic conditions in the location presented a serious health hazard. In 1994, I found that in Duncan Village (Proper) the sidewalks and street drainage systems were again clogged with litter, and that sewage sometimes overflowed onto the streets as manholes were pushed open by the blocked sewerage system. These conditions were a direct result of the refusal of the municipality to service the township until such time as the DVRA were prepared to co-operate with them on management and development issues. In some of the shack areas, the piles of rubbish stood almost two metres high and were located right on peoples' doorsteps. The state of urban services and infrastructure, which were now hopelessly overused, were also poor with leaking toilets, broken taps, shattered streetlights, and potholed roads. The boundary fences that had separated individual houses from each other had also been broken down. Mr Nel, the former Duncan Village township superintendent, could barely contain his anger as we discussed the state of township infrastructure. "When I was in charge here," he said, "this was a model township that everyone could be proud of. What has happened here is a disgrace. It makes me sad to think that 20 years' of hard work has gone down the drain!"[12]

The formal housing stock was also generally drab and poorly maintained. Cracks gaped open on soiled sidewalls, and in some cases, what had once been carefully maintained gardens or vegetable patches, were now overrun with backyard shacks. Many house-proud tenants no longer seemed to care about the state of their dwellings. They showed scant regard for municipal property and even the interiors of their dwellings, which had once been carefully segmented into different functional spaces, were often in a state of disarray. Kitchen units were often worn, chairs broken and the once polished and shiny coal stoves often stood in disuse as families reverted to paraffin, which was cheap and readily available. Neatly furnished lounges, which had once been a source of family pride and status were often converted into playrooms for children, who spent long hours watching battery-driven TV sets or listening to the radio. Men did their drinking in shebeens rather than at home with friends. The run-down state of homes was a clear reflection of the increasing poverty of the location, which had been hit by retrenchments and escalating unemployment.

The general dilapidated state of the houses and streets was, however, not uniform. The houses of better-paid workers often stood out from the rest. They had garden fences separating them from the streets and had been upgraded at the cost of the owners, who usually built onto the front of their houses by erecting face-brick extensions with burglar bars. The residents of

12. Interview with Mr Nel, Township Superintendent, 2 June 1996.

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these houses were workers who had not lost their jobs - many worked for Mercedes Benz of South Africa[13] or Nestlé, the two main factories in town. After 1996, even these workers moved out of the township as the above-mentioned employers started building housing estates for their workers on land acquired next to the township. These workers then rented out their municipal houses and erected shacks in their backyards to allow them to extract rental income. The implosion of modernism occurred rapidly from the mid-1980s onwards. This was compounded, as said before, by increasing incidents of residential fires in the new shack areas, where households had reverted to paraffin as their main domestic fuel. Fire and rising crime also encouraged those who had the resources, to move out of the township and to seek alternative accommodation. Opportunities were, however, relatively limited because of the slow rate at which new low-cost housing schemes were initiated in the city. However, after 1995, there was a steady flow of better-off households to the new housing estates of Reeston, Scenery Park and Braelyn Extension. This increased the levels of poverty, crime and violence in Duncan Village.

During the 1990s, there was little evidence of the playful engagements with dress and fashion that had characterised the streets of the 1950s. Most household budgets did not extend to the contemporary equivalents of "La Continental", and stores like Modern Man, Bryants and Chess had relocated out of the city centre, following the black middle-class's movement into formerly white suburbs. Dress styles generally mirrored the clothing lines of budget stores, like Pep and OK Bazaars, and there was little evidence of creative style-making and the "diversionary" tactics mentioned in previous chapters. There were no Panama hats and Italian spats, no American suits and Chelsea boots, Oxford bags and Texan ties, or their contemporary equivalents. Women also no longer took to the streets in taffeta skirts and nylon blouses, or with Italian shoes and designer bags, as they were said to have done in the 1950s. Nineties women, in general, seemed much less conspicuous on the streets than they had been in the 1950s. There were also very few characters, like Peter Ray, pushing the limits of style with such items as giant American cars and colourful outfits. Other aspects of the 1950s cosmopolitanism, such as the old location's rich musical and jazz scene had also not been revived, nor had local traditions of township theatre, fêtes, bazaars and sports events. The 1980s and 1990s lacked the competitive style-making that had achieved prominence in the 1950s.

But this does not mean that clothing had become any less important as a maker of status and identity. In fact, with peoples' homes under the constant threat of fire, there were few other ways in which they could externalise their aspirations and express their identities. The problem, however, was that most households were now poorer than they had been prior to the events of

13. Since 1998, Daimler Chrysler SA.

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1985, and there was less income available to purchase expensive clothes. Nevertheless, the tail end of the *amapansula* style still lingered on in the 1990s. Some youths still aspired to this flashy gangster-look, wearing wide black trousers, low on the hips, to reveal the top of the buttocks and cut slightly short to expose white socks and shiny Crockett and Jones shoes. Honed in shebeens and on the streets of Johannesburg, this style was associated with a distinctive lingo and with the music of Brenda Fassie, Yvonne Chaka Chaka, and others. It was distinctly counter-cultural and embodied macho and sexually explicit dance routines. Not only did those who subscribed show off their buttocks, they also used explicit crotch movements as a major focal point in their dance routines (see Chapter 5).

As far as the so-called School identities were concerned, I found no evidence to suggest that this category existed in the township anymore. By the 1980s, the main categorical distinction in the township was not between Red and School, but between migrants and comrades and Ciskeian and Transkeian. It was a distinction that was less embodied than the old Red/School divide and therefore less visible. It was based more on political commitment and social practice, than on dress styles and deportment. In many ways, the very concept of becoming a comrade (*iqabane*), as we will see in the next chapter, meant rejecting older migrant identities and associated Xhosa masculinities. Thousands of the rural youth flooding into Duncan Village, especially after 1986, identified themselves as "comrades" and now associated themselves with the activities of the DVRA, the ANC and the UDF. They were thus not readily available for incorporation into the old *amakhaya*-type migrant networks. Defection of rural male youth to the *amaqabane* was a source of great anxiety for many older migrants and commuters, who had historically depended on *amakhaya* networks, in order to attend to their homesteads and interests in the countryside. In the 1990s, conservative migrants found that they could neither rely on rural youth to provide them with domestic assistance in town (cooking, ironing and washing), nor to drive their ploughing teams, fix their cattle byres, herd their livestock, and help build up their *imizi* (homesteads) in the countryside. This undermined their ability to build up resource bases in the countryside for their rural retirement.

Like migrants, urban mothers and housewives were also faced with new challenges. With the declining economic situation in the township they could no longer afford to sit at home and simply live off the housekeeping money provided by their husbands. They had to get out into public spaces and compete for resources. The success of many women in achieving greater economic security was seen in the growing numbers of women who entered the formal job market in the 1980s and 1990s. The demand for service-sector workers, especially in the retail, catering and commercial sectors in the city, assisted them in their endeavours. But they were also increasingly visible on both the township streets and in the city centre as hawkers and small-

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business operators. In the 1990s, I was struck by the ability of women to access resources and opportunities that men seemed unable to grasp. It was as if the social and economic marginalisation of women during the era of modernist planning had strengthened their networks and resourcefulness in exploring options, which others had not considered. It seemed as if, while modernism had cast African men in stereotypical roles as household patriarchs and industrial workers and migrants serving the formal sector of the economy, it had taught women to work around systems of authority and power. It had taught them to transform what de Certeau (1986) would call "tactics" into "strategies". But women were also careful not to relinquish control over the pre-existing social and cultural domains – the space of the home and the yard. In fact, as we will see in Chapter 7, their excursions into public spaces were often measured interventions that were built on the continued control and careful management of the domestic domain. The strategies employed by women were also seen to be more geographically flexible and often involved bridging the urban-rural divide, to minimise risks and strengthen support amongst their matrikin. It was therefore not surprising to find, in the 1995 survey, that more women than men kept active social ties with their rural homesteads.

But the increasing visibility of women in public, and the ways in which they controlled household resources and monopolised opportunities, was also a source of concern for men since it threatened established male notions of power and control, both within and beyond the home. While the post-apartheid Duncan Village appeared to offer young men very little as they faced the challenge of translating political power into economic resources, it seemed to work so much better for women who had kept their eye on economic opportunities and allowed others to dominate township politics. The widening gap between male and female experiences of the collapse of apartheid created enormous frustration for men, who, as I will argue at greater length in subsequent chapters, increasingly turned their attention away from the state and towards the conditions in their own backyards. Their anger and frustration in sacrificing so much for so little was often translated into a sense of identity crisis, where they felt that in a world of limited goods, women's gains were necessarily men's losses. This raised the spectre of cross-gender violence and domestic instability, which had become an increasing serious problem in the township in the 1990s. Women, as we have seen, were now blamed for fires, for failing to meet their domestic responsibilities and for being crassly materialistic. They were increasingly seen to care only for themselves and their children, ignoring their broader responsibilities to their husbands and their kin. Young women were now said to be fickle and manipulative, only having eyes for men with money and resources to offer them.

One of the public arenas where the tensions between men and women flared up in the mid-1990s was on fire sites. In the mid-1990s fire disasters were often associated with witchcraft

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activity. Fire (*umlilo*) was one of the malevolent forces used by witches in the form of *vutha* to perpetrate their evil deeds. For impoverished shack dwellers, to suspect witchcraft where fire was involved did not demand a great leap in their imaginations. Moreover, the appearance of fire carried with it all the hallmarks of witchcraft activity. Fires, it was said, were like witches. They struck in the small hours of the morning when people were least prepared to deal with them. They tore through entire neighbourhoods with the speed of lightning and caused havoc and mayhem in their paths. They always arrived unannounced and disappeared unexplained. Moreover, the devastation wrought by fire, like the action of witches, seldom only affected the lives of one person. Fires challenged people's perceptions of social and community life as orderly and stable. They appeared to embody a selfish and gluttonous desire to destroy the lives of others. It is not surprising therefore that people so often dealt with fire within the idiom of witchcraft: they refused to focus on the structural conditions of life, which were causing their misfortune, and rather attributed its incidence to individual causation.

However, as I visited numerous fire sites during 1995 and 1996, I also came to realise that the fear of fire had become a particularly feminised fear, since it was women, especially young women, who were made to carry the blame for many of these disasters. One striking example of this was seen on Sandile Street where a large shack fire broke out in July 1995. The incident was reported in the local press as follows:

> Armed police prevented an enraged crowd from meting out mob justice to a sixteen-year old girl who allegedly caused a fire, which left 200 people homeless in Duncan Village yesterday. While the fire was raging, residents caught and bound the alleged culprit, whom they claimed has started a fire twice before and shouted that they wanted to hold a people's court, police said.
>
> Police Internal Instability Division members who were on the scene to assist firemen, fired rubber bullets to disperse hundreds of angry residents and rescued the girl. The mob, who were wielding sticks and throwing stones, again tried to attack the girl as police escorted her to an armoured vehicle with her arms held behind her back and bundled her inside. She was guarded by police, clad in bullet-proof vests and holding tear gas canisters at the ready (*Daily Dispatch*, 4 July 1995).

As the police escorted the girl away, the crowd bayed "*makatshiswe, makatshiswe*" ("let her burn, let her burn"). They meant what they said and had the police not arrived timeously on the scene, this girl would have been burnt by the mob. I discovered that not all incidents of fire were dealt with in the same way, and within the DVRA, committees worked hard to try to prevent such incidents occurring, because they undermined the unity and cohesion in the township. However, it was also clear that fires often provided opportunities where unemployed men turned their anger and frustration on young girls and independent women as they vented their frustration at

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their own inability to exert control and dominance both in their homes and in the neighbourhoods in which they lived.[14]

In this world of self-doubt and uncertainty, men seemed to increasingly seek security in their own identities as Xhosa men. This resulted in an interesting anomaly, where in the context where migrants were shedding conservative rural identities, Xhosa men in general were also increasingly proud of their own ethnic identities as Xhosa men. The earlier distinction between Gcaleka and Ngqika, which had dominated in Duncan Village during the 1960s and 1970s, now faded away as men increasingly referred to themselves simply as Xhosa. They often spoke of the power and importance of Xhosa men in the ANC and of the pride they had brought "the nation". However, the roots of this greater sense of ethnic pride were not only lodged with contemporary political developments, but also dated back to the early 1990s when Xhosa and Zulu residents of hostels and informal settlements on the Reef were at loggerheads with one another. The direct involvement of the former Transkei leader, Bantu Holomisa, in these disputes ensured that they had local resonance. Some Xhosa hostel dwellers involved in those violent confrontations on the Reef also returned to Duncan Village in search of work, and told fresh stories of Zulu atrocities and the threat they posed to Xhosa identity. Discussions of Xhosa manhood and identity boiled down to the issue of male circumcision, which was not practiced by the Zulu, Mpondo or Bhaca. In 1990s Duncan Village, youth fervently wished to undergo initiation as soon as possible and, in the shack areas, it became routine practice for groups of men to "check out" new youths in the area and to pressurise them into attending an initiation lodge.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to explore some of the consequences of the political rebellion and the associated implosion of modernist planning in Duncan Village. I have investigated the political and demographic implications of the collapse of apartheid planning in Duncan Village and the struggles for power that ensued, in the wake of the dramatic events of August 1985, when the township slipped irrevocably away from the state and into the hands of the DVRA. In investigating the consequences of political change, I posed the question whether the post-apartheid Duncan Village of the 1990s had not, in fact, adopted some of the social and economic characteristics of the old East Bank location of the 1950s. On the basis of the demographic evidence collected in 1995, I found that there were some striking similarities between the two in social composition, especially in terms of the influx from rural areas, new evidence of circular

14. For a fuller discussion of fire and the fear of fire, see Bank 2001: 150–51.

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urban-rural migration and the re-emergence of household forms, such as the matrifocal family. I was also struck during my initial field visits, by the presence of old-style *imbarha* shebeens, clustered around Florence and Sandile Streets, and even the presence of the occasional *iseti* beer drink, which seemed to suggest the re-emergence of Red social life in the township. Furthermore, I saw youths and women occupying the streets in a way that had not been possible during the preceding two decades. This seemed indicative of the re-establishment of the multi-functional street and the creation of public spaces for the expression and negotiation of identity.

But, despite these comparisons, I soon came to realise that the Duncan Village of the 1990s was a very different place to the East Bank of the 1950s. First, the economic situation in the township was dire, with employment rates creeping up to 40 % of the economically-active population. Unlike the 1950s, the city was not in a period of economic expansion and secondary industrialisation. In fact, by contrast, the 1990s seemed to be characterised by the rapid loss of industrial jobs, the weakening of labour unions and on-going retrenchments in the motor, textile and food industries. The economic growth seen in the commercial and services sectors, which drew greater numbers of women into the job market, did not compensate for the shrinkage in other sectors of the economy, resulting in a steady overall rise in the unemployment. The Duncan Village of the 1990s was, therefore, not only poorer than the East Bank had been in the 1950s, but it was also surrounded by an air of doom and gloom as the expectations associated with political freedom were not being translated into economic opportunities. Consequently, there was none of the optimistic and flamboyant cosmopolitanism that had been such a feature of the hope and expectation of the fifties generation. Moreover, those who made it economically now increasingly moved out of the township to seek accommodation in better-serviced and less crime-ridden housing estates. Those who had the economic resources to enjoy the benefits of the political transition were leaving the ghettos.

In terms of identity politics in the location, the 1990s were not characterised by a general distinction between urban and rural identities, between townsmen and tribesmen as the Trilogy researchers had suggested in the 1950s, but rather by increasingly sharp generational and gender conflict. The social divide between comrades and migrants, which had featured strongly in the 1980s, was not so much a division between the urban and the rural or between civil and customary society, but more a division between the values of the new youth of the liberation era and those of older-generation migrants. The youth of the 1980s and 1990s, as we will see in the next chapter, were not opposed to "rural influences". For instance, they remained committed to their ethnic identities and to traditional rituals of manhood, notions of discipline and masculinity. What they did object to was the political profile, the moral arrogance and single-mindedness of what they considered to be an "old-fashioned" rural world-view of some migrant workers. But,

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as we will see in the next chapter, the political divisions between migrants and comrades also served to disguise the convergence of the urban and rural life-styles and outlooks in the Eastern Cape during the 1980s, especially amongst the youth. From an analytical point of view, the really interesting questions about the 1980s and 1990s is therefore not how and why comrades and migrants clashed, but to establish how, when and under what conditions groups of urban and rural youth in the city were able to forge alliances and construct common identities that transcended the old politics of town and country.

By the mid-1990s, I have also noted that the conflicts between migrants and comrades were in many ways surpassed by a deepening divide between men and women, who now increasingly shared the same social and economic aspirations, but had differential capacities for the realisation of their dreams. In the 1990s, many women, especially those who had bad luck in their relationships with men, were increasingly determined to capitalise on new opportunities in the job market to assert their social and economic independence. Urban housewives, who had had so little room to manoeuvre in the 1960s and 1970s, had also come to the realisation that the future of their families now depended on them playing a more active economic role in raising money for their households. As women broke the patriarchal yoke of "middling modernism", their agendas often collided with those of men, especially unemployed youths who desired the same resources that they seemed more capable of securing for themselves and their children. The evidence of gender conflict and tension was plain to see in Duncan Village in the 1990s and was not only reflected on fire sites, but in the growing incidence of rape, domestic violence and gender conflict within and beyond households (see Chapter 7). It was almost as if the anger and frustration of men, which had been directed outwards towards the state and its repressive laws, had now increasingly turned inwards. Thus, just as the changing position of youth and the nature of generational relations emerged as an important topic of investigation, so too did the changing position of women and nature of gender relations in the township in the 1990s.

In the remaining chapters, I follow through the research agenda that emerged from my initial research engagements in Duncan Village in 1995–1996, when I was conducting my first phase of field-work and was primarily involved in gathering social and demographic information on the township. In this period, I came to the realisation that the three social categories that required closer historical and ethnographic investigation were those of the youth, migrants and women. In the next three chapters, I explore the changing social positions, cultural orientations and identity politics of each of these categories, paying particular attention to the convergence of rural and urban youth in the 1980s and 1990s. To ensure consistency and continuity in this work as a whole, I begin each one of these chapters by returning to the original Xhosa in Town research of the 1950s, before embarking on a discussion of my 1990s

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anthropological research in the township. In all three chapters, I highlight the collapse of the urban and the rural, as an essential or even primary social and cultural divide in Duncan Village, and its replacement with other social cleavages and divisions. This leads me in the final chapter to leave the city and enter the space of the village, where I explore how the historical identities of Red and School have also changed.

This brings me to the end of my historical and contextual review of the Xhosa in Town Trilogy and the dynamics of social and cultural change in the city since the 1950s. It is against the background of the analysis provided in these opening chapters that I now embark on a series of more specific ethnographic discussions and explorations of particular social categories, identities and processes of social and cultural change.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE STYLE OF THE COMRADES: YOUTH POWER, CITY STREETS AND THE POLITICS OF HOME

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is, as the title suggests, to focus on the comrades as a social and cultural style rather than merely a political movement. There is already a large literature on South African urban youth politics in the 1980s and 1990s, which stresses the rise of the comrades (*amaqabane*) as a political phenomenon (cf. Lodge 1983; Mayekiso 1996; Sitas 1992; Seekings 1992, 1993; Carter 1992). Most of these works concentrate on the organisational structures and political ideologies underpinning the nation-wide mobilisation of youth in the 1980s and on the politics of the liberation movements and the emergence of democratic civic structures in the townships during the 1980s and 1990s. Other more sociologically-oriented studies focus on the pavement politics and street masculinities associated with the rise of the comrades (Bundy 1987; Xaba 2001), while a third stream in the comrades literature, associated with scholars like Catherine Campbell (1994), attempts to explore the impact of violence on youth identities. Work in this third stream generally explores the domestic situations and life histories of comrades as a means of assessing the impact of the political involvement on family life and personal identity construction. The three streams have run along parallel paths, seldom intersecting in meaningful ways. Those interested in political formations have generally kept out of the sociology of the street, whilst those dealing with issues of violence and identity have focused mainly in the home and the intimate social relationship within youths' lives.

Although much of the political work on urban youth in the 1980s is sensitive to historical continuities in the ideological and organisational dynamics of youth political formations, the more sociologically-oriented literature has paid far less attention to the historical dimension of the youth cultural styles, social values and attitudes. Glaser (2000) has recently expressed dismay at the extent to which current analyses of urban youth, for instance, continue to ignore the in-depth social histories that have been produced on urban youth identity, culture and politics in

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the 1950s (cf. Bonner 1988, 1995; La Hause 1991). One of the consequences of the failure of scholars to situate the social and cultural dynamics of youth identity politics within regional and city-specific histories, is that the urban youth of the 1980s often appear as a homogeneous category. Whether encountered in Cradock, Kimberley or Katlehong, they appear as remarkably similar formations, barring small differences in ideology and organisational capacity. While there can be no doubt that the same broad national political and economic tendencies structured the responses of youths in different centres, it also needs to be recognised that these formations were constituted within a specific urban context and shaped by particular regional and local historical circumstances.

In the case of Soweto and the Reef townships generally, Glaser (2000) has argued that pre-existing urban gang structures, many of which date back to the 1950s, laid the social foundation on which the comrades established new articulations of power and authority at the street and neighbourhood level. In this context, he suggests that the comrades quickly developed a "distinctive subculture with its own style and ritual" that fused "politicised student and gang subcultures" in the city (*ibid.*: 187). The image that emerges from Glaser's work on the Reef is that the comrades emerge here as a specifically urban phenomenon that weld together different aspects of urban youth experience to form a tightly-knit social and political formation that bears the social imprint and values of earlier gang brotherhoods. The idea that the new political identities that emerged amongst the youth in South African cities were specifically urban identities has also been developed in the work of Mamdani (1996). He argues, rather more optimistically, that the political culture of the urban youth embraced the values of civil society and civil liberties, and was specifically constructed in opposition to the undemocratic traditions of patriarchal power and entitlement associated with customary system in rural areas. This formulation, which is based largely on his reading of the secondary literature on political developments on the Reef during the 1980s, is then generalised to characterise the political identities of urban youth across the country.

The problem with these formulations is that they shut out the critical role that rural youth played in shaping the comrades as a social formation, and thus reproduce the idea that urban and rural youth were still deeply divided in their social and political outlooks and orientations in the 1980s. While such a division might have lingered on the Reef, I suggest that one of the reasons why the comrades of Duncan Village were able to consolidate power with such force in the 1980s was precisely because they were able to address and break down these barriers. One important reason for this was that the comrades in Duncan Village never actually evolved as a "distinctive sub-culture", but emerged as a generationally-based cultural style (in the sense that Ferguson (1999) uses the term), which drew in youths from different backgrounds

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and experiences. This style, I will argue, set itself off against other styles on the streets of the township with which it engaged in an ongoing dialogue throughout the 1980s. In the making of the comrade style, I suggest that the construction of existence of shared notions of masculinity and male power consolidated through acts of collective public violence emerged as an important point of convergence where urban and rural youth were brought together in an uneasy alliance. But this alliance was also not unbreakable and, when political power had been secured in the 1990s, and the focus of the youth turned again to the harsh realities of making a living in an impoverished community, older differences re-emerged.

In this chapter I also argue that it was not only on Duncan Village's streets that the style of the comrades was made, but in the home too. The reconstruction of youth domesticity, especially with the large-scale adoption of *ukuhlalisana* (living together outside of marriage) as the preferred domestic style amongst both urban and rural youth in the 1980s, contributed to the convergence of disparate groups of male youth under the umbrella of the comrades. The ideological undercurrents associated with *ukuhlalisana* set out a new agenda for how youths should relate to their parents and respond to existing forms of domestic authority, social obligation and engagement. In this discussion, I suggest that, while the youth should have displayed a high level of commitment to the reconstruction of domestic and social relations, young men and women developed conflicting expectations around what "living together" meant. This created tension and conflict, aggravated by the difficulties that male comrades experienced in attempting to translate their self-confident street masculinities into domestic power and authority. This chapter therefore ends with a discussion of the fragility of the power of the comrades and the difficulty they experienced in the 1990s in operationalising their fantasies of power and authority in the township of the nineties. It also highlights gender relations as a critical terrain of struggle in the 1990s and lays the foundation for further discussion of the topic in Chapter 7.

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Rural and Urban Youth in the 1950s

In the *Xhosa in Town* Trilogy very little reference is made to the youth as a distinct social category. In these texts, the role of the youth is generally dealt with as part of the larger narrative of the construction of Red and School identities and life-styles in the city. Different categories of rural youth, therefore, feature as carriers of these identities, and are presented as fulfilling social roles required for the social reproduction of Red and School responses to urban life. Nevertheless, the Mayers reported that in the East Bank of the 1950s, urban and rural-born youth formed two opposing categories where "the glaring contrasts in dress, in speech, in manner, are only the

outward signs of completely different values" (1971: 188). While town-bred youth "put the accent on smartness, rather than trying to be smart" and embraced a wide range of cosmopolitan styles and influences, the country-born youth, whether Red or School, were seen to show a lack of urban sophistication in their dress styles and general social behaviour. The reason for this, as the Mayers argued in their later work on youth socialisation in the Ciskei and Transkei, was that rural youth had been socialised in a very different way to urban youth.[1]

In rural areas around East London where Red families predominated, the Mayers (1970, 1972) reported that rural youth were taught to respect rank or seniority, to show respect for tradition, the law (*umthetho*) and to eschew urban values and life from an early age. At about the age of twelve they started to attend *umtshotsho* meetings, which involved dancing, sweet-hearting and stick play. These activities encouraged age solidarities and were regulated by certain norms – contraventions of which were dealt with by the *umtshotsho* group as a whole. The *umtshotsho* groups were organised on a strictly territorial basis and proved to be a great attraction for both girls and boys in rural areas. As boys went through initiation and became young men (*abafana*), they joined *intlombe* groups, which placed strong emphasis on traditional dress, on debate amongst men and on dancing and singing. These groups were said to be the "schools" of the Red people and were widely evident in rural communities in the East London hinterland in the 1950s, and were noted in many rural communities through to the late 1970s (Mayer 1970, 1972; see also McAllister & Deliwe 1994). Former East Bank residents said that the influence of Red youth culture was seen in the *intlombe* groups that sung and danced at beer drinks in the location and in the ubiqituous stick fighting that occurred amongst youth. The latter fights sometimes broke out in the backyards of houses, but were most commonly seen at the weekend when groups of youths from different rural areas were involved in stick-fighting competitions in the bushes surrounding the location (see Plate 14).

In their analysis of School youth who came from areas like Keiskammahoek, the Mayers found local groups similar to the Red *umtshotsho*, known as *inhavu*. These groups did not mature into *intlombe* groups after initiation. In School areas, they noted that young men did not automatically belong to the territorially *intlombe* groups, but could choose to participate in one of a variety of voluntary groups, known as "parliaments" or "meetings" at which youths discussed

1. Youth are not dealt with as a specific social category in the Trilogy. It was only after the completion of these studies that the Mayers took an active interest in youth socialisation and identity politics, which emerged as their major research interest in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1972, they produced a two-volume report, "Report on Research on Self-organisation by Youth among the Xhosa-speaking Peoples of the Ciskei and Transkei" for the Human Sciences Research Council. These volumes were published at this time probably because of the heavy criticism leveled against their earlier work, but they nevertheless contained very valuable descriptions and analyses of the rural youth's social life and organisational forms.

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Plate 14 : Rural Youth. Photo 39, Boys stick-fighting play in the King Williamstown district, 1955; Photo 40, Migrant youth, East Bank, 1957; Photo 41, Young initiates in the Mocipiaas location, 1998.

various issues and drank beer together (*ibid.*). These activities were often not approved of by seniors and provided a forum where young men developed identities that were not necessarily in keeping with those of the older generation. The "parliaments" were also structured along western lines, with a leader, a secretary (who recorded the minutes) and a treasurer. Western-style dress was worn and education valued, but the poorly educated were not excluded (*ibid.*). The Mayers go on to report that, unlike the *umtshotsho* meetings of the Reds, the parliament get-togethers could be unstructured and competitive and often ended in drunkenness and violence, as men squabbled. In the Khalana district near East London, where Red youth associations flourished, the Mayers found that these meetings, by contrast, were elitist affairs where tea was preferred to beer and where a great deal of discussion centred on the value of education and *ukhongo* (enlightenment) (*ibid.*). Variations on the "parliament" form have been noted in areas like Mount Ayliff and Pondoland in the former Transkei, where youth groups known as *indlavini*, with a strong urban influence, also existed at this time (cf. O'Connell 1980; Beinart 1991).[2]

When the urban-born youth of East Bank used the term *imixhaka* (meaning "country bumpkin") to denigrate rural youth in the city, they referred not only to the Red youth but to School youth too, who were also distinguished from them in their dress styles, accents and forms of association. If the rural-born youth of East Bank constituted a differentiated and a general category, so did the urban youth. Ntsebeza (1993), in his work on the urban-born youth of East Bank, reports that they were divided into *iingxungxu* ("those with temporary jobs"), *tsotsis* ("criminal youth") and *oobrighty* or bright boys ("fashion-conscious youth") who mingled with *tsotsis*, but were not necessarily involved in crime. The Mayers also refer to the *oobrighty* youth at one point as "flashy and irresponsible" rather than "criminal" like the *tsotsis* (1971: 198). These categories were generally distinguished from the *amasinala* (educated youth or senior students), a highly influential category in 1950s East Bank. Most came from prominent East Bank families and attended the local Welsh High School, with its strong academic traditions and range of clubs, societies and sports to stimulate the youth and "keep them off the streets".[3] While the *amasinala* youth formed networks across the location as a whole, the less well-educated but fashionable *oobrighty* youth formed their own groups in particular neighbourhoods and streets (see Plate 15).

2. Mager (1999) also analyses the changing position of rural youth in the former Ciskei, but is less concerned with the categorical distinction between Red and School than with issues of sexuality, gender oppression and entrenchment of patriarchal power in rural locations in the Eastern Cape during and after the 1950s.
3. Welsh High students were exposed to organised sports training, music and choir lessons, and learned debating and other skills that enabled them to excel in their different fields of interest. The skills this cohort of youth learnt were transferred to the location streets, enabling youth in general to domesticate the broader cultural influences. Also see Chapter 2.

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The *oobrighty* youth consisted of a mixture of owners' and tenants' children and spent more time on the streets than at school or in the community hall, or on extra-mural activities like scouts or choir practice. They liked jazz and were regular supporters of musical and dance events at the Peacock or Makambi Halls. They engaged in competitive style-making and were always on the look-out for new influences "to show off their new styles" (see Chapter 2 for details). This quest for style was, however, not restricted to male urban-born youth. In fact, as the Mayers (1971: 201) point out: "(T)he girls too go in for smart styles, though sometimes combining these with beads worn around the ankles; some like to use lipstick, and to powder their cheeks with pink face powder." The association of young townswomen with fashionable styles is also noted by Mager (1999) who points out that female *tsotsis*, known as the *amatsotsikhazi*, were also seen on the streets of East Bank dressed to the nines themselves (1999: 123).

Despite the differing styles and social upbringings, former East Bank residents suggest that the urban youth, also known as the "borners", were generally united by their common interest in cosmopolitan dress styles, jazz music and sport. As Ben Ntamo explained:

> All the urban youths in those days were interested in sport and music. And when it came to picking the best team it did not matter which street or area you came from. Everyone pulled together to get the best results for the club. And on Saturday afternoon when the youths went to Rubusana Park to watch matches, they would mix freely, thinking only of their sports team, hoping for a win ... There were also lots of tournaments where East Bank teams played others from King Williams Town or Alice. At these events the youth also stood together behind their players.
>
> Jazz was the other things that united us. Local bands like the Havana Hotshots, The African Quavers, The Swingers and many others enjoyed a strong following in the location. And when it came to talking about jazz and listening to it, the urban youth in those days all spoke the same language. It was the style they liked and everyone could relate to it.[4]

The integrative power of sport and music was also seen in the extent to which Coloured youth, born and brought up in the location and who lived mainly in the Moriva and Tsolo sections, were also incorporated into the social activities of the urban youth. They played in bands and rugby teams, and belonged to the same gangs and social groups as African youth. In fact, as I learnt while working on the East Bank restitution case, there was far less social distance between Coloured and African youth in East Bank in the 1950s than there was between urban and rural youth in the location.

In a context where urban and rural identities were relatively clearly marked off from one another, the scope for cross-over from one category to another was limited. But this did not mean

4. Interview, East London, 13 January 1999.

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Plate 15 : Urban Youth Styles. Photographs 42 and 44 highlight the contrast between *oobrighty* youth and *amasuti* youth, who tended to be more formally dressed. In other images of urban youth in the 50s, the radio is a common prop, indicating a connection to the modern; Photo 43, double-breasted suits and Christies wide-brimmed hats were popular among a wide range of youth. Photo 45, shows newly initiated urban youth in the location with their new clothes. Notice that the youths are wearing no shoes and that they carry sticks in their right hands. In the 1950s, newly initiated youth were not allowed to wear shoes in town and were expected to use their sticks to shake hands with other men.

that rural youth, who found themselves ostracised on the streets, did not attempt to seek access to urban street or neighbourhood cohorts of urban youth. These attempts were obviously much more common amongst School youth from rural areas like Keiskammahoek, where they had lived under the influence of mission education and mainstream churches. This tendency is noted in a section of *Townsmen or Tribesmen* (1971: 188–191), where the Mayers report on Red youths who try to break links with their *abakhaya* in town. They call these youths "half-Reds":

> The ex-Red recruit to a town clique will fall over backwards in his own eagerness to cut himself off from everything that is Red. Whether out of insecurity or ineptitude, 'half-Reds overdo everything'. In his own room the young man may be living with the rough and ready furnishings typical of poor Red homes, may be sleeping on a mat on the floor, but with the gang he is all out to impress. To this end he exaggerates his dress; he is all for using the special slang of the town; to him a girl is always *icherry* and a detective *iturkey* (*ibid.*: 189).

They go on to state that, "some of the low-class 'urban' girls may [also] be Red girls in disguise, who find it possible to keep up the pretence in low-class company, but not in 'respectable' circles where they constantly risk being given away by small points, such as their inability to serve tea in the proper manner" (*ibid.*: 190). In the above quotation the Mayers inadvertently allude to something important in the way in which urban youth cultures were constructed in East Bank in the 1950s, namely the social distance between the house and the street. In the cases they quote of half-Reds, they hint at the disjuncture between home-life and street-life: between the capacity of youths to adopt and perform particular identities and styles on the street that were not necessarily sustained in the home. This tendency was certainly not confined to half-Reds seeking access to street gangs; it was a common feature of the experience of urban youth in general.

On the streets, urban-born youths pretended to be free agents making their own destinies, they displayed a cocky self-confidence and independence to their rural counterparts, which many knew had no place in their homes and would not be tolerated by their social or biological parents. Kuhle Radu explained, "as far as our parents were concerned, the attitude we had on the street was not the attitude they wanted to see in the house, where they demanded respect and that we behave in a proper manner".[5] In most cases, urban youth lived in extended family situations where their parents or other senior kin owned the houses in which they lived. This placed adults in a position of power over youths who could not realistically consider moving out of home before finding casual or full-time employment. The relatively high degree of residential stability among urban youth was in contrast to that of the working rural youth who

5. Interview, East London, 5 October 2000.

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lived with their *abakhaya* or in *intanga* groups. The domestic situations of urban and rural youth placed them in different social positions vis-à-vis the power and authority of adults in the home.

The urban youth, who seemed so free on the streets, were often exposed to close control in the home. The stories of former East Bank residents suggest that the activities of young women were particularly tightly controlled. Thenjiwe Ngcebetsha recalled that, "in those days we had to listen to our parents and obey their instructions. We could not just go where we wanted and do what we wanted like the youth of today. At home there were lots of rules, and chores to do".[6] She related her story about parental discipline in terms of township courting rituals and the restrictions her parents placed on her evening outings:

> In those days, you could not just go out with your boyfriend on a Saturday night without your father's permission. The young guys were too scared to just knock on the door and come into my house in case my father was there. They would wait in street and whistle to attract my attention ... I remember how, on Saturday nights, we would sneak out of our rooms after they went to sleep to meet up with our boyfriends on the street corners. I used to carry my high-heeled shoes and tiptoe down the passage so as not to make a noise in the corridor. When we got back late at night from the dance-halls, we sometimes used to sleep on the veranda so as not to wake our parents up. It was a constant cat and mouse game ... If we were caught sneaking out there would always be extra chores and even a beating. My father believed in giving us a good hiding with his belt if we misbehaved.[7]

Other women recalled their heavy household workloads. Tumi Majola recalled that it was her duty to milk the three cows that her father pastured on the East Bank commonage and every day bring milk to the house before getting ready for school.[8] This work, she said, was in addition to helping her mother with chores around the house. Zinzi Bata, who lived with her grandmother on Camp Street, recalled that the domestic load placed on teenage girls was no lighter in female-headed household: "My mother and my grandmother would give the orders all the time. It felt like we had no time to ourselves. We were always in the house working, and had no choice but to obey them, especially my grandmother, who was very strict" (see Plate 16).[9]

Young men had greater freedom to roam the streets and to get on with their business. They often managed to stay out until after dark and operated on the premise that domestic work was for girls. But, as Ndyebo Momoti recalled:

> In those days our fathers still had respect and authority. They would watch how we behaved and, if word got around that you were getting out of hand, they would call you

6. Interview, East London, 20 June 2000.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Interview, East London, 26 September 1999.
9. Interview, East London, 10 September 1999.

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Plate 16: Domestic Situations. In East Bank, it was common for youth who had secure employment to seek their own accommodation in the backrooms of municipal houses; Photo 46, shows a young couple living together in such a room; Photo 47 and 48 are pictures of young, urban-born youth who stayed with their parents in the 1950s.

> in and give you a hiding. The best thing to do was to show them the necessary respect and then just get on with your own business. But there was a fine line that could not be crossed. If you got into trouble with the police or with a girl, there was a lot of explaining to do and many visits were made between families to sort of the problem. The worst-behaved young men, who became *tsotsis*, were usually ones who had no fathers in the location. They would not listen to their mothers and had much more freedom than us. We were often envious of them because they did what they liked.[10]

The situation, of course, varied from family to family. But the general picture that emerged from interviews with former East Bank residents was that the sense of freedom and power that urban-born youth enjoyed on the streets in the 1950s did not extend into the home, where they had to respect their parents and obey house rules. This disjuncture between the space of the street, where urban-born youth identities and power was celebrated, and the space of the house, where established notions of generational authority and respect were enforced, created tension in the 1950's East Bank. In the 1950s, when youth had adopted increasingly radical political positions, sometimes colliding with those of their parents, this opposition between power on the street and in the home came into sharp focus. Yet it was never fundamentally undermined. Even when groups of rural migrant men were urged by state agents to take to the streets in 1958 to enforce discipline and clear the location of criminal and *tsotsi* elements, they enjoyed limited support from most urban-born parents.[11]

Changing Youth Styles and the Rise of the Comrades

During the 1960s, when the streets of the new Duncan Village had fallen silent while rumblings of government bulldozers echoed in the distance, rural youth were pushed out of the township. In this period, as I noted in Chapter 3, *tsotsism* and street gangs were also eradicated and were only prevalent in pockets in C-section, as the focus on youth social activities now moved from the streets to the new run-of-the-mill Bantu Education schools, Ebenezer Majombozi Qaqamba High. However, by the mid-1970s, people living in the new neighbourhoods had come to know each other better and there was a growing spirit of resistance, especially to the continuing forced removals. In this period, the urban youth started to reappear on the streets in greater numbers. Rising youth unemployment also contributed to this trend as the new groups of youth, known as *tingxungxu*, forged themselves into neighbourhood gangs, socialising together and using the

10. Interview, East London, 10 September 1999.
11. Mbhuti Adonsi explained that, "while some people supported the action of migrants, saying that the youth in the location were getting too big for their boots, the majority of our parents [that is, of urban-born youth] felt that discipline was a family matter and disagreed with the action of the migrants". Cf. interview, East London, 14 May 2001.

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streets to play football, drafts and other games. *Tsotsis* now also roamed the streets in increasing numbers, and for the first time since the 1950s, *oobrighty* youth were seen again in Duncan Village.

The *oobrighty* group was divided into two main groups, the *iikati* (cats) and the *ivies*. Tlali Ratshi, who grew up in Duncan Village (Proper) in the 1970s, claimed that the name *iikati:*

> ... referred to the ways they treated themselves. They were clean cut and well groomed, and loved to dress in bright clothes. They wore tight, stovepipe trousers, known as "zoots", which were slightly short in length to reveal their brightly coloured socks. They also liked to wear *oomabotshwecelani* (shoes with laces at the side) and often had their shirt sleeves pushed back to the elbow. This was even done when they wore jerseys. They also permed their hair in the S-curl style and were known to be highly successful womanisers.[12]

To a large extent, as Tlali also explained, the *iikati* modelled themselves on the black American pop idol, Michael Jackson, whose music they and other *oobrighty* youth favoured. The availability of portable hi-fi systems from the early 1980s contributed to bringing their music and dress style onto the streets. The *iikati*'s outfits were not expensive, although those with money did prefer to "wear designer labels".

The *ivies*, who comprised somewhat better-educated youth, introduced another fashionable street style that reflected their presentation of themselves as the township's "Ivy League". Their look was less shiny, bright and colourful than the *iikati's*, as they adopted more subdued colours in a more expensive range of shirts and pants – the pants with a looser fit and the shirts smarter and usually buttoned up to the top. They also fancied themselves as womanisers. Mtelele Sam, who later became a leading figure in the DVRA, explained:

> While the *iikati* thought they had style that could attract the ladies, they had nothing on the *ivies*. These guys were the real *izifebes* (womanisers) and the women flocked to them. They had expensive tastes and gave everyone the impression that they had money to back up their fashionable look. This is what the girls were after and the *ivies* were generally disliked because they had the reputation of being lady snatchers.[13]

Unlike the *iikati*, which were a local group, the *ivies* of Duncan Village appear to have emerged as an imitation of a fashionable Sowetan style with the same name, which first appeared on the streets in the 1960s and grew in popularity in the 1970s.[14] In East London, the *tsotsis* and the *ivies*

12. Interview, East London, 8 June 1996.
13. Interview, East London, 14 April 2002.
14. Glaser (2000: 108) defines the Reef *ivies* as follows: The "ivy" style was clean cut and dandyish, even prissy; it emphasised, for instance, particular makes of aftershave and deodorant. "Ivies" were heavily influenced by elite American fashion and saw themselves as more classy than the "clevers".

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often clashed over women and were known to dislike each other. One of the obvious differences between the two in stylistic terms was that, while *tsotsis* wore their trousers on the hips, the ivies generally wore theirs above their belly buttons.

The movement of the school-going youth, now calling themselves *comrades*, onto the streets of Duncan Village in the 1980s placed them on a collision course with the *oobrighty* youth, especially the *ivies* and *iikati*, as well as the *tsotsis* and small-time *iingxungxu* youth gangs. The comrades had no time for dressing up (*ukunxibisa*) – they viewed dress as very functional, and sported t-shirts, track suits, jeans and sneakers that enabled them to remain mobile and elusive. As one former comrade explained: "We travelled light, no heavy suits and fancy shoes, because we were always on the move, fighting the *system*[15]". The last thing the *amaqabane* wanted, he explained, was to be conspicuous on the streets and to draw the attention of the police. But because comrades liked to be associated with workers, they also sometimes sported two-piece, blue overalls or work suits, and on official occasions they often wore khaki trousers and shirts to adopt a militaristic look. In line with the clothes they wore, the *amaqabane* would sometimes refer to each other as *msebenzi* (worker) or *msebenzi wehlabathi* (worker of the world), leaders were referred to as *nkokheli* (leader) and rank and file street activists often just as *soldier*. The term *ukurhabulisana*, which means sharing or drinking from the same vessel, was also adopted amongst comrades in Duncan Village (it was also apparently used on Robben Island to refer to the political sessions and discussions held amongst political prisioners themselves).

The language of struggle also drew heavily on the slogans and manifestos of the main anti-apartheid political formations of the time. Catch-phrases such as "each one, teach one" (used mainly by the Congress of South African Students or COSAS), "an injury to one is an injury to all" (promoted by the South African Allied Workers Union or SAAWU), or "*asinamali*" (meaning "we have no money", that is, to pay their rents), were widely used as short-hand markers of identity. Knowledge of liberation songs, which punctuated proceedings on street marches and at political meetings, was also important. Some of the popular choruses sung in the 1980s included the following:

Rolihlahla Mandela,
Freedom is in your hands
Show us the way to freedom
In this land of Africa

"Clevers", with their particular brand of urban machismo, generally regarded the ivies as "good boys" and "sissies".

15. Term used to refer to the police, special branch and other apartheid structures.

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Epalamente siyaya noba kubi	We are going to parliament even if it is bad
Siphuma eSoviet siphethe ne Bazooka	We are from the Soviet and we have Bazookas
Siyaya noba kubi	We will be there no matter what
He wena Koornhof, He wena Koornhof	Koornhof, Koornhof
He wena Koornhof Sukudlala ngomnt'omnyama	Don't play with black people
NguMkhonto Lo weSizwe	We are MK (Soldiers of Mkhonto weSizwe)
Basebenzi manyanani	Workers unite
Yiyole intlangano yabasebenzi	Here is the workers union
A basebenzi bomZant' Afrika	Workers of South Africa
Weena Mugabe Uyinkokheli ye Zimbabwe	Mugabe you are the leader of Zimbabwe
Sicel 'usiph'indawo	Please give us a base, a refuge.
Siz 'ongena ePitoli	So that we can enter Pretoria

Comrades also accumulated cultural capital through attending political meetings, workshops, and rallies, and proudly wearing the t-shirts and satchels distributed at these events – indicating their struggle connections and commitment. On the streets, the comrades would taunt the *ikati* and *ivies*, teasing them about their clothes and implying that their fashions were effeminate. They also chastised them for their lack of political ideology and direction. From the outset, the comrades associated themselves with a macho, risk-taking attitude that set them apart from certain categories of *oobrighty* youth. But while comrades teased the *oobrighty* youth, they had stronger terms for collaborators, terms like *umdlwembe*, derived from the Zulu, meaning "sell-out", and *ukungwakuza*, meaning someone that was politically ill-informed and illogical, almost to the extent of being mentally ill.

While the interactions between different categories of urban youth, as well as students and workers, had a critical influence on the formation of the comrades as a social and political phenomenon, it would be misleading to see this movement in Duncan Village merely as an amalgam of urban influences. The re-entry of rural youth in the township in the 1980s also left a profound mark on the cultural and political orientations of the *amaqabane*. Studies of rural youth in the Eastern Cape in the 1970s show that important changes had occurred in youth identity politics since the 1960s. In the late 1970s, O'Connell identified three categories of rural youth in the Mount Ayliff district of the Transkei: the Reds; the Rascals or *indlavini*, seen as rural equivalent of the urban *tsotsis*; and Gentlemen or *amanene*, who were better-educated and aspired to *impucuko yesilungu* (western ways and life-styles). He reported that Red youth style was receding rapidly and had "virtually disappeared in Nzongisa", while the Rascals and the Gentlemen, who were "inclined to be defiant, violent, uninterested in the community, and often criminally orientated", were growing (O'Connell 1980: 297). The picture that emerges from

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O'Connell's research is one of increasing conflict, violence and disarticulation between the rural youth and the older generation.

In Shixini on the Transkei coast, McAllister and Deliwe (1994) also argue that, by the late 1970s, the Red organisational frameworks of *umtshotsho* and *intlombe* had begun to break down, and that there was increasing evidence of ill discipline and violence amongst the youth. By the 1980s, they claim that a new form of social gathering and entertainment for the youth had emerged, namely *potsoyi*, which grew out of the existing *intlombe* groups and was said to resemble a "shebeen party" (*ibid.*: 27). It took the form of a beer drink where liquor was sold for cash and where music was provided, usually by a disc jockey called *musikanda*. These authors go on to argue that:

> Elders denigrate *potsoyi* for a variety of reasons, including its reputation for violence, but principally because it ignores the seniority principle, which is still important in rural Xhosa life, with uncircumcised boys and circumcised young men attending together. There is also no discrimination between girls who never had a child (*noswanunye*) and *amakhuza* (women or girls who have had illegitimate children and who may even have been married briefly ... As a result, Shixini elders refer to *potsoyi* disparagingly as *kwamantisipala* (the Municipality). This implies an association with urban life-styles, but there is more to it. Just as a municipality offers a variety of services to people of an area, so is the *potsoyi* all things to all people.

Similar trends have been noted in areas closer to East London, whence many of the youth that entered the township in the 1980s came. In traditionally Red areas, like Mooiplaas, located 45 km. outside the city, *umtshotsho* and *intlombe* organisations fell by the wayside in the mid- to late 1970s, and a widening gap had emerged between youth and elders in many villages (see Bank & Qambata 1999; also Chapter 8).

By the 1980s, the former distinction between Red and School youth had largely fallen away and it was increasingly evident that, like urban youth, rural youth in the Eastern Cape were becoming politically active. In the early 1980s, rural youth from areas like Mooiplaas, Chalumna, Newlands, Kwelera, and Nxarhuni, all on the city's outskirts, had also been engaged in political struggles with the Ciskei Bantustan authorities over plans to forcibly remove communities and enforce homeland consolidation. Youth from these areas had taken up the cudgels against headmen and state officials in anti-removal campaigns, which had in some cases resulted in significant political victories (see Chapter 8). Involvement in these struggles brought these rural youth into direct contact with various anti-apartheid movements and groupings, like the United Democratic Front and the ANC Youth Congress, the last of which was increasingly active in the rural Eastern Cape by the mid-1980s (Southall, Segar & Donaldson 1992).

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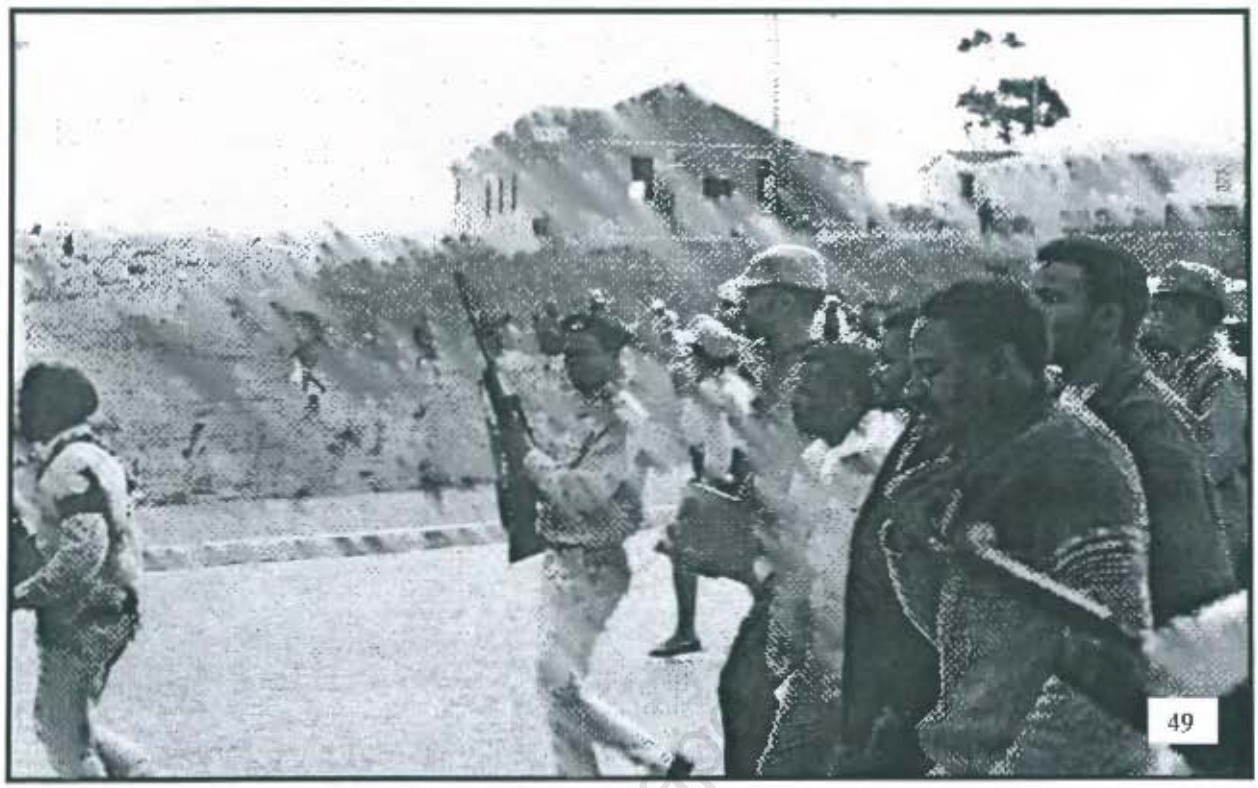






Plate 17 : Comrades and Fashion-conscious Youth. Photo 49, comrades and workers march on Douglas Smith Highway, 1987. Notice the military fatigues with the homemade rifles; Photo 50, *Ikathi* Michael Jackson look-alikes practice their dance routines in Duncan Village, 1982; Photo 51, Pansula-style youth look relaxed on a sidewalk in Duncan Village (Proper), 1997.

With their shared commitment to political transformation in the city, rural and urban youth soon found common ground, with the former quickly absorbed into the DVRA and other local-level political structures. Represented on the DVRA's street and area committees, they also played a critical role in establishing people's courts, transferring rural idioms of popular justice into the urban setting. Rural youths, who generally had little formal education and lacked the political sophistication of some of their urban counterparts, made their mark on the streets rather than in the classroom. They proved themselves fearless street fighters; often being the first to confront heavily-armed security policemen and *casspirs* (armed cars) with little more than stones. Their bravery and commitment earned them the reputation of being amongst the township's most valued comrades. Many attributed their skills as combatants to the gruelling initiation they had gone through in rural areas and their experience of village stick fighting. Vuka, a politically-active youth from Chalumna, explained:

> In the village there are no shortcuts to manhood; no comfortable initiation lodges on the edge of the township. Out there you encounter the real thing and you learn to be tough and self-reliant, how to survive when the chips are down. This experience served us well when the teargas and the *casspirs* came to the streets of Duncan Village. We had no other way to survive except to live on our wits. There was no more talk of *umxhaka* (country-bumpkins). We were all *amaqabane*.[16]

Duncan Village's *amaqabane* therefore did not emerge as the kind of distinctive sub-culture that Glaser (2000) has suggested had emerged in Soweto. Duncan Village's *amaqabane* constituted a much broader category, incorporating various youth types, all of whom were able to express a common cultural *style*, in the sense that Ferguson (1999) defines the term. Above all else, being *iqabane* meant acting like a comrade, being able to perform a certain identity, to speak in a certain way, to have some command of the new struggle rhetoric, to adopt appropriate codes of behaviour and styles of dress. In order to perform the style convincingly, it had to be practised and cultivated over time. But it did not mean having to share a particular upbringing in which certain values, cultural competencies and social orientations were inculcated from an early age. And it was precisely because the *iqabane* identity was more of a stylistic orientation, rather than a distinctive fully-fledged sub-culture, that it was possible for rural youths to access it and to influence its development.

But while there were clearly significant points of intersection between urban and rural youth in Duncan Village in the 1980s, which fed on the ability of the youth to draw distinctions between themselves and other social categories, such as migrants, there were also lingering differences amongst the youth. It is important to emphasise these in order to understand the

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complexity and fragility of the comrade identity in Duncan Village and to avoid assuming that the intersection between rural and urban youth identity politics simply evolved as a linear process of blurring, where old differences simply fell away. In the section below I attempt to highlight some of these differences, paying particular attention to the fraught relationship between rural youth and urban-born *com-tsotsis* in the township in the late 1980s. I also consider the role of collective male violence as a means of counteracting these centripedal tendencies.

Rural Youth, *Com-tsotis* and Masculinity

By the late 1980s, the *iikati* and the *ivies* styles had faded from the scene and were now replaced by the increasingly popular *amapansula* style, which had its origin in Soweto in the mid-1980s. Drawing on the assertive urban youth identity politics of the time, the *amapansula* style bore the imprint of a hardened street masculinity and expressed a machismo not seen in the styles of the *iikati* and *ivies*, who often said to be slightly effeminate. It was a style that was much more acceptable to some urban-born comrades, despite its emphasis on conspicuous consumption and flashy clothes. In Duncan Village, the *amapansula* brought the *tsotsis* and the comrades closer together and contributed to the making of the *com-tsotsis*, a category that made its appearance in Duncan Village after 1985. Mcebisi Qamarwana explained that one of the distinctive features of the new *oobrighty* youth was their insatiable appetite for expensive clothes:

> They liked shiny expensive shoes and low-slung, heavyweight trousers. They disapproved of the shiny lightweight stovepipes of the Cats, calling them "cheap". These youth would often carry their neatly-ironed trousers on hangers over their shoulders so that everyone could see their expensive outfits. They would also sit outside their houses for hours, shining their shoes and listening to their own brand of music.
>
> The *pansulas* also liked hats. They would wear "eight piece" caps with their outfits. Some older *pansulas*, who were circumcised, wore Stetsons as a mark of their seniority. They also liked Muffler and Ray-Ban sunglasses and shopped at places like Modern Man, That Man, Judges, Canons, Strands, Bryants and Dan Watson in East London. Some also went to Zola's Fashions in Mdantsane. They liked upmarket brands of shirts like Pringle, Pierre Cardin and Darks, while the best cuts in trousers were the Cutwoods, Punchwood and Cutrite brands. *Pansula* were also very fussy about their shoes. Crocket and Jones, Medicus Royal, and Flosheim were regarded as the best brands, followed by Barker and Jordan shoes.[17]

Music was also at the core of the *pansula* style: South African artists like Paul Ndlovu, Chicco Twala, Mercy Pakela and, of course, Brenda Fassie, the female icon of this largely male style,

16. Interview, East London, 12 December 1997.
17. Interview, East London, 10 October 2001.

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were all popular. The *amapansula* were also soccer-mad and were great fans of the two Soweto glamour clubs, Kaizer Chiefs and Orlando Pirates (see Plate 17).

For many rural youth in the city, the enterprise of playful style-making on the streets and the associated conspicuous consumption of clothes and fashion, seemed frivolous, irrelevant and even reactionary, in relation to the broader political challenges they faced. They also objected to the arrogant attitudes of the urban-born *oobrighty* youth, whom they said lacked discipline and had scant respect for organisational rules and regulations. The concerns of the rural youth and other comrades came to the fore after the declaration of a State of Emergency in June 1986, when dozens of senior DVRA comrades and activists were arrested. In this period the power of the residents' association to control the streets suddenly weakened and there was a period during which urban street gangs and *tsotsis* ran riot in the township. As one resident explained in a letter to the *Daily Dispatch* (7 August 1986), following the escalation of incidents of violence and crime in the township in 1986:

> Many of the horrifying petrol bombings and stonings in Duncan Village have been perpetrated by teenage gangs running riot in the township. Most of the youths are not connected with pupils' or residents' organisations and roam the streets in pursuit of excitement and a sense of power. Some residents are angry and frustrated at being powerless to stop them.

By mid-1987, it was confirmed that the actions of these youth gangs – referred to as *comtsotsis* – had ensured that the crime rate in Duncan Village had increased by 250 % since June 1986 (*Daily Dispatch* 3 August 1987). The *oobrighty* and *tsotsi* street gangs, who were only partially integrated into local-level political structures, used the uncertainty created by the arrests of 1986 to pursue their own objectives. Rural youth, by contrast, who still felt insecure in the township because of their recent arrival and were not well integrated into neighbourhood networks, remained loyal to the DVRA. They believed in accountable civic structures and were angry at the way in which the gangs were using their status as "comrades" to take advantage of township residents and to feather their own nests. Dumisane, a politically-active rural youth from the Mooiplaas location who arrived in Duncan Village in 1985 explained: "The situation was totally, totally not right, we were now at the mercy of these teenage thugs, most of whom had not even reached manhood." Dumisane explained that rural youth felt that the problems of the gangs could not be addressed via meetings and political education, "we were calling for discipline, order and respect – we demanded that those who abused the struggle be punished".[18]

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18. Interview, East London, 5 July 1996.

Many rural youth said that it was no good having street committees and other structures if they did not have the power to enforce discipline. They demanded that people's courts, which were already operating in some areas, be developed and expanded to restore effective control. This in itself required education, as Tops explained:

> The school-going youth did not know how justice worked in the rural areas. They had to be taught that there had to be law (*umthetho*), and those who did not obey the law needed to be dealt with severely and publicly. People had to see what would happen to them if they did not respect the comrades.[19]

In the period prior to 1986, the comrades had introduced certain laws in the neighbourhoods: one of these was that comrades were not allowed to drink and to patronise shebeens. Some migrants and *oobrighty* youth defied these measures without being punished. Many rural youth argued that the comrades had shown weakness in their handling of this issue. They pushed for harsher punishment not only on this issue but also on rape, which they specifically associated with the activities of the *com-tsotsis*. As Mandisi Jekwa, a DVRA branch committee member, explained, by the late 1980s the interventions of rural youth had delivered results:

> As comrades, we agreed that women were vulnerable on the streets and we did not want them to be exposed. It was a war and it was our job to protect the women and children from pain and suffering ... We wanted them off the streets for their own safety ... But rape was not something that was tolerated at all. There were three things we started punishing severely as comrades: crime, rape and drunkenness. Comrades who came to meetings drunk would, for instance, have to take what we called a "Cool Aid" and "half a loaf" (that is, a tin of water and Omo (washing detergent) and half a loaf of Sunlight soap). Those who were caught for rape got a lot worse than that![20]

While older divisions between urban and rural youth still lurked below the surface, there was nevertheless a significant convergence and consolidation of the generational power of male youth in Duncan Village in the late 1980s. In fact, as discipline was restored after 1986 with regular flogging and beating being meted out by people's courts, the comrades became increasingly intoxicated by their own power and were feared by other township residents. In this period, public violence, especially against *umdlwembe* (spies) or *abanqwakuzi* (political opponents) elements, served not only as a warning to those who did not obey the comrades, but as political rituals which renewed the youth's unity and their commitment to struggle. Mandisi's account of an incident where three alleged police informers were found living in a shack in his area gives a good sense of the mood that prevailed on the streets of the township in the late 1980s:

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19. Interview, East London, 18 July 1996.
20. Interview, East London, 15 March 1996.

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> No one who lived in Duncan Village in those days [late 1980s] could escape the wrath of the comrades. They were so powerful and dominant that people lived in terror of them. I remember as a kid seeing many horrific acts of violence, of old men being beaten up, of girls being raped and even of necklacing. I remember I was walking home from school through Bebelele and there was a huge commotion because the comrades claimed that they had found a shack with three police informers. As I passed, I could see the accused men were standing on the roof of the shack with the crowd below baying for their blood. The men were being interrogated by some of our leaders; they were denying their involvement in any police-related activity. I remember that, as they were screaming and shouting, one fell off the roof and was almost instantly beaten to death as he fell to the ground. The noise and commotion had alerted the police who had brought a helicopter overhead. They started speaking through the megaphone demanding that the crowd disperse and that the men on the roof be left alone. This allowed the men to flee and escape, but I heard the next day that after the police had left they [the three men] had been tracked down by the comrades and murdered.[21]

In much the same way as sporting events and musical shows constituted "tournaments of value" in the 1950s, political rallies, public floggings and people's courts served that function in the 1980s and 1990s. These public expressions of collective violence also resonated with rural traditions of stick fighting, where village youth would display their prowess and dominance in public displays of violence. It was the public squares, bus terminals, street corners and church buildings, rather than the dance-halls and sports grounds, that were now critical sites where male youth expressed their power. These spaces provided nodes where the political and social values cultivated on the street and in the schools, could be expressed in concentrated performances of power and style. But what was expressed through street violence was a very masculine power. Indeed, as the struggle in Duncan Village moved out of the schools and onto the streets, women's struggle roles changed. In the classroom, female students had played key roles in debates and in formulating political strategy. But once the struggle moved onto the street, the comrades increasingly moved female youth out of the firing line, requiring them to operate on the fringes: to provide support for their men on the "front line" (Glaser 2000).[22]

The forging of new masculinities on the township streets was central to the project of the comrades. Xaba (2001: 108), for instance, uses the term "struggle masculinities" to refer to the type of masculinity that became dominant amongst young, urban Africans in their struggle

21. Interview, East London, 12 April 1998.
22. In 1995-1996, the power of the comrades was on the wane, but the people's courts that they had set up were still very active in the township and meted out severe beatings, and even death, as punishment. In 1995, at least three people were killed and many others injured as a result of the workings of people's courts in the township (*Daily Dispatch*, 24 July 1995). Over the same period, it was reported

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against apartheid. He defines struggle masculinity as a "socially-constructed collective gender identity":

> Its main characteristics were opposition to the apartheid system (which included Bantu Education, exploitation of workers and communities, high rents and rates, and the suppression of protest) and political militancy. Because many older African people (particularly men) were seen to be complicit with apartheid, such opposition assumed a posture that was anti-authority. Since struggle masculinity existed side-by-side with *street masculinity*, which was disparaging towards women, struggle masculinity was tainted by some of the negative attitudes and behaviours towards women (Xaba 2001: 109).

Xaba's definition of "struggle masculinity" echoes Glaser's (2000) earlier comments on the links between comrades and urban street gang sub-cultures in Soweto. Both accounts present these forms of masculinity as derived from urban experience. But such a proposition is difficult to sustain in Duncan Village where "struggle masculinities" seem to have emerged as a complex amalgam of rural traditions, social memories and definitions of masculinity and discipline, as well as those associated with street gangs. The evidence from Duncan Village thus suggests the co-existence of different and even contradictory tendencies in the way in which youth masculinity was articulated and expressed during the 1985 to 1995 period.

It was precisely the existence of these contradictory tendencies that made the comrade identity both so volatile and so fragile. It was an identity that seemingly constantly needed to be renewed and reaffirmed in order to re-assure those who shared it of their common interests and orientations. It is therefore interesting to note that, although differences between urban and rural youth were widely denounced by the comrades throughout the 1980s, they had begun to reappear in the township in the mid-1990s as the youth now began to compete with one another for jobs and scarce resources. The urban youth of the 1990s did not speak of the *imixhaka*, as they had in the 1950s, but used the term *igungqayi* (meaning "those with a 'rural outlook'") to refer to the youth that were continuing to flow into the township from rural areas. By the 1990s, urban youth as well as those who had come into the city from rural areas in the mid-1980s were complaining that too many unemployed rural youth were taking urban jobs, housing and other scarce development resources. In this context, older stereotypes of rural youth had begun to re-emerge as the urban youth complained that these young people lacked sophistication and political pedigree to share the meagre rewards for which they had struggled so hard in the 1980s.

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that there had been more than 25 murders and hundreds of house-breaking incidents, rapes and serious assaults reported in the township (*Daily Dispatch*, 27 October 1997).

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But former comrades were also highly critical of some of the new urban youth of the 1990s, especially a new brand of tsotsis, called the *amaginsta* (from the English "gangster"), that made their appearance on the streets of Duncan Village in the 1990s, wearing gold chains, rings and bracelets. The *amaginsta* were said to have connections with "big time" drug and money rackets in Johannesburg, and were joining forces with local *tsotsism* to commit crime in the township.

The evidence presented above problematises the notion that the youth-identity formation evolved as a linear process where old differences between urban and rural youth simply dissolved in the city as rural youth became incorporated into urban-based political struggles against the state. The evidence suggests that, although rural youth had left earlier forms of youth socialisation and self-organisation behind, they nevertheless drew on ideas associated with older forms of youth organisation in their critique of the behaviour and practices of the *com-tsotsis*. This section also showed that the process of convergence of interests amongst the youth were often situationally defined and that once conditions changed as they did in the 1990s, it was always possible for older distinctions to re-emerge in new forms. This is precisely what happened in the 1990s as the notion of *igungqayi* gained currency among the disenchanted urban youth.

If, however, I were to end my discussion of youth identity politics here, with the styles and public displays of the street, I would miss a critical piece in the puzzle of changing youth identity politics. Youth, as we know, did not only live on the streets; they also went home, and it was in their new homes in the shack areas of Duncan Village that important aspects of the style of the comrades as a generationally-based social movement were forged. In the final part of this chapter I move from the street to the make-shift homes of township youth and particularly to the rise of *ukuhlalisana* as a domestic form of choice amongst the urban and rural youth in this period.

Ukuhlalisana and the Politics of Home

In the 1950s, when youth political activism was on the upsurge in East Bank, the majority of urban and rural youth in the location still lived in domestic environments where they were under some level of parental or adult control. In the case of the urban youth, they mainly lived in the homes of their parents or relatives, while most rural youth, especially Reds, found themselves having to comply with the rules and regulations of the senior *abakhaya*, who often acted as their guardians. In the 1980s and 1990s, urban and rural youth found themselves in a very different situation. In this period, most urban and rural youths were no longer under the authority of older-generation men and women, but lived in backyard and free-standing shacks, where they had created their own households. Most of them lived as couples in *ukuhlalisana* relationships,

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which formed the basis of a quarter of all households in Duncan Village in 1995. The emergence of *ukuhlalisana* relationships in urban areas and their connection to the changing politics of the youth is a topic that has not received close analytical scrutiny, but is one that I believe is critical to an understanding of the comrades as a social and cultural phenomenon.

In Duncan Village, *ukuhlalisana* was not just another domestic option into which urban and rural youth were pushed as a result of the growing housing crisis in the townships. It was an option that they specifically sought out for themselves as they attempted to translate the power they experienced on the streets into the domain of the home. It constituted part of the style of the youth. In Duncan Village in the 1980s and 1990s, such relationships became emblematic of the youth's desire to achieve social and political freedom. The comrades associated *ukuhlalisana* with rejection of older forms of family structure and obligation. They viewed it as a vehicle for the expression of their newly-found freedom and sense of liberation from existing social and political structures. As one youth explained: "It was one of the ways in which we tried to show our parents that we were committed to something new."

Ukuhlalisana relationships, of course, were not new in Duncan Village in the 1980s. They had existed in East Bank in the 1950s, but on a much smaller scale, and were also noted in homeland towns during the 1970s (Mayer 1971; Manona 1980).[23] Manona, however, argues that the trend among the rural youth in the Ciskei, especially after the 1950s, was towards a form of informal marriage known as *ukuthwala* (literally, "to carry"). This form of marriage deviated from the custom of careful negotiations between families, elaborate marriage rituals, and the transfer of *lobola* cattle from the husband's family to the wife's family. In the case of *ukuthwala*, the couple usually eloped without parental consent and the prospective husband paid compensation known as *inkomo yokuthwala* to the wife's family (Manona 1980: 189). With *ukuthwala*, the expectation was that a full traditional marriage would follow and that proper *lobola* negotiations and marriage rituals would eventually be undertaken. However, this did not always occur (*ibid.*: 202).

Ukuhlalisana was different from *ukuthwala* because it did not acknowledge the rights of the families involved. It represented a much stronger assertion of independence from parental authority and power on the part of the youth. The decision to "stay together" was taken independently by the youths, without any negotiations between families and there was no

23. The Mayers note that *ukushweshwa* or "staying-together unions" were quite common in East Bank in the 1950s. They "involved town unions in which the woman comes to stay with the man without being married to him, and they live in a room as one domestic unit" (1971: 257). *Ukushweshwa* is therefore an older term for what is today normally called *ukuhlalisana*. The main difference between the practice of "staying together" in the 1950s and that of today is that in the 1950s the practice was mainly confined to married migrants who already had country wives, while today it is dominated by unmarried youths. See Mayer 1971 : 257-261 for details.

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transfer of cattle or cash. In Duncan Village, the adoption of *ukuhlalisana* on a large scale indicated that the male youth, in particular, did not feel that their parents had a significant role to play in their choice of partners. *Ukuhlalisana* was also different from *ukuthwala* in the sense that it did not necessarily anticipate marriage. In Duncan Village, living-together relationships often lasted for years without *ukuthwala* or formal marriage being transacted. This had important implications for the position of women in these relationships, because without cattle changing hands, they could not – at least in customary terms – be expected to take on the roles of wives. *Ukuhlalisana* partners, unlike *ukuthwala* brides, could not don German-print dresses, black headscarves and the *uxukatho* neck-scarf characteristically worn by a new wife (*makoti*) after an *ukuthwala*, or customary marriage. One of the problems with *ukuhlalisana* relationships was that, while they were easily appropriated as symbols of youth independence, they offered no clear cultural definition of the roles that men and women were expected to play within these relationships.

As a result, *ukuhlalisana* relationships in Duncan Village were characterised by high levels of gender tension and conflict. There were several reasons for this. Firstly, the impulse towards living together came unequally from men and women. Young men, who led the rebellion against the state in the 1980s, were more eager to break away socially from their parental homes, whether in town or country, than were young women, who were often ambivalent about setting out on their own. The 1980s political struggles had been softer on the relationships among women within domestic units, than they had been on those between men, especially in rural areas where male-generational conflict had really come to the fore in the 1980s. Cross-generational relationships among women in rural areas, as we will see in Chapter 8, were less severely damaged in this period than they were amongst men. However, young women also realised that if they wished to find the right man, which many hoped they would eventually marry, they would have to accept the risks of moving out of their natal homes and shacking up with their partners. Young women spoke a great deal about the art of finding "the right man" to "shack-up" with. They tended to agree that "looks" were not the only, or the most important, consideration. As one single woman explained:

> There are three kinds of men that cause real problems, those that drink too much, those that have extra-marital affairs and those that don't bring home their wages. For me the ideal man is not very good-looking, he doesn't drink, he won't squander money. But in life one cannot always be fortunate enough to choose: love is a strange thing.

Secondly, while young men were keen to break away from the formality of conventional kinship and marriage relations, they relied heavily on older ideas about the obligation of women in marriage to inform their relations. This slippage between ideology and practice was indeed a major reason why *ukuhlalisana* relationships were notoriously unstable and fraught with tension

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in the shack areas. In many cases, men quickly adopted patriarchal roles by trying to treat their lovers as if they were their *ukuthwala* wives: expecting them to behave "like wives" in taking responsibility for domestic matters and by tending to their men's needs and sexual desires. Women in these households often found men's demands excessive and argued that, if they were expected to behave "like a wife", they should be treated like one. Many said that if men wanted their loyalty, they should at least pay *inkomo yokuthwala*. The desire of young women to transform living-together relationships into informal marital ones, and the desire of men to avoid marriage at all costs, exacerbated the tensions within these relationships.

In *ukuhlalisana* relationships sexuality thus emerged as a central issue. Duncan Village men saw sexual conquest as an essential component of their assertion of successful masculinity. Issues of initiation, penis size, and virility were part of men's everyday discourse as were their sexual conquests and desires. The ability to simultaneously entertain several sexual relationships was seen as highly desirable and something older youths bragged about in front of younger boys. Sexual fidelity was, in contrast, regarded as a state that women constantly tried to impose on them. It was not a characteristic to which men aspired. As Tops worded it: "Being loose, mobile and unattached was something we had become used to; as comrades we were always on the move and did not need to account for our whereabouts. It was now difficult for us to get used to being in one place, always at home, and this was something our girlfriends did not understand. They wanted loyal and responsible fathers for their children, men who like their father brought home a pay packet at the end of the week."[24]

In an environment where cross-gender socialising was kept to a minimum, sexuality constituted an important social act of exchange whereby identities were constructed. In living-together relationships, women felt vulnerable to excesses of male sexuality. Among their peers, women were acutely embarrassed if they were regarded as being unable to hold onto their men, whom they valued as economic and social resources, potential household bread-winners and a male presence in the home. Many believed that it was much easier for a man to find a woman than for a woman to keep her man. Young women thus went to great lengths to hold onto their men. Many invested in love potions, believed to be able to beguile and bewitch a woman's lover and enhance her sexual attraction and performance. These women would pay up to R400 to local herbalists – sums they were willing to spend even when they had access to very little money. Love potions used in Duncan Village's shack areas in the 1980s and 1990s included those known locally as *ivamna* ("listen to me only") and *bhekaminandedwa* ("look at me alone"). They were said to enable a woman to hold onto men or to lure them from other relationships. Usually

24. Interview, East London, 18 July 1996.

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comprising a mixture of herbs and the woman's body fluids (vaginal secretions, blood and nail scrapings), made into powders or pastes, they were either added to the man's food or applied to the woman's body or the man's penis. Male youths seen doing what other young men considered to be "women's work" were often said to be under the spell of these potions. Men said that they only used love potions very occasionally, often in a fit of jealousy and to prevent their woman from having affairs with other men. The male potions were usually applied to the penis before sex in order to prevent other men from getting an erection if they tried to have sex with one's woman.

Young women in the shack areas also used various cosmetics to enhance their attractiveness. During the day, these included camomile cream, applied to the face as a sunscreen to prevent the skin from darkening. A light, fresh skin was said to make a woman more attractive to men. Some women also used *Eskamel* (a powerful anti-acne cream) that peeled away the surface layers of the skin, exposing the lighter layers underneath. Application of skin creams, in both shack and formal areas, was not merely part of women's beautification kits. It was also an important marker of women's domestic roles. Wearing a pinafore or old clothes around the house and in the mornings, when men were out of the house working or seeking work, and whitening one's face with heavy doses of creams, signified to other women that they were attending to their domestic responsibilities. Once afternoon came, and women went out to attend to things outside the house or were waiting for their men to return from the city, they changed out of their old clothes and removed the creams. Many young women now applied cheap perfumes and dressed up in better clothes. The application of skin creams and cosmetics was, therefore, not only a sign of the desire to enhance attractiveness and sexual appeal, but served as a marker of association with the home and domestic roles (see Chapter 7).

Women discussed the elaborate strategies they had used to hold onto their men. These included initiating pregnancies even though doing so opened a woman to being taunted by her rivals with comments such as "*umntwana akayoring*" ("a child is not a ring"). Young women who adopted this strategy ran the risk of rejection because young men tended to shy away from the responsibilities of fatherhood, precisely because it brought with it increased pressure from the family to marry.[25] Yet this was precisely what most young women wanted because it was seen to secure their access to a man's attention and earnings. The transition from being a lover to a *makoti* was a major achievement, proudly symbolised in Duncan Village by the adoption of a new dress code. The standard outfit of a young *makoti* in the shack areas was a blue German-print dress or pinafore, covered by a towel, worn like a sash across the shoulder. On their heads, the *makoti* all

25. For a detailed discussion of fatherhood in Duncan Village in the 1990s see Bank (1998).

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wore the standard black scarves. As these women matured as wives, they tended to move the scarf further back on their foreheads and dropped the sash to the waist; soon also trading their blue German-print dresses for brown ones. With young men's proclivity to delay and even actively resist marriage, a young woman's transition from lover to wife was recognised as highly significant, not least because a considerable number of women doubted that they would ever marry.

When a woman became pregnant, it more often failed to lead to the marriage she desired, than it succeeded, and it often also marked the end of a living-together relationship. The stresses and strains that a child's arrival brought on the households of living-together couples were often so severe that break-ups commonly followed after a child's birth. Even during the pregnancy, men tended to start looking around, and by the time the child arrived, the erstwhile couple was often locked into a love triangle. As the new mother applied pressure for the man's stronger commitment to the relationship, so he tended to move away, often taking up residence with a new lover. A woman exposed to such behaviour found herself in a vulnerable position since she would frequently have defied her parents' better judgement when first entering the living-together relationship, and she now had difficulty returning to her natal home. Having left in disgrace, she was reluctant to return, and this placed her lover in a powerful position so that, in many cases, the relationship became physically abusive. Without close kin's support, such women had no means to control male-initiated domestic violence. According to the men, such experiences served to prepare their women for the hardships of marital life, including witchcraft accusations and verbal abuse from in-laws. By tolerating these abuses, while still in a relationship of cohabitation, the men claimed that women were proving their ability to prove that they could eventually become good wives – *umfazi uyanyamezela* ("to tolerate hardship of marriage").

The everyday realities of male dominance, violence and abuse in living-together households recorded during my fieldwork confirmed the extent to which men held the upper hand in such units and were able to dictate the terms of their relationships with women.[26] By having separated young women from a support group of female kin, by having drawn them into an ideology of defiance of older forms of association and obligations, and by having confined them in make-shift wood-and-iron one-roomed shacks, they rendered these women vulnerable to domination and abuse. They created an environment in which they could express their sexuality and assert their masculinity, unfettered by the older generation's norms and sanctions. Young men's social power in this situation was clearly expressed in the ease with which they were able to shun their responsibilities as fathers

26. Direct evidence of domestic violence was noted in approximately a third of the 20 detailed case studies undertaken with youth households during 1996 and 1997. My findings were documented in the evidence collected by ISER research assistant, Linda Qambata, in Duncan Village in 1998.

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and resist the demands of their women to make them respectable wives. But young men were also frustrated because they often lacked the economic resources to fulfil their fantasies of themselves as male bread-winners. Young women would often taunt their lovers by demanding that they prove their manhood by putting food on the table and supporting their children. They would often use men's weak economic position to threaten them, saying that if they did not support their families themselves and accept the need for marriage, they would have to find men who would. They would say that their lover could not expect them to stay at home "like a wife" when they could not fulfil the obligations of a "husband". These struggles created enormous tension within households and resulted in high levels of domestic violence and in the instability of *ukuhlalisana* relationships, most of which broke down. Many young men, frustrated by their own inability to find regular employment in the city were also, by the late 1990s, finding it increasingly difficult to discipline their lovers, especially if they had a source of income of their own. The desire of men from both urban and rural areas to exert power and the increasing realisation amongst women that their own expectations of men as bread-winners were seldom realised, escalated the levels of tension and instability. This is an issue to which I return in Chapter 7, where I explore the growing tendency on women to form matrifocal households in Duncan Village in the 1990s.

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Conclusion

This chapter has been divided into two main parts. In the first part, I explored the emergence of the comrades as a political and cultural style, which drew equally on urban and rural traditions of youth mobilisation and expression. My discussion began in East Bank in the 1950s and then connected up to the literature on rural male youth associations in the Eastern Cape, much of which evolved out of the Mayers' own work on youth socialisation in the 1960s. I explored the different paths that urban and rural youth identity politics followed through the 1960s and 1970s and how these traditions had increasingly converged by the 1980s. By this time, the distinction between Red and School youths, with their particular forms of youth organisation and cultural expression, had not only blurred, but was associated with a growing social and economic distance between young and older men in the rural areas. In the city, the flashy cosmopolitan styles of the *oobrighty* youth of the 1950s, which were so markedly different from the rural youth, also largely disappeared as the streets of Duncan Village were now much more tightly controlled by the state. In the late 1970s, some of these styles were revived via influences from Soweto, but this did not significantly detract from the increasing convergence in the outlooks and orientations of urban and rural youth on the eve of the Duncan Village revolt of 1985.

It was in this context, I argued, that the rural and urban youth of Duncan Village were able to find common ground and unite under the umbrella of the comrades in the 1980s. I suggested that, unlike the situation on the Reef where the comrades seem to have emerged as a distinctive urban sub-culture, in Duncan Village they evolved as a complex blend of urban and rural influences, traditions, experiences and organisational memories, which sometimes sat rather uneasily together under one overarching identity. What bound these youth together was their commitment to the struggle and a shared cultural style, which was easily assessable and served to disguise differences in experience and upbringing. It was the looseness and inclusivity of this generational style, which fused politics and masculinity, that welded youth together into the politically cohesive force that forced the agents of the apartheid state out of the township and established in a new social order. In my discussion of the way in which the comrades consolidated power, I highlighted the continuing tensions between the urban-born *oobrighty* youth, who reconstituted themselves as *com-tsotsis*, and the rural youth, who threw their weight behind the civic, the DVRA, and its political allies.

The second part of the chapter focused on the power held by the comrades on the streets and how this was translated into their homes in Duncan Village in the late 1980s and 1990s. I focused on the adoption and use of *ukuhlalisana* by the youth as a means to express their new-found freedom and power. In this section I suggested that young men generally entered these relations with high expectations, hoping to translate the exaggerated sense of power and control they enjoyed on the streets into the home. However, male fantasies of power often failed to materialise because of the very limited economic resources under the control of the comrades. Young women from their side were demanding that, if young men wanted to behave like powerful patriarchal figures and wanted their lovers to behave like subservient Xhosa wives, they needed to support their families and enter into marriage transactions – even if these were only *ukuthwala* arrangements. The refusal of most young men to contemplate marriage and their inability to support their lovers, while they continued to "play the field", created enormous tensions within many new youth households. This in turn undermined the stability of these relationships and the desire of men to consolidate their power. The outcome was the failure of these men to provide for their lovers and their children, as we shall see in the discussion in Chapter 7 regarding the increasing levels of violence against women, both in the home and on the streets of Duncan Village. Consequently, women were increasingly seeking other options outside of *ukuhlalisana* relationships.

In terms of the overall argument of the dissertation, this chapter has highlighted the complex interplay between urban and rural identity politics in Duncan Village and related this to the emergence of the comrades as a cultural style. I have attempted to show that the ideas and aspirations of the rural youth were not simply swallowed by a new urban politics, but rather that

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rural youth themselves contributed significantly to the making of new hybrid social identities amongst the youth in the 1980s and 1990s. The political victory of the comrades in Duncan Village in the 1990s was not, as Mamdani (1996) would have us believe, a triumph of the egalitarian and democratic values of urban civil society over the reactionary forces of customary power. It was rather more complex and subtle than this, and was centrally built on the ability of urban and rural youth to construct new identities, which at different moments absorbed and rejected influences from both urban and rural youth. In the next chapter, I turn my attention to migrants and the way they used notions of the urban and the rural to map out their own responses to social and political change in Duncan Village in the 1980s and 1990s.

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CHAPTER SIX

THE RURAL IN THE URBAN: TRANSFORMATIONS IN MIGRANT CULTURE AND IDENTITY[1]

Introduction

In his book, *Going for Gold*, Dunbar Moodie (1994) sets out to conceptualise the nature of migrant cultures on the South African gold-mines. Moodie (1994: 21) argues that the material conditions of mine migration and the associated hostel life gave rise to "variant strands of migrant cultures" that had as their "central motif a commitment to the independence and satisfaction of patriarchal proprietorship over a rural homestead". In order to sustain this vision, male migrant workers had to retain access to arable land in the rural areas, which could provide them with the material foundation for "building the homestead". The sustainability of these migrant cultures depended on the maintenance of specific gender identities: on the conception of manhood as grounded in the desire to preside competently and benevolently over the affairs of the homestead and on the commitment of women to serving this goal. To this extent, Moodie (1994) insists that "migrant cultures" must always be constituted as resistance to proletarianisation, at least to the wider systemic pressures that sought to alienate these workers from their productive rural resources. Moodie is careful to point out that the "migrant cultures" on the mines were not only built up around a "tenacious attachment to land and agrarian production", but they were also informed by specific experiences and understandings of compound life and mine work. In Moodie's analysis, then, variant strands of migrant culture were constructed within the interstices of mine labour, compound life and peasant proprietorship.

Moodie's formulation of "migrant culture" is therefore very similar to that of the Mayers, especially in their revised account of Red and School as rural resistance ideologies (cf. Mayer 1980). Like the Mayers (1980), he also argues that by the late 1970s, the material conditions for the survival of migrant cultures had disappeared in South Africa. Land-based subsistence strategies in rural areas had been destroyed by Bantustan development and its associated mass-relocation programmes. This, in turn, spawned increasing, if uneven, female out-migration from rural areas

1. A previous version of this chapter appeared in the *Journal of Southern African Studies* (cf. Bank 1999).

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that undermined the shared household project of "building the homestead". Migrant cultures on the South African gold-mines, he suggests, were in a state of terminal decline by the 1980s. New cultural and ideological forces were rapidly transforming them, as notions of masculinity on the mines became unhinged from the old moral economy of the homestead, at the same time as the National Miners Union (NUM) was providing migrants with a new, "progressive" vision of the future. He concludes by stating that, as old migrant life worlds broke down and new ones were not yet fully constituted in their place, migrant identities became fragmented (Moodie 1994: 40–43). The decline in migrants' rural resource bases and the rise of urban labour unions are thus said to fundamentally reshape migrant identity and consciousness.

Mamdani (1996) provides a slightly different perspective in his book, *Citizen and Subject*. He argues that the continued appetite of migrant workers for conservative ethnic politics in South African cities of the 1990s, as seen in the continuing violence in migrant hostels on the Reef, was a reflection of the fact that changes in their material conditions of existence did *not* have a fundamental impact on their consciousness of themselves as migrants. He attributes the resilience of older, rurally-oriented migrant identities to the failure of the democratically-elected South African state to break down the old colonial *political* contradiction between civil and customary power. The ease with which hostel dwellers on the Reef still mobilised behind tribal or ethnic ideologies in the 1990s is seen to reflect the resilience of ideas of customary power and patriarchal privilege. Indeed, Mamdani suggests that hostel migrants were still susceptible to this kind of political mobilisation because the system of customary power had offered them much more than simply a right to arable land. He asserts that as long as customary power is underwritten by state power – as is the case in South Africa – migrants will always want to defend the "rural in the urban", even when their historic rights to land are "significantly emptied of content" (*ibid.*: 184).

The aim of this chapter is to provide ethnographic substantiation for my earlier assertion that, contrary to the argument of the Mayers (1971) about the collapse of Red migrant culture in East London after the 1960s, these forms not only survived, but flourished, in the hostels of Duncan Village well into the 1980s, and that rural identities were still strongly embraced by active and lapsed migrants in the township throughout the 1990s. In the first half of the chapter, I analyse the institutional framework and social relations within which Red migrant culture (to use Moodie's term) was reconstituted and reproduced in Duncan Village between the 1950s and 1990s, paying special attention to the situation of migrants in the B-hostel complex. I will suggest that within the space of the hostel, conservative migrants were able to develop an institutional basis for the survival of Red migrant culture, which while different from that of the 1950s, was nevertheless socially coherent and culturally focused on rural resistance. By the late 1980s, I suggest that this institutional basis for this cultural form, which centred on *abakhaya* migrant

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cooking groups, rapidly disintegrated as a result of the changes that were occurring both in the city and in the surrounding rural areas. My argument in this part of the chapter therefore intersects with that of Moodie (1994), insofar as I concur that it was in 1980s that saw the demise of "migrant culture" in Duncan Village.

In the second half of the chapter, I concentrate on the persistence and increasing visibility of rural-focused migrant identities in Duncan Village after the collapse of Red migrants' cultural forms. Here I part company with Moodie and his assertion that the collapse of migrant culture triggered a shift away from older rural identities to new social identities forged through participation in labour unions. While this argument might have some relevance for the gold-mines, it was certainly not supported outside these institutions, where migrants and comrades continually clashed in ongoing political struggles in the 1990s. In Duncan Village, as we have seen, migrants did not join the SAAWU or other unions in large numbers in the 1980s, nor did they seek an alliance with the comrades that dominated the township streets. Instead, they continued to defend their rural identities and hostel spaces from outside intervention, by reconstituting themselves as respectable rural Xhosa men, who rejected what they saw as the degenerate, arrogant and misguided life-styles of the new youth. But why did they do this? And how could they sustain such responses in a context where the institutional basis of pre-existing migrant cultures had collapsed? Mamdani, as we have seen above, claims that it was because they were still *entitled* to patriarchal proprietorship in the countryside, even if they were no longer always able to exercise these rights or to reap material reward from their rural links. In other words, he situates the lingering importance of rural identities in the city, which he presents as essential and unchanging, in the politics of the countryside.

In trying to account for continued presence of the "rural in the urban" in Duncan Village, I adopt a different perspective by suggesting that migrants' primary loyalties in the 1990s were not to the countryside but to their urban jobs and resources. I suggest that, given the diminishing significance of rural resources in the survival strategies of migrants, their interests have become increasingly focused on securing urban permanence and in preventing the comrades from taking over the urban spaces and entitlements that they had secured under apartheid. Thus, despite the fact that many former migrants in the hostels no longer remitted resources regularly to rural kin, and were feeling increasingly disconnected from their town-based *abakhaya*, they nevertheless continued to invest in migrant identities to press claims for their right to remain in the city. In making these claims, I argue, former migrants often exaggerated their connections with the rural areas and the differences between their own masculinities and life-styles and those of other urban residents. The account I present of the "rural in the urban" in the 1990s, therefore, differs fundamentally from those of both Moodie and Mamdani because it is based on notions of

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disconnection and reinvention, what van Binsbergen (1997) has called the "virtualisation", rather than any political or economic connections with rural regimes. In short, I see the reconstitution of the "rural in the urban" in Duncan Village in the 1990s as primarily an urban rather than a rural resistance ideology, which has come to exist outside the circuits of rural social relationship and political identities. I consequently conclude that the rural identity politics of the 1990s was much more free-floating, flexible and fragile – more public and performative, more style-like – than that with which migrants were engaged during the "migrant culture" era.

As with my previous chapters, I begin my analysis by returning first to the 1950s and to the constitution of Red migrant cultural forms in the old wood-and-iron neighbourhoods of the location.

Domesticity and Red Migrant Culture in the 1950s

In the 1950s, the Mayers (1971) linked Red and School migrant cultural styles to different forms of domesticity in East Bank. They argued that *amaqaba* migrants gravitated to the densely-settled wood-and-iron shack areas of the old East Bank location where the central nodes of Red migrant culture were located. In the 1950s, there were no hostels in East Bank, so migrants coming into the city would hire rooms in the rambling wood-and-iron tenements in the township. On arrival in the location, Red migrants invariably moved into communal rooms with other migrants from their home area. In a small sample of 33 Red migrants, the Mayers found that "20 had turned to *amakhaya* when they came to town, 10 had had a brother to put them up, and the remaining 3 had moved in with non-agnatic kin" (1971: 103). To be accepted into the room, a newcomer would be required to offer an "arrival gift" of beer and brandy to his roommates. In Red rooms, it was common for as many as six or eight migrants to cram into a single room as long as the landlady would permit it. One migrant would be the official tenant, but he would "sub-let" space in the room to other migrants, who would contribute to the rent. In some of the houses, Red migrants from the same rural areas occupied several rooms, giving the house a specific character. Reader (1960) observed:

> There are definite groups of houses in the location, definite streets, definite neighbourhoods where lodgers tend to all come from the same rural locality. A newcomer hailing from that area and bearing their tribal name is directed to these places for help and accommodation (1960: 141).

On arrival in a room-sharing set-up, the newcomer, referred to as *inyuwana* ("new one"), would have the lowest status of the roommates and would often have to cook for the others, clean the house and make the tea. By contrast, the official tenant would assume the mantle of "room boss".

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He would be the longest-serving member of the group and would usually do the least amount of domestic work. Red rooms were governed by specific rules concerning cooking, eating, sharing and the entry of women. Failure to adhere to these rules could lead to a fine or even expulsion from the room. Some room-groups remained together for long periods of time, but the general tendency was for Red migrants to move on to less crowded rooms and eventually into a situation where they enjoyed the status of room tenant. With age and marriage, Red migrants increasingly sought to live alone. Mayer argues that the commonest cause for older Red migrants' desire for privacy was sexual association with women: "The 'rules of the house' entail that as long as a man is staying with a group of others he cannot indulge in love-making in the room. Even if the sexual partner is a man's own lawful wife on a visit from the country, intercourse in the presence of other men is improper" (Mayer 1971: 108). In the overcrowded wood-and-iron shack-lands of East Bank, where rents were high and space at a premium, few men achieved this goal.

In the case of School migrants, the Mayers noted a more varied domestic pattern. School migrants were much less inclined to live together in large groups of non-kin homemates than their Red counterparts (Mayer 1971: 209). Their entry into the city was usually mediated through family connections – a mother's sister, a father's brother, or even a more distant relative. They would normally take up residence with family members until such time as they were able to get a place of their own to rent. Living with large groups of men was regarded by the School migrants as being of "low status", but this did not mean that they were always able to avoid undesirable living conditions. Unlike Red migrants, the School migrants did not insist on women remaining in the countryside. They often came to town with wives or lovers, or alternatively were joined by them shortly after arrival. The tendency of School migrants to include women in their domestic arrangements placed them in a fundamentally different position to the Red migrant groups. In domestic situations involving women it was very unusual for men to take responsibilities for domestic work and cooking. The cultural models of family drawn on by School migrants in these situations were little different from those of urban-born couples. In the discussion below I trace how this *amaqaba* culture changed over time.

Some of the richest ethnography on *amaqaba* domestic patterns is to be found in Reader's (1960) work on lodging arrangements in East Bank. Unlike the Mayers, he takes us into the intimate spaces of migrant rooms, describing the interiors of rooms, the domestic equipment, and daily cooking and eating practices. Given their attempts to reduce consumption expenditure in town, the rooms of Red migrants were typically sparsely furnished, containing all but the most basic domestic equipment:

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> The household articles normally all belong to the registered tenant. They are used free of charge by the sub-tenants, who are personally responsible for replacing any breakage. These belongings of room-groups are generally distinguished by their sparseness, inferior quality and poor state of repair. Cups without saucers, mugs without either, are likely to be found. Tin dishes, cracked plates of the cheapest kind, a cooking pot, a water bucket and a pressure stove will probably complete the feeding (*sic*) equipment. The surroundings themselves are often little better. Sometimes there are no furnishings at all but paraffin tins used as seats and the untidy linen of the occupants (Reader 1960: 128).

From his descriptions we learn that these migrants generally cooked with paraffin wick or pressure stoves. Oil-burning stoves were virtually unknown in these migrants' rooms and were confined to households in the municipal housing estates. Each room group would have one, or occasionally two, paraffin stoves that would be used to cook meals and warm the room in winter. At night, the migrants used candles or paraffin lamps for lighting. Reader notes that many migrants made small homemade paraffin lamps that, like the *ufinya-futhi* lamps used today, "made horrible smoke at night". Reader (1960: 138) reports that the heavy use of paraffin for cooking and lighting so blackened the interior walls that they had to be scrubbed clean by the landlord when migrants left.

Reader also provides a detailed account of the way migrants contributed communally towards the cost of meals:

> As these room-sharers do not usually have regular consorts to cook for them [i.e. women], the main meal of the day is not in the evening, as with the married men, but at lunch-time. Then the men feed (*sic*) independently at eating houses near their work. The communal room-group meal is thus essentially an evening (and fairly casual) arrangement. The men are tired. They want to smoke their pipes, and drink kaffir (*sic*) beer, for which a further money contribution to the common pool is required. There are minor difficulties of distribution when all room-mates are not present together. Sometimes a man running short of money has to borrow when his turn comes and pay his room-mates back on the following payday. At weekends those who remain behind prepare a grand supper. On Saturday the necessary meat, potatoes and cabbage are bought for the Sunday supper ... On the evening of the day of rest, unwonted and savoury odours, preferably created by the skill of some female consort, emerge to beguile the palates of those who have not had the good fortune to return to the country (1960: 140).

Once the meal had been cooked, social rules and principles consistent with the social hierarchy amongst Red migrants governed eating. In his account of eating and sharing, Reader (1960: 136) emphasised the unequal status of newcomers and junior men when food was distributed:

> With seven in a room, the communal dish of gravy circulates from senior to junior, just as it would have done in the country, starting with the room tenant, the registered lodger. He takes several deep sips before passing the bowl to the next man, so it goes down to the newest arrival, who finds the desirable layer of fat on the surface or the gravy entirely

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> gone. This is symbolic of all dealings in the room. The meat from which the gravy is drawn is in principle brought in turn by each member of the room-group. Even if this arrangement is properly carried out, the senior men have the first choice no matter who may have bought the meat. They are adept at chewing and swallowing quickly, so that the newcomer is on his first piece while they are on their third.

Outside of the domestic arena, *iseti-drinking* groups provided the other social arena where Red migrants interacted with their *abakhaya* on a daily basis. *Iseti* drinking groups were much larger than room groups and always included *abakhaya* from a variety of different houses in the neighbourhood. Social interactions among *abakhaya* migrants at *iseti* sittings were much more formal than in rooms. The seating arrangements and the distribution of beer within these groups were based on seniority. The oldest migrants were always served first and were entitled to more beer than their younger counterparts, who were ranked in accordance with their year of initiation. Senior men were also given more time to speak at these beer drinks and had the most influence over the content and direction of discussion. Rural issues and customary concerns tended to dominate conversation. Returning migrants and new arrivals from the countryside were warmly welcomed into the *iseti* and men listened closely as they imparted fresh information about developments in the countryside. But the *iseti* was more than a source of information about rural life, it was an important social arena where the morality of Red urban life was imparted and reinforced. It was here that Red migrants were reminded of responsibilities to rural kin, the virtues of saving in the city, the dangers of sexual liaisons with town women, and the corrosive influences of westernisation and Christianity on the Xhosa way of life.

The work of the Mayers and Reader combine to provide a fascinating and textured account of the nature of migrant culture, domesticity and consumption in the slum yards of East Bank in the 1950s. Their work shows that the approach of migrants to consumption was structured by a conception of themselves as peasants in the city. They viewed their involvement in the urban economy in very instrumental terms. *Amaqaba* migrants saw wage labour and urban life as a "necessary evil" that had to be endured to ensure the survival of their homesteads in the countryside and to shield themselves and their families against proletarianisation. The central motif of this migrant culture was, as Moodie has pointed out, the "satisfaction of patriarchal proprietorship over a rural homestead" (1994: 21). In order to effect this, *amaqaba* migrants involved themselves socially in *abakhaya* networks in the city.

The two key social institutions for the reproduction of *amaqaba* culture in Duncan Village, as we have seen above, were the *iseti* beer drinks, which brought migrants from different age-sets together on a daily basis, and the room-based cooking groups, which involved migrants from the same age-sets and home areas in communal cooking and sharing arrangements. These two social institutions worked in a complementary way to facilitate the social reproduction of *amaqaba*

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culture during the 1950s. Room-based cooking groups fostered horizontal solidarities among Red migrants through enforced daily co-operation, while the *iseti* drinks facilitated inter-generational links among age sets and inculcated a respect for seniority, discipline and responsibility through the ritualised activities of talking and drinking.

Cooking Groups and Red Revival

In their revisit to East London in the 1970s, as I reported in Chapter 3, the Mayers suggested that the old division between Red and School migrants had become blurred and that Red migrant life had effectively disappeared from the city, only being found in a small pocket in Duncan Village where municipal authorities had not yet destroyed the old wood-and-iron houses of East Bank. In this chapter, I went on to suggest that in reaching this conclusion, the Mayers had not considered that this conclusion was based on an inadequate analysis of the new situation in Duncan Village where large numbers of former East Bank migrants were re-grouped in male single-sex hostels.

In B-hostel, the general marginalisation of Bhaca and Gcaleka workers by township people, combined with their confinement in the fenced and guarded hostel complex, served to produce two ultra-conservative Red migrant sub-cultures, which remained active into the 1990s. McAllister and Deliwe (1994) claim that the expansion of the hostel system countrywide led to a general regrouping of Transkei migrants from formerly "Red" areas, like Kentani, into tightly-knit *abakhaya* groups inside hostels. They summarise the core values of this migrant ideology as it was practised in the urban hostel context during the 1960s:

> Here the older men, acting *in loco parentis*, would keep a close watch on the younger men and boys to ensure that they behaved in a way appropriate to a "red" Xhosa (*amaqaba*) – i.e. that they never forgot that they were working for their parents and their rural home, that they did not waste any money, and that they did not engage in urban pursuits and pleasures. Most of all they were told to avoid 'town women' who would cause them to squander their money and forget their rural home. One who ignored this rule was told *utye intaka eyojiweyo emlungwini* – 'you have eaten a bird roasted at the white man's place'. This referred to the luxury and the pleasure of catching and roasting birds that boys indulged in while out herding cattle, an activity that sometimes caused them to neglect the cattle and allowed them to destroy crops (1994: 15).

McAllister and Deliwe go on to explain that a trustworthy elder in the hostel block would sometimes be asked to safeguard the earnings of his home-mates. He would have a goatskin purse, *umfelemntwini* (meaning, "die for a person"), implying that he would have to be killed before parting with it. This elder, or another senior man, would assume the position of *isibonda*: the block representative charged with the responsibility of mediating disputes within the hostel.

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In the constructed social world of the Duncan Village hostels, the old moral code of Red migrants was reinforced with new intensity after 1960 as senior migrants set out to enforce strict codes based on specific notions of home, seniority, gender and respect. This moral code was built on the unquestioned authority of senior men, and on the maintenance of *abakhaya* links as the most effective route to building the *umzi* back home. To use the Mayers' terms, the hostel experience in Duncan Village intensified experiences of "encapsulation" in a context where Red migrant sub-culture was generally in a state of decline in the township as a whole.

In comparing Red sub-cultural forms in the hostel after 1960 with those of the East Bank shack area prior to 1960, it is possible to identify a significant change in the institutional basis of cultural reproduction. In the old East Bank location, it was the *iseti* beer drink, more than any other institution that constituted the central locus for the reproduction of *abakhaya* ties and Red sub-cultural identities. However, with the demolition of large parts of East Bank many of these *iseti* groups were destroyed as migrants were dispersed. In some of the shack areas, which were not immediately affected by relocation, old-style *iseti* beer drinks continued for some time, while in areas such as the C-section, migrants were able to regroup with their old drinking partners to establish new *iseti* groups based on *abakhaya* links. However, from the late 1960s and especially the 1970s the dominant trend in the township was towards mixed *iseti* groups, comprising migrants from a wide range of rural areas. The new openness of township-based *iseti* groups made these institutions poor vehicles for the transfer of core *amaqaba* cultural values. In fact, with the emergence of mixed *iseti* groups and the erosion and blurring of the Red-School division inside the township, the focus of Red cultural reproduction shifted to the hostel block and sets of social relations enclosed within it. In this narrow social world, the most critical vehicle for maintenance of *abakhaya* links and the reproduction of Red social hierarchies and value relations was the migrant cooking group.

Migrant cooking groups in the old East Bank location, as we have seen, were generally small, relatively informal and characterised by age equivalence. The leader of the group was the official room tenant and it was through his appliances and domestic utensils – his paraffin stove, plates and cups – and through his ability to raise credit at the local store that the activities of the group operated. The tenant was the most powerful member of the group, although he was not necessarily the most senior migrant in the room. Moreover, the relative informality of the cooking group could be sharply contrasted with the formality of the *abakhaya iseti* where interactions among migrants were governed by a myriad of formal rules and conventions.

The re-emergence of migrant cooking groups in the hostels occurred in a very different context. First, hostel rooms or blocks were allocated to migrants as groups rather than as individuals. This meant that no one individual had control of domestic and cooking activities.

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Secondly, the appliances and fuel required for cooking were provided by the municipality, free of charge. The costs incurred by the municipality in offering this service were built into the fees charged to the employer for the use of the hostel. In B-hostel, the municipality installed a single coal stove in all hostel blocks and made coal available to migrants as a common facility – a storeroom – within the hostel complex. This storeroom was always open and migrants could go and collect coal as and when they needed it. Thirdly, unlike the *iintanga* (age-set) groups that shared rooms in the East Bank, B-hostel blocks were inhabited by men of all ages. The primary basis for group formation inside these blocks was home networks rather than age-based links.

In both Bhaca and Kentani blocks, cooking was performed in groups of between eight and sixteen men. In some blocks, two groups were formed, while in others the entire block would cook together. The groups usually comprised men of different ages who came from the same district. In the Kentani hostels, men from the same villages and locations would gravitate to the same hostel block and the internal sleeping arrangements would reflect the closeness of their associations. Fathers and sons would arrange to sleep next to each other, while men from the same rural villages organised to sleep together as a unit. In some hostel blocks, cooking groups emerged organically, while in others senior migrants simply used their age and seniority to impose a structure, much in the same way as they had at the *iseti*. The common pattern in the Kentani blocks was for the entire block to operate as one cooking unit. Senior men or the block *izibonda* would take charge of the group and decide on the allocation of tasks. This invariably meant that menial domestic work like making the fire, cleaning and cooking, was rotated among junior migrants. When food was served, senior migrants would be served first and would be first in line for a second helping. These practices mirrored the allocation of beer at *iseti* beer drinks, where men were served in order of their age and where the oldest men were always first in line for a second beaker. It also echoes Reader's description of eating rituals among *abakhaya* of the 1950s where gravy was symbolically skimmed off the top by senior migrants.

The cost of purchasing food for consumption in the hostel block was borne by all migrants involved in the group. Each migrant would contribute equal amounts to a common fund. This would be controlled and managed by senior men, although the task of purchasing food was shared. Unlike the old East Bank room-sharing groups, where food would be purchased on a daily or weekly basis, hostel-cooking groups tried to avoid regular trips to the shop by buying in bulk. At month-end, each cooking group would buy a 50 kg. bag of mealie meal as well as a large bag of sugar, tea, salt and other essentials. The aim of the group would be to avoid wasting money during the week on "unnecessary luxuries". In the Kentani hostels, large amounts of *amasi* (sour milk) were brought in free of charge from the dairy. The pilfering of food, often a problem in the old room-sharing groups, was generally not an issue in the hostels.

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Contrary to the argument presented by Philip Mayer (1971; 1980) that the *amaqaba* culture in East London was in a state of collapse by the early 1970s, this cultural form was reconstructed in Duncan Village after the apartheid state destroyed its residential base in the East Bank location. Forced out of backyard shacks and wood-and-iron tenements in the 1960s, conservative Transkeian migrants, in particular, managed to successfully rebuild enclaves of *amaqaba* culture within the transit housing zones of C-section and D-section, and especially in the new municipal hostels in Duncan Village. In the new transit housing zones, clusters of Transkeian migrants reconstituted old *abakhaya* networks by sharing accommodation and setting up new *iseti* beer drinking groups, which could act as focal points for co-operation among *abakhaya* in town. In the post-1950s period, B-hostel was to emerge as the centre of *amaqaba* culture in Duncan Village. The boundedness of this institution and its physical separation from the township made it an ideal environment in which "Red" migrants from the Transkei could "encapsulate" themselves in an ideology of rural resistance and articulate a discourse of Xhosa tradition.

Based in the B-hostel complex, *amaqaba* culture survived through the dark years of the 1960s and 1970s by shifting the focus of cultural reproduction away from the *iseti*-drinking group to hostel cooking groups. The reconstitution of the small *iintanga* or age-based cooking groups of the 1950s, into large, inter-generational, *abakhaya*-based social units, combined the functions of domestic management with cultural transmission. The relocation of these social functions away from the public domain of township life and into the private domain of the hostel cooking group ensured that the reproduction of cultural values could be insulated from a wider world where "Red confidence" had been eroded. In fact, it is arguable that the ability of hostel migrants to control consumption and effect savings to build up their rural homesteads was far greater in the post-1960 period than it had been before. For example, unlike in the 1950s, hostel migrants were not liable for paying rent in the hostel nor were they expected to pay for fuel. Furthermore, the weekly donations of *amasi* to migrants from Model Dairy and curfews that controlled the ability of migrants to move around the township, also helped reduce urban consumption expenses and maximise rural remittances.

What made these hostel-based cooking groups such effective units of cultural reproduction was precisely that they were inter-generational. In the 1950s, the Mayers explained that room-based groups were generally fairly informal, age-equivalent, communal groupings where respect on the basis of seniority was "seldom very pronounced". The inclusion of senior men in B-hostel cooking groups had two important social consequences: first, it introduced a more formal ethos into the organisation and management of migrants' domestic life, and secondly, it created a social arena where migrants of different generations could interact on a daily basis. The latter phenomenon was essential for the cultural reproduction of the *amaqaba*

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style, since it allowed older migrants not only to inculcate the core values of Red culture among the youth, but it also allowed them to keep a close eye on the ways in which rural youth conducted themselves in the city.

Social Dislocation and the Reinvention of Tradition

During the political upheaval of the 1980s in Duncan Village, the comrades tore down the barbed-wire fences around B- and D-hostel and gutted the guardrooms, the superintendent's offices and the municipal beer hall associated with the hostel complexes. The destruction of this apartheid infrastructure in 1985 established the hostels as "liberated zones" within the township. B-hostel dwellers could now move freely around the township and their lives were no longer inhibited by the myriad of apartheid rules and regulations that governed hostel life. However, far from embracing the new political space created for them by the *amaqabane* (comrades), the hostel dwellers immediately embarked on concerted rear-guard action against any radical change. The hostel dwellers rejected the idea that new families, which were now flooding into the township, should be settled on open spaces inside the hostel complex. Led by Kentani and Bhaca migrants, they made it clear that they would not be prepared to accept women in the hostel, even if they were the wives of *bona fide* migrants. The men insisted that the hostel had to be retained as a single-sex institution. In order to enforce change, the DVRA insisted that the old system of appointed *izibonda* be replaced by a system of democratically-elected *izibonda* for each block. The hostel dwellers agreed to this proposal, but in practice the elected *izibonda* invariably ended up simply being the most senior migrant in the block. The new democracy of the hostel was a qualified democracy of seniority. In fact, by reconstituting the *izibonda* system outside of the control of the local municipality, senior migrants had the political space to resist *amaqabane* dominance and to reinforce their own conservative ideas based on tradition, patriarchy and seniority.

Senior migrants cast themselves as the custodians of a culture of discipline and respect, which had to be defended against the tyranny and disorder of township politics. In order to distinguish themselves from the township *amaqabane*, the "hostel fathers" set about recreating their own conservative traditionalist culture. They reinforced the old curfew system, which meant that hostel blocks had to be shut by 21:00 in the evening, and established a system where they could fine and punish any block member who disobeyed their authority. The ultimate punishment used by the *izibonda* was eviction from the hostel. The success of the *izibonda* and other senior migrants in resisting change in the hostels was shown in the fact that in 1995 – almost a decade after taking control of the complex – 82 % of the beds in B-hostel were still occupied by

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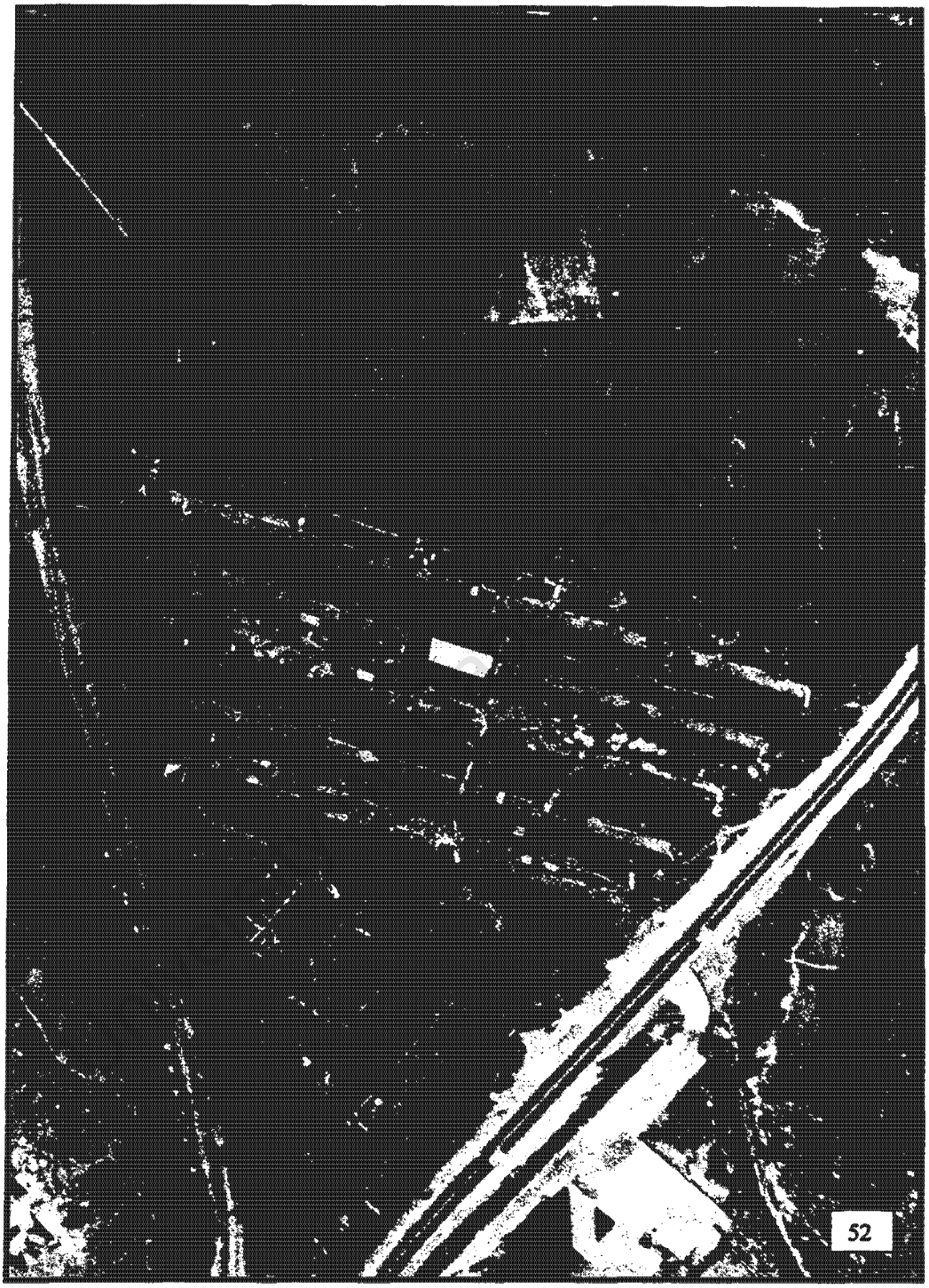


Plate 18: B-hostel. Photo 52, Aerial photo of B-hostel taken in 1993. Notice the migrant gardens established within the hostel precinct. These gardens were well maintained until this area was inhabited by shack dwellers in the late 1990s. Also evident in the complex is the burnt-out shell of the municipal beer hall that was destroyed in the 1985 riots.

single men. Fathers, sons or siblings shared a further 10 % of the beds, while a mere 8 % of the bed spaces were used by couples. Women constituted only 10 % of the total hostel population.

The most surprising feature of this reconstitution of conservative cultural values and discipline through the vehicle of the new *izibonda* system from the mid-1980s, was that it occurred in a context where large numbers of hostel migrants were losing contact with their rural homesteads. From the mid-1980s, the material conditions that had supported *amaqaba* migrant culture, as a form of rural resistance, had been undermined by devastating drought and stock losses in the Transkei. The life histories collected from hostel residents revealed that both the levels of migrant remittances and the frequency of home visits had steadily declined through the 1980s. There was a growing collective disillusionment in the project of "building the *umzi*". Men spoke variously of drought-related stock losses, chronic (syndicated) stock theft, the collapse of village-based ploughing teams, the disintegration of agricultural extension services under the Transkeian administration, and the departure of daughters and wives to nearby towns and cities. Although these factors affected individual migrants to differing degrees, it was evident that the overall pattern was clearly towards an increasing withdrawal from rural production and household management. The increasing difficulty of these hostel dwellers to effect rural retirement was seen in our 1995 survey which showed that 59 % of the hostel population was over the age of forty years, while 38 % was already over the age of fifty years. Many of the older migrants in B-hostel were still employed, albeit on a casual basis (many as part-time security guards), and said that they would hold onto their current jobs as long as possible. Other older men had already retired, but had not yet left the hostels (see Plate 18).

In the changing social and political environment in Duncan Village in the 1980s, the reconstitution of a conservative, generationally-based system of political control in B-hostel came at considerable cost. Younger migrants and married men felt that the new regime imposed by senior migrants was authoritarian and unreasonable. They wanted to see greater flexibility in the way the hostel was run, not more rules and regulations. But older migrants simply argued that, if hostel residents were not happy with the way that the hostel was being managed, they could move out. As a result of these generational tensions and other divisions, a number of new developments emerged. First, the population within B-hostel became increasingly unstable as some migrants moved out and new ones were recruited to take their place. In finding replacements for those who left, the *izibonda* were always very careful to ensure that the recruits were prepared to recognise their power and authority. Secondly, the co-operative and supportive ethos that had prevailed among *abakhaya* in B-hostel during the 1960s and 1970s was breaking down. Migrants who were beginning to renege on their rural responsibilities were less interested in maintaining good relations with their home-mates in town. Thirdly, in the face of deepening

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internal conflicts within the hostel, the older divisions based on tribal identities – in particular those between Gcaleka and Bhaca migrants – began to fade as migrants identified themselves in new ways. The main social cleavages in the hostel in the 1990s were between young and older men and between "active" and "lapsed" migrants.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, the internal politics of the hostel had a profound impact on the institutions of *amaqaba* culture. In a context of diminishing rates of return, migration and growing inter-generational tensions, *abakhaya* social networks began to break down. The result was the emergence of new kinds of cooking and drinking arrangements among hostel dwellers.

In 1986, when the East London municipality lost control of the hostel, migrants also lost access to a free supply of coal. This initiated a major change in fuel-use strategies of residents within the hostels. Without access to a reliable local outlet where coal could be bought, migrants were forced to change from a coal to a paraffin-based domestic fuel-economy. By 1987, the old coal stoves in the hostel block were no longer in use, as B-hostel dwellers switched *en masse* to cooking on paraffin stoves. This change in cooking technology triggered the disintegration of block-based cooking groups. By the 1990s, more than two thirds of the residents in B-hostel were cooking alone, while the rest of the hostel population were still involved in some form of group cooking. The new cooking groups encountered in B-hostel in the 1990s were, however, much smaller than the old block-based *abakhaya* units and were built around new social solidarities.

In 1996, there were two distinct types of cooking groups in operation in the hostel: rural-focused kin groups and urban-focused "work-seeker" units. A good example of how these kin group units were formed is provided in the case of the Mlomo family. The Mlomo family built up a strong family presence in Block 16 of B-hostel over a period of almost a decade. The eldest brother and leader of the group, Mandi, arrived in the city in 1987 to join his father, who was then employed as a migrant at Model Dairy. When the dairy changed hands in 1987, Mandi's father moved out of the hostel to set up a small informal business in the shack areas. When his bed became vacant, Mandi persuaded the *isibonda* to allow him to recruit a younger brother, who had recently lost his job in Johannesburg. In 1993, when another space opened up in the block, Mandi brought another brother to B-hostel. He had been living with their paternal uncle in a hostel on the East Rand. He wanted to leave there because of escalating hostel violence. In 1994, a third brother joined them from their Kentani home, where he had been looking after his mother. Two other men joined the following year – one was the son of their mother's brother (*malome*), the other was an age-mate from the village. The six men formed a single cooking unit. Only three of the men were employed and made regular contributions to the domestic expenses of the group; the other three members contributed whenever they could. Every week, each of the employed members put R35 in a communal kitty. The money was spent on maize meal, tea, sugar and

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paraffin, all purchased at a local supermarket in the location. These were the core ingredients of the daily diet of these migrants. Additional food, such as soup packets, vegetables, bread or meat would be purchased to supplement their staple daily dish of mealie meal. If they were desperate for money they would go to their father's shack to ask for a loan. Every month, the men sent between R400 and R500 home to their mother and sisters in Kentani.

The shift away from *abakhaya* to kin-based cooking groups was associated with the increasing residential instability in the hostel after 1986. As established hostel dwellers moved out of the complex to return home or find alternative accommodation elsewhere in the township, beds were re-allocated to new recruits. The selection of new recruits was done in an informal way. The names of potential candidates for the beds were submitted to the block *isibonda* for consideration. In many cases, block residents advanced names of friends or relatives, often a close male kinsman, as replacements. The *izibonda* generally supported this system on the grounds that they were less likely to experience disciplinary problems if they selected the relative of a hostel insider than if they recruited an unknown outsider.

As a result of this recruitment procedure, the social composition of the blocks changed. When the municipality was in charge, workers were sent to stay with *abakhaya*. Under the new system, kinship rather than home-links emerged as the dominant principle behind placement. Thus from the mid-1980s, it became possible for clusters of close patrikin to congregate within particular blocks. By setting themselves up in the same residential units, these patrikin could then support one another in the city and collectively attend to responsibilities in the countryside. The creation of a kin-based network in the hostel was, however, a slow process that always depended on the availability of new spaces for their kinsmen in the block.

The second type of cooking group operating in B-hostel in the 1990s had nothing to do with a culture of rural responsibility. As the turnover of hostel dwellers increased, unemployed men came to the hostel to seek accommodation. Many of those who arrived had previously worked as migrants on the Reef, and decided to return to the Eastern Cape due to the escalating political violence in the north. These men were familiar with hostel life and were generally welcomed into the hostel by the *izibonda*. They were, however, usually unemployed on arrival and took up residence with home-mates or friends whom they hoped would help them to find employment. From their time of arrival, until they found some means of supporting themselves independently, these migrants were often absorbed into cooking groups in order to provide them with a means of subsistence. The creation of these groups was usually initiated by older migrants keen to establish new allies who could assist them in trying to restore discipline and obedience amongst the youth. The formation of these groups had much more to do with the politics of control within the hostel than they did with the practices of patriarchal proprietorship in the

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countryside. One indication of the relatively low levels of obligation among members of these groups was that they usually collapsed as soon as the new recruit had found employment.

In the 1990s, cooking groups were, however, thin on the ground in B-hostel as the vast majority of hostel-dwellers cooked alone. A much more individualist ethos now prevailed in the hostel kitchens and one that differed fundamentally from the ethos that had existed only a decade earlier. Migrants now kept their food under lock and key, whereas in the past they had left bags of maize meal and drums of sour milk standing open in the hostel (see Plate 19).

The shift towards greater individualism was evident in the restricted patterns of sharing and exchange in the hostel. In the 1990s, there was very little informal sharing of food and other commodities outside of cooking groups. Migrants who borrowed items, e.g. a bottle of paraffin or a cup of sugar, from their block mates, were expected to return exactly what they borrowed, as soon as possible (i.e. within a day or two), or had to pay the lender in cash. It was rare for the lender to allow the borrower longer than a week to return a commodity and there was little tolerance for delayed payments. There was also no interchange between commodities in these transactions. For instance, a cup of sugar was generally not regarded as a fair substitute for a cup of maize meal or a cake of soap. What was borrowed had to be returned – no more, no less. The same rules applied to money. No migrant would entrust his precious earnings to an *isibonda* with a goatskin purse. The old moral economy of collective trusteeship and joint responsibility simply did not exist. Each man managed his own money and the exchange of money between men was always carefully monitored. It was only in the kin-based cooking groups that there was any pooling of income.

Despite the increasingly instrumental nature of their exchange transactions within the hostel, migrants continued to draw a distinction between their own moral conduct and that of the surrounding township community. In relation to money lending, they contrasted hostel-based schemes with the usurious money-lending rackets in the township. They reported that no migrant was allowed to charge interest on the money he lent to another migrant. Although many migrants liked to think of themselves as different from township residents – as individuals who operated in accordance with a superior set of moral values – the circuits of everyday exchange in B-hostel had largely been emptied of their moral content. In virtually every respect, they were now designed to minimise inter-dependence, mutual trust and social obligation.

The disintegration of *abakhaya* social networks inside B-hostel was also seen in the changing drinking patterns of hostel dwellers. During the early 1980s, many B-hostel migrants drank socially at *iseti* beer drinks in the location. These groups still operated on a daily basis and remained important social nodes, where *abakhaya* could meet and discuss matters of common concern. But, by the 1990s, old-style *iseti* beer drinks had largely disappeared. The only remaining

drinking social relations
vs
cooking individual relations

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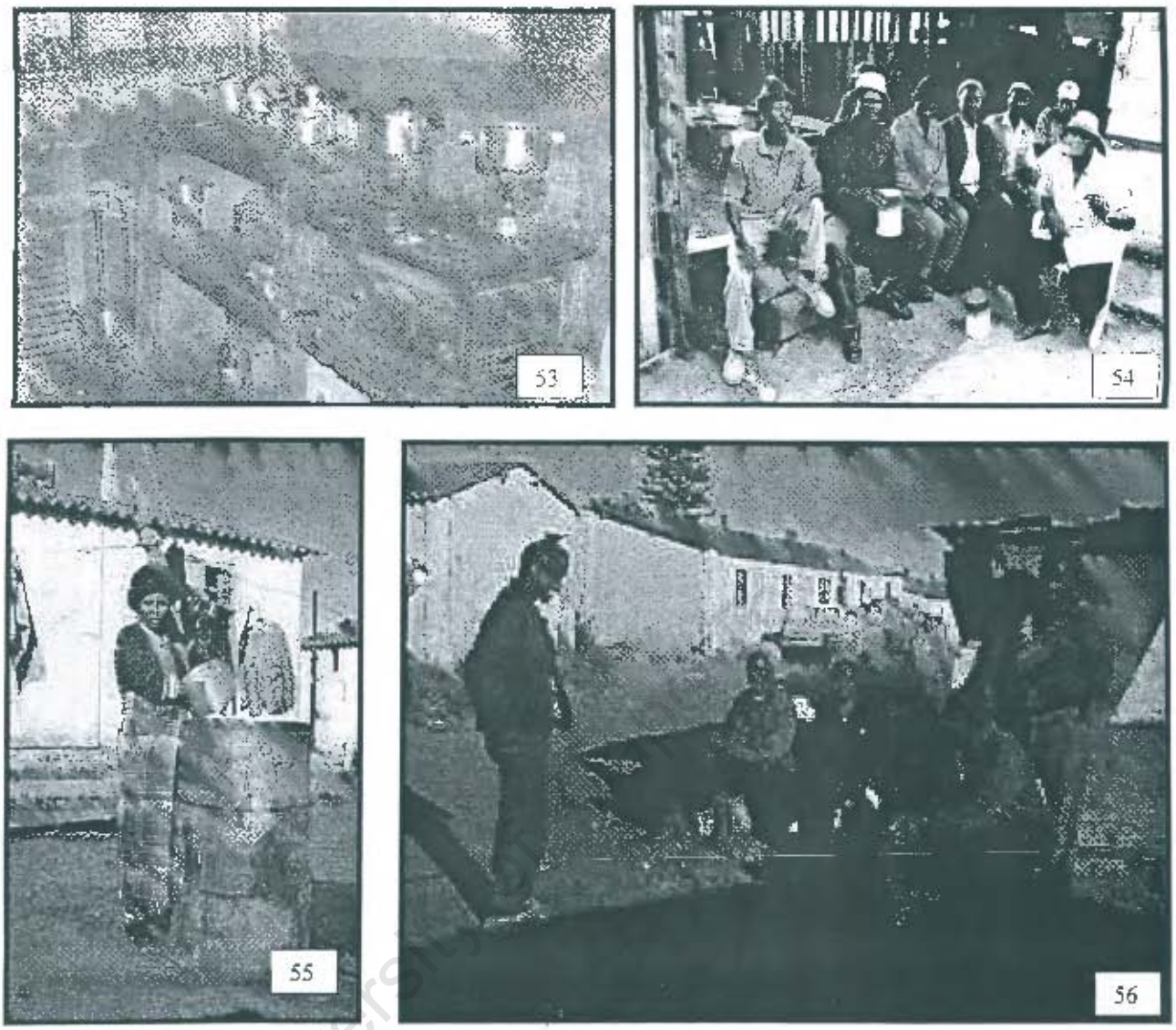


Plate 19: Hostel Dwellers. Photo 53, depicts a row of paraffin stoves with cooking pots each belonging to an individual migrant in Block 16. At the time that this photograph was taken, cooking groups had already begun to disintegrate and most migrants were now cooking alone. Notice the disused coal stove; Photo 54, a group of migrants outside an *imbarha* shebeen in Duncan Village (Proper), 1998; Photo 55, rural wife visiting her husband in B-hostel; Photo 56, group of migrants socialise in the hostel complex.

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iseti groups that still operated on a daily basis involved Bhaca migrants who worked for the municipality. Migrants from the southern Transkei sometimes held *iseti* drinks at the weekend when they had more time to socialise. But during the week, migrant drinking was now mainly done at *imbarha* home-brew shebeens. Unlike the *iseti* groups, which comprised of a pre-selected group of *abakhaya*, the *imbarha* drinks were open to all. In the past, migrants from B-hostel had avoided these drinks because they were said to be patronised by "undesirables", such as *amatshipha* ("lapsed migrants") and *amakhazana* ("*tsotsi's* women"). But now many migrants were willing to spend their afternoons and evenings at *imbarha* drinks. By the early afternoon, unemployed men from the hostel could be seen sipping beakers of home-brewed beer, while they waited for employed migrants and townspeople to return from work.

By shifting their loyalties from *iseti* to *imbarha* beer drinks, migrants distanced themselves from their former close-knit rural networks. But even in these new environments, migrants did not make any effort to integrate socially with other sections of the urban poor. They were generally reluctant to join new social groups and placed a great deal of emphasis on their own independence and self-sufficiency. When they moved out of the hostels and into backyard shacks, they generally did so alone. They cooked alone and they ate alone. In establishing new identities outside of the old close-knit *abakhaya* networks, they generally rejected urban integration and stressed self-reliance. They did their own washing and cleaning: trying to set themselves apart from townsfolk. They emphasised that, unlike the urban-born Xhosa men and the "Coloured people" (*malau*) in the township, they were able to control their own lives and resources. They said they had learnt to appreciate the value of money and knew how to handle themselves in the city. For struggling migrants, parsimony was more than a value – it became an obsession. They viewed saving as the only route to eventual self-reliance and this could only be achieved through reducing consumption, restraint, frugality and discipline. As rural resources disappeared and their ability to save diminished, the ability to control their own income became a source of increasing anxiety for migrants.

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Reconstituting Masculinity

In B-Hostel, there was a marked change in male attitudes towards women, and a general hardening of gender relations as migrants lost contact with their rural homesteads. In order to illustrate changes in migrant consciousness, it is useful to explore the ways in which both active and struggling migrants represented women in Duncan Village in the 1990s. In the past, as we have seen, the construction of a successful migrant career depended on the ability of migrants to "encapsulate" themselves in close-knit and supportive networks of town-based *abakhaya*, who

helped build up the moral strength and personal resolve to resist the lure of the city and to remain focused on rural responsibilities. In trying to enforce a moral code of financial discipline, an earlier generation of migrants in Duncan Village had identified townswomen as the major threat to their aims and objectives. Certain kinds of townswomen were seen to represent unrestrained urban consumption. They symbolised a powerful threat to the construction and maintenance of a migrant career. The views of migrants on this topic have been well documented since the 1950s (cf. Mayer 1971; Minkley 1996). In the 1990s, migrants in Duncan Village continued to express strong reservations about the "seductive powers" of townswomen. They argued that "townswomen" were a corrupt and corrosive force that could effortlessly eradicate a migrant's life-long savings. These deep-seated fears about the power of townswomen lay at the basis of the refusal of hostel migrants to open the complex up to women in 1986. They argued that, in order to safeguard their integrity and to remain focused in their objectives, it would be unwise to allow women into the hostel.

But the decision to defend the hostel against women in the mid-1980s was not only based on the desire to keep townswomen out, it was increasingly predicated on the desire of struggling migrants, who were reneging on their commitments to the *umzi*, to keep rural women out as well. The tension in B-hostel over the access of women to the hostel essentially revolved around the control of income and changing conceptions of manhood. While many younger migrants were in favour of granting women relatively free access to the hostel, there was a sharp division in the views of "active" and "lapsed" migrants. Active migrants argued that their rural wives should be allowed to visit them for as long as they wished. They argued that their wives had been entrusted with enormous responsibilities in the rural areas and that they should be free to come to town to discuss "family matters" when necessary. Those lapsed migrants, on the other hand, who had deserted their rural kin, objected vociferously to such demands on the grounds that it would compromise the generally-accepted ruling about women in the hostel. They argued that hostel dwellers should not turn their backs on "tradition" by watering down their commitment to the exclusion of women. They argued that to compromise the ruling would threaten the very survival of migrant culture in the hostel. They were effectively demanding that a "hostel tradition" be enforced to prevent their deserted rural wives and kin from coming into the hostel complex to make claims on their earnings. It was deeply ironic that the most conservative views on the issue of women were articulated by men who had effectively lost contact with the rural areas.

But as time passed and the collective interest of active migrants and youth increasingly came to preside over that of the lapsed migrants, the number of women in the hostel complex increased. By 1995, women from rural areas had begun to move into the hostel. The response of many lapsed migrants, who had fought tooth and nail to maintain the old gender ruling, was

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now to try to vacate the hostels by moving into surrounding shack areas. The motivation behind the decision by members of the old guard to move out was that the softening of the gender rule inside the hostel complex had exposed them to the claims of their deserted rural dependants. In order to resist the demands of close kin, some of these men simply decided to disappear. For those with employment and the ability to pay rent, the backyard shack areas provided a safe and stable residential base where they could hide from rural dependants. For those without permanent employment, however, the freestanding shack areas were generally a better option because it was possible to live there rent-free. Some of those who moved out into these areas managed to support themselves on casual employment. Others struggled to make ends meet. After a period of hardship, some of the latter men managed to find accommodation with single women, usually unmarried mothers, who would take them in as guardians.

Former migrants regarded this as a personal defeat and embarrassment. By accepting lodging and food, they felt that they effectively crossed the line; had been "eaten by the city'; had indeed become no more than *amatshipa,* the derogatory term popularly used to refer to migrants who had "forgotten about the countryside". A number of these ex-migrants living with single women were depressed and demoralised. In interviews with the household head they sat like shadows in the background, offering no opinions of their own. They appeared as dominated appendages with no voice or authority in the household. For any self-respecting migrant, who put great store on his ability to shape his own destiny and achieve self-reliance and independence through hard work and careful planning, the degradation of becoming a domestic appendage was difficult to bear. Many ex-migrants only endured this because it was a lesser shame than facing deserted dependants.

For struggling migrants in the shack areas, who had some means of supporting themselves, the most desirable domestic arrangement was living alone. These men seemed determined to limit the involvement of women in their daily lives: they cooked for themselves, did their own washing and cleaned their own shacks. They realised that as soon as they took a woman into their household, they would have to relinquish control of at least part of their income and would be turning their back on the possibilities of self-reliance in old age. The decision by many "lapsed migrants" to live alone and to cook, wash and clean for themselves was a clear statement about their desire to control their own lives. They figured that as long as they lived alone and controlled their own income, they might still resurrect their careers as active migrants and rebuild their resources for self-reliance and independence in old age, even if this objective could not be realised in their home villages. By holding onto their cookers, these migrants symbolically held onto their dreams of self-sufficiency and their identities as rural men in the city. The act of relinquishing a cooker was viewed as an act of submission: it was an acknowledgement

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that they had been "swallowed by the city" and were now vulnerable to "domination by women". In this context, migrants used their paraffin cookers not only as functional domestic appliances, but also as symbolic markers of identity.

The notions of masculinity prevalent among struggling migrants in Duncan Village had consequently shifted away from the idea that masculinity could only be expressed through patriarchal proprietorship over a rural *umzi* and guardianship over close kin associated with that homestead. This was replaced with an urban-based notion of masculinity as a matter of personal autonomy, patriarchal power and control over earnings. Struggling migrants set out to limit the involvement of women in their daily lives, whom they perceived as the major threat to their income and by implication, to their long-term objectives of self-sufficiency. Since the ability to control spending and saving had become something of an obsession among struggling male migrants in Duncan Village, they invested considerable effort in preventing their income from "slipping out of their hands". For migrants who were still attending to rural responsibilities, part of their income was always entrusted to rural kin, to be allocated judiciously, to defray the expenses of the *umzi*. The arrival of money from the city often came with a list of instructions from the migrant as to how it should be spent. The failure of rural wives or kin to comply with their instructions could lead to the withdrawal of remittances.

Through the control of their income and their cookers, migrants in Duncan Village set out to shape their own destinies by distributing resources prudently between the demands of household maintenance and the longer-term demands of saving for retirement. Active migrants still believed, as they had done in the past, that their ability to achieve a balance in these competing objectives was the key to their long-term security and personal fulfilment. Lapsed migrants, who were cash strapped and had lost many of their assets in the countryside, generally set out to resolve the tensions between their long-term objectives of stability and personal security and the short-term objectives of household reproduction, by withdrawing resources from their rural homesteads but without giving up their long-standing dreams of eventual self-sufficiency. In reassessing their life-strategies, struggling migrants generally withdrew from their social networks in town that linked them directly to their home villages. Many gave up their positions in village-based ploughing teams and other rural institutions, and left *abakhaya* cooking groups and *iseti* drinking groups. Whilst some of these migrants continued to return to rural areas to attend rituals and visit friends, their involvement in rural life was superficial. They had effectively lost interest.

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This shift away from rural resources was, however, not accompanied by any serious attempt by struggling migrants to effectively integrate themselves into urban networks. In the city they found themselves marginalised and isolated. At an economic level, many formerly active migrants were unemployed, under-employed or dependent on state welfare in the city. At a social level, they became isolated from the *abakhaya* and increasingly operated alone. They kept contact with a handful of other former migrants who shared their misfortune. By force of circumstances, they were increasingly looking to the urban area as a base for long-term survival. In some cases, this shift in focus was only partial: a matter of spreading risks or temporarily building up a stronger base in the city, without completely giving up on dreams of patriarchal proprietorship in the countryside. For migrants, who had watched their daughters "be swallowed" by the cities and their savings dwindle, too much had already been invested in the countryside for them to abandon it altogether. Thus they remained "country people" in the city and found it very difficult to imagine themselves outside of a rural frame of reference. The perceptions of these migrants of themselves as "within the city", but not "of the city" were seen in, among other things, the considerable interest they displayed in urban farming as a part-time occupation in the city.

The care and attention that lapsed migrants devoted to their gardens that were neatly carved out of tiny parcels of land, usually on steep inclines where settlement was difficult, bore witness to a desire to identify themselves with agrarian activities. These men grew a range of fresh vegetables (especially pumpkins, beans and spinach), as well as maize, on small strips of land in and around the hostel. Some more enterprising migrants extended their operations to vacant land earmarked for family housing projects outside the hostel. The pursuit of farming in the city was not only an exercise in urban survival: it was also a matter of asserting their identities as rural men in the city. Many of these individuals explained that they regarded their urban farming as a "labour of love" – a source of great pleasure and self-fulfilment – rather than as just another economic activity. The positive ways in which these migrants referred to labouring in their gardens could be contrasted to their descriptions of the drudgery of wage work in the city. Migrants often used the Xhosa word *ukwakha* ("to build") rather than *sebenza* (working) or *pangela* (working for whites) to describe their farming activities. But the interesting thing about the way lapsed migrants used the term *ukwakha* and the way this term was normally used by active migrants was that they no longer seemed to use the term to imply building *together*. For them, urban farming and the work associated with it was a solitary pleasure, but it nevertheless remained connected to the imaginary of the rural. It was an expression that van Binsbergen (1997)

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has called the "virtualisation of the village" in the city., or what Baudrillard (1981) would call the process of "simulacrum" – a copy of a copy – that avoids contact with the ideal form.

For migrants in the 1990s, urban farming was a matter of self-preservation and self-reliance rather than that of collective responsibility. But, despite the de-socialised nature of the urban farming pursuits of lapsed migrants, the fact that these men evoked sharply-honed contrasts between urban and rural life worlds, between tradition and modernity, between farming and wage work, meant that they remained conscious of themselves as migrants, despite their alienation from their rural homes and their withdrawal from *abakhaya* networks in the city. It meant that, while migrants were increasingly forced to rely on the city for survival, they were still not prepared to embrace urban life and establish new identities for themselves as city people. They still embraced the countryside as an ideal, which they associated with a distinct set of values, such as generational respect, discipline, self-restraint, self-reliance and moral responsibility, which they argued were sorely lacking in the city. These men were "migrants" without migrancy. They had lost their rural resources, but not their self-respect and sense of identity. They still considered themselves to be rural men in the city and it was precisely for this reason that they resisted the overtures of townswomen and clung onto their cookers with such determination and resolve.

In view of the above analysis of changing forms, migrant masculinity and identity formation, it is possible to begin to provide an alternative interpretation of the reactionary political responses of B-hostel migrants in Duncan Village in the mid-1980s. Mamdani, in his recent analysis of the Reef hostel violence of the 1990s, argues that Zulu migrants were more politically active in defence of their status as migrants and their identities as "tribal subjects in the city", because they enjoyed stronger social and economic links with their home areas than other categories on the Reef. This simplistic materialist analysis is based on the idea that the stronger a migrant's material connection with the countryside, the stronger his commitment will be in defence of "traditional" culture and society in the city. However, as the above analysis suggests, the relationship between migrant identity politics and migrancy as an essentially economic process is more complex than Mamdani imagines. In fact, as we have seen, there is no reason why access to rural resources in the form of arable land should be a necessary prerequisite for the emergence of conservative migrant identities in urban areas. There can, of course, be no doubt that migrant identity formations are everywhere constructed around sharply-focused contrasts between rural and urban life worlds, but this does not mean that these contrasts need to be based on current "lived experience". As Raymond Williams pointed out long ago, the countryside is often more powerful as an idea than as a reality. Roosens (1994) has also pointedly remarked in relation to contemporary migrant identities in Europe, that the erosion of active social and

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economic ties between migrants and their homelands can infuse a "*new conservatism*" into these cultures, where "they become more traditional than the cultures of the regions of origin" (1994: 99).

This is precisely what we have observed in Duncan Village. As the active social and economic ties between migrants and their home areas were severed in the 1980s, the processes of migrants' identity formation and masculinity became unhinged from any real rural relationships. In this context, migrants were able to reinvent identities for themselves in the splendid isolation of the city. The collapse of migrant cultures, which kept migrants abreast of actual developments in rural areas and brought them into monthly contact with the complex and changing dynamics of everyday life in the countryside, effectively freed migrants who were rapidly losing contact with their rural homes from having to deal with the daily difficulties of managing a migrant career in the Eastern Cape in the 1990s. They could now reconstruct notions of their own masculinity and identity as migrants, as men in the city but not of the city, in terms of a set of much more free-floating and imaginative narratives of contrast. They could take views on issues of tradition, which were much more absolute and uncompromising than some of their fellow migrants, who were still trying to carve a life for themselves between town and country. This rupture of the relationship between town and country that occurred in the mid-1980s – a context of intense generational conflict in the city – resulted in lapsed migrants taking up rigid political positions, which stressed their traditional identities and a right to a space in the city.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have moved away from the township and into the space of the hostel. The main objective of the analysis above has been discover to what extent, and in what form, the *amaqaba* migrant sub-culture of the East Bank, which was so richly described by the Mayers and their colleagues, managed to survive the relocation period. I began the chapter by exploring the centrality of cooking groups and drinking groups, to the reproduction of *amaqaba* sub-cultures in the old East Bank location, and wondered to what extent these groups could be reconstituted in the new hostel complexes in Duncan Village after 1960. I found that, while *iseti* drinking groups were difficult to reconstruct in the tightly-controlled hostels, migrants re-established this tradition by cooking together with their *abakhaya* in the hostels and used these groups as a central vehicle for rekindling their old *amaqaba* migrant sub-cultures. In a context where the hostel population was deliberately kept separate from the rest of the township residents, I suggested that processes of social separation and "encapsulation" actually deepened amongst hostel migrants after the 1960s. This contradicts the argument made by the Mayers that the distinctive migrant sub-

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cultures were effectively destroyed after the removals. The evidence shows that the *amaqaba* cultural form, in particular, lingered on in Duncan Village long after the removals.

But how did the hostel migrants respond to the dramatic political and social changes of the 1980s, when the fences around the hostels were pulled down and these hostel complexes were declared part of a newly-liberated township zone? I have suggested that the political changes in Duncan Village as well as changes in the surrounding countryside had a profound impact on the coherences and sustainability of ethnically-oriented "migrant cultures" in the hostels. As inter-generational tensions deepened, the old cooking groups that had been so central to the reproduction of *amaqaba* cultural forms during the 1960s and 1970s started to disintegrate. Other developments, such as the collapse of ploughing teams, prolonged drought and youth out-migration from the rural areas, also weakened the cohesiveness of *abakhaya* networks and solidarities in the city. The result was that senior migrants in the hostels became increasingly isolated, not only from the rural youth in the city (many of whom had joined the comrades) but also from the countryside itself. In B-hostel in the mid 1990s, there was a sizeable group of former migrants, who seemed more committed than ever to their identities as "rural men in the city", but had very little contact with their rural homes.

These men were no longer integrated into ethnically distinctive *amaqaba* sub-cultures, predicated on tight-knit social networks and daily interaction with their *abakhaya*. Their identities were now defined in terms of much more individualised notions of responsibility that were no longer built on meeting particular obligations in the rural areas. Many of these lapsed migrants left the hostels to seek refuge in the shack areas, where they could hide away from their rural kin, who were constantly seeking to pressurise them to take responsibility for those they had left behind. But, while many former migrants tried to uncouple themselves from rural obligations, they found it extremely difficult to integrate themselves into the hegemonic, masculine culture of the comrades inside the township. At *imbarha* beer drinks or in their urban gardens, these men lamented the pace and direction of rural and urban social changes, and continued to distance themselves from developments in the city. They emphasised their identities as real Xhosa men, who wanted no part of the new urban cultural and political forms promoted by the youth. They remained adamant that, while they were in the city, they were not of the city. This commitment to the performance of migrant identities without migrancy, marked the end of an era in which migrants in Duncan Village associated themselves with tribally-oriented *amaqaba* sub-cultures in which they reconstructed their identities as a broad cultural style, based on the contrast between urban and rural life.

This analysis challenged Mamdani's concept of the making of migrant identity and political consciousness. Rather than seeing it simply as part of the "ideological baggage" of a

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particular form of the state in Africa, migrant consciousness, I have argued, might be better conceptualised as a set of more free-floating and imaginative narrative contrasts between urban and rural life worlds. Mamdani's failure to engage with issues of the historical imagination, the making of masculinity and the social construction of identities, leads him to the mistaken conclusion that migrant identities can only ever be an expression of "tribal consciousness" and that migrant politics in Africa can only result in "inter-tribal conflict". However, if one takes a broader view of the construction of migrant identities, then it is possible to see that the narrative contrasts deployed by migrants need not be structured around tribal identities, but can equally be shaped by other ideas, such as race or nation. This rather weakens Mamdani's general argument about the specificity of the African situation, and the role of the "bifurcated state" in the making of African political identities.

In terms of the argument of the dissertation as a whole, this chapter has again shown that the relationship between urban and the rural identities is considerably more complex than is suggested by a linear rise and fall thesis of the kind originally advanced by the Mayers. In Duncan Village, rural identities did not disappear with relocation nor with the tumultuous political events of the 1980s, but were carefully remade and reconstituted, not only in relation to changing material and political realities in rural areas, but also in relation to the politics of the city itself. In the 1980s and 1990s, hostel migrants were no less responsive to the changing township environment than were the politicised youth, discussed in the previous chapter, who also reworked their own understanding of the urban and the rural and its meanings in a changing context. In the next chapter, I shift my attention to the changing positions of women in the township and follow through with my discussion of changing urban identity politics and the reconstitutions of the urban and the rural in Duncan Village in the 1990s.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

RECLAIMING THE HOUSE: WOMEN, CITIZENSHIP AND THE POLITICS OF CONSUMPTION

Introduction

In a recent review of debates on motherhood in twentieth-century South Africa, Walker (1995) has noted that discourses of motherhood have featured centrally in the political and domestic struggles of African women. She argues that African women's organisations with very different constituencies and political agendas have shown a "remarkable congruence of attitudes concerning the social and political identity of women as mothers" (1995: 417). She notes that the work and responsibilities of motherhood – of nurturing, child-care, preserving and protecting the household – have remained at the core of African women's identities. Feminist scholars have raised doubts about the value of such ideologies for the liberation of women. Many have argued that the association of women with familial roles and the identities of wives, daughters and sisters – with what might be regarded as "patriarchal roles" – has undermined their capacity to challenge patriarchal authority in the society. However, Werbner (1999) has recently argued that, despite such concerns, women's active citizenship in post-colonial settings often starts from pre-established cultural domains of female power and rightful ownership, and women's power then evolves from there. It is from within these culturally-defined domains, or the attack upon them, Werbner suggests, that the conditions of possibility for the movement of such women into the public sphere are created, and their progressive defiance of authoritarian structures of power, usually controlled by men. She argues that the conditions for the *feminisation* of citizenship in patriarchal post-colonial societies usually begins with "the reconstruction of citizenship in terms of encompassing qualities associated with women's roles as nurturers, careers and protectors of the family and its individual members" (1999: 26).

In reflecting on the emancipatory capacities of "political motherhood", feminist scholars have criticised the ways in which the public-private dichotomy has been used to identify separate and discrete gendered spaces within society. Werbner (1999) has, for instance, argued that this

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distinction has its roots in Eurocentric theories of society and needs to be rethought in post-colonial situations. Other scholars, like Duncan (1996), have problematised this distinction more generally by suggesting that the private domain is frequently the site of direct intervention by the state and can therefore not be seen as separate from the "public sphere". McDowell (1995) has also argued more generally that a rigid separation of the public and the private as socio-spatial categories ignores the extent to which these sites are fluid and contested. She argues, for instance, that there are multiple public domains that allow for the emergence of cross-cutting identities and spatial practices. Bonnin (2000) has endorsed these concerns for South Africa, arguing that, while white middle-class families in South Africa might experience the household as a "private space", this is not the case for poor black women. They have been hounded in their homes by pass laws and forced to comply with the regulations of forced resettlement. They also often live in crowded environments where privacy is a scarce resource and where, as informal traders, their homes are also their work-places. Bonnin argues that a "conceptual framework which focuses on the sites where women challenge the dominant power relations, rather than on a simply private-public dichotomy, allows us to see that gender relations are continually being reformed across a variety of spaces" (2000: 304). She concludes that challenges to power relations in one space reformulate subjectivities impacting on power relations in another site (*ibid.*).

Two important points emerge from these debates. The first is that, when considering the distinction between the private and the public spheres, we need to be careful not to take these as given and assume that they represent the "ideal types" associated with Western political theories. We need to recognise, as Lister has also pointed out, that "the public-private divide can be understood as a shifting political construction, under constant renegotiation, which reflects both the historical and cultural contests as well as the relative power of different groups" (quoted in Duncan 1996: 133). Or, to put it in Lefebvre's (1991) terms, the public and the private are both contested "representations of spaces" and "spaces of representation" which are materialised into "spatial practice" through the social and spatial struggles that surround their constitution. The second point to note is that the relative power and influence that women in particular can exercise within public and private spaces is determined by the way in which they are constituted, and that there is always a relationship between the two. In considering the role of women within these spaces, I have found de Certeau's (1986) distinction between "tactics" and "strategies" provides a useful way of thinking about women, space and power in Duncan Village. For de Certeau, "tactics" comprise those "small manoeuvres" and "acts of wit" employed by ordinary people to subvert the meanings and contexts of the dominant media and consumer images (1986: 37). "Tactics" are essentially reactive since they emerge from within dominated social spaces and discourses. "Strategies", on the other hand, are viewed as more calculated interventions or

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rationalisations launched from *autonomous* social spaces, "... a place of their own", "... a base from which relations with an exterior composed of targets or threats can be managed" (1986: 36).

In this chapter I'd like to explore Werbner's suggestion that women's claims for new forms of citizenship in post-colonial societies emerge from their control of the "pre-existing cultural domains" of the home, and then gradually work outwards into public spaces. In assessing this process, I use de Certeau's (1986) notions of tactics and strategies as a lens through which to analyse women's claims for citizenship. I begin my analysis by returning to the 1950s, where I assess Pauw's analysis of the matrifocal family as well as other historical sources in this period. I argue that women's ability to control property during this period was critical to the power they came to assert in public, as seen in their participation in political and popular protests of the time. But it was not only the strategies of the independent matriarchs, the notorious *amakhazana*, but the tactics of fashionable young women and urban housewives who used men's money to support their new consumerist desires that threatened male power and authority. Many of the latter looked forward to occupying new modern township houses, where they could express their consumerist aspirations and fill the spaces of their kitchens and lounges with the latest modern furnishings. However, after relocation, these women found themselves entirely dependent on male earnings and authority. Their hopes of moving into a "black suburbia" were consequently dashed by the restrictions imposed on them by the new order. The conditions for urban mothers and housewives deteriorated with the influx of new residents in the 1980s, as they found themselves increasingly pushed back into the old social economy of paraffin. In the second part of the chapter, I focus on the relationship between citizenship and consumption by exploring how women appropriated paraffin as a symbol around which they restructured their domestic relationships and reformulated their "tactics". Here I also investigate the impact of electrification and the resurgence of consumerist orientation amongst township women. Lastly, I relate the increasing levels of crime and violence in the township to the desire of many married and single women to extend their social networks beyond the city and to look for alternative residential options in new low-cost housing estates. At a theoretical level, the chapter explores women's changing representations of space and identity.

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Styles and Strategies: Matriarchs in the 1950s

In his book, *The Second Generation*, Pauw (1963) reported that there were two main trends in household formation amongst urban-born residents in the East Bank location in the 1950s. The first and dominant trend was towards the establishment of nuclear and extended families that were headed and controlled by men. The other secondary trend was towards *matrifocality*, a

situation also widely noted in the Caribbean, where households cohered around a "mother figure", who emerged as household head and key decision-maker in the family (Smith 1988; 1996). In matrifocal families, the household development cycle did not hinge on the maturation of the married couple and eventual dispersal of their children into separate units. Instead, it was inextricably connected to the fate of mothers and other senior women and their ability to control their daughters and other junior women. The growth and consolidation of this family form in East Bank by the 1950s was seen in the fact that there were *twice* as many female-headed, multi-generational households than male-headed ones. Pauw also noted that there were significant numbers of new "mother-and-child households" emerging in the wood-and-iron sections of the township. In reflecting on this situation, Pauw (1963: 52) declared that there was an "unmistakable trend towards the matrifocal family among Xhosa households in the city of East London", and that increasing numbers of women in the city's locations were setting up their own households "without effective male participation". He argued that this trend was undermining the growth of the "normal nuclear family" in the city.

In Pauw's view, the key to matrifocality was the growing economic opportunities available to women in the city. He argued that the easy access that women enjoyed to the labour market and other income-earning activities, especially those related to the control of residential property, meant that the Xhosa husband/father figure had become *dispensable*. He explained that:

> For their income, households depend mainly on labour, trading and rentals; none of these are controlled exclusively by the husband-father. Mothers freely take up employment, venture into large- or small-scale trading and can own properties through inheritance or purchase. Even an unmarried mother can manage to rear her own family without a husband-father, and even without her own mother ... (1963: 162).

The economic power of women in the location in the 1950s was demonstrated in the fact that the majority of "site permits" in East Bank were in the hands of women (Minkley 1996). This meant that there were more landladies than landlords in the location and that they were pocketing most of the profits from the highly lucrative room-rental market. Women also dominated the informal sector by offering a wide range of products and services. In the formal employment sector in the city, women held about 20 % of the available jobs. But the ascendancy of the matrifocal family as a social form in East Bank was not simply a function of the economic opportunities available to women. It was also a structural consequence of the legally-enforced system of labour migration. In a context where men moved between town and country on labour contracts, the opportunities for many town women to enter stable conjugal relationships were limited. Most men in the city were migrants. They were generally not looking for permanent urban unions and the associated

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financial and social responsibilities. Instead they sought lovers – *khwapheni* (meaning, "a thing that is hidden away"). This demand for sexual services and companionship spawned prostitution and other casual unions that helped to create many fatherless families and unwanted pregnancies.

In reflecting on the ability of matrifocal families to survive as functional social units in the location, Pauw (1963) insisted that this was only because of the *disarticulation* of domestic and public power in the city. He explained that in rural Xhosa society, the father figure was an essential link between the matricentral cell of mother and child and the wider society. It was the father that gave the mother and children their politico-jural status and linked the household to productive land and other resources in the village. The male household head defined the social, economic and political status of the family in rural society. In the city, Pauw noted, the father-role was essential neither in upholding the jural-political status of the household, nor in determining access to economic resources. This meant that women could effectively bypass male-dominated circuits of power and authority in the location and quietly got on with the business of making a living and running their fatherless families. One of the key characteristics in the economic success of these households, Pauw argued, was the ability of senior women to hold their families together as close-knit social units where power and authority was ordered along generational lines. In multi-generational matrifocal households power cohered around the "mother figure" and other senior women who expected respect and obedience from junior women. The strongly centripetal tendencies in these units appear to have allowed them to operate like closed business corporations, which lay beyond the reach of male-dominated authority structures in the location.

In a recent review of the position of urban matriarchs in the East Bank in the 1950s, Minkley (1996) argues that their influence extended far beyond the domain of the house. In fact, he argues that the urban matriarchs profoundly shaped the contours of social and political life in the location:

> Independent and single/unmarried women 'owned' the East Bank Location and the men in it. These women were able, over the period, to shape the location in material, social and cultural ways with a great deal more effect and endurance than men from the location elite, factories and rail-yards, male migrants from the rural areas, or the masters of the local state. The community of the location cohered around these "matrifocal family structures", although it was seldom consciously or publicly asserted (1996: 156).

Minkley claims that the public influence of independent urban matriarchs, the *amakazana*, was reflected in the levels of anxiety that local officials and location elites displayed concerning their role and influence in East Bank. Both groups complained that these women were undermining stability in the location and drew a direct connection between the uncontrolled *tsotsis* youth on

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the streets and the proliferation of "fatherless families" which they were said to prefer. Minkley (1996: 162–163) demonstrates the active involvement of the *amakazana* and *amatsotsikazi* (female *tsotsis*) in public protests during the 1950s. When the local state took action to exert greater control over residential property in the location, in particular, independent women were directly affected, and actively participated in the protests associated with these measures.

The presence of women on the streets is strongly supported by photographic records collected for East Bank, where there are many pictures of young fashionable women walking the streets, or of women photographed in motor cars, listening to radios or reclining on a new lounge suite. The way in which young women in these images appropriate the "modern" is indicative of the fact that they did enjoy a street presence and influence and that they were not entirely confined to the home and to their domestic routines (see Plate 20). Mager (1999) in her account of the city in the 1950s said that the streets were also occupied by the so-called *amatsotsikazi*:

> Like their male counterparts, *amatsotsikazi* were associated with style and performance, distinctive dress and body language. They were said to wear "large gypsy-like earrings and narrow skirts", to straighten their hair and fight and shout in the streets. *Amatsotsikazi* displayed aggressive sexuality and flagrantly violated the role of the respectable African women. Indeed, their very status depended on a sexual relationship with an *itsotsi* or group of *amatsotsi* (Mager 1999: 162).

The extreme assertiveness and physical presence of *amatsotsikazi* on the streets was, however, rather atypical of women in East Bank, especially older women, who tended to confine themselves to the home. For young unmarried women street presence was more important, since it brought them into contact with the groups of young men who roamed the streets. But dressing up it seems was not only directed at location men. Nomathemba Sontji recalled that young women would often go to the Kwa-Lloyd offices dressed to the nines, hoping to attract the attention of some influential white official. She explained:

> In those days the most cherished possession for a woman was a site permit for your own house. Rents were high and it was an easy way to earn income. You could run a small business selling liquor, which we used to hide under the floorboards, or other soft goods, like food, *vetkoek* (dough buns) and cooldrink for the kids. I remember that women would do virtually anything to get this "site permit". If you had money you could try to buy one for somebody who could not pay their rent, but women also knew that some officials at the Kwa-Lloyd offices liked "our nice thighs". Women would go there in their most alluring dresses and skirts to satisfy these officials in the hope of getting a site permit.[1]

1. Interview, Sontji, East London, 20 August 2000.

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Plate 20: Power Dressing. Photo 57, three East Bank women pose in an automobile; Photo 58, young fashionable women on the street in East Bank, 1955; Photo 59, East Bank mother and daughter dress up in folk costumes for a function in the location, 1953.

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The women who desired site permits were most often the "run-away girls" and "unmarried mothers" who had fled unwanted pregnancies, authoritarian fathers and cruel, unsupportive husbands in the rural areas (cf. Mager 1999). They thus entered the city because of damaged rural social relations and had little chance or desire to return to their rural homes. They were desperate for urban permanence and security and so would go to great lengths to ensure that they did not have to go back to the rural areas.

Ferguson (1999: 211) claims that it is often the case that the "best-versed in cosmopolitan style are more local than any localist, focused as they are on the 'here' of town life rather than the distant rural 'there'. He goes on the state that "there is no necessary requirement that those who reject the demands of localism must exhibit any special 'involvement with the plurality of contrasting cultures on their own terms'". In East Bank, once women had found a husband or had secured premises for themselves, they often retreated from the street, focusing instead on their homes and their verandahs. It was the young girls who were sent to the communal washing facilities and the small children who were made to collect water and run errands. As women got older, they retreated into the house and focused on their domestic and business roles as mothers, and in the case of independent women, as house-based entrepreneurs and providers. Managing the house and the rental income derived from the backrooms not only provided independent women with a lucrative source of income, but kept them focused on the house. The stories that the daughters of such women told of their experiences in the 1950s stressed the emphasis that their mothers placed on thrift and good housekeeping. One woman explained that her mother was always saving money and that she would scold them if they wasted paraffin or did not make good use of left-over food (*umbeko*). Another recalled that her mother had grown up in the rural areas where nothing was wasted and she would make a point of running the house on a tight budget, and they were also expected to be available all the time to help her out. Her grandmother would refer to the practice of *intsalela*, which means to carry over, which she said was important in good housekeeping.

The narratives of the frugality of independent mothers is a reflection not only of the poverty of the location in the 1950s, but of their own insecurities in a context where there were still very few jobs for women on the labour market. The income generated in the house, after the tenants had paid their rent and what they made from the sales of beer and food, was not conspicuously consumed, but saved. Some former residents said that independent women often had hundreds of pounds hidden in their houses. The attitudes of these women to money and housekeeping reflected a certain insecurity and reluctance to make themselves too conspicuous, lest they became the targets of officials and local elites who were increasingly blaming *amakhazana* (unmarried mothers) for a host of problems in the location. But what is also

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interesting about the narratives of the daughters of these women was that, despite their mothers' rejection of the rural areas as places to be avoided, the models that they developed for good housing were predicated on rural ethics of thrift, frugality and saving. The very same notions of building the *umzi* that migrant men applied to their rural homesteads seem to have been applied by many urban matriarchs to the building up of their own houses in the city. Profits, they would argue, were not gained by throwing money away on smart clothes, or by entering high-risk "push-push" pyramids or rotating credit schemes that some urban women ran. It was better secured, they would say, in savings clubs and in the practice of good housekeeping. The housekeeping values associated with these urban matriarchs seem to mirror those that Gudeman and Riveria (1990) associate with what they call "the peasant-house model", where profits are seen to derive from saving rather than reinvestment as in capitalism (also see Gudeman 1992; Miller 1998).

In the 1950s, then, it seems clear that independent matriarchs played an active role in location life and were able to move onto the streets relatively freely. This created spaces for independent women to find a voice on the streets and, even when their interests were threatened, to participate in public protests. But this did not necessarily mean that they "owned" the location in the sense that Minkley (1996) suggests. Urban matriarchs generally did not wear flashy clothes, flaunt their sexuality, taunt rural women on street corners, or gather in public places. Instead they generally adopted a much more modest and defensive style which was built on the control of pre-existing cultural domains and on the assertion of what Wells (1993) would call "motherism" rather than "feminism".[2] It was younger style-conscious women, the *amatsotsikhazi*, and many of the new urban housewives of the 1950s who became more assertive and threatening, as they refused to become "more local than the locals", engaging instead with the cosmopolitan and consumerist impulses that were washing through the location in the 1950s.

Into Black Suburbia: The Tactics of the House

The 1950s were boom years for the East London economy and saw a host of new household appliances and commodities as well as beauty creams and cosmetics make their way into the shelves of shops in the city. As Burke (1996) has shown in his study of the African consumer

2. Wells (1993) has contrasted "motherism" and "feminism", suggesting that the political campaigns of African women in the 1950s in particular, such as the anti-pass campaigns, had limited potential for success in transforming unequal power relations between men and women because of their "motherist" focus. "Motherism", Wells argues, "is not feminism" because "motherist" movements fight for the rights of mothers and not women. The tendency of African women to emphasise continually their roles

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market in Zimbabwe, the post-war period saw a flood of new cosmetics and domestic products enter this market throughout southern Africa. As a growing port city, East London was an immediate beneficiary of these developments. Sybil Hans recalled that in the 1950s there was suddenly in the 1950s a whole range of new household products directly available to East Bank residents:

> In the 1950s the shops were crammed with new products which were not difficult to get if you had the money. I remember that most of the latest creams and detergents were displayed in the windows of local shops, like Masuali's store, on our corner. You did not even have to go to Oxford street to get the latest stuff (Interview, East London, 30 May 2001).

The marketing of these products was associated with a new set of images for the African housewife, which focused on hygiene, cleanliness and domestic efficiency. The message conveyed through the media was that housewives who used the new products would stand a better chance of keeping their men. For example, a popular Sunlight soap advertisement directed at African urban women said, "I was losing Tom's love ... until I talked to a friend". The advert told the story of how a housewife's use of Sunlight stopped ruining her husband's clothes and how this made her husband exclaim that she was a "wonderful wife" (Kallman 1998: 106). Other adverts for products, for example, Surf and Omo, offered women "the cleanest whiteness wash in the world", while various body creams and skin lighteners promised to keep them beautiful for longer. The dominant image of mature women in the media was that of active home-makers. They were presented as directly responsible for cleanliness, beauty and keeping a home. Younger women, by contrast, were usually presented as hard-working, not yet home-makers, who were seeking good husbands (cf. Burke 1996; Kallman 1998).

In the 1950s the new images of African housewives that projected a morality of "modern domesticity" circulated in East Bank through magazines such as *Drum* and *Bona*, but also through radio programmes, such as Sis Barbara's *Ezamakhosikhuzi* (literally, "for women"), which ran on Radio Bantu every morning. Joyce Tjali recalled that listening to the radio was now very popular in the location and that Sis Barbara was a "hot favourite among East Bank housewives". Her programmes, she said, "gave women all sorts of new ideas and hints on cooking, washing, child-care and household hygiene" (Interview, East London, 10 September 2000). These ideas were supported by the marketing campaigns of the big companies which tried to transform consumption into a spectacle. The BAT fair that ran in September was a case in point. There were demonstration vans, fashion shows, beauty contests, stunts, and point-of-sale promotions. Many

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as mothers in public protests and political activity, both in the 1950s and in the present, she asserts is

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of the demonstrations and contests were meant to be both entertaining and educational. They attracted large crowds and offered free samples and on-site demonstrations on how to use and apply new detergents, creams and household commodities. By the late 1950s, the East London locations were awash with new consumer products, which as Joyce Tjali explained, "opened a whole new world to us women" (Interview, East London, 10 September 2000).

In the 1950s, there was a great desire amongst urban housewives to improve their homes and adopt new, more modern domestic routines – a clean and hygienic environment would establish themselves as modern and efficient housewives. However, one of the problems in the locations was that houses were overcrowded and people were poor. Moreover, many home-owners relied on the income they could make from their houses, either by using them for business activities or by cramming as many tenants as they could into back rooms. Dedicating entire rooms to domestic display was a luxury that most families could not afford, but it nevertheless remained an ideal. It was seen as a sign of considerable affluence and status for families to be able to have a reception room in their houses, as I explained in Chapter 3. For the majority of home owners, front-room space was too valuable to devote simply to domestic display. But women also used these front rooms to host tea parties. Mavis Bam recalled that:

> These tea parties went on all the time. They were big events for the host who had prepared everything. Everything had to be perfect. The room had to be cleared of all. Sometimes two rooms in the house were prepared. Everything was spic and span and shiny by the time the guests arrived. It was the one time where the house was really a show-piece. There was always a *masikanda* (guitarist) at these get-togethers to provide the music and various things were raffled off, including the chicken, which the women would compete to purchase by putting money in the kitty.
>
> The tea parties were mainly for the older women and there was much discussion about their home and children. It was a real opportunity for them to get away from their husbands and many tea parties went on through the night as the women switched from tea to "nips" (brandy and wine) as the evening wore on (Interview, East London, 30 May 2000).

Tea parties were not only about domestic display and competition though, they were also centrally about making money. As Tumi Zwakala explained, "The success of a tea party would be judged by the number of guests who came as well as by the amount of cash made. No-one went to the trouble of organising these events without hoping to make money" (Interview, East London, 10 October 2000). To gain access to money for themselves, women embarked on a range of other schemes. Mavis Bam recalls the 1950s precursors of what are today known as "push-push" (pyramid) schemes in the township: "We used to call it 'links'. Each person would put in a guinea, that is one pound ten, and you would be paid out for every ten new members you found"

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thus seen as a matter of "colluding with patriarchy" rather than challenging it.

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Plate 21: Chicken and Tea. Photo 60, group of urban housewives gather for tea-party, notice the chicken in the center of the picture, which would have been raffled for the benefit of the host; Photo 61, members of a sewing group, 1956; Photo 62, women's group gathers for a function outside the Peacock Hall, 1954.

(Interview, East London, 30 May 2000). There were also other *imigalelo* clubs and credit schemes, but Marvis says that "links" were the big money-makers for women (see Plate 21).

For younger women who did not own homes and could not transform domesticity into a virtue, their bodies were the source of transformation and the expression of identity. For the daughters of those who were entering the new urban working class, expenditure on clothes and cosmetics was seen as a priority. Sybil Hans recalls that there was much talk of the new lotions, creams and cosmetics on the market: they were always talking about what "we could wear to the next dance and what new beauty products were available on the market" (Interview, East London, 30 May 2000). Mrs Mthimba remembers that at the communal washing facilities, where the younger women gathered to wash dishes and clean clothes, the discussion focused less on the power of detergents and more on new beauty soaps, skin creams and clothes. She said:

> As young women we often talked about what we called "can't gets" – those coveted products, like scented soaps and special perfumes, that would make young women beautiful and desirable. "Can't gets" were those desired things that women wanted but were difficult to have because they were either not locally available or very expensive. "Can't gets" always caused a lot of tension and jealousy among women and would provoke arguments. It was natural because in those days every woman wanted to be stylish and beautiful.[3]

In East Bank, young women's bodies thus became critical markers of identity. According to Mrs Mthimba, the application of clothes, skin creams and cosmetics could be very revealing:

> You could tell the girls that grew up in the rural areas from those born in the city by the way they used skin lighteners. In the rural areas, these creams were only really applied to the face, while in the location we smeared them all over our bodies, including our necks. So you could often tell the girls from the rural areas from their dark necks and the fact that they liked to wear hats, which was not fashionable amongst us young girls. It was something that we associated with older women.[4]

But the ability of young town women to get out in public to display their bodies in public was limited by the strict domestic routines that governed their home life. In many male-headed and matrifocal households, it was felt that it was inappropriate for young women to spend too much time on the street, unless they had a specific reason for being there, such as running an errand to the shop or making their way to the communal washing areas. In the East Bank, mothers exercised enormous control over their daughters' time and labour, and relied heavily on them to manage the households while their sons and husbands were out of the house. Daughters, on the other hand, used all sorts of pretexts to get out of the house to meet their friends. But they were

3. Interview, East London, 21 August 2001.

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not very successful in these endeavours during the week. And it was mainly at the weekend that they were allowed to participate in structured social events, such as dances, beach outings, sports events, watching movies and social club get-togethers at the community centre. It was here that all the effort and excitement generated during the week around clothes and cosmetics were finally put together. When they were out in public places, these women wished to show off their vibrant skins, lightened with Ponds Vanishing cream, their stockinged legs and their shiny dark wigs. As one woman explained, there was "a fine line between looking good and looking cheap – like the *amatsotsikazi*".

The other interesting point to observe in relation to dress, power and style was the dignity that traditional dress bestowed on women. There were many special occasions, such as Mfengu day, which took place in March, and at various concerts and pageants, older women in particular often chose to dress up in folk costume (see Plate 20). Donning such dresses did not mean that these women were Red rather than School, because in this context folk dress was not a statement of social identity as much as one of fashion. The fact that many educated urban women from the 1950s owned such outfits and admitted to wearing them on "special occasions" is indicative of their association with dignity and respect. These women would, of course, never wear these dresses for everyday-use because in that context they carried a very different meaning, being associated with Redness. In East Bank there were nevertheless Red women who took to the streets in a more modest version of the colourful and picturesque folk costumes seen at functions by their urban-born counterparts. This is clearly seen in the photographic record, which shows such women in crowd scenes or just going about their business on the streets. The fact that these women moved around so freely without the harassment and victimisation to which their male counterparts were often exposed, suggests that they were not seen to have a stake in the politics of space in the location. They were viewed simply as visitors, who stood outside the style wars of the streets and were afforded freedom of movement and respect wherever they went.

In the East Bank location, as Minkley (1996) shows, male anxieties about the changing position of women in the location was usually directed at independent single women. Yet the threat to male power and influence was not confined to the *amakhazana*, it also came from within their own homes, from the rapidly-changing aspirations, identities and consumerist tendencies of their own wives and daughters, who demanded more money and freedom to express themselves as modern women. While women were demanding money to become "perfect wives", as the adverts said they should, they were not always complying with the projected media images of

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4. *Ibid.*

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the perfect wife. For instance, men felt very uneasy about the way in which their wives were engaging in all sorts of independent money-making endeavours, which constantly took them out of their own homes, in the name of this new domesticity. As Mr Tom said:

> We never really knew what our wives were doing with all our money. They always said that they were spending it on the household, but then we discovered that they were also involved in these clubs and money-making schemes. Sometimes this led to them having affairs with other men. This made us wonder why they needed so much money to buy all the new cosmetics – who they were making themselves beautiful for![5]

Men's complaints about the wonted sexuality of the *amatsotsikazi* and the economic strategies of independent women were, in some ways, projections of their worries about their own wives. The evidence also suggests that, when the reality of relocation set in, many women were looking forward to moving into proper new houses, where they were hoping to translate the "can't gets" into realities. When the municipal bulldozers and trucks rolled in to flatten the East Bank in the mid-1960s, it marked the end of an era of the urban matriarchs, many of whom, as Minkley (1996) explains, were "married to beer" and derived good incomes by renting out their backrooms. Yet, at the same time, it also marked a new era for many urban housewives who saw in the landscape of apartheid something modernist, a space in which to expand and consolidate their aspirations and desires as modern town women.

In the new Duncan Village, as I have already indicated in an earlier chapter, women's desires often turned into disappointment. Firstly, there was no question of reconstituting female-headed households here. Women who were not part of male-headed nuclear families were not welcome in the restructured township. Secondly, the focus in the city was not on the creation of new industries, with feminised labour forces, as was the case in Mdantsane. The aim in the city was to consolidate and stabilise existing industries and their almost exclusively male work forces. There were consequently few opportunities for the new Duncan Village women to enter formal-sector employment, outside of nursing and domestic work. There were also very limited opportunities for earning extra money within their tightly-controlled neighbourhoods. It was only in the 1970s that shebeens opened again in the township, and even here there was always the threat of arrest, closure and even deportment for those involved. In the 1960s and 1970s, many urban housewives and mothers felt the pinch, not only of the economic downturn in the urban economy, but of a closure of a range of informal income-earning activities.[6] This meant that

5. Interview, East London, 10 August 2001.
6. The changing economic fortunes of the urban economy during this period was closely related to the fact that the city was wedged between two hopelessly under-developed homelands which both had aspirations towards political "independence" and seemed destined to swallow up East London. During this period, cautious investors took their capital elsewhere, resulting in the collapse of the great

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at precisely the time that women were given new domestic spaces to fill with appliances and consumer goods that they had so coveted in the East Bank, they found it difficult to fill their houses with modern furniture. As one woman explained: "The thing I found most difficult in the new houses was that feeling of emptiness, not only on the streets, but in my house. Those brick walls and hollow rooms echoed and I had nothing left to fill them with. It made me long for our old crowded house in East Bank". The design of the houses with their own toilets and ablutions at the back, as mentioned earlier, also contributed to feelings of disconnection and alienation. The great irony for many of the new townships housewives of the 1960s and 1970s was their fantasies of modern domesticity, inculcated by Sis Barbara, women's magazines, and the BAT fair, turned out to be a nightmare. As Audrey Jokazi explained:

> Many of us could not wait to get into our new houses. We had really felt the overcrowding in the East Bank and couldn't wait to get some more space to ourselves. If you ask people now what they thought then, many will say that they never wanted to leave East Bank. This is not entirely true because many of us did not like the idea of having our community broken up, but at the same time we could see that the new houses were going to be better – new, clean and spacious.
>
> It was such a strange feeling when we eventually moved into these houses. They were empty and cold inside with cement floors. We were so far away from each other and everything was neatly arranged. It felt very strange to me not to have the hustle and bustle of a busy house ... It started to feel very isolated and alone in my new house, although I wanted a four-room house. My husband was away at work all day and the streets were quiet. There were hardly any visitors and the hours dragged. I used to listen to the radio – there was no TV in those days – while I washed clothes, cleaned the house and ironed, but this was not the same as talking to friends or watching people go by on the street. To my surprise, I started to get very lonely and started to wish that we had not been moved at all. More and more, I felt that I wanted to get a job myself just to get out of the house, but my husband did not like that idea.[7]

These feelings were compounded by the economic vulnerability of women who were now entirely dependent on the husbands for "house money". In this context, women were forced to abandon the "strategies" they had adopted in the 1950s and turned their attention to the "tactics" of the house – to "small manoeuvres" and "acts of wit" within the dominated space of the house. They took on the mantle of urban housewives and, despite disappointments, turned their attention to pressurising their husbands and sons for greater access to their income (see Plate 22 & Plate 23).

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economic boom of the 1950s, when East London seemed destined to follow Durban and Port Elizabeth on trajectories of rapid economic growth and development. This never materialised, resulting in the increasing need for political control and incentivised industrial decentralisation programmes to shore up the local and regional economy (cf. Swilling 1997; Nel 1990; Hirsch & Green 1982; Minkley 1992).

7. Interview, East London, 10 July 2001.







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Plate 22: New Interiors. Photo 63, young upwardly mobile couple rearrange living room; Photo 64, couple celebrates their new kitchen; Photo 65, housewife takes pride in her kitchen.







Plate 23: Women's styles in the1970s. Photo 66, mini skirts and high heels on a Duncan Village street corner, 1974; Photo 67, fashionable mother proudly poses with her new electric stove; Photo 68, experimenting with black American fashion-styles of the 1970s.

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Plate 24: Clubs and Societies. The images above were assembled from Duncan Village women's own photograph albums of the 1990s. In viewing the pictures in these albums, it was striking to note how often women photographed themselves in situations where they were either giving or receiving gifts. These forms of representation contrasted starkly with those seen in male photography, which usually highlighted male importance and public profile. Photo 69, Club member receives large new electrical appliance at end-of-year function; Photo 70, Women's money changes hands; Photo 71, *Spaza* shop owner and her daughter prepare for function; Photo 72, Birthday Club meeting.

One way in which women in shack areas consolidated these relationships was through the communal cooking of *imifino*, a traditional women's dish made of vegetables and mealie meal. The vegetables and herbs for the dish would be gathered by older women in the open veld and wooded areas outside the township. These herbs and vegetables would then be cooked on a paraffin stove in the shack areas or yard and shared among women. Making *imifino* was a thoroughly communal exercise that involved the sharing of various items like food, fat, paraffin, appliances and labour among women. The women would say that *imifino* is a dish for women and children. Men were never present at *imifino* gatherings. They claimed that *imifino* was women's food and that, if consumed by men, it made them "lazy" and "weak", that it sapped their strength and masculinity. Men contrasted *imifino* to their preferred diet of samp and meat. It was, however, occasionally revealed that some men ate *imifino* that their wives brought home after these gatherings, but they would never admit to doing so. The association of paraffin with *imifino* reinforced the gendered construction of this fuel and implicated it in the closed and secretive social world of women's neighbourhood networks.

Unlike male beer drinks that attracted kin and clansmen from far afield, the cooking of *imifino* was very much a neighbourhood affair in Duncan Village. There were no rules that excluded certain kinds of women from participation. Every woman in the neighbourhood who wanted to participate was invited. As one women explained, "those who share in the dish are not necessarily those who contribute to it". Another stated that "the idea behind making it is to socialise and talk about a whole range of issues from life in the rural areas to raising children in the city". *Imifino* cooking provided women with a social space of their own in which they could discuss local problems and neighbourhood issues. It established a locus of power within the neighbourhood where sharing relationships and support networks could be constructed and consolidated. But *imifino* cooking did more than reinforce existing patterns of social interaction; it created new opportunities for women to expand their social and economic horizons. Through their involvement in the social networks associated with paraffin, urban mothers integrated themselves into their neighbourhoods in new sorts of ways. The idea of urban-born women participating in and even organising *imifino* cooks, which were understood to be a rural tradition, would have been unthinkable a decade earlier, when these women were more closely focused on their own households, and reluctant to form close relationships with rural women in the city. By allowing these events to take place in their yards, they opened the door to new relationships with women of their age groups who came from a wide variety of places.

This process of extending women's social networks beyond the household was also expressed in the formation of savings and grocery clubs, which were often discussed at *imifino* cooks. These clubs, better known as *umgalelo*, consisted of groups of women who decided among

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did not know how to use fuel to achieve more than one objective at a time. She said that they did not think to leave the dishes to be washed with the hot water left over after making tea, nor did they care whether they used a whole litre of paraffin to make a pot of samp. She explained that it was also unnecessary for her daughters to make a cooked lunch of soup and rice rather than eating bread and saving the fuel for the evening meal. Younger women showed far less care and interest in dealing with paraffin and were often accused of being irresponsible with the fuel, and ran the risk of causing fire.

But it was not only in the circuits of domestic exchange that women used paraffin as a social commodity. By embedding themselves in the paraffin economy, women immediately connected themselves to the myriad of *spaza* shops that cluttered every block in the township. At these shops women would interact with other women who would sell paraffin to them on credit or for cash. Men were seldom prepared to enter this feminised world. If paraffin was needed for the household and their wives were not around, they would send children to the *spaza* shop to buy paraffin "on their mothers' behalf". If paraffin had to be bought on credit, men would usually tell children to put it on their wives' credit account. Likewise, when *spaza* shop owners came to collect outstanding credit in the neighbourhood, they did not approach men to cover the costs of paraffin bills. In this way, men minimised their association with paraffin and women formed tightly-knit networks around the exchange and control of paraffin in their homes.

But the most significant circuits of exchange for struggling urban housewives were not those at the *spaza* shops, they were non-commoditised, inter-household exchanges associated with this fuel. When a household ran out of fuel and there was no money to go to the *spaza* shop, it was invariably women or children who went to a neighbour or relative to borrow a cup of paraffin. Where children were involved, these exchanges were not made in their "own names", but in those of their mothers or grandmothers. Relationships within these networks were based on sharing and reciprocity. Paraffin, food and other items exchanged between women (or in the names of women) would usually not have to be repaid immediately. Only in a few cases did we find that women who borrowed paraffin within the neighbourhood or yard would be asked to pay it back within a specified time. This only happened when the household from which the paraffin was borrowed did not have enough for themselves. It was also clear that paraffin was not given a specific status within these exchange networks. If paraffin was borrowed, there were no social rules specifying that the paraffin had to be returned. As a commodity it was lumped together with other basic-need items such as mealie meal, soap, sugar and salt, and was subject to the same rules of exchange as all these items. In this respect, the feminisation of neighbourhood networks was far more encompassing than the *spaza* shop's social networks. Men had no problem buying groceries from *spaza* shops – they were merely reluctant to go to these outlets for paraffin.

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In Duncan Village in the 1960s and 1970s, many women insisted that if they were to be the home-makers and housewives of the new township they needed an weekly "allowance" in order to perform these tasks effectively. Women now colluded with the discourses of their own subordination in order to extract income from their spouses. By dividing household expenditure into recurrent bills, such as rent, and then insisting that most of the rest be given over to them to "manage the house", urban women tried to show their husbands that they retreated from the consumerist tendencies that had so threatened them in the 1950s. They suggested that they were now approaching the tasks of housekeeping with the same frugal determination of the poor urban matriarchs of the old location. They emphasised the importance of thrift and embraced the new bargain chain stores, like OK Bazaars, Pep Stores and Russells in Oxford Street, rather than the specialist shops that had captured their imagination in the 1950s. By showing restraint, women set out to demonstrate that they could manage money effectively and that they were not the spend-thrifts they had been accused of in the 1950s. In embarking on these tactics, the point that urban housewives were now continually making was that their husbands should recognise, at least in theory, that it was morally correct and economically sound for money to be transferred from men to women. Moreover, that transfer would ensure that the household was properly managed and that all the requisite domestic duties were performed. In order to encourage this flow of money "down" the social hierarchy from men to women, urban housewives played down their consumerist aspirations and emphasised that they were now simply homemakers and mothers, who were focused on nurturing their families and maintaining their husbands' houses.

Associated with these arguments that the morally appropriate route for money to travel was from men to women, was the idea – propagated by urban housewives – that in the hands of men money was dangerous. Women argued that their husbands and men in general were not good at managing money, that they had an inherent propensity to squander it, and that they were inclined to "waste" it on other women or alcohol. Women, on the other hand, they said, knew how to handle money; they were *naturally* astute and responsible with money. They said that they knew how to save money and that they did not squander it. The claims of women, which were quite widely accepted by men, seemed to be based on their ability to extract money from "dangerous" extra household exchange circuits and "socialise" it in the home. What the new urban housewives were saying, in essence, was that for dangerous money that their husbands earned to be "stabilised" it had to be brought into the moral economy of the household. Many women in Duncan Village resented the level of their dependence on male earnings in the post-1960 period and remembered the 1950s with great nostalgia, as a period when women controlled their own incomes and their own destinies. As Tombi Dlwani recalled:

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themselves to save a certain amount of money every week/fortnight/month. In Duncan Village, these clubs were dominated by women and usually geographically bound in the sense that the members came from a particular neighbourhood or area. There were essentially two ways in which these clubs worked. Firstly, there were rotating savings or credit clubs in which the members decided amongst themselves to pay out their collective contributions to a different member every month or week. Thus, if there were six members in the club paying R100 a month, the members could expect to get R600 every 6 months. In the second type of club, payouts occurred over a longer period as funds were accumulated and saved over time and then divided up among the members. This type of club often took the form of what people call a "grocery club". In this type of club money was accumulated during the year, often starting in February, and then used to purchase groceries in bulk for all the members at Christmas time. The groceries were shared out equally among the women according to the contributions they had made to the club (see Plate 24).

To survive, savings clubs were very strict about payments. Club members were given a chance to miss one payment, but after that they could be expelled from the club. In the case of expulsion, members might be liable to lose their contributions. The sanctions that encouraged payment were generally more social than economic. Women kept up with their payments in order to remain connected to other women in the group. Failure to meet obligations to the group often meant that women lost access to the support of other women. By failing to keep up with their payments, women ran the risk of earning a reputation for being unreliable or selfish. Although there is much more to be said about savings and grocery clubs, the main point for the discussion here is the way in which women justified their participation in these clubs. Most women, especially those with families, expressed the desire to belong to such clubs. But they never claimed that their motivation for belonging to such clubs was to make money for themselves. In all the cases, women justified their participation in these clubs in terms of meeting their obligations to their families and close kin. However, it was clear that rotating credit clubs in particular were often linked to women's accumulation strategies.

Men were, however, often very anxious and suspicious about their wives' club activities. They were concerned that large numbers of single women belonged to these clubs and that the wives were engaged in these clubs to make money that they could use to buy luxuries for themselves. The use of these clubs by some women to finance new furniture purchases or the acquisition of electrical appliances, fuelled men's anxieties. Women in male-headed households, on the other hand, constantly tried to assure men that they were participating in the clubs for the benefit of the household as a whole. In Duncan Village men were especially concerned with the rotating credit clubs, and I recorded a number of cases where men tried to gain access to these

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clubs as members. In most cases they were denied access. They found the grocery clubs much less threatening and were more willing to allow their wives and daughters to belong to these. For those women who could afford to participate in the club scene in Duncan Village, there were considerable benefits to be had; not only in terms of the income they earned, but also in terms of the sets of relationships they were able to build up outside their home. It was through the club scene that some women were able to translate "tactics" into "strategies".

Women in Duncan Village developed a deeply ambivalent relationship to paraffin as a domestic fuel. On the one hand, they felt that paraffin sapped their energy, stole their time and restricted their mobility. Women knew that paraffin increased their domestic loads and associated them with fire disasters. At the same time, however, women were well aware of the power of paraffin as a social lubricant, which facilitated and maintained their domestic and neighbourhood support networks. For women, paraffin seemed by its nature to encourage solidarity, sharing and mutual support. The social control that women exercised over paraffin could easily be translated tighter control over household affairs. The social meanings of paraffin could be used to keep men out of women's business and could be manipulated to mystify household budgeting and resource allocation. It allowed women to continue to exert pressure on male earnings.

Beyond the household, as we have seen, these "tactics" evolved into "strategies" as women used paraffin to delimit spaces of "their own", a locus of power within which they could devise more calculated and strategic intervention to undermine the dominant power relations at the neighbourhood level. The feminised social networks built around *spaza* shops, the borrowing and lending in women's names, the delimiting and control of extra-household exchanges, and the creation of *imifino* cooking groups allowed women to force open social spaces of their own outside of the dominant patriarchal ideology. In de Certeau's terms, such strategies amounted to "an effort to delimit one's own place in a world bewitched by the invisible powers of the Other" (1986: 36). The creation of these feminised social spaces was absolutely vital to the survival of many female-headed households which depended heavily on neighbourhood-level networks and invested a great deal of time and effort keeping these restricted circuits of exchange open. Single women were often at the forefront of the effort to prevent men from joining credit clubs and other informal societies dominated by women. They would repeat the point that men did not know how to deal with money and that their presence in these clubs would only lead to corruption and disunity. To the extent that the gendered definition of paraffin served to keep certain circuits of exchange open and others closed, women had a vested interest in the dominant constructions of paraffin as a commodity in Duncan Village.

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Modernist Aspirations and Exit Options

Although in the 1980s and early 1990s it was not easy for women in Duncan Village to avoid participation in the social economy of paraffin, few would deny that the future lay with electricity and that the sooner they were given access to it the better. Thus in 1996, when the first phase of the Duncan Village electrification programme, involving 720 households, was completed in C-section and the lights were finally turned on, local residents took to the streets in spontaneous celebration (*Daily Dispatch*, 15 March 1996). As young people partied at shebeens throughout the location, many proclaimed that access to electricity meant that they "had not been forgotten by the RDP" (*ibid.*). Further electrification projects followed in D-hostel and eventually the programme reached Duncan Village (Proper) in 1998 where 99 % of the pre-existing electrical infrastructure had been destroyed in the 1985 riots. Despite the public euphoria, we found that the shift from paraffin to electricity did not occur as rapidly as many policy-makers imagined it would (Bank *et al.* 2000). Most women in the township were reluctant to do away with paraffin altogether, and continued to pursue multiple fuel-use strategies and still used paraffin extensively in the preparation of food. Rich (1997: 228) has recently argued that the incorporation of new technologies, such as VCR's and computers, in homes in the West have generally served to render domestic space "less female". He argues that as a result of changes in technology:

> Women seem increasingly disenfranchised within the space of the home, the sphere that was supposed to represent the most sacred and the refuge of last resort. I would argue that women are becoming marginalised in the very space to which they used to be so central. As technologies transform the household, those women who still occupy the position of stay-at-home wife/mother are in danger of becoming a species of retired railroad car, dumped on the siding as new locomotives speed by (Rich 1997: 228).

The arrival of electrification in Duncan Village suddenly brought men back into the house as they wanted to sit around and watch TV and were quick to associate themselves with the positive images associated with the acquisition of modern household and entertainment appliances. This has important implications for the gendered definitions of social space associated with paraffin. The intrusion of men into the "inside" space of the house or the shack, especially at times when they had not generally been at home, gave rise to new tensions as old spatial divisions were open to redefinition. Many women felt irritated by the mess and extra labour associated with the extended presence of men and children in the home. They felt an increased sense of confinement in an already cramped and grossly overcrowded environment.

In the old space economy of paraffin, it was necessary for children to be around the home in case they were needed to run errands or do household chores, but they still played outside.

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With television and other home-based entertainment appliances, they wanted to spend more time *inside* and many women now complained that they were always under their feet and not as willing as they used to be to help them out. For women, the invasion of the home brought changes and improvements to their lives, but such rewards often came at a cost. In a one- or two-roomed shack it is not easy to diffuse domestic tension spatially by getting children to go to "their rooms" or by moving appliances elsewhere. Everything had to be done in highly-compressed, multi-functional spaces that were already over-utilised. Electrical appliances quickly emerged as important symbols of modernity and upward mobility and were often high on the agenda of women's list of priorities, as some of the images presented in the plates below indicate. But such shifts also had ambiguous social meaning for women, who had learnt how to use the paraffin social economy to deepen their control of the moral circuits of affection and exchange within and beyond the house.

The acquisition of electrical appliances served as a strong maker of style and identity among certain social categories, the most significant of which were single women with good jobs – nurses, teachers and permanently-employed semi-skilled workers – who did not need to rely on men for income. For this cohort of women the acquisition of electrical appliances had become *the* marker of status and difference in Duncan Village in the 1990s. It separated them, as an aspiring professional class of young independent women, from the social economy of paraffin that inscribed a form of domesticity and dependence, which clashed with their most basic perceptions of themselves as self-sufficient, independent women. Due to their economic positions, many of these women felt comfortable outside the multiple dependence of the paraffin economy. They did not feel the need to seek bonds of sisterhood with other single and married women in the township. They were seldom actively involved in the micro-level exchanges and reciprocities, which constituted the social fabric of female-centred neighbourhood networks. They felt that they could stand alone with their children, and they wished to enact this social difference and upward mobility. For these women, one of the primary ways of achieving this in the mid-1990s was through the acquisition of electrical appliances and by the total rejection of paraffin as an acceptable domestic fuel. In some of these households, electrical appliances literally cluttered their homes. Every surface in their cramped houses or shacks was adorned with appliances of one kind or another (TV's, kettles, irons, microwave ovens, hi-fi's, etc.). Indeed, in many of these cases, investment in electrical appliances proved to be the most significant item on the household budget as literally hundreds of rands were deposited every month in savings clubs and hire-purchase schemes.

Close investigation of these cases revealed that competitive consumerist values of these women derived not so much from the experience at the neighbourhood level, but from their

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association with other women of their class in the work-place, at the clinic, in the school or at the factory or service sector concerned. It was here that their consumerism and class aspiration were nurtured and honed. It was among their workmates that they discussed their quest for change, modernity and self-advancement. Significantly, most of these women acquired the cash for their appliance purchases, not through neighbourhood-based clubs and associations, but through competitive work-based rotating credit clubs which lacked the egalitarian ethos of neighbourhood clubs. These competitive rotating credit clubs tended to operate on monthly instalments of hundreds rather than the tens of rands common in the township. The ability to save and accumulate through these clubs was a matter of considerable pride to these women and they often tried to outdo each other by increasing the stakes by raising the monthly instalments. Inability to keep up with the demanding and often escalating monthly instalments was treated as a sign of failure and a source of humiliation among their peers. The consequence of competitive saving was that the pay-outs were enormous by local standards. Work-based clubs thus gave semi-skilled and professional single women the buying power to purchase a major new electrical appliance on a regular basis. And, in an environment where there were few other forms of investment, besides clothes, which could define these women's social aspirations, the accumulation of household appliances was one of the few ways in which this cohort of women could distance themselves socially from their poorer neighbours.

Many young women in living-together households also expressed strong consumerist tendencies. By the mid-1990s, many of the youth in Duncan Village turned their attention away from the social values of the *amaqabane* political culture, with its anti-materialist leanings, and embraced a new ideology based on transience, social mobility and consumerism. The social and material contradictions that emerged from this shift away from family, social obligation and community responsibility was discussed in Chapter 5, but perhaps the most serious contradictions within these households were those based on gender. In Duncan Village living-together relationships tended to be short and fiery, characterised by high levels of tension between young men and women who often had quite different expectations of what these relationships were able to deliver. In the case of women the presumption of marriage was seldom realised and in the case of young men the aspiration towards stable, permanent employment never materialised. This resulted in a failure of expectations which fundamentally undermined the social philosophy on which living-together relationships were based in the first place. With the struggle over income and the pursuit of individualised accounting and budgeting standard features of many of these units, the couples involved in these households found it extremely difficult to save for anything that could not be regarded as an individual possession. Thus while the notion of accumulating household appliances appealed to many of those living in these units,

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the necessity of pooling resources and planning ahead often proved too much to ask of household units that were lucky if they lasted together for more than a couple of years.

To the extent that new appliances were purchased in living-together units they were most often identified as "individual possessions" that would be taken from one relationship to another. In these households young men and women adopted different strategies of appliance acquisition. The men, as we have seen, showed little interest in the accumulation of kitchen appliances and generally focused their attention on entertainment appliances, such as radios, TV's and hi-fi equipment. In setting out to acquire this equipment young men tended to rely on the grey or black market. Stolen goods were often discussed or even displayed at shebeens and those men interested in purchasing them would enter into negotiations to buy them for cash. Thus many of the appliances brought into the household by men were often recycled stolen goods. Young women, on the other hand, focused more on kitchen appliances and were much more inclined to purchase these through legal channels. They used their own savings as well as extra income that could be made through club membership to assist them in their purchasing strategies. In some of the better-off young households there was more of an ethos of building the house together. But the general tendency among the youth was towards personalising commodities and appliances and using them as an extension of their own identities which were made and remade as much on the street as in the home.

The appropriation of appliances thus generated a new social and spatial dynamics within households, but they were also significant ciphers of identity in the public domain. Silverstone and Hirsch (1992) suggest that for domestic appliances to acquire meaning in the public domain a process of "conversion" is required. In other words, these commodities need to be used and displayed to indicate membership and competence in public (and class) cultures. I have already referred to this process above in relation to skilled and semi-skilled single mothers with middle-class aspiration. In this case, conversion occurred through work-related networks as these women used the accumulation of domestic appliances to assert class membership. The emphasis on the public meanings and stylistic implications of appliance acquisition was also seen in youth households where the acquisition of appliances seemed to be far less significant as labour-saving devices in the home and far more important as markers of identity outside the home. Cooking and entertainment appliances, like clothes or cosmetics, were extensively used and displayed within the neighbourhood and on the streets to affirm peer-group membership and demonstrate social and economic success and stability. The need to constantly "convert" appliances from the domestic to the public domain was a function of the insecurity that especially young women felt in these units. By displaying appliances conspicuously, young women attempted to demonstrate that their current relationships were stable and that their partners were committed to home-

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making, even though they were often the ones who had bought the appliances. For young men, appliances such as a portable hi-fi system, carried immense symbolic value and served to affirm their membership within public youth cultures.

By the mid-1990s, and especially after the introduction of electricity in Duncan Village neighbourhoods, young and especially professional women started to speak the language of the "can't gets" and "wanna gets", that had so dominated the 1950s. Older township mothers and poorer women who now often struggled to raise their families on their own were less inclined to be enthusiastic about the new consumerist trends. They continued to speak of the art of thrifty house-keeping and the value of older practices, and seemed much more reluctant to leave the paraffin social economy which created the networks they needed for everyday survival. But in Duncan Village in the 1990s there was a general desire amongst women to explore various exit options to help them escape from the increasingly violent and crime-ridden neighbourhoods in which they lived. The attempts by women to build networks beyond the township were particularly strongly pursued by single women and unmarried mothers. For those with secure employment in the city their aspirations were focused on moving out of the township into one of the many new low-cost housing estates, like Scenery Park, Reeston and Braelyn Extension, which offered a more secure and peaceful environment for them to bring up their children. But unmarried mothers and matriarchs who did not have the security of good jobs looked more to the rural areas than to other urban settlements as a potential source of security for themselves and their children. This marked a significantly different trend from that of the 1950s, where matrifocal families rooted themselves in the locations and showed little interest or desire to return to the rural areas whence they came.

But women with rural links were also careful not to exaggerate their rural connections, because the last thing they wanted was to ostracise themselves from the urban networks. Women with such aspirations did not don folk customs, turbans or even German-print dresses, lest they alienated themselves from women within their neighbourhood networks. The last thing single mothers in the shack areas wanted to be accused of was having a bad attitude or being selfish. To avoid accusations of this sort it was imperative that they did their best to show a commitment to the needs of other women in their neighbourhoods, even if they secretly sent a large portion of what they earned back to the rural areas to support their children and relatives. In Duncan Village, women liked to reassure themselves of their common plight and struggle for survival, of their bonds of sisterhood and their common plights as struggling mothers. They did not appreciate women who kept focusing on developments elsewhere and seemed to lack a commitment to their neighbourhoods and the social relationships within them.

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The two cases below provide examples of single women with regular incomes, who carefully disguised their rural links, but invested most of their earnings outside the city. Ntombokuqala was acutely aware of these dynamics soon after she had arrived in Duncan Village from Mooiplaas in the mid-1980s, and quickly befriended her neighbours by offering them gifts of food and paraffin when she had extra income in the household. When I first met Ntombokuqala, who was in her mid-thirties and living with her teenage son, I was under the impression that she only had one child and that she had been born and brought up in the city. But I was later to discover that she had three other younger children who had been sent to live with her mother in Mooiplaas. She said that every month she would send amounts of between R100 and R150 home to support them, but was careful not to publicise this amongst the women in her urban social network. In fact, it was only when I visited her home in Soto village in Mooiplaas two years later that I realised how much of her earnings had been squirreled away outside the city. Her mother explained that her daughter was very regular with her remittance and, not only put her children through school, but had also bought a whole range of new appliances and household furniture which she had left with her mother to look after. These items had all been delivered to her home by Lewis Store in East London where Ntombokuqala had an account. Her mother said that, while it was convenient to have a well-equipped house in the village, her daughter could easily take all her possessions away with her if she found better accommodation for her whole family in the city.

Patricia was another single mother who had invested some of her savings in her home village. She was the mother of six, who lived in the free-standing shack areas of Duncan Village since 1984 without a stable male companion. Patricia was born in the rural areas of the former Ciskei in 1952. She came to East London at the age of 18 to live with relatives but had to move into town as a live-in domestic when her relatives were relocated to Mdantsane. In 1984, Patricia left her domestic job and moved into one of the new shack areas in Duncan Village. From here she started a small business selling sweets and fruit at the bus station. By the late 1980s, her business had grown to include a *spaza* shop and a shebeen that operated from her three-roomed shack. Although Patricia never married, she has six children from different men. During the 1970s, when she was employed as a maid, she saved enough money to build a home for her children in the countryside. Her children were educated in her home village, where she enlisted the support of her mother and her sister to care for them. She compensated her kin for their support by sending money home to them every month. Patricia also kept all her valuable furniture and personal belongings at her rural home. In fact, by the mid-1990s, Patricia was the leading entrepreneur in her neighbourhood. Two of her daughters now lived with her and helped her with the business. The strength and resilience of her business was evident in 1996

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when her shack area was burnt down. To the shock of many of her neighbours, Patricia did not wait for the Red Cross to arrive with "handouts". She simply paid a local builder several thousand rand in cash to rebuild her shack immediately. Patricia explained that she would not normally have made such a large investment in the city, but felt that she had to prevent her business from being adversely affected by the fire.

Persistent fire disasters and rampant crime in Duncan Village in the 1990s provided women like Ntombokuqala and Patricia with ample incentive to ensure that their most valued possessions were safely stored away outside the city. However, the two cases also show how single women's attitudes towards the rural areas had changed over time. For younger women of Ntombokuqala's age, the village was still relatively unattractive as a place of permanent residence and investment. This is why these women tended to accumulate possessions rather than making any fixed investment in developing rural resources by buying farming equipment or investing in the construction of her own house in her village. However, by the time women reached their forties, which was Patricia's age, and had fewer long-term employment options in the city, the question of leaving the city loomed large in many women's minds. The thought of having to retire from work in the shack areas was terrifying for especially single mothers and, given that most of these women lacked the resources to contemplate urban retirement, their focus fell increasingly back to their home villages and to securing a rural exit route. This was not always easy given that land and property in the rural areas were concentrated in male hands. And this is why, as I will argue in the final chapter, women's most intense struggles against male domination in the Eastern Cape are taking place and why women now seem most determined to transform old "tactics" into long-term "strategies".

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Conclusion

I began this chapter by referring to Werbner's (1999) theorisation of "political mothering" in post-colonial societies, where she argued that feminisation of citizenship and the empowerment of women in such societies often emerged from their control of "pre-existing cultural domains". In this chapter, I have argued that both in East Bank and Duncan Village, women have devoted considerable attention to devising strategies and tactics that will allow them to control the private spaces within which they live. However, the ability to transcend the private-public divide after the 1950s, was severely curtailed by the reconstitution of patriarchy under the apartheid township plan and the subsequent entrenchment of male authority during the period of popular unrest. In fact, the history of women's social power in Duncan Village since the 1950s can be read as a story of diminishing authority within the restricted domain of the

house where they experienced increasing levels of loneliness, isolation and frustration at not being able to control their own resources and social networks. It was only after the mid-1980s when all semblance of black suburbia had disappeared and women again found themselves lodged in the social economy of paraffin, that they were able to begin to construct extra household networks and resuscitate clubs and societies. It is indeed ironic that it was through the social practices of paraffin, rather than those of the suburban homes, that women were again able to establish social power in their neighbourhoods. However, the difficulties that they experienced with crime, violence and domestic instability, encouraged many of them to shore up options elsewhere.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

BEYOND RED AND SCHOOL: GENDER, TRADITION AND IDENTITY IN THE VILLAGE

Introduction

In order to develop my arguments around the changing position of women, gender identity and the connections between the urban and rural, in this final chapter I move away from Duncan Village and the city of East London and enter the space of the village. I travel about 50 km. northeast of East London to a former "black spot" location called Mooiplaas, which comprises 14 villages. I conducted ethnographic research here between 1998 and 2001 (cf. Bank & Qambata 1999, Bank 2001). In order to focus the discussion, I will concentrate on the two villages that I have come to know best during those three years, namely Ngxingxolo and Slatsha. Both these villages, like many others that exist on the fringes of East London, have had active and ongoing links with East London and Duncan Village over many decades. In fact, the original *Xhosa in Town* research of the 1950s made frequent reference to the fact that the majority of the residents of East Bank came from rural areas situated close to the city, like Mooiplaas, Chulumna and Kwelera. A survey conducted in Ngxingxolo village in 1998 revealed that over 60 % of households had family members living or working in the townships of East London (including Mdantsane). The continuing social connections with the city were also indicated in some of the case studies presented in the Chapter 7.

In this chapter, I pick up where I started the dissertation, with the theme of Red and School, and the changing significance of these categories, this time not in the space of the urban location or the township, but the space of the village. We will recall that we started by discussing Zakes Mda's (2000) recent award-winning novel, *The Heart of Redness*, in which he suggested that the contemporary politics of development in South Africa has re-ignited old divisions between traditionalists and modernisers in Eastern Cape villages. Such divisions he argues are rooted in the deep ideological schisms that emerged during the 1856-1857 Xhosa cattle-killing. Mda's novel

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portrays these events as driving a deep wedge in rural Xhosa society between pro-westernisation "believers" and traditionalist "non-believers", collaborators and resisters, which continues to be a salient social cleavage in Eastern Cape rural communities. Set in Kentani, in the Transkei home of the Xhosa prophetess, the novel tells of the power of tradition as an alternative to western-style modernisation and as a social force in contemporary rural South African communities. It tells of how local residents, in confronting new development opportunities, continued to be split between Red and School factions which respectively opposed and embraced the new development initiatives. But as we have already seen, Mayer (1980) argued that these old divisions were already rapidly disappearing in rural communities by the late 1970s.

If these identities have indeed fallen by the wayside, what then are we to make of Mda's insistence on their current salience in rural communities along the former Transkei coast? Is he simply mistaken in assuming that Eastern Cape rural communities are still split along these lines? How might it be possible that a style of cultural identity politics, which was associated with a bygone era, can re-emerge after a period of absence? The answer seems to lie in the fact that, even if Red and School are no longer as visible as embodied identities as they were in the 1950s – people do not, for instance, wear red blankets any more – they are nevertheless inscribed in the collective social memory of many rural communities. This means that they can still be evoked and even reconstructed as rural communities grapple with the uncertainties of change. But it would also be unwise to think that the people living in rural communities in the Eastern Cape have responded to change by generally retreating into the "heart of Redness". Indeed, as Papastergiadis argues, identity formation can just as easily be characterised by "openness" as by "fixity" during such periods. As he puts it:

> ... identity is never found by suspending the self in a mythical past, nor is it invented without a prehistory. Identity always oscillates between fixity and openness. The conflict and transformation of globalisation need not either lead to the cultural impoverishment of homogenisation or a retreat into "splendid isolation". It may involve the extension of existing repertoires, the hybridisation of identities and the creation of new modes of affiliation (2000: 98).

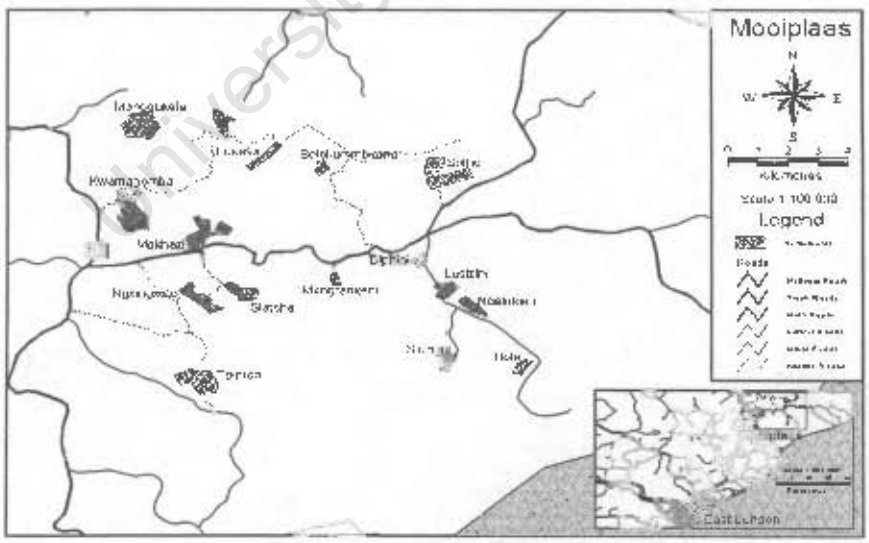
Garcia Canclini (1995), in his work on Latin America, also suggests that the dominant substitution-retention models of rural cultural change associated with modernisation and dependency theory have tended to direct attention away from critical and complex processes of "intercultural hybridization". He suggests that people in Latin America cannot just "enter or leave modernity", as these "countries now are the product of the sedimentation, juxtaposition and intercrossing of Indian tradition, of colonial Catholic hispanism and of modern political, educational and communicative practices" (*ibid.*: 148). He argues that this process does not occur

as simple cultural syncretism, where different cultural elements were separated out, so as to then – and only then – be mixed together. Rather, it occurs through dynamic processes of trans-cultural exchange where the "modern" fails to "substitute" the "traditional", resulting in constant re-articulations of tradition. He warns that this seldom merely results in the re-affirming and re-inventing of pre-existing cultural practices and orientations, but opens up new cultural spaces and avenues for identity formation. Canclini also suggests, as we saw in the introduction, that it is precisely at those moments when the drive towards modernisation is most intense that tradition is often most actively re-articulated and the potential for new forms of cultural practice are greatest (*ibid.*: 233-38). These insights are replicated in other work on "cultural hybridity", which emphasises that cultural identity formation is always a relational process that is shaped both from the outside and from within (cf. Bhabha 1994; 1997; Hall 1996; Gilroy 1987; 1993).

It is this tendency of cultural identity formation and politics to oscillate between moments of fixity and openness in changing development contexts that provides the focus of this chapter. Using case material from one Eastern Cape rural location, I compare and contrast the polarised cultural identity politics of the 1950s with the current openness and innovation associated especially with women's response to market-oriented, post-apartheid development initiatives. In the first part of the chapter, I show how pre-existing cultural differences between Red and School families became highly politicised during the betterment period as households struggled for resources and influence. This occurred in a context where newly appointed village headmen exercised enormous power at the local level. I go on to suggest that these divisions continued to be emphasised until the 1980s, when villagers were able to set aside their differences in a protracted struggle against government-led forced removal. In the second part of the chapter, I explore local-level responses to the new market-oriented development policies of the 1990s. In this period, I have been struck by the ability of women to put aside old divisions and construct new identities and strategies that have allowed them to take advantage of the new opportunities. The intriguing aspect of these responses, by comparison to those of the earlier period, is that women have not turned their backs on "tradition" in order to embrace "modernity". Instead, they have worked within and around notions of tradition to create new identities that not only blend aspects of the older Red and School responses, but transcend them in significant ways. I conclude by suggesting that the ability of women to establish new identities, in a context where men have generally remained trapped within an older style of identity politics, has allowed them to express increasing amounts of power and authority, not only in the home, but also in public.

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Mooiplaas location comprises a wedge of former mission land located between the N2 national road and the coast, 50 km. northeast of East London. It was consolidated into a single location after the 1936 Land Act, when the land was acquired by the Native Trust, as an island of African reserve land surrounded on all sides by white-owned farms. Following the assessment of the condition of the location by Native Affairs Department officials, rehabilitation or betterment planning was introduced in the location in 1958 (Andrew 1993: 4). There was no overt resistance, despite the fact that some families lost considerable amounts of land and livestock in the process. Betterment planning divided Mooiplaas into fourteen closer settlement villages, each under the control of a headman, and each divided into fenced arable, residential and grazing zones. Formerly scattered households across the territory of the location were aggregated into compressed settlements. Each relocated household was given a certificate of occupation, which entitled it to a residential site with a garden, a one- or two-acre arable field, and access to communal grazing. The land's administration and the power to allocate land in each village were placed in the hands of headmen. The location headman was, in turn, responsible to the Department of Native Affairs that held overall responsibility for implementing and managing betterment (Mager 1999: 110–117). Andrew reports that betterment was implemented relatively smoothly in the area and that the "the relocation of arable land does not seem to have led to any major difficulties" (Andrew 1993: 5).



Map 4: Mooiplaas showing betterment villages

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While Mooiplaas was not an area where people mobilised against "the Trust" (Mager 1999: 72–97), the introduction of betterment did create considerable tensions within the location. Mager argues that, due to the generalised poverty in the Ciskei, resistance and collaboration often emerged as gender-specific responses to betterment. She suggests that female producers, especially single mothers and widows, were inclined to collaborate with "the Trust" in the hope of securing rights to land. She reports that women were rewarded for their collaboration in some areas, but that many of the gains they made during betterment were lost shortly afterwards with the reconstruction of rural patriarchy under the Bantu Authority Act of 1951 (*ibid.*: 115–120). Due to the fact that betterment was only introduced in Mooiplaas in 1958, very few opportunities existed for single or independent women to obtain access to land. Tumi Falase, who was already a widow at the time of betterment, claimed that single women and widows were discriminated against by "the Trust", and were not allowed to be allocated arable fields. "The best they could expect," she explained, "was a residential site and even this was not guaranteed".[1] There was also considerable dissatisfaction amongst larger stock-holders and formerly better-off "middle peasant" families, who claimed that their yields fell dramatically after betterment and that their herds were slashed with the new ruling that no household could own more than ten cattle (Bank & Qambata 1999: 15–17). However, the main fractures in the new betterment villages in Mooiplaas occurred along the lines of Red and School, rather than gender or class.

During 1958–1959, Philip Mayer estimated that just over 4100 of the approximately 5000 rural African peasant homesteads in the East London district (about 85 %) were Reds (Mayer 1971: 20). In Mooiplaas, the presence of the Anglican and Methodist churches meant that there were more Christianised families here than in other parts of the district, especially the surrounding farms. Nevertheless, the dominance of the Red way of life in the district as a whole was seen in the fact that only 10 % of marriages recorded in the district in 1955 were Christian marriages (Mager 1999: 189). Prior to the state's attempts to modernise land-use and agricultural practices in the location, Mooiplaas's rural homesteads were widely scattered, in the manner described for other southern Nguni pre-colonial settlements (Hammond-Tooke 1975). Red families lived in homesteads dotted along the ridges; most School families' homesteads were clustered around mission stations, churches and schools. Betterment planning forced these two categories of people together, creating tensions between Christianised (School) and non-Christianised (Red) families, who now encountered each other across garden fences and on neatly laid-out village streets (de Wet 1995). Xoliswa Mdingi remembers how her father, a successful farmer and Anglican lay preacher in Ngxingxolo village, found it very difficult to

1. Interview, Tumi Falase, Mooiplaas, 12 August 1998.

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adapt to the flood of non-Christians now clustered around the church and local mission school. He was further irritated by the local headman's willingness to allow into the village large numbers of Red families from surrounding white-owned farms. Xoliswa recalled her father accusing the headman of taking bribes and cattle in exchange for sites and arable land:

> My father would say that betterment was a terrible thing, because it divided the people. It forced people with different life-styles and values to come together and to live on top of each other in new settlements. He would say that the people were much happier when those who did not attend church were still scattered in the hills. He would say that we could respect them then, and that there was no need for conflict. He said that it was only once everyone came together that there was conflict over land and resources. Everyone wanted to have enough land to support their families, but there was only a small amount to be shared out among many.[2]

Other 1990s village residents echoed these views about betterment as a cause of conflict. It was also evident in the way people of different ages recalled their childhood. Most of those over 70 years of age remembered that there was relatively open interaction between Red and School children in the location in the 1930s. They noted that these categories existed and were acknowledged, but said that relations were cordial rather than aloof. Those born at the time of betterment, and especially those associated with School families, recall that their parents were adamant that they should not interact with the Red people.

In Ngxingxolo village, the closer settlement process split the village into two sections: an old section where Xoliswa's father lived, and where School households predominated; and a new section, known as Slatsha, where the majority of the new arrivals from outlying areas and farms were Reds. The Red-School divide in this village was thus territorialised. During the 1960s, I was told, tensions between the village's segments continued, being particularly strongly expressed at cultural events such as initiation. Young men from Slatsha would regularly descend on the old section of the village and beat up the School youths with sticks, as a 65-year-old man, who was crippled in one of these skirmishes, explained. He recalled that the worst clashes always occurred at Christmas time, when youths from Slatsha would come looking for stick fights after they had been initiated into manhood. He said that the Ngxingxolo youth were no match for the tough Red youths from Slatsha, and that they were invariably badly beaten up in these clashes. It was because of the heavy casualties caused by stick fighting, he suggested, that the village headman banned this fighting in the late 1960s.

The tensions between Red and School were aggravated in a number of villages by the appointment of new headmen from School-oriented families. Mager argues that this tendency

2. Interview, Xoliswa Mdingi, Mooiplaas, 15 April 1998.

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was seen throughout the former Ciskei as the wages attached to Tribal Authority work improved significantly after the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 and again in 1959 with the declaration of the Ciskei as a Regional Authority (Mager 1999: 98–123 and Hammond-Tooke 1975: 65-80). In Ngxingxolo village, the most influential and longest-serving betterment-era headman was one Koyana, a staunch Christian and supporter of betterment. He was outspoken and highly critical of those he referred to as "uncooperative Reds" who were reluctant to adopt "progressive farming practices". While many other headmen were more accommodating of village differences, Koyana unashamedly sided with Christianised families during the 1960s and 1970s. He was said to ride around the village on horseback, gathering up children who were working at home or herding animals and forcing them to go to school. Assisted by a group of self-appointed councillors, he did everything in his power to persuade Red families to abandon their "pagan traditions" and attend church. Nolindile, an elderly woman from one of Ngxingxolo's Red families, remembered the Koyana period as a time of repression:

> Headman Koyana was an educated man who had no respect for our culture. He was opposed to everything traditional in the village. He did not tolerate us wearing traditional dress. He would chase and beat up young men who wore blankets rather than pants. He said that wearing blankets was a sign of laziness. I remember that he even tried to stop young girls, who went to work on the farms as seasonal labourers, from singing traditional songs on their way home. He would say to them, 'Hurry on home and help your mothers with household chores.' He even tried to stop us from thatching our roofs [a practice which is believed to encourage the ancestors to enter the house], from decorating our houses on the outside with water-paints, and from dyeing our garments with red ochre and lard. He did not like people giving their children 'bad names', like Nontlupheko, meaning 'the one who is poor and always beset with problems'.[3]

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Koyana, and other headmen like him, waged a campaign against "things traditional" on diverse fronts. As the above quotation suggests, they directed their attention to the most intimate aspects of people's everyday cultural life and experiences. By forcing children to attend school, instructing young working women to help their mothers in the home, and preventing young men from pursuing traditional forms of recreation, such as stick fighting, they sought to restructure household relations and inculcate new forms of sociability and identity in the village. They also played a key role in creating opportunities for local church leaders and agricultural extension officials to work effectively in their areas. Koyana was a strong advocate of the adoption of "improved" agricultural techniques and was always keen to have these officials in the village. He said that he was determined to have Red villagers abandon what

3. Interview, Nolindile Kwane, Mooiplaas, 22 July 1998.

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he called the "idleness of tradition" and change their traditional family ways. His authoritarian manner and methods were unpopular, but they did produce results.

By the late 1970s, recreational stick fighting in the village had ceased, as had traditional forms of youth associations, such as *intlombe* and *umtshotsho*, which stressed the traditional principles of respect for seniority and of broad kin- and community-based solidarities (see Chapter 5). In challenging the social fabric of traditional forms of association, headmen also undermined older patterns of social co-operation and cohesion that had made collective agricultural work possible. Local residents recalled that a result of the headmen's and agricultural officials' interventions was that co-operative work parties, ploughing teams and extra-household labour exchanges had begun to disappear by the 1970s. The new emphasis was on household self-sufficiency and autonomy, built on a combination of migrant and commuter labour and family farming. The shift away from tradition was also seen at the level of the home itself. In Ngxingxolo, more and more families opted for square houses rather than rondavels. This pleased headmen such as Koyana, as did the tendency of people to replace their old thatched roofs with tin ones. But these changes did not come naturally to Red families and did not occur without resistance and bitterness in the village. As one woman explained, "We did these things because we were scared of Koyana, not because we wanted to".[4] Another explained that her father added a tin roof for fear of what the headman might do, but never actually removed the thatch underneath, "so that the ancestors could still visit us in our house".[5]

To assist smaller male-headed households to farm "better", the state also provided advice and training to increase household agricultural output. It offered government tractors to help with ploughing, and seed and fertiliser for fields and gardens. A regular dipping service, with "free chemicals", was also set up to ensure that livestock remained in good condition and disease-free.[6] Agricultural extension officers stressed the need for new progressive farming techniques and for households to establish their own economic independence in the village. They promoted an ideology of self-realisation, independence and self-sufficiency, both during field visits and at regular agricultural shows and demonstrations in Mooiplaas during the 1960s and 1970s. Women were targeted for special attention in order to help raise levels of household production and encourage greater household self-sufficiency. As Joyce Zokile, an elderly woman who grew up in a School family in the Ngxingxolo section, explained:

4. Interview, Thembeka Cangu, Mooiplaas, 18 June 1998.
5. Interview, Nonpela Tjali, Mooiplaas, 6 May 1998.
6. According to oral sources from Ngxingxolo village in Mooiplaas.

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> They were keen to encourage development and household self-sufficiency. This entailed training us in all aspects of self-sufficiency like baking, all types of crafts, home economics and farming. At the time [the 1960s] delegates would be chosen from the villages here to go for training at Debe's Nek [a small town in what became the Ciskei]. Delegates would stay at the centre for a week, with each day dedicated to learning new skills. On the last day of training we would be taken on a tour of development projects in the area and would see what some farmers had achieved under the supervision of teams from the Fort Hare Agricultural School and Fort Cox College of Agriculture. This scheme was for all interested parties until it collapsed in the 1970s.[7]

Joyce went on to explain that the idea behind these courses was that women who were trained would take the skills they had learnt back into their villages and share them with other women. Joyce recalls that this was problematic in Ngxingxolo because, "when we went to visit Red women with this information, they would often chase us away, saying that we were spies for Koyana".

The courses and betterment planning, generally, had little positive effect on agriculture in Mooiplaas. The separation of arable fields from family homesteads, while rational in terms of effective arable resource utilisation, made little sense from a family farming perspective. Distances between homesteads and fields, supposedly people's main productive resources, proved problematic both from a logistical and a security point of view (de Wet 1995: 55–80). Moving people and equipment several kilometres every day to work the fields was a major disincentive, as was the fact that the grazing camps were not all properly fenced, so that livestock easily wandered into arable lands.

Very few of the households made a success of the new production regime and, despite the agricultural shows, access to new technology and interventions by betterment officials, many of the new fields were soon abandoned or used only infrequently. Another problem was that house gardens in the betterment villages were small, and could not be expanded without interfering with other sites. Previously, with scattered settlement, garden boundaries were not so constrained. Now the many households who were eager to enlarge their gardens and devote effort to garden production were limited to small gardens within the boundaries of their domestic plots in the village. In general, agricultural output in the location declined steadily in the 1960s and ever more households became largely, if not solely, dependent on migrants' wage remittances.

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7. Interview, Joyce Zokile, Mooiplaas, 20 July 1998.

Rural Revolt and Household Fragmentation

The betterment era in Mooiplaas ended abruptly in 1981 when the state announced that it intended to remove all residents to a new site at Ncera, west of East London, to help consolidate the newly independent Ciskei homeland's territory (*Daily Dispatch*, 10 September 1981). Village headmen were told that, as civil servants of the Ciskei government, they should support the initiative and begin moving their people to the new areas as soon as possible. Meetings were held to inform villagers of the government's plans. But the majority objected and, by 1985, simmering political unrest had boiled over into open revolt, as groups of male youths swept through the villages threatening to murder collaborators. Drawn from both Red and School families, the defiant youth led the struggle under the banner of their new collective political identity as comrades (see Chapter 5). Like the city youth, they distanced themselves from family identities and expressed themselves in the language of the *amaqabane* – comrades determined to put an end to apartheid oppression and to chase "illegitimate" headmen from the villages. Openly affiliating themselves with anti-apartheid organisations such as the United Democratic Front and the ANC Youth League, they established links with politicised youths in nearby locations such as Kwelera and Newlands. Nicholas Matebese, one of the young leaders of the anti-removal committee in Mooiplaas, explained that sport, and especially local rugby matches and tournaments, had proved to be key points of interaction and mobilisation amongst the youth.[8]

In March 1986, peaceful protests against the removals turned violent when comrades in Mooiplaas's Soto village murdered a senior headman and his daughter (*Daily Dispatch*, 25 March 1986). In April, nine adults were allegedly murdered by comrades who were now burning down the houses of collaborators (*Daily Dispatch*, 15 April 1986). The state responded by suspending government services to the area and sending in trucks, under police escort, to remove households that wished to move to Ncera. But the trucks came too late for supporters of the relocations, and they were forced to flee, leaving their homes and possessions to be torched by the comrades (*Daily Dispatch*, 26 April 1986). With the headmen out of the location, the anti-removals committee, which had mobilised resistance against the removals and was dominated by comrades, was disbanded to make way for the Mooiplaas Residents' Association (MRA). The MRA was democratically elected in the sense that it comprised 28 members, with two representatives coming from each of the new popularly-elected village committees.[9] One of the interesting aspects of this shift from headmen to village committees in Mooiplaas was that the youth did not use their power to re-allocate land in the villages to ensure that more households

8. Interview, Nicholas Matebese, East London, 10 September 1997.

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had access to arable land, by contrast with the radical behaviour of youth in East London, who seized new land for settlement and re-allocated residential sites.

One reason for this relatively moderate approach in Mooiplaas was that there had been a growing sense of unity in the villages in the struggle against forced removal, and the new political leadership did not want to set up committees that would encourage division. As a result, unlike organisations such as the Duncan Village Residents' Association in East London, which was dominated by youth, the village committees in Mooiplaas comprised a mixture of Red and School, as well as young and old. In a situation where the state had responded to the struggle against the removals by withdrawing teachers, agricultural extension officers and other key services from the area (*Daily Dispatch*, 14 May 1986), residents felt that the only way to survive was to work together. Referring specifically to the old Red-School divide, Mrs Dodo explained:

> It was as if a huge weight had been lifted from our shoulders. There was now a much better atmosphere and stronger basis for co-operation and mutual support. There were very few people in Mooiplaas who wanted to follow the headmen to Ncera, and this meant that – when they were out of the picture – those who were left behind had to get to know each other and work for all the people.[10]

Other informants concurred, saying that while times were tough after the withdrawal of state support for key activities, the village committees served as a unifying force in the villages and had strong local support. Many recalled how households worked together to help each other during the 1988 outbreak of Redwater cattle disease (*amanzi abomvu*), which followed the closure of the state livestock-dipping service. The collapse of public education was another issue around which the village committees mobilised resources and employed the services of outside groupings, such as NGOs, to assist them. Politically-progressive NGOs, such as the Border Rural Committee, provided backup and support for the MRA in obtaining access to legal advice and other resources to maintain their struggle for autonomy from the Ciskei government (Naute 2001). These networks gave the MRA political legitimacy, as residents felt that their struggle was supported by a broader community.

But while rural villagers experienced a new sense of community in the face of adversity, biting poverty in the location, which was exacerbated by drought, retrenchments and cattle disease, increased tensions within households. Older men and women were often at loggerheads over what was the best strategy to support their households, while young men and women were now more difficult to discipline than ever before. Young men, in particular, had tasted the power of moving around in the locations as comrades. They provoked fear in the hearts of many older

9. Interview, Nicholas Matebese, East London, 10 September 1997.
10. Interview, Lulama Dodo, Mooiplaas, 17 June 1998.

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residents, who were terrified that they might be identified as "collaborators" (Bank & Qambata 1999: 34). After the youth had put their lives on the line for the struggle, it was not easy for older household patriarchs to discipline their sons. The older men could also no longer rely on headmen and tribal courts to enforce discipline where they failed. After the events of 1986, young men were in any case eager to leave the villages for the cities where they could either continue the struggle or search for work. Their lack of interest in establishing an agrarian future for themselves in the village was seen in the fact that they made no effort after the revolts of the mid-1980s to enforce land reform in the villages. They allowed older men and women to take charge of the new residents' structures in the villages while they set their sights on new horizons in the cities. Their enthusiasm to leave was also fuelled by changes in the cities, especially East London, where comrades had seized old townships such as Duncan Village, and transformed them into "liberated zones".

Once young men started leaving in droves, women followed. With agricultural production failing, even on garden plots, as the drought of the 1980s deepened, young women had also become disillusioned with their prospects in the villages and started flooding into the new informal settlements in East London. Figures show that by the mid-1990s, in many of these areas, women out-numbered men.[11] As the youth left, so many established migrants and commuters began to lose faith in the project of building their family farms in the villages. Many stopped remitting income as frequently and some gave up on the idea of returning home at all, seeking instead to set up a base for themselves in the urban areas, where new housing projects were being established for people with jobs.[12]

In the post-1994 period, the saving grace for many rural households which had been depleted of social and economic resources has been the increase of social welfare grants and pension payments to black South Africans. These payments, which had been racially determined in the past, with black people receiving pensions only once every two months, were equalised after 1994, ensuring that households with older members suddenly found themselves better off than many of those who relied on migrant remittances. The shift from remittances to welfare grants as the main source of household income in the villages also meant that there was a shift of economic power in many households away from men to women, who comprised the vast majority of welfare recipients in the villages (Bank & Qambata 1999: 70–100). In short, the

11. For further details see unpublished East London TLC's 1998 Socio-economic Survey of Informal Settlements in East London. Report prepared for the Directorate of Development Planning East London (cf. Africon *et al.* 1998).
12. The opening up of new low-cost housing estates, such as Scenery Park, Reeston and Braelyn Extension in East London, has given the residents of some informal settlements a chance to settle permanently in the city.

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betterment images of the emergence of small but stable rural households making a living by combining migrant remittances with field-based family farming had all but evaporated in Mooiplaas by the 1990s. Instead, these nominally functional and productive farming families had been replaced by increasing numbers of economically weak and socially-fragmented households which neither farmed very effectively nor received regular wage remittances from absent industrial workers.[13]

Women and the Re-articulation of Tradition

It was in this context that women who stayed behind in the village began to look beyond their households and associated identities in order not only to find alternative sources of income but also to enlarge the social and cultural networks in the village. For the women of Ngxingxolo village, the impetus towards change initially came through their involvement with Operation Hunger, an NGO poverty-relief programme initiated in the late 1980s to help poor women earn extra income through the production of crafts and curios for the tourist market. In 1989, a neighbouring village resident, Mrs Mtele, who worked as a recruiting agent for Operation Hunger in East London, came to Ngxingxolo to invite women to join the project. Responding to Mrs Mtele's invitation proved seminally important for creating earning opportunities outside agriculture, and linking Red and School women together across the village. Many School women had attended sewing and housework classes at the Fort Cox Training Centre during the betterment years and developed considerable technical expertise in these fields. Women from Red families, on the other hand, had access to the cultural knowledge needed for designing the traditional garments and curios that Operation Hunger required. The project thus created a framework within which women from both sides of the village could co-operate and forge alliances around a common objective: meeting Mrs Mtele's monthly orders for cultural artefacts and curios.

Initially the women were too poor to buy the materials required to make the cultural commodities and relied on Mrs Mtele to supply them. But as they started to realise small returns from their labour, they saved their earnings and bought their own beads, buttons, rattling chimes, zigzag, bias binding and thread. Selected women from the group, those with some schooling, also took advantage of business training offered by NGOs, such as Triple Trust, which

13. A survey of 100 households in Ngxingxolo village revealed that in the 1997–1998 season, one third of the households produced no maize at all, while only 17 % produced more than five bags. Correspondingly, only 6 % of households claimed that they received regular remittances from absent migrant workers in 1998, while only 20 % of the economically-active population of the village had full-time formal employment. See Bank and Qambata (1999: 45, 88).

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began work in the area in the early 1990s, offering a range of small-business management courses. When Mrs Mtelo left Operation Hunger in 1992, the women split into two groups, the Mashilakhe Sewing Group, which focused on the production of traditional cloth garments, and the Masikuhuthale Beadwork Group, which produced artefacts such as anklets, bracelets, badges, and beaded mats. Both groups in co-operation now started to supply a curio shop at the Transkei border post with regular consignments of goods. Both also travelled into East London over the weekends to market their wares on the beachfront and at the harbour. In 1994, there were about 20 women involved in the two groups (see Plate 25).

The economic returns on these investments were small. But the women involved gained immensely from their collective experience. They had learned that working together enabled them to share information. They gained confidence in their ability to earn income themselves to supplement or, in extreme circumstances, to replace remittances. They learned how the development industry worked, particularly through interacting with suppliers, NGOs and development officials. Those with education, in particular, began to recognise what roles they should play to obtain access to resources from an industry that emphasised women's empowerment and stressed women's training and development. They also learned the principles and practices of efficiency and accountability demanded of them by funding agencies. Perhaps most importantly, they learned that they could all gain by sharing their educational and cultural knowledge, soon realising that their strengths lay in combining the Red and School traditions to produce products of sufficient quality to attract tourists' and funding agencies' attention. Maureen Mbane, a 38-year-old woman from the Ngxingxolo section, explained how they worked together, openly discussing questions of design and quality in order to be creatively innovative:

> When we discussed the design of the items we produced, like *skhwenkweni* (breast covers), *ixakatho* (shoulder wraps), *iqhiya* (head scarves) or *inxili* (purses), we would always be thinking of ways of brightening these items up with new designs to make our work different from other groups'. We would experiment with a lot of variation before coming to something that we thought was original.[14]

The sewing and beadwork groups' successes encouraged new groups to form in Nxgingxolo village. The ANC government's post-1996 economic development framework for the Eastern Cape has stressed the need for rural communities to make the transition from subsistence to market production. The adoption in 1996 of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy at national level, together with the creation of a number of regional Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs) in the Eastern Cape, entrenched a new focus on the market as the mechanism

14. Interview, Maureen Mbane, Mooiplaas, 10 June 2001.

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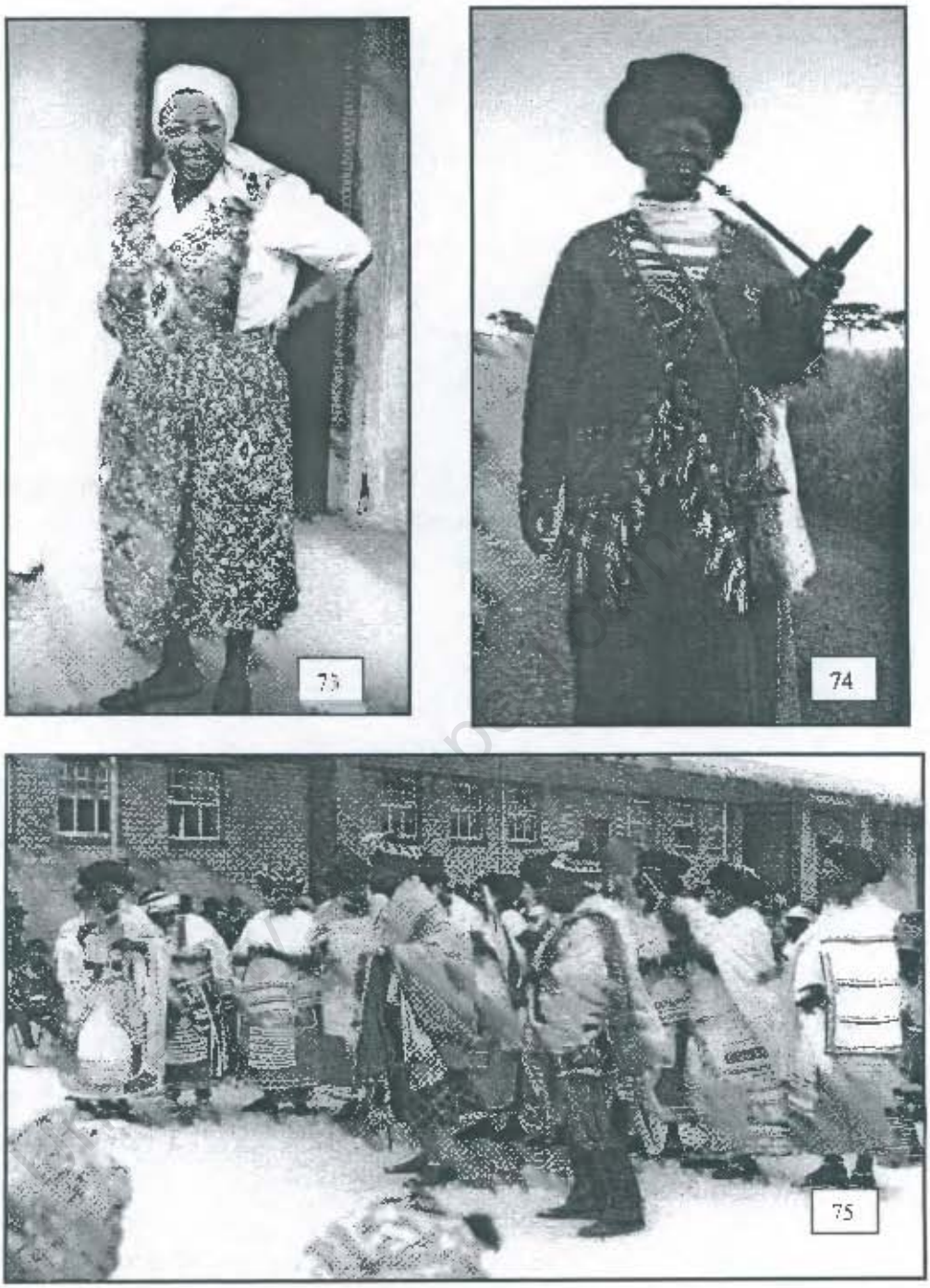


Plate 25: Red and School. Photo 73 and 74, depict the contrasting dress styles of women, who in terms of the Mayers' classificatory system, would have been defined as "Red" and "School". While such dress-styles are still common amongst older women, this contrast is difficult to detect amongst younger women; Photo 75, shows both "Red" and "School" women dressed up in folk costume for the 2000 ANC anniversary celebrations in Mooiplaas.

for development (Kepe *et al.* 2001). As the policy emphasis shifted, development agencies and government officials stressed the need for rural communities to start to form their own market-oriented "commodity groups", which ideally would be export-focused (*Daily Dispatch*, 4 February 1999). In formulating a new policy framework for the rural areas, great emphasis was placed on empowering women so that they could be responsive to new opportunities.[15] Women in Mooiplaas welcomed the new policy focus and travelled to training and information workshops in East London to find out more about how funds could be secured to support their activities.

Their research revealed that two local government departments provided opportunities for them to obtain access to state funds to develop their groups. The Department of Welfare's poverty relief programme focused on rural women's plight and offered funding for groups of poor women to put together proposals for small market-oriented development projects (*Daily Dispatch*, 12 September 1998). The Department of Agriculture (later Agriculture and Land Affairs) also offered incentives for rural producers to establish market-oriented "agricultural commodity groups". In the light of some overlap between the two departments' programmes, Ngxingxolo's women sometimes drew on both for a single project. This happened, for example, with the Masikhanye Pig Farming and Nomzamo Poultry Groups. Both began in the village homestead yards of influential women from School backgrounds, but, following a series of successful applications for government support, moved onto business sites with dedicated facilities such as sheds and equipment. These women's ability to tap state funding resulted from their close relationships with women involved in the craft projects, each of which managed to secure government grants exceeding R20 000 for their projects. Significantly, by the late 1990s, very few men had capitalised on the new opportunities to secure development funding. Ngxingxolo's only group in 1998 with male participation was the Luqamo Leatherwork Group, and this was initiated by the women's sewing and beadwork groups who wished to work their designs into leather.

The formation of "small projects" with some funding also allowed women to connect their village activities to economic opportunities in the city. While these groups now had the equipment and facilities to produce pork, chickens and eggs, they still needed to market their products. Many did so by using younger women in the cities, often daughters or relatives, to sell their products at factory gates and on township streets. Returning to the city after a weekend at "home", these young women purchased cuts of pork or consignments of eggs and chickens, transported them by taxi, and sold them directly into the city's large consumer market. Such

15. The Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs has, for instance, introduced a series of awards for

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opportunities thus provided an incentive for younger women to visit the village, enabling links between older and younger women to be strengthened. These links were also used to market crafts and curios on the beachfront. Due to the cost of travelling into town from Mooiplaas, which was more than R10 each way, daughters and close friends or relatives could be asked to sell beads, brooms and curios on the women's behalf in the city at the weekends. One development that did, however, improve the prospects for the craft and curio groups, was the 1999 opening of Khaya la Bantu ("Home of Bantu") "cultural village" on a white-owned farm a few kilometres from Mooiplaas. This provided a new outlet for existing products and created space for developing a new range of performance-oriented cultural products. The initiative came from Zinzi Tofu, a member of the beadwork group, who obtained permission from the "cultural village" owner to bring her own cultural group to perform there for tourists. Ironically, as a member of a prominent School family, Zinzi had had no experience with traditional dance – her mother, who had wanted her to adopt "School" ways as a child, having prevented her from learning "isiXhosa tradition":

> When I was a child my parents were strong Christians and I was not encouraged to learn any of the traditional dances and rituals. This was discouraged at the mission school that I attended. In fact, in those days my parents looked down on people in the village who did not follow the reforms that Koyana wanted to bring to the village. They said that I should focus on my Bible studies and on education and should not be tempted to participate in our traditions. When I offered to organise a group for Khaya la Bantu, I knew I was taking on a real challenge because I had no experience of this type of dancing ... In fact, at the time I had my own dance group, but we were doing township jive because that's what the youth in the village are interested in. But I was short of money and I knew that with the contacts I had in the village I could find out about traditional dance and learn what I needed to know.[16]

When I first met Zinzi in June 2000, she was still running her jive dancing groups. I remember her mother complaining that her dancers were wearing out the blue lino on her lounge floor. But old Mrs Winifred Tofu's attitude had changed when she heard about the Khaya la Bantu offer. Hearing that money would be made entertaining foreign tourists, she helped Zinzi prepare the group and assemble a repertoire of Xhosa custom and dance that would appeal to the tourists. Just as women had gathered information about how to refine their beadwork techniques by visiting older traditional women in Slatsha, Zinzi now visited those she knew there from the beadwork group. She spent hours learning new dance routines, adjusting and modifying them for the tourists. Most of what she was shown involved girls and boys dancing separately. She changed these to create new routines with a competitive style, where individual dancers would

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women farmers to encourage their involvement in production. See *Daily Dispatch*, 11 October 2000.

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break away and show off their flair while the team kept the rhythm and vocals going. Most of the new tourist dances dealt with puberty issues and involved girls calling on boys to pay *lobola* (bridewealth). Zinzi and her Slatsha associates also devised a set of cultural productions introducing tourists to the main traditional Xhosa life-cycle rituals and to the very gendered roles that Zinzi and her associates themselves flouted daily. A further irony, given her earlier anti-Red sentiments, was old Winifred Tofu's appearances. Dressed in full traditional regalia as a great Xhosa matriarch, she narrated the story line and, in her excellent English – as good as Zinzi's – she would stop the performance every now and then to fill tourists in on the "real meaning" of certain traditional Xhosa social and cultural practices (see Plate 26).[16]

Zinzi's hybrid products, and those of the other groups, set women scheming about how tradition could be used in other ways to make money. It also provoked discussion amongst village women around the relationship between modernity and tradition. Women like Zinzi, and others from school backgrounds, said that they had come to recognise the power of "tradition" and the value of their identities as modern Xhosa women. They expressed these identities though creating hybrid cultural products and a revival of folk customs, not only at traditional rituals but at all events of social significance. This resurgence of pride in women's tradition and folk customs cannot, however, be associated with a retreat into the past, some kind of search for the "heart of Redness". It involved a dynamic re-articulation of tradition, which was neither Red nor School, modern nor traditional. It represented something quite new, innovative, malleable and "situational". The weakening of households as economic and social units contributed to this process, since women felt less wedded to the older family identities and more committed to working together to find new solutions to their problems. The new social bonds established among women and their rejuvenated interest in tradition was clearly expressed at village rituals, where some of the garments prepared by the women's sewing groups were proudly put on display for everyone to see. Even women from prominent School families, such as Zinzi Tofu, Maureen Mbane, Joyce Dodo, Muriel Mdingi and various women in the wealthy Matebese household, would attend these events in the most beautifully-crafted traditional folk costumes. In this final section of the chapter, I turn briefly to the arena of ritual and the visibility and social presence of women at these events.

16. Interview, Zinzi Tofu, Moolplaas, 13 June 2000.

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Clubs, Rituals and Beer Drinks

The rise of women's commodity groups in Ngxingxolo village and elsewhere in Mooiplaas was also associated with a sudden expansion of informal savings and credit clubs in the location during the 1990s. In a survey of women's social clubs in all fourteen villages in 2001 it was found that there were between five and eight different clubs in each village (Bank 2001: 48–52). The clubs were generally of three kinds. Firstly, there were rotating credit clubs that involved members paying out their collective contributions to each member on a rotational basis. Secondly, there were savings clubs that accumulated funds over a fixed period and then distributed these to members, plus interest, usually at Christmas time in the form of groceries bought "in bulk" by the club. Thirdly, there were women's clubs that saved specifically for ritual events. The most common of these were the clubs organised to buy clothes and gifts for new male initiates when they came back from the bush (*ibid.*: 53–55). Women in Ngxingxolo said that, while the third form had existed in the villages for as long as they could remember, the first two forms, which they associated with "urban life", had only really taken root in the villages in the 1990s. Some said that the clubs had become popular when welfare grants and pension payouts increased and women suddenly found they had "a little extra for themselves". Other women said that they belonged to clubs because, "if they left money in the house, their children would take it".

Whatever the reasons given, middle-aged and older women in Mooiplaas took great pride in their clubs and it was quite common for established clubs to have their own uniforms, which members would wear at club get-togethers or at ritual events. In Ngxingxolo and other villages, some clubs celebrated their achievements by holding beer drinks for members, as I discovered during one visit to Siatsha after dark. The club organiser, Dixie Dodo, who had been helping me with my field-work, was in the middle of a savings club meeting when we arrived. The meeting was taking place in an old rondavel behind the main house which, judging by the cattle skulls and horns strapped against the thatch, had been the site of many family rituals. On the night of my visit, the rondavel was filled with some thirty women from Red and School backgrounds preparing for their savings club's quarterly meeting. According to the club secretary, the women had come from all over Mooiplaas to celebrate the good returns made on their investments. Inside the rondavel, the women were seated according to age, older women on benches on the left side, younger women on the floor on the right. At the back were several cases

17. Interview, Winifred and Zinzi Tofu, Mooiplaas, 15 July 2001.

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Plate 26: Khaya la Bantu. Photo 76, 77 and 78 depict Zinzi Tofu and her team performing their traditional Xhosa cultural routines for a group of American tourists in April 2001.

of beer quarts (750 ml), four bottles of brandy and two bottles of gin. A female *injoli* [18], as the club secretary described her, distributed bottled beer and brandy to the members, no traditional beer having been brewed for the occasion (McAllister 2001: 152–156). The atmosphere inside was rowdy and excited as the women celebrated the discipline and solidarity that had brought the club success. As the evening drew on, their collective sense of achievement and fulfilment grew, and the women became extremely loud and outspoken. Amidst the joking, the women made constant references to the need for "development" in the villages and the inability of men to provide the leadership required. They spoke positively about their achievements and about what could be achieved by women working together. After a lengthy evening of drinking and talking, they then dispersed into the dark.

What was striking about this event, and other similar women's club meetings where liquor was served, was that they had transformed a familiar male ritual, a beer drink, into an empowering experience for women. By transforming quarterly credit club meetings into female beer drinks, the women of Mooiplaas were using an older cultural script to stage a new kind of performance. In the past, beer drinks of this kind were the preserve of men. They occurred with great frequency at the end of the agricultural cycle and provided an opportunity for men to reflect on the successes and failures of the past season. Such events also provided important fora for the exchange of information about other social and political concerns (*ibid.*: 148–176). Within the matrix of a patriarchal world of male power and authority, the beer drink constituted a critical "backstage" arena where male consensus was forged and male public opinion tested. Beer drinks were also important fora for the ritualised enactment of generational power and respect, and for the consolidation of other kinds of solidarities such as those between kin, neighbours and clansmen (*ibid.*). By usurping what was ostensibly a male ritual of power, and converting it into an expression of female power and solidarity, Mooiplaas's women were doing much more than simply sharing a drink together. They were laying claim to a powerful and authoritative tradition.

The growing confidence and solidarity that women achieved through their participation in the extra-household circuits of clubs and commodity groups also filtered through into the way they expressed themselves at family rituals. Rituals of one kind or another were performed in Ngxingxolo almost every weekend during the late 1990s. Some were small family affairs. As often they were large social events that took months to arrange and involved a wide spectrum of people from within the village and beyond. In the case of important family rituals, relatives and clans-people travelled from as far afield as Cape Town to participate. The majority were family-

18. The term *injoli* usually refers to the male master of ceremonies at beer drinks, and is derived from the

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centred rituals involving communications with the ancestors to mourn the dead or to mark a stage in the life cycle of the living. Of the 100 village households interviewed in Ngxingxolo during 1997–1998, no fewer than 33 had performed a ritual of some kind during the preceding year. The table below provides a breakdown of the particular types of rituals performed.

Table 8.1 Types of rituals performed in Ngxingxolo, 1997–1998.

Ritual name	Purpose of the ritual	No.
Ukulila/Ukukhapha	Terms are used interchangeably: *ukulila* to mourn, *ukukhapha* to accompany. This ritual is performed after the death of a male household head and signifies mourning. An ox is slaughtered in the morning and the meat is eaten on the same day. Bones are burnt the following day. No beer is brewed and women wear traditional dress.	9 cases
Ukubuyisa/ Ukuguqula	*Ukubuyisa* means to bring back and *ukuguqula* to turn around. This is performed some time after the funeral of a male household head to bring his spirit back home. An ox is slaughtered and has to bellow when its throat is cut, otherwise the ancestors will not hear the call. The innards of the beast are eaten on the same day, but the beef is only consumed the following day. Beer is brewed and women wear traditional dress.	3 cases
Imfukamo	Performed when there is a problem in the family (e.g. the infertility of a daughter). Precise details of the ritual are often stipulated by a *sangoma* (diviner). The ritual involves seclusion in a special hut that faces the cattle byre. Beer is brewed and the healing process involves communing with the river spirits.	5 cases
Intambo	*Intambo* means necklace. Performed when a family member displays strange behaviour (e.g. bed-wetting). Normally performed for women to encourage fertility and to ensure good health.	6 cases
Ukuwalusa	Initiation for males. It marks the transition from boyhood to manhood and involves the family in a variety of rituals as the process occurs.	4 cases
Imbeleko	Performed for a newborn child, usually before the child is ten days old. A goat is slaughtered to make a goatskin blanket for the child. The fore-quarter of the goat is eaten by the mother alone.	6 cases

Most of these rituals were initiated and organised by women, whose role was far greater than simply contacting kin. Having made such contacts, widows suggested and even sometimes decided how and when the ritual should occur – a significant transformation from the days when

verb *ukujola*, "to apportion or divide". See McAllister (2001: 152–156) for further discussion.

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male agnates took all that responsibility. To orchestrate such events, women used their social networks to mobilise people and acquire the resources needed to stage the appropriate ritual. In the late 1990s, individual households only rarely hosted large rituals on their own because costs were virtually prohibitive. Women thus played a key role in mobilising family friends and relatives to support these events. In this process of social networking, women would turn to their clubs or those of their relatives and friends for support in the form of funds, material items such as cooking utensils, access to women's labour, or non-material help such as information about how to proceed. In return, entire credit club memberships were invited to the ritual. At the ritual itself club members sat together, participating as members of their clubs rather than individuals since many had no kinship connections to the families involved. Women's ability to participate in such rituals as members of women's groups, rather than as affines of men's families, gave them the confidence to behave in ways that would have been regarded as quite inappropriate for women in traditional terms, including, in particular, taking leading roles in the rituals.

Men may have still presided over some of the ceremonial matter and delivered the main speeches at most rituals, but in many ways these occasions now belonged to the women. It was the women who were always the most punctual, most socially involved and the most fastidious in their attention to detail. On most such occasions, men appeared simply as functionaries going through the ritual motions. Many of them, women would complain, kept disappearing at critical moments when their presence was needed. In referring to ritual and social change, Comaroff and Comaroff (1993: xx) point out that ritual processes should never simply be viewed as an expression of a received "social structure". They need to be viewed as dynamic social processes which can "fashion visions of worlds yet unborn, deploy the pragmatics of language to invest contemporary practice with new force, or call upon the power of poetics to subvert familiar forms of authority". In Ngxingxolo, it was not so much the invention of new rituals that symbolised the increasing power and authority of women in the village as the way in which they inserted themselves within older cultural forms. One strategy women employed was to elaborate and elevate the expression of female solidarity during these events by inserting their own beer drinks into these events.

Consider the example of a ritual performed by an old widow where she slaughtered an ox in honour of her father-in-law, and which ended with a women-only beer drink. The widow, Novoti Guwa, prepared for the ritual by consulting her late husband's relatives to inform them of her intentions. After these deliberations, a goat was slaughtered in the homestead "to sweep the yard", that is, to announce the forthcoming ritual to the ancestors. The performance of the ritual was a major undertaking for Novoti's household and, in preparing for the event, she relied heavily on the labour and generosity of other women to ensure that it went off well. During the

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course of the ritual, which lasted an entire weekend, literally hundreds of people from Ngxingxolo and the surrounding villages visited the house to share meat and beer. Some guests came from as far as East London, Butterworth and Umtata. While many of the men of the village seemed distracted and moved in and out of the homestead, the women provided a constant and engaged presence throughout the proceedings.

One particularly interesting aspect of the weekend's events was the preparation of the part of the ritual known as "fire-extinguishing". During the course of the ritual the electrical supply to the homestead had been cut, so as not to anger the ancestors. In order to ensure that proceedings could go on through the night and that dancing and singing would not be interrupted, fires were lit after midnight. The following day, as the ritual was winding down and village outsiders were leaving, all the women who had participated in the preparations were invited to help with "extinguishing the fire". This was an invitation to another fully-fledged beer drink, but this one organised and run exclusively for women. Women explained that this was a relatively new innovation that had become standard practice to mark the end of most large-scale rituals, replacing what in the past was simply a pot of *imifino* (wild vegetables), cooked by the household's women to thank other women for their support.

At Novoti's house the women gathered for the event in the main rondavel where beer had been set aside earlier, and where the seating was arranged according to age, older women close to the door, younger *amakoti* (wives) at the end of the row. Daughters of Novoti's family occupied the left side of the rondavel normally occupied by men on such occasions, and publicly assessed how well the ritual had gone. Novoti then thanked everyone for supporting her, whereafter her daughters brought in bottles of whisky, brandy, gin, soft drinks and bottled beer. One daughter, playing the conventionally male role of *injoli*, then handed out the liquor, distributing the home-brew first and always from eldest to youngest. After a number of beakers of beer had been consumed, the *injoli* brought out the "hot stuff" – the brandy, whisky and gin – distributing it according to the same rules governing the distribution of home-brew, after decanting it into glasses handed to each woman in turn. As the *injoli* did her rounds, each woman chose either to consume the liquor herself or to appoint a proxy. Only at this point did men come into the picture. While the women were conducting the "extinguishing ritual" inside, a number of older men had gathered outside. But until this point they remained excluded both physically and socially from the rondavel, being allowed to enter now if nominated by a woman to take "her tot".

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Plate 27: Rituals, Clubs and Beer Drinks. Photo 79, shows Mrs. Dodo and her husband, a village healer, preparing for an *intonjana* ritual, 1998; Photo 80, depicts club members gathered together at a ritual with their gifts, 1998; Photo 81, depicts women at a "fire extinguishing" beer drink, 1998.

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Conclusion

By taking charge of certain aspects of ritual and custom in Mooiplaas in the late 1990s, women were seeking to authenticate their new-found material power by embedding it in a deeper set of meanings, values and activities that increasingly located them at the social centre of the community. By creatively manipulating rituals, such as male beer drinks, Mooiplaas women were redefining their roles in the community. But their interest in such rituals was also associated with a desire to develop and maintain their networks beyond the village. They used them, as men have been reported to have used beer drinks, to discuss broader social and political issues. Women too used the opportunities created by the rituals that they organised for discussion relating to credit club meetings, poultry schemes and other social and economic opportunities. Moreover, the regular ritual activities they ensured occurred in the village provided them with a means of drawing their dispersed kin back to the village. Information about these rituals circulated widely in the diverse social networks of residents in the informal settlements on the fringes of East London and other small Eastern Cape towns, always providing a kind of encouragement for those who had migrated there to return home to participate in "the community". Women who organised and called people from afar to attend such rituals anticipated that they would bring cash and goods with them from the city and use some of it to purchase local commodities, either for their own use or resale in the city. The continuous process of organising and supporting ritual activities was thus clearly an attempt by women to ensure that the social links between town and country remained well-lubricated, so that those who had left the village - however temporarily - would remain conscious of their responsibilities at "home". In that sense, the rituals performed the same kinds of functions that the processes of "encapsulation" were said to have performed for Red people in 1950s East Bank location.

The argument which I have developed in this chapter is that rural women in Mooiplaas have found a new basis for co-operation in the post-*apartheid* era that has enabled them to bypass the old polarised identity politics of Red and School. To do so, they have embraced new identities that reflect a process that Canclini has called "truncated innovation". It is not a process of retreat into cultural essentialism, but one involving the creation of subtle criss-crossing links between different cultural orientations and experiences that has been mediated by the re-articulation of tradition. It has been women's ability, in both town and country, to develop hybrid identities that have allowed them to respond effectively to the imperatives of social and particularly economic change. I have tried to show, therefore, that women's engagement with tradition was a means of simultaneously opening up new economic opportunities for themselves and re-shaping their own identities as rural women, rather than as Red or School rural women. The two processes are, I

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change between men and women in the village

would argue, so deeply and indeed dialectically intertwined that one cannot readily claim that either has determined the other.

By contrast with the experiences of women, rural men – whose identities were much more strongly shaped by apartheid ideology than those of women – have tended to remain trapped in the older identity politics of Red and School. When I revisited Ngxingxolo village in 2001, I found that the achievements of women in relation to small projects and other local economic opportunities had created considerable resentment and anger, especially amongst young men in the village. I noted that in the Slatsha side of the village a group of young men was again invoking their Red identities by arguing that all the new development opportunities in the village were being monopolised by School people. They claimed that this was proved by the fact that most of the new infrastructural development, such as a reticulated water supply, a new clinic, a police station and other facilities, had been located on the Ngxingxolo side. They also claimed that the village committee was an instrument of old School interests and was deliberately ignoring their claims for new residential sites, jobs and opportunities. To make their point, these men had seized land for residential sites beyond Slatsha and had set up their own separate committee. But, unlike the Reds in Mda's novel, they did not seek to revert to the splendid isolation of tradition, but rather a fair share of the benefits of a restructured modernity which gave them access to new economic opportunities and the right to "restore" patriarchal power and authority in their own community.

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CHAPTER NINE

BEYOND EXPOSE ANTHROPOLOGY: BACK TO THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF URBANISM

Back to the Trilogy

In the 1950s, when the Mayers and their colleagues entered East London's East Bank location to embark on field-work for the *Xhosa in Town* project, social anthropology was still the dominant social science discipline in Africa. The "tribal study", which had become the analytical lens through which colonial understandings of Africa were formed and consolidated, remained the dominant paradigm, even in the 1950s. But there had also been a significant shift in focus, at least in central Africa, where anthropologists from the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (RLI) had begun moving away from the rural areas towards the emerging industrial towns and cities, and were now grappling with issues of urbanisation and social change. Much was expected of the discipline and the RLI, generously funded by the British government, aimed to generate a coherent set of understandings about the impact of urbanisation on social structure and cultural identity formation in these new urban-industrial settings. In the new anthropology of urbanisation and social change of the 1940s and 1950s, the underlying narrative of the period was a modernist one. As Ferguson (1999: 35) points out:

> Two competing images of the African – migrant-labouring tribesman versus permanently-urbanised townsmen – were in this way placed into a relation not only of opposition but of historical succession. The two ideological stereotypes were made into the polar ends of a historical progression, in which the conservatives' vision represented the past, while the liberals claimed the future.

In developing their analysis of the urban transition, the RLI anthropologists argued that Africans on the Copperbelt proved to be highly responsive to new urban environments in which they found themselves, and were able to shed their tribal identities in the urban context. The RLI

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anthropologists argued that rural people had relatively fixed identities, which were circumscribed by local culture and social institutions. Yet, when they arrived in the city, they were able to operate in a much more open field where adopting new identities was always possible. It was precisely this idea which underpinned the RLI's famous urban situational analysis. In terms of this framework, once Africans left their tribal heartland and entered the city, they were able to "choose" from a range of modern identities. The significance of the *Xhosa in Town* project in East London in the 1950s was that it contested the assumption that Africans would inevitably adopt more Westernised life-styles the longer they stayed in the city. The work of Philip and Iona Mayer on the Red sub-cultures of East Bank location indicated that long-term exposure to urban conditions could, in fact, generate the opposite response – a determined rejection of the world of the whites and a defence of traditional cultural values and orientations.

The debates generated by the *Xhosa in Town* project provided new impetus to the emerging field of urban anthropology in Africa and helped initiate various studies in South Africa that explored themes around urban social change and identity (Wilson & Mafeje 1963; Dubb 1976). But, while the 1960s were exciting years for urban anthropology in South Africa, the discipline suffered a series of damning critiques both at home and abroad in the 1970s. Most articulate among them, at least in relation to the Mayers' work, was that of Bernard Magubane (1971; 1973), a South African scholar, who declared that the "townsmen versus tribesmen" paradigm revealed a colonialist, even racist, attitude. His work dove-tailed with broader critiques of the discipline, such as Asad's (1973), which declared the discipline to be the "hand maiden of colonialism". This led to a political and intellectual crisis for the discipline as a whole. In South Africa, where the study of tribes and tradition was further politically loaded by apartheid ideology, the Mayers' work on the trans-location and entrenchment of traditionalist Xhosa folk-culture in the city became extremely problematic. This analysis seemed to imply that urban Africans, or at least some of them, supported apartheid. Worse, it appeared that they did so out of choice rather than as a response to larger political and economic processes that constrained them.

In the late 1970s, Philip Mayer, as has been argued in this study, responded to these critiques by reworking his original thesis and recasting the Red (conservative) and School (progressive) responses as examples of rural resistance ideologies. He was careful to point out that these were not responses of collaboration, but long-standing resistance ideologies that were born within a context of colonial domination. In constructing this argument, he drew heavily on the work of French structuralist Marxist, Louis Althusser, and other then fashionable neo-Marxist analyses of ideology. This response was published in 1980 and signalled a decisive shift away from earlier approaches to a much deeper concern with the problems of political economy in

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South African anthropology. However, the 1970s controversy around *Townsmen and Tribesmen* and the persistent accusations of its collaborationist intellectual and political tradition, took a heavy toll. In particular, it signalled a retreat from social anthropological engagement with culture. It marked the beginning of a period when neo-Marxist perspectives dominated South African anthropology and the discipline became an adjunct to the revisionist social history movement (cf. James 1997). In the new intellectual division of labour in South Africa, anthropology was lauded for its capacity to provide micro-level details of the impact of broader political and economic processes on ordinary people's lives. In adopting this role, social anthropologists deserted the cities in favour of a re-engagement with the rural periphery.

This anthropology showed little concern with culture and identity issues and focused predominantly on kinship, poverty, and processes of social differentiation. It was nevertheless deeply sensitive to questions of historical process, something glaringly absent from the 1950s and 1960s anthropological works on social change. Within a decade, the face of South African anthropology had changed, as anthropologists retreated from analyses of culture and social structure to embark on understanding rural housework. Their primary aim was to illuminate the nature of apartheid and capitalist exploitation in the rural periphery, highlight processes of resistance, and plug empirical and theoretical gaps identified by the broader materialist perspectives. The idea that anthropology's role was to expose apartheid, also developed from the mid-1980s, when ethnographic research was being used to deconstruct the apartheid state's definitions of categories such as race, ethnicity and tribe (Boonzaier & Sharp 1988). This led to a revival of interest in politicised ethnicities and processes associated with the re-invention of tradition. Gordon and Spiegel (1993) have called this a period of "expose analysis" in South African anthropology, the main aim of the discipline having been diverted to deconstruct the categories used by the state to classify people, to show that apartheid was a deception, a lie, a gross distortion of social reality.

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Expose Anthropology, Households and the City

In their review of South African anthropology, Gordon and Spiegel (1993) suggest that this tradition, while useful, was limited: firstly, because it was satisfied simply to critique, and excluded increasing knowledge and theoretical development; secondly, because it concentrated too much on deconstructing the rhetoric of only the dominant political position, and thirdly, because it romanticised resistance to apartheid. For me, the central problem with expose analysis with its strong focus on resistance was, firstly, the limitations of this "deconstructionist project" and, secondly, its inability to break out of the old retention-substitution models of social change,

which had dominated the discipline since the 1930s. The focus of anthropological writing in this tradition was to contrast the irrationality of apartheid and essential rationality of the resistance strategies of ordinary people. Re-invented traditions, ritual and ethnicity were manipulated in highly instrumental ways to achieve strategic ends. The people, it was consistently argued, used culture and tradition as a medium through which to articulate and act out their maximising, instrumental rationalities.

The household emerged as a central concept for the analysis of rural resistance during this period. The dominant notion of rural households that prevailed at this time was that they were seen to be part of relatively autonomous peasant sectors, or at least had been until relatively recently. The prevailing wisdom drew on evolutionary models, especially those of a neo-Marxist kind, which presented the relationship between peasants and capitalism as one of mutual exteriority.[1] In terms of this perspective, the presumption was that an already constituted capitalism made use of existing traditions and social forms for its own already established goals, and in so doing reshaped these institutions to suit its own needs. In the anthropology of this period, rural households as social groups, along with other aspects of tradition that had survived the ravages of racial capitalism, were positioned outside of capitalism and therefore modernity. Their connection with the industrial economy was recognised through their contributions of labour power which fed processes of accumulation within that economy. The basic concepts used in the analysis of rural households focused on processes of exclusion, marginality and resistance. In these debates rural households have generally been presented as "black boxes" with their own internal dynamics, constantly adapting and responding to changes in the structural conditions within which they were made to survive (cf. Murray 1981; Spiegel 1980; De Wet 1995).

However, by the mid-1980s, it was being shown that such resistance, based on the moral economies of the rural house, had begun to unravel. More and more people in the rural areas, Spiegel (1983) wrote, were "spinning off" the development cycle and thus losing access to the social and economic resources that enabled them to defend themselves against racial capitalism. The argument mirrored the Mayers' (1980) suggestion that the resistance ideologies of Red and School, which had been so firmly entrenched in the 1950s, were also eroding under hastening processes of political and economic change. In 1985, Sharp and Spiegel noted that, in certain rural areas, the moral coherence economy of the household had become so eroded that many of the new closer settlements in the homeland had been transformed into a "Hobbesian nightmare", where social relations seemed devoid of moral content.

1. Compare Kahn (1993) for a detailed discussion of the influence of similar traditions in the study of Indonesian peasant sectors. Also see Gudeman (1992), Carstens and Hugh-Jones (1995) and Carstens (1997) for a thorough anthropological analysis of peasant concepts of 'the house' and 'household'.

It was against the backdrop of these studies and concerns that anthropologists re-entered the urban areas after the repeal of the notorious influx control legislation in the mid-1980s. In plotting the new routes into urban areas, some scholars picked up on earlier anthropological narratives of the household, arguing that such units often embarked – as coherent social units – on a heroic "struggle for the city" from which they had been excluded for so long (Mabin 1989, 1990; Crankshaw 1993; Cross 1993). But while lingering notions of moral coherence and social networks seem to have carried rural households into the city, anthropologists were quick to point out that maintaining these relationship within the changing spaces of the hostel and informal settlements were well nigh impossible. The stories that emerged from the new urban anthropology of the 1990s have been dominated by the "experience-near" anthropology of "disorientated fragmentation or disem-power pain" of which Knauft (1997) speaks, rather than the "experience-far descriptivism" of the political economy of the 1980s. In narrating the devastating consequences of apartheid, a number of the new studies focused on children. Jones's (1973) account of the harrowing ordeals and fragmented lives of hostel children in Somerset West is probably the most powerful of the expose anthropology of the city. In a strongly-worded passage in her book, *A Bed Called Home*, Ramphele (1993) complained that it was only foreign scholars, who could leave South Africa for the comfort of their home countries, that were in a position to "romanticise the survival cultures of the urban poor". Those who lived in South Africa, she argued, had the responsibility of revealing the appalling social and economic conditions that prevailed, and of working for the empowerment and transformation of impoverished communities.

Rethinking the Urban House: The Spatial and the Cultural

The problem for South African anthropology, however, was that it had largely turned its back on cultural analysis. Many of the new studies to emerge out of informal settlements simply depicted social relations as amoral, many doubting that older notions of the household which had served anthropology so well in the rural areas could be used in the urban context at all (cf. Ross 1993; Spiegel et al 1986). In depicting the urban behaviour of informal-settlement residents as self-interested and utilitarian, the focus of analysis quickly shifted to social networks. Here it was shown that informal-settlement residents continued to traverse the spatial boundaries of the city and continued to move back and forth between urban and rural areas, where they apparently found the moral communities to which they still felt attached. By contrasting dysfunctional informal-settlement households with coherent extra-urban social networks, these scholars inadvertently reconstructed the classic old sociological divide between *gemeinschaft* and

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gesellschaft, between the city as a place of alienation and countryside as a place where social relations were still *social* in that they contained a moral content. By leaving this impression, this work seemed to contradict the thrust of the rural household anthropology of the 1980s, which had come to the conclusion that agricultural betterment, forced resettlement and bantustan development had effectively "urbanised" the countryside (Murray 1981; Sharp & Spiegel 1985; De Wet 1995).

In the anthropology of the past two decades a primary focus of anthropological analysis has been on the manner in which apartheid and racial capitalism have undermined and eroded the social values and cultural coherence of the African family. What has been given far less attention, however, is the way in which apartheid as a form of racial modernism was itself centrally concerned with reconstructing African kinship patterns and remodelling the house. The intention of the apartheid plan was not, it would seem to me, to destroy the African family, but rather to remake it in ways that were functional to the creation of a more productive urban and rural working class. It was, in my view, a plan that was not only shaped by local racial ideologies and practices but was fundamentally influenced and underpinned by international modernist planning regimes. This assumption has been a fundamental point of departure for the project as a whole and has profoundly affected the anthropology of urbanism that I have attempted to construct in the preceding chapters. The anthropology of urbanism elaborates an understanding of apartheid as a racialised regime of space and power that set out to "norm and form" urban and rural social spaces in ways that would deepen proletarianisation, while at the same time reconstructing social and political order. It was a regime that sought to rebuild new communities in betterment villages and African townships by imposing new definitional order – these racialised modernist "spaces of representation" – that were designed to remake African subjectivities and identities. Apartheid, in other words, contained within it the cultural project of racial modernism (cf. Judin and Vladislavic 1999; Robinson 1998).

In trying to conceptualise the spatial and social transformations associated with the implementation of urban apartheid, which has been located at the centre of this study, I have found Paul Rabinow's (1989; 1995) concept of "middling modernism" particularly useful. Rabinow (1989) argues that the key departure of "middling modernism" as a form of urban planning is that it no longer focuses on "regulating and ameliorating a locale and its inhabitants, but rather on treating both as a matter to be formed and normed at will" (1989: 345). It is not concerned with "the isolation and rectification of islands of pathology" but with providing "a blueprint for the scientific administration of modern life" (*ibid.*: 344). The intention, he claims, is to create abstract sites where "all reference to older modes of life, to history, to the sedimented place of memory, and to sociability had been eliminated" and where the "the central point of the

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city had been reserved for public administration" (Rabinow 1989: 358). Middling modernism imposes itself, Rabinow argues, from the outside as a universal grid onto existing situations without taking cognisance of local conditions, values and practices. It seeks "to bestow on the allotments a city plan (*plan de ville*) and, symmetrically, on assisted families a life plan (*plan de vie*)" (in Rabinow 1989: 332). The key feature of middling-modernist regimes, as with all modernist planning, he insists, is that they seek to "create New Men freed, purified and liberated to pursue new forms of sociality which would inevitably arise from correctly-designed spaces and forms" (Rabinow 1995: 60).

Urban apartheid planning as it emerged in South Africa after the 1950s amounted to precisely such a racialised planning regime. It no longer set out to regulate and ameliorate what were considered to be local pathologies and disorders of the old locations, but sought to impose a new and universal modernist regime in all areas and situations. The "norming and forming" process embarked on by apartheid planners in South African cities in the 1950s involved segmenting urban populations into various social components that were graded and allocated to different spatial destinations, associated with different levels of modernity and forms of social identity. In the new townships, the plan deemed it necessary to separate rural migrants and more settled townspeople, and to stabilise the latter in an orderly urban environment (cf. Robinson 1992, 1998). It was hoped that careful spatial planning and disciplined public administration would reform and reshape urban-born African families into a modern working class.

As with modernist urban planners elsewhere, one of the critical objectives of the new township plan was to clear the cities of "dysfunctional urban families", especially female-headed households, which were blamed for a host of social problems in the cities in the inter-war period (cf. Glaser 2000: 22–28). To "normalise" the urban family, a new technical house plan was devised and implemented in townships across South Africa. The new house plan was devised to encourage the development of a functional urban family. The plans defined the normal use of such a shelter and made this a condition of occupation. It specified the functions of the rooms – living room, bedroom, kitchen, etc. – and sketched in the proper furnishings for the interiors. In the urban apartheid plan, as with other middling-modernist regimes elsewhere, housing proved to be a central locus for the interaction of macro- and micro-knowledge and powers (Rabinow 1995: 76).

If "expose anthropology" has located the African household on the margins of the modern, on the outside looking in, the anthropology of urbanism I have attempted here has located it at the centre, positioned inside the modern. Conceptualised in this way, the discussion of African households can take a new turn. They can be seen as part of the broader project of the construction of alternative modernities rather than as part of older social and cultural systems

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that linger on the fringes. By repositioning the house within a discourse of cultural constructions and spatial practice, located within ongoing dialogues between "spaces of representation" and the "representations of space", I would suggest that there are new possibilities for the strong traditions of household-based analysis in South African anthropology. The "home-made" anthropology in which so many were immersed can be re-imagined in ways that meaningfully illuminate a larger anthropological canvas that allows us to locate our housework more meaningfully, while engaging more productively with the master narratives in our field. It is necessary, then, to see the house not only from the outside in, from the gaze of the missionary, colonial administrator and apartheid bureaucrat or planner (cf. Comaroff 1992; 1998), but also from the inside out. Once we have arrived at some sort of understanding of domesticity and the culturally-constituted relations within this sphere, we can work outwards to the space of the yard, the street, the dance-hall, the stadium, and beyond to the space of the village. This not only requires theoretical innovation, but a careful rethinking of our spatial strategies as field-workers (cf. Marcus 1998).

Persistent Dualism, Hybridity and Difference

If there is a need for anthropology to rethink the house and household as social and cultural domains, it is also important that we revisit the persistent dualisms that continue to dominate anthropological engagements with migrants and the city. In a recent book on Hong Kong, Abba (1997) has argued that Hong Kong as a city is seen as an East-West city that mixes tradition and modernity, memory with desire. He suggests that this idea is enshrined in one of the most durable images of Hong Kong, which shows Chinese junks in Victoria Harbour against the backdrop of tall modernist sky-scrapers. The image, he notes, has gone beyond kitsch or stereotype, being promoted to, and promoted as, an urban archetype. Abba regrets the ways in which this discourse is able to make complex urban spaces disappear into a one-dimensional image, structured on a facile binarism – a binarism, which Abba (1997) insists, merely leads only to a "copulation of clichés". In a similar way, it might be asked whether the townsman-tribesman opposition and related binary ideological constructs, such as those between the urban-rural, civil-customary, migrant-city dweller, and more recently the localist-cosmopolitan divide, do not serve the same purpose. Put differently, does southern African anthropology not simply produce and reproduce a "copulation of clichés", albeit ones that have now dressed up the modern and the traditional in increasingly sophisticated theoretical clothes?

The reasons why the urban-rural dualism has remained so powerful in South Africa, is not simply because people have adopted determined strategies of cultural resistance, it is

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because, as Mandani reminds us, this divide is itself due to the regimes of power and knowledge that underpinned the racial modernism of apartheid. The modernist belief that social problems could be solved through major planning interventions, lay at the core of apartheid. However, unlike the other modernist planning regimes - which tended to direct the new working-class communities towards a single development path, where a sophisticated welfare infrastructure to assist those who fell by the wayside (cf. Hall 1996) - apartheid did not. The welfarist tendencies in European modernist planning traditions were notably absent from the apartheid variant. Under apartheid there was no question of rehabilitation and welfare support for blacks, especially outside the core urban areas. These privileges were reserved for whites only. Blacks who did not meet the new criteria for urban permanence were either sent to live in single-sex hostels as migrant labourers or deported to the countryside to be "retribalised" in the homelands. In the apartheid version of modernist planning there was, however, not one, but multiple destinations to which Africans were directed and they were graded along on a scale of development, which placed the tribal village at the bottom of this hierarchy and the settled township community at the top. In the cities, the aim was to modernise a small section of the black working class and to allocate the remainder either to single-sex hostels or move them out of cities altogether. The urban hostels were modelled on the "kraal" and set about maintaining and entrenching tribal values and identities in the city. They were very successful in achieving this, and often served to deepen the migrant cultures in the cities, as we have seen in Chapter 6. For those who did not classify for access to these spaces, relocation to the new homelands was inevitable.

But the homelands were also divided into different socio-spatial destinations. They were not just the monolithic tribal spaces they are often made out to be. They contained their own version of urban and rural divide, of the contrast between the hostel complex and the township estate. In the homelands, new townships were energetically erected from the mid-1960s through into the mid-1980s to accommodate homeland teachers and bureaucrats, who refused to relocate to the homelands without proper urban services and accommodation, and to house "dysfunctional families" cast out of white urban areas. By moving "dysfunctional families", especially female-headed ones, into homeland townships and resettling them in the tranquillity of a modern, planned urban environment in the semi-rural precinct, state officials hoped to reform them and engender new forms of domesticity and discipline amongst unruly elements (cf. Mager 1999). Apartheid officials clearly believed that they were capable of undoing some of the damage of uncontrolled urbanisation. They wanted to remove social and cultural forms associated with the in-between spaces of "skokiaan culture" about which anthropologists soon wrote disparagingly (Hunter 1936; Hellman 1948; Malinowski 1961). The apartheid plan intended

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to achieve this, not through the "retribalisation" model of the village and the hostel, but through the application of the mainstream modernist urban planning regime, such as the "garden village", in the new homeland towns. It was anticipated that the new spatial and domestic regime together with the discipline of industrial work in homeland industries would eventually create pockets of modernity in the tribal heartland of the rural periphery. Beyond these urban areas lay the villages and tribal trust lands, which were intended as the homes of migrant labourers and the structurally unemployed whose members the state did not want to see drifting into the cities and other white areas. But even in these space, the model of the tribe was compromised by modernist under-pinnings of betterment planning and closer settlement, as we have seen in the last chapter.

Given the above, it is not surprising that political divisions and identities based on an opposition of the urban and the rural, the village and the city, between the status of subject and citizen, have been noted by successive generations of anthropologists. What is surprising is that they have paid so little attention to the strong modernist tendencies of the apartheid model and to the ambiguities and contradictions implicit in a system that aimed both to refashion tribalism and to constitute modernity. As Geschiere and Gugler (1998) have pointed out, we need to recognise how the rural and the urban have also become intertwined over time through complex processes of social, cultural and political change. They emphasise how ethnic and civic forms of citizenship are constantly threaded together in the post-colonial African context to create new cultural and political identities (also see Fisiy & Gosheen 1998; Nyamnjoh 2001). These cultural processes have also been linked to the increasing absence of the material conditions needed to clearly separate the urban and the rural, the customary and civic (cf. Bryceson 1996). In the analysis provided in the preceding chapters I have stressed how such processes of "convergence" played a critical role in identity politics in Duncan Village, especially during the 1980s, when urban and rural youth set aside their differences to reconstruct a set of new identities. I have also suggested that similar tendencies are now evident amongst women who are pursuing their own forms of "insurgent citizenship", which transcend earlier divisions. Ironically, as I pointed out in the previous chapter, it is the 'tribal' space of the village rather than in the city where women have been most able to erase former differences to combine and transcend older social and political divisions.

In recognising the cultural capacity and political will of Africans to transcend these divides, there has been a shift in the literature from a fascination with the reconstruction of the rural in the urban to an interest in the complex hybridity and plurality of African modernities. Those "in-between" cultural spaces of "skokiaan culture" that haunted the previous generation of social anthropologists are now being celebrated as the locus of African creativity and, by some,

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as the fountain-head of a new African Renaissance. Suddenly, it seems that it is not the culturally "pure spaces" of townsmen and tribesmen that anthropologists and cultural analysts are seeking to document, but the hybrid social forms that constitute a peculiarly African process of cultural creativity and innovation. It is therefore not surprising that *Townsmen or Tribesmen* has recently come under fire again. Robins (1999), picking up on the spirit of Abba's earlier remarks, has claimed that the Red/School distinction emphasised by the Mayers creates an "artificial divide" that ignores the complex and essentially hybrid nature of African identity formation. Robins (1999) follows others in asserting that the Mayers overdrew the Red/School distinction by ignoring the subtle in-between spaces of cultural mixing and identity formation.

Sharp (1997) is another who has recently commented on the potential of notions such as "creolisation" or "cultural hybridity" as a means of steering South African anthropological enquiry "around the shoals of expose analysis" (1997: 16):

> There are two reasons why "cultural hybridity" is not another way of talking about [the older anthropological concept of] "syncretism". In the first place, it involves no assumption of an original culture on which social memory draws to achieve a condition of hybridity ... In the second place, hybridity involves a reflexive awareness of multiple subject positions rather than a simple mixing of one or two cultures (1997: 17)

Concepts such as hybridity, therefore, seem to offer a way out of the persistent dualisms of the past. But there is also a danger, as Sharp (1997) notes, of mistaking syncretism for hybridity. This is what the Mayers meant in 1971, when they described the convergence of Red and School sub-cultures in Mdanstane as "blurring". The assumption they worked on was that these were pure culture forms before they were mixed together. In this dissertation, I have suggested that such a model is limited because it fails to recognise the hybridity of Red and School in the first place. But, in preferring hybridity to syncretism as a term for analysis, I have suggested here that we should not forget Bakhtin's (1981) crucial distinction between "organic" and "intentional hybridity" (Bakhtin 1981; also Werbner 1999). In Bakhtin's view, processes of hybridity fluctuate between periods where trans-cultural exchange and transfers occur largely subliminally and organically and other situations where there is greater consciousness of cultural difference. It is in these latter moments, Bakhtin (1981) suggests, that processes of hybridity can also politicise ethnicity (also see Werbner 1999). The process described here is similar to what Canclini (1995) refers to as "truncated innovation", which involves the constant and conscious re-articulation of tradition in the midst of processes of ongoing trans-cultural exchange and dialogue.

My own reading of Red and School in East Bank (see Chapter 2) and in the rural areas outside the city (see Chapter 8) suggests that the 1950s was generally a period of "intentional hybridity", where Red and School identities often took on the form of "politicised ethnicities".

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This is not to suggest that they were the only identities in circulation at that time, but I do not believe that the Mayers (1971) exaggerated the salience of this division in their East Bank research of the 1950s. My problem with their work, as I argued in Chapter 2, was more a contextual one. It related to their failure to situate identity formation within the context of space and power, especially the space of the urban itself. In my view, the concept of hybridity is useful because, firstly, it shifts away from the idea that identity derives from some cultural essence; secondly, it stresses the relational aspects of identity formation; and thirdly, it recognises the possibilities, under different conditions, of fixity and openness. It is for these reasons that I have found the concept of style, as it has been formulated by Ferguson (1999), more useful than the more conventional notions of sub-culture in analysing identity politics in Duncan Village. In shifting the focus from sub-culture to style, from the habitual and the constant to the performative and the relational, we open up the possibility for a more profound understanding of the relationship between space, power and identity. It is also only by spatialising our analyses of cultural identity formation and difference, as the anthropology of urbanism does, that we begin to access the other voices that speak within, through and across broader categorical distinctions.

One problem with current formulations around hybridity is that too much attention is given to the opposition between the coloniser and the colonised, or to the opposition between the local and the global. This attracts attention away from the dynamics of intra- and inter-local cultural exchanges and transaction. Simple dualisms, however theorised, can grossly simplify urban identity politics unless they are situated within a thorough understanding of the regional context within which they occur. A simple opposition between localism and cosmopolitanism is inadequate if it ignores the extent to which urbanites themselves often engaged in blending and reworking a wide range of localist discourses, incorporating rural styles into cosmopolitan forms. This is particularly important in relation to South Africa, where urban communities were cut off from the international circuits of cultural exchange after the 1950s and where various forms of local identities were actively encouraged and supported by the state. In this context the circuits of urban cultural formation were densified at the local and regional level. It is for this reason that I have suggested that the regional context remains a critical terrain for "ethnographic thickening" in the anthropology of urbanism.

In the analysis provided in this dissertation I have attempted to show that broad cultural and categorical distinctions, such as Red and School, urban and rural, are themselves internally finely differentiated. The construction of Redness in B- and D-hostels, for example, occurred in different ways as migrants from Kentani, Mount Frere, Mpondoland and Elliotdale in the former Transkei all wrote their own cultural scripts, which were in dialogue with each other as well as with various urban-oriented identities. Similarly, in the case of the urban youth, I have shown

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that there were many segmentations and ongoing dialogues on the streets and in other public spaces between *oobrighty, amasinala,* and *umgxungxus* in one era, *pansula, iikati, ivies* and comrades in another. To understand the nature of urbanism at different times, we must always look beyond the relationship between the colonised and the coloniser and the local and the global, and pay careful attention to the multiplicity of local points of reference in these processes. It is this local diversity that allows for a plurality of African urbanisms.

Calls by anthropologists like Moore (2000) for a closer engagement with post-colonial theory should thus be noted, but we should also not lose sight, as Fardon (1990) has suggested, of our regional ethnographic traditions and the multiplicity of localisms contained within them. The theoretical and methodological spaces that I have tried to open up through the anthropology of urbanism attempted here will hopefully help to revive anthropology as a discipline in South Africa, where it is currently struggling to find a meaningful voice in a changing society. In order to revive the discipline in South Africa, I believe that it is critical that we firstly re-engage with our earlier ethnographic tradition, as I have attempted here and many Zambian studies have done in recent years. Secondly, we need to prioritise further research in urban areas. The future of South African anthropology, at least at the moment, lies not in grand theory, but in carefully-crafted regional ethnographies that are capable of speaking powerfully to local issues of social transformation while at the same time engaging the broader theoretical and empirical concern in the discipline. My hope is that this study has made a small contribution toward moving in that direction.

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Toko, Mr. by L. Bank and L. Maqasho, East London, 14 June 2000
Tom, Mr. by M. Qamarwana and A. Nicholas, East London, 10 August 2001
Tops, Mr. by L. Bank, East London, 18 July 1996
Twaku, P. by B. Mrawu and L. Maqasho, East London, 21 September 1999; 21 August 2000; 14 May 2002
Vuka, Mr. by L. Bank, Chalumna, 12 December 1997
Xabanisa, N. and Ms Seti by L. Bank and L. Maqasho, East London, 08 October 1999
Zokile, J. by L. Bank and L. Qambata, Mooiplaas, 20 July 1998
Zwakala, T. by L. Bank, East London, 10 October 2000

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3. Photographic Collections

	Name	Quantity
1	Morolong	520
2	Adoons	4
3	Mbolekwa	4
4	Bertha Kelly	5
5	Joe Mcoseli	1
6	Banana Macanda	1
7	Goniwe	4
8	Mgojo	4
9	Naidoo	25
10	Moyikwa	34
11	Forster	5
12	Labans	71
13	Njikelana	22
14	Jegels	23
15	Meyer	1
16	Makatala	16
17	Meine	68
18	Natalie	1
19	Temmers	22
20	Mjaleni	3
21	Gaxela	3
22	Maki	5
23	Noqobo	8
24	Mazwi	2
25	Mangxila	1
26	Municipality	61
27	Ngeju	9
28	Willard	1
29	Noyho	5
30	Sontshi	7
31	Sam	5
32	West Bank	48
33	Unknown	30
	Total	1019

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APPENDIX 1

PHOTOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Photographs	Name of Collection*	Photographer
Plate 1		
1 Oobrighty youth	unknown collection	Unknown
2 Older Man	Makatala collection	Unknown
3 Youths	Morolong Collection	Morolong
4 Women at the Cinema	Morolong Collection	Morolong
Plate 2		
5 Bat- Fair	Morolong Collection	Morolong
6 Beauty Pageant	Morolong Collection	Morolong
7 Consumer Products	Morolong Collection	Morolong
8 Rugby	Morolong Collection	Morolong
9 Family Picnic	Macanda Collection	Unknown
Plate 3		
10 Youth	Moyikwa Collection	Unknown
11 Mother	Unknown Collection	Unknown
12 Men	Meinie Collection	Unknown
Plate 4		
13 Beach	Morolong Collection	Morolong
14 Beach on Sunday	Morolong Collection	Morolong
15 Youths from race track	Morolong Collection	Morolong
16 Police Pass Arrest	Makatala Collection	Unknown
Plate 5		
17 African Quaivers	Morolong Collection	Morolong
18 Havana Hot-Shots	Morolong Collection	Morolong
19 Cuban Stars	Natalie Collection	Unknown
20 Peacock halls	Morolong Collection	Morolong
21 Ballroom Dance	Morolong Collection	Morolong

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Plate 6

22 Demolitions	Meinie Collection	Unknown
23 Family Photograph	Meinie Collection	Meinie
24 Furniture wating outside	Meinie Collection	Meinie

Plate 7

25 Duncan Village	East London Municipality
26 House plan of the 51/9	East London Municipality

Plate 8

27 Duncan Village Extention	East London Municipality

Plate 9

28 Duncan Village Extention	Morolong Collection	Morolong
29 C- section	Morolong Collection	Morolong

Plate 10

30 Mdantsane	Morolong Collection
31 Map	Reintges (1992)

Plate 11

32 Worker	Unknown Collection	Unknown
33 Migrant	Unknown Collection	Unknown
34 Workers	Unknown Collection	Unknown

Plate 12

35 August Riots	Daily Dispatch Collection	Unknown
36 Burial of Victims	Daily Dispatch Collection	Unknown

Plate 13

37Army Patrols	Daily Dispatch Collection	Unknown
38 Burning Vehicle	Daily Dispatch Collection	Unknown

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Plate 14

39 Stickfight	Mager (1999)	
40 Migrant Youth	Ngeju Collection	Unknown
41 Young Initiates	Unknown	Unknown

Plate 15

42 Oobrighty Youth	Morolong Collection	Morolong
43 Man in Suites	Unknown Collection	Unknown
44 Amasinala Youth	Moyikwa Collection	Unknown
45 New urban Youth	Ngeju Collection	Unknown

Plate 16

46 Young couple	Moyikwa Collection	Unknown
47 Young Family	Moyikwa Collection	Unknown
48 Youth with Parents	Unknown	Unknown

Plate 17

49 Comrades	Duka Collection	Unknown
50 Michael Jackson	Terror Collection	Unknown
51 Pansula-Style	Tshawe Collection	Tshawe

Plate 18

52 B- hostel	Duncan Village	Pollock

Plate 19

53 Paraffin Stove	Duncan Village	Bank
54 Group of Migrants	Duncan Village	Bank
55 Rural Wife	Duncan Village	Bank
56 Migrants socialise	Duncan Village	Bank

Plate 20

57 Motorcar	Morolong Collection	Morolong
58 Fashionable Women	Morolong Collection	Morolong
59 Mother and daughter	Morolong Collection	Morolong

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Plate 21

60 Wives gather for tea	Morolong Collection	Morolong
61 Sewing group	Morolong Collection	Morolong
62 Women group	Morolong Collection	Morolong

Plate 22

63 Living Room	Morolong Collection	Morolong
64 New Kitchen	Morolong Collection	Morolong
65 Kitchen	Morolong Collection	Morolong

Plate 23

66 Women	Morolong Collection	Morolong
67 Electric stove	Sontshi Collection	Unknown
68 American Style	Morolong Collection	Morolong

Plate 24

69 Women clubs	Tshawe Collection	Tshawe
70 Money exchange	Tyali Collection	Unknown
71 Spaza Shop	Tshawe Collection	Tshawe
72 Club meeting	Tshawe Collection	Tshawe

Plate 25

73 School	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank
74 Red	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank
75 ANC Celebration	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank

Plate 26

76 Women performing	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank
77 Tourists	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank
78 Dancing	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank

Plate 27

79 Healer	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank
80 Club members	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank
81 Women	Mooiplaas Collection	Bank

* Photographic Collections refer to the Author's own collections, which are housed at the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at Rhodes University East London.

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Plate 21

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