South Africa: Urban transformation

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Abstract

This paper discusses transformation as a multi-dimensional concept to effect social change in South African society in the post-apartheid era. The policy implications of such a variegated understanding of social change are examined with special reference to planning principles such as holism, capacity building, self-reliance, community integration, participatory democracy and so forth. It is argued that transformation is a multi-dimensional process, and whilst on the basis of provisional evidence there appears to be nascent forms of socio-spatial change, structurally, such apparent change is shot through by a number of contradictions, tensions and potential conflicts.

1. Introducing the problematique of the Apartheid City

In this paper it is argued that the socio-spatial[1] problematique of the Apartheid City influences to a great extent the rate of change in South African society, particularly after the inauguration of the first democratic government in 1994. This means, amongst other things, that the future of South Africa is inextricably linked with the future of its cities. It would, therefore, be no exaggeration to suggest that the South African city reflects the state of the nation and the welfare of its people. For the most part of its colonial-cum-apartheid history, the city reflected the racist planning frameworks of the successive white-controlled governments, a situation made quite explicit on 30 May 1952, in a speech in Parliament, by the then Minister of Native Affairs, Dr Hendrick F Verwoerd, when he declared:

- Every town or city, especially industrial cities, must have a single corresponding black township.
- Townships must be large, and must be situated to allow for expansion without spilling over into another racial group area.
- Townships must be located an adequate distance from white areas.
- Black townships should be separated from white areas by an area of industrial sites where industries exist or are being planned.
- Townships should be within easy transport distance of the city, preferably by rail and not by road transport.
- All race group areas should be situated so as to allow access to the common industrial areas and the CBD without necessitating travel through the group area of another race.
- There should be suitable open buffer spaces around the black township, the

breadth of which should depend on whether the border touches on densely or sparsely populated white areas.

- Townships should be a considerable distance from main, and more particularly national roads, the use of which as local transportation routes should be discouraged.
- Existing wrongly situated areas should be moved.
- Everybody wants his servants and his labourers, but nobody wants to have a native location near his own suburb (cf *Cape Times*, 14 July 1949; *Cape Times*, 31 May 1950; Durban City Council, 1951).

This explicit, racially-motivated, planning framework has been systematically enforced by the administrative functionaries of the apartheid state catering mostly for the needs of its "white" citizens. It is the cumulative impact of these racially-contrived planning frameworks that has resulted in "Islands of Spatial Affluence" in a "Sea of Geographical Misery" at the end of 20th century South Africa (Marais, 1998; Mabin, 1999a; Simone, 1999; Saul, 1999; Bond, 1999a). It is these, largely historically-constructed uneven forms of development that are the subject of transformation in the democratic South Africa of the 1990s and beyond (Lodge, 1999).

Within a year of its 1994 democratic dispensation, the South African government, in a document entitled *Remaking the Urban Sector: The Government of National Unity's Strategy for South Africa's Cities, Towns and Neighbourhoods* (1995, p 1), spelled out the importance of the urban domain for the country by stating: "Following a global trend, South Africa is experiencing explosive urban growth. Approximately 26 million people, 65 per cent of a 40 million strong national population, already live in metropolitan areas, cities and towns. This urban sector accounts for some 80 per cent of South Africa's Gross Domestic Product. As economic activities and social and cultural opportunities expand in our cities and towns, urbanisation will persist and more than likely accelerate. By 2000, the urban population will be above 70 per cent of the country's total. By 2010, this proportion will likely have risen to 75%". In a revised version of the above document, entitled *Urban Development Framework* (1997, p 2), the government observes that "[i]nternational experience has shown that ultimately, the success or failure of national development initiatives will largely be shaped in cities and towns. National economic success depends upon urban success". However, ensuring the vitality of South Africa's cities and towns depends, to a great extent, on how South Africans understand the dynamics and overall trajectory of their society at the dawn of the 21st century, particularly in the light of the enduring legacy of apartheid *vis-à-vis* the welfare of ordinary people. In this regard, for example, *Statistics South Africa*, 1998 (*Cape Times*, 21 October 1998; www.statssa.gov.za), indicate that there are large socio-economic differences amongst South Africans as 43% have no formal housing, 20% have no education, 62% earn less than US$300 per month, 34% are unemployed, 72% have no telephones, 50% have no toilet facilities and 55% have no indoor plumbing. In the light of the import of urban life and the associated socio-economic distinctions underlying its multi-faceted dimensions, frequently driven by racial, gender and class antinomies, understanding the historical antecedents and structural differentiations of urban South Africa is, therefore, crucial for securing the overall welfare of the country in the 21st century. These multi-faceted differentiated experiences of people in space (geographically

specific localities), punctuated by particular historical phenomena (archived, indexed, remembered and narrated in distinct memory forms) necessitate, therefore, that the concept of people-driven development, as officially proclaimed in the *White Paper on Local Government* (1998) be a defining element of transforming the apartheid state and its related institutional practices and spatial manifestations. Similarly, the government's *Green Paper on Development and Planning* (RSA, 1999a) and the *Municipal Systems Bill* (RSA, 1999b) point out that recognizing the historically driven social processes, undergirding the South African urban landscape, is vital for understanding (and solving) the multiplicity of problems such as homelessness, unemployment and overall squalor characterizing South African society in general and South African urban life in particular. Accordingly, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and all related legislation, operational frameworks and development policies and guidelines, acknowledge the historical antecedents/practices underlying the current planning initiatives to create a more equitable dispensation (McCarthy and Smit, 1984, Cameron, 1986, Smit, 1989, RSA, 1995, RSA, 1997 and RSA, 1998a). It is this historically-informed problematique of apartheid planning that orients the definition, substance and form of the multi-dimensional process of transformation since the birth of democratic South Africa on 27 April 1994 (Lewis, 1999b and Robinson, 1999). It is against this backdrop that the rest of this article considers, sequentially, the concept "transformation" as a discursive/interpretive signifier within the historically-driven context of social change in South Africa. It argues that transformation is a multi-dimensional process, and whilst on the basis of provisional evidence there appears to be nascent forms of socio-spatial change, structurally, such apparent change is shot through by a number of contradictions, tensions and potential conflicts. The conclusion proffers a number of suggestions to facilitate the process of fundamental socio-spatial change in South Africa.

2. Transformation

The concept "transformation" is central to social change in South Africa. This means, amongst other definitions, that sectorally, its differentiated substance, form and dimensions, impact directly on the extent to which there is a structural shift from the dominant, exclusionary relations of power of successive colonial-cum-apartheid regimes to the more equitable, inclusive dispensation of the "new" South Africa. Transformation, however, does not merely have formal/nominal constitutional validity. On the contrary, its substantive content *vis-à-vis* policy formulation and implementation is contingent on the particular interpretation attached to it as a popular discursive/visionary framework on the one hand, and as a practical, legally enforceable guide on the other (in the quest to effect meaningful change in the South African society at large). Whilst the interpretation of "transformation" is problematic – there are, potentially, as many divergent/convergent meanings as there are potential interpreters/decoders of the term – nonetheless, it can still be suggested that in practice, as a defining concept of the new order in South Africa, it has the following dimensions.[2]

2.1. Epistemological dimension

The epistemological dimension of transformation refers to the origin and nature of specific sets of knowledge about social change, which, in turn, reflects our thinking and

cognition about the world. In the post-apartheid South Africa, this means, amongst other definitions, that the substance, form and dimensions of existing knowledge and knowledge formations are being examined, interrogated and questioned (cf Lyotard, 1984). This interrogation of extant/dominant conceptual/theoretical frameworks is dialectically linked to various efforts that are being made to authenticate/legitimate the voice of the subaltern/marginalized in society, not merely constitutionally, but also institutionally at all levels. In the process of critical review and interpretation of major assumptions about society, its constituent parts are often expressed as binary polar opposites as opposed to being dialectically linked as an ensemble of relations of power (male/female; ruling class/working class; black/white; north/south; developed/underdeveloped; urban/rural; rich/poor and so forth). The concept of Westernization/de-Westernization is being introduced/problematized to highlight and decentre the exogenous as opposed to indigenous oriented/derived regimes and forms of truth claims, knowledges and knowledge formations. Hence, the import of the call for an African Renaissance to validate the origin and development of African insights and African consciousness about the human condition in all its forms and dimensions (Makgoba, 1999). Here the call is not merely for an epistemological (knowledge oriented) legitimation of the African experience and being, but it is, simultaneously, also an attempt to juxtapose African achievements – varied through space and time – in relation to the dominant Western-centred notions of progress, advancement and development. Reconfiguring and reconstituting, ie trans-forming the existing bodies of knowledge and knowledge formations as disparate, discontinuous relations of power (in terms of saliency, hegemony, voice of interpellation/codification/instruction/implementation), discloses both the subordination of the African origins of being and consciousness and the dominant Western-centred practices in most, if not all, spheres of society. The goal is not necessarily one of replacing the Western notion of social change and progress with a so-called indigenous/Africanist rendition of development but, rather, the attempt is to accentuate the co-existence, in dialectical unity of the African origins of being, in the context of a thoroughly Westernized meaning and essence (ie hegemony) of human progress as mediated through more than 300 years of colonialism and apartheid practices. It is this dialectical unity (in practice) of the materially driven bifurcation of "Westernized essence/African-centredness of being and development" that impacts on policy formulation, policy implementation and social change in the transition to a more democratic dispensation in South Africa since 1994. Accordingly, the epistemological dimension underlying transformation is heuristic: it espouses incisive questioning, whilst simultaneously it is also hermeneutic, by being predicated upon a critical interpretation of the prevailing social practices with the view to reconstitute and reconfigure dominant relations of power in South African society.

2.2. Conceptual dimension

The conceptual dimension of transformation encompasses the vision of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic spatial order where different forms of geographic space, socialized through a specific configuration of social relations/experiences of work, residence, recreation and cultural heritage, amongst others, are readily accessible to most citizens (RSA, 1998b). Accordingly, the accent here is on the transformation of the Apartheid City through, amongst other methods, the construction of activity corridors and the promotion of multi-functional/mixed landuse zoning as opposed to mono-functional zoning (RSA,

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1998a). As a spatially defined, socially embedded process, transformation is thus an interrelated series of materially-driven practices, whereby the form, substance and overall dimensions of urban space are purposefully changed to reflect the principles of a more equitable social order. Thus, interpreted and pursued, transformation is quite clearly distinguishable from reformation; the latter entails cosmetic change in an *ad hoc* and piecemeal fashion, leaving the status quo largely intact, whilst the former is a programmatic, plan-oriented, project-directed effort to change the unequal access to and occupation/ownership of socio-politically differentiated space in South Africa.

2.3. Historical, moral dimension

More importantly, perhaps, the process of transformation is driven by a constitutionally ensconced concern for some measure of expiatory, compensatory, redistributional justice (RSA, 1996a and RSA, 1996b). Hence, for example, the importance of integrative and densification programmes to ameliorate/eliminate the spatial effects of apartheid planning (ANC, 1994; RSA, 1995, RSA, 1997, RSA, 1998a and RSA, 1999b; Williams, 1999b). Accordingly, most planning policy frameworks/programmes and projects emanating from government highlight the historical antecedents of unequal relations of power undergirding the urban regimes in South Africa. Therefore, they proceed from the premises that a semblance of justice (in terms of constitutional equality before the law) requires/necessitates the re-arrangement of the institutional/bureaucratic practices in society. Thus, the emphasis on public participation, accountability, transparency, as empowering processes to equalize the relations of power that influence/determine the formulation, design and implementation of specific planning policies *vis-à-vis* the provision of equitable services within the jurisdiction of a particular local authority/municipality/town/city (RSA, 1998a, RSA, 1998b and RSA, 1998c). In the quest to promote a greater degree of accessibility to high-order services and social spaces within particular urban areas, authorities are, amongst other things, advancing the concept of one city one taxbase, embracing the notion of one city many cultures, and promoting the creation of metropolitan-wide planning frameworks under the notion of a uni-city as opposed to reinforcing the existing juridical boundaries spawned by the apartheid state (RSA, 1998b). Even so, the process of change (irrespective of it being morally sound) in practice appears to be fraught with all manner of contradictions, tensions and even struggles. The reconstitution of socialized space from its colonized/racialized/ethnicized, propertied/valorized forms is profoundly influenced by the dominant economic/political/ideological relations of power and is thus manifestly unequal, both quantitatively and qualitatively (Marais, 1998; Lodge, 1999). Frequently, defensive responses by historically privileged groups who, for example, perceive the alteration of planning codes/zoning schemes as a *de facto* "encroachment of low quality residential structures into their high-quality neighbourhoods", result in the "not-in-my-backyard [NIMBY] syndrome" in areas which have been targeted for densification/equalization programmes.

2.4. Empirical dimension

As suggested above, transformation, in the South African context, has a political content in so far as it means the fundamental deracialization, de-ethnicization of the prevailing juridical boundaries of local authorities (Cloete et al., 1991; Commonwealth Secretariat,

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1991; RSA, 1998b and RSA, 1998c). Precisely because transformation at the urban level – in terms of socialized space – is inherently political in nature, this change-inducing process is often punctuated by the dialectical relations of power of either co-operation/resistance, compromise/intransigence, consensus/dissent, profoundly affecting both the pace and scope of change in the society at large (Isandla Institute, 1999; Mabin, 1999a; Lehulere, 1999).

2.5. Institutional dimension

The scope and pace of change in South Africa are also influenced/determined by the extent to which public institutions adjust to and comply with the current directives of transformative planning. Indeed, since the dawn of time, social relationships are premised on a specific ethos and logos, ultimately culminating in specific institutional practices (Aristotle, 1981; Diegel, 1990). Hence, for example, the importance of transparency and accountability to the "demos"[3] and the significance of 'vox populi'[4] to effect the transformation of the entire society (Aristotle, 1981). However, in the current conjuncture, in view of the unequal relations of power bequeathed upon South Africans by the apartheid state, the vested interests accumulated through a differentiated, racialized social order serve as a structural constraint in changing institutional practices. Thus, institutions often defy as opposed to comply with prevailing regulations and codes of conduct that seek to facilitate forms of behaviour/relations of power that, for example, facilitate the provision of equitable services, especially to historically neglected communities. In this sense, some institutions engage in the processes of interposition and nullification by either still applying apartheid-oriented interpretations of specific planning regulations and/or simply by ignoring and/or delaying the effective implementation of particular change-inducing measures as provided for by specific legislation promulgated by the new democratic government. Here one can readily refer to those institutions where there appears to be a patent unwillingness, if not belligerent opposition, to appointing capable black employees to senior management positions to approximate the demographic profile (ie in terms of race/language/culture/gender/ethnicity) of a particular community/area (Williams, 1998). Even so, the legislative requirements in this regard, if enforced consistently and effectively, and if, in the presence of continued defiance, punitive actions were to be meted out to the offending officials in such institutions, the existing, pro-active, change-inducing legislative measures would, in the long run, despite initial setbacks, still be able to contribute significantly to the transformation of apartheid-derived institutions. Such institutional transformation depends, however, to a great extent on the presence of proficient managerial skills.

2.6. Managerial dimension

The process of transformation necessitates the re-prioritization of planning issues in terms of employing and deploying human skills and expertise with the view to solve extant problems, eliminate red-tape, rationalize and systematize projects and programmes that expedite the translation into practice of specific objectives. These are organizational processes which have been receiving attention not merely in terms of the promulgation of appropriate legislation, such as the *White Paper on Local Government* of 1998, the *Municipal Systems Bill* of 1999, and the *Green Paper on Planning and*

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Development of 1999. On the contrary, Central Government, since 1994, in alliance with various institutions of higher learning, such as the University of the Western Cape, the University of the Witwatersrand, the University of Fort Hare and the University of Stellenbosch, have been training newly-elected officials from historically deprived communities in areas such as: democracy, co-operative governance, infrastructural services, housing and financial management. Transformation, being pursued and managed in such a co-ordinated manner, is, therefore, clearly a programmatically oriented and practice-driven process aimed at visible, sustainable results of systematic change in the South African social order.

2.7. Programmatic/practical dimension

In the case of South Africa, transformation assumes the form of a particular vision of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic social order, specifically in relation to the urban profile, its morphology, and the resultant configuration of economic/political/ideological relations of power that would eventually consummate in a "people-friendly living environment" (Smith, 1992; Swilling, 1991; Tomlinson, 1990; Tomlinson et al., 1994). Hence, the importance of the RDP, which focuses, amongst other things, on the restructuring of segregatory spatial forms, such as racially exclusive residential areas, community and cultural places/spaces (cf Blandy, 1999). This multi-faceted restructuring process necessitates a re-allocation of fiscal resources to redress historic imbalances both spatially and institutionally (ANC, 1994; RSA, 1995, RSA, 1997 and RSA, 1998a). The *Green Paper on Development and Planning* of 1999 specifically lists the practical measures that need to be taken to transform the Apartheid City. These include, amongst others, redefining both the procedural and substantive aspects of development and planning, commensurate with the basic right of freedom of movement and equal access to places of residence, work and recreation in the post-apartheid South Africa. It is these interrelated aspects of development and planning that characterize both the substance and form of transformation as it is being introduced, defined, expressed, and measured in relation to different projects and programmes in South Africa, particularly since the mid-1990s (cf Dewar, 1992; Barberton et al., 1998; Mabin, 1999a and Mabin, 1999b). In this regard, anecdotal evidence suggests that projects and programmes aimed at such fundamental change are largely government-driven, as borne out by a plethora of official policies and legislative measures (cf ANC, 1994; RSA, 1993, RSA, 1996a, RSA, 1996b, RSA, 1997, RSA, 1998a, RSA, 1998b, RSA, 1998c, RSA, 1999a, RSA, 1999b and RSA, 1999c). Whilst many of these official efforts suggest definite progress towards the fundamental restructuring of racialized space in South Africa, the experiential impact on apartheid space/practices is perhaps too flimsy, too incidental and too tentative to announce the death of the Apartheid City since, whilst constitutionally apartheid has been buried, in practice, given the inertia of geographic space as a locational determinant, racialized space, as an existential reality, still largely dictates where the majority of ordinary South Africans can live, work and play. The reason for this anomaly appears to be three-fold: first, there is not sufficient vacant land to accommodate the homeless people in or close to the cities of South Africa, hence the Apartheid City remains largely intact. Second, the land in or close to the city is too expensive for the state to acquire for low-income residential purposes. Third, even in the cases where it is possible to increase residential densities, the incidence of "Not-in-my backyard" syndrome, as pointed out earlier, is virtually perennial, resulting in expensive, drawn-out

court battles by largely middle-class people (irrespective of race) to prevent the construction of low-income residential areas in proximity to high-income areas.[5]Accordingly, it can be suggested that transformation of South Africa in general and urban areas in particular is shot through with multiple tensions, contradictions, conflicts and struggles. Thus defined, it can therefore be argued that transformation is a fluid, open-ended, multi-levelled process and is perhaps most effectively captured by the notion of "tension-ridden planning-in-motion", as suggested in the ensuing sections.

3. Transformation is shot through by multiple tensions

It is axiomatic that after almost half a century of racial engineering, successive racist spatial practices have had an almost indelible impact on current land use patterns in South Africa. Indeed, partly as a result of the racist control of geographical space, as receptacle of ideologically-motivated practices/exclusions, the following features characterize the larger land use/development problematique in South Africa.

Planning during the current period of transition to a democratic social order presupposes at least the existence of a clear, unambiguous, coherent policy framework to guide decisions *vis-à-vis* development programmes and projects. Regrettably, however, most local authorities do not have clearly formulated policies in respect of existing problems such as housing, unemployment, illiteracy and poor social services. In urban South Africa there are various problems detracting from progressive spatial and non-spatial change, including, amongst others: a steady population growth, unemployment, lack of housing, poor health services, limited access to land, inefficient utilization of land, fragmented urban structure, inadequate transportation network, the absence of a co-ordinated environmental policy, inadequate educational and training services and a largely ineffective local government (Williams, 1995).[6] For example, the existing vulnerable position of the unemployed, homeless and the poor is graphically borne out by statistics supplied by the "Speak out Poverty" campaign, organized by the South African Non-Government Organisations' Coalition (Sangoco), the Human Rights and Gender Commissions (cf *Cape Times*, 5 March 1998):

- 53% of South Africa's population live below the R3,100 (approximately US$50) a month poverty line; in the meanwhile, the ratio of a managing director's salary to that of the lowest paid worker is 100:1 as opposed to 7:1 in Japan; and 6% of the population earn more than 40% of the income;
- more than 2 million South Africans are nutritionally compromised – including 87% of all African children under the age of 12;
- some 38% of poor children also suffer from stunted growth;
- an estimated 200,000 children between the ages of 10 and 14 are engaged in various forms of labour, representing 4% of all children in this age group;
- an estimated 270,000 handicapped students are outside the formal specialised school system;
- 81% of schools in the Eastern Cape Province have no telephones;
- 57% of all schools have no electricity;
- 53% of the population are poor but they receive only 40% of the education resources;
- over 9 million people live in informal shacks;

- only one black person in 2000 is at university as opposed to one white person in just 30.

The rate of urbanization in South Africa – almost 67% of the country's people live in cities which, for historical reasons, reflects profound levels of "racial" and economic segregation with "white" areas being affluent and black areas, for the most part, being grossly underdeveloped and impoverished (World Bank, 1991, p 2).

Even though the urban economy contributes 70% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), in predominantly "black areas" the urban economy is undermined by: deficient service provision; deteriorating infrastructure; weak and discredited municipal institutions; over-regulated urban markets; distorted spatial settlement patterns; and skewed distribution of economic enterprises favouring largely white interests, thereby exacerbating the impoverishment of blacks. However, in stark contradistinction to the very poor state of the urban economy in "black areas", in "white areas" it is characterized by: strong fiscal capacities; broad-based economic functions; effective land and housing markets; well run municipal organizations; high service levels; and access to a well developed financial market ((World Bank, 1991, pp 3–4).

With a view to overcome the preceding contradictions and tensions, amongst others, transformation projects and programmes seek to unravel and realign the social relations of power which gave rise to the patterns of uneven development in the South African society by introducing and highlighting the notion of "people-driven development" (ANC, 1994; RSA, 1998a, RSA, 1998b and RSA, 1998c).

4. People-centred development: nascent forms of transformation

Underlying people-centred development is the premise that human development is a multi-dimensional process varying in space and time (cf Castells, 1996, Castells, 1997 and Castells, 1998). It is this spatial and temporal variance of human development that informs the process of transformation in the construction of a new socio-spatial order in the South Africa of the 1990s and beyond, as borne out by the ensuing examples. These are based on a study initiated by the Department of Constitutional Development (cf Cranko et al., 1999, pp 42–55), which required recommendations on the promotion of partnerships as alternative service delivery options. They are cited here to illustrate their transformative character *vis-à-vis* the socio-spatial relations of power, underlying development and planning programmes, in the different areas throughout most of South Africa. The change-inducing character of these examples is derived from the planning and development principles that undergird the broader spatial transformation of the South African society.

Holism, ie formulating a comprehensive plan to guide both short term and long term development programmes. The city of Cape Town is, for example, implementing a comprehensive development plan, called the Municipal Spatial Development Framework (Muni-SDF), to change the lives of the majority of its residents through an improved transport system and a series of multi-purpose parks, public spaces, social facilities and housing (CCT, 1999). The central principle of an integrated city drives this development plan. One of the key strategies in this regard includes the structural integration of the

present transport system through the creation of "activity precincts" – where road, rail and bus/taxi systems meet at primary, secondary and tertiary interchanges. Market squares are to be built around these interchanges and, as these places are becoming more popular, multi-purpose parks for leisure and sport activities, clinics, creches, libraries, shops, offices and residential facilities will be created. The Integrated Land Serviced Land Project (ILSP) is perhaps both a forerunner and an approximation of the Muni-SDF (IHSA, 1999, p 6). The ILSP has a budget of R1.4 billion (approximately US$240 million) and provides for the basic needs of 40,000 families living in informal settlements in and around the townships of Langa, Guguletu, Nyanga and Crossroads in Cape Town in the Province of the Western Cape. This integrated project comprises 39,800 housing units; 807 school classrooms; 16 community health facilities; 15 sports fields and 18 community halls; 3 police stations, housing resource and advice centres; support for capacity building, economic development projects and pre-school care and education.

The city of Cape Town is also spending R550 million (approximately US$90 million) on the Wetton-Landsowne-Phillippi Corridor Project which includes the construction of 2,500 houses in 13 key development projects in places such as Kenilworth, Wynberg-Youngsfield and Philippi (CCT, 1997). In addition, the city is also spending R217 million (approximately US$30 million) on projects in Hanover Park, Guguletu and Manenberg. These planning projects, amongst others, allow for the construction of a planning approach that recognizes the need to promote an integrated, multi-dimensional understanding and solution of social problems like homelessness, overcrowding and the displacement of the poor. It is an approach that recognizes the preceding contradictions, tensions, amongst other things, in South African society and thus accents the people-driven, human-centred, multi-faceted concept of "development". Accordingly, consonant with the ethos of a non-racial, democratic, open city, development is pursued as progressive change in the spatial and non-spatial character of specific areas with the view to allow human beings to enjoy meaningful lives. Accordingly, in communities having a poor social environment, and reportedly experiencing the highest levels of social disintegration, particularly those in racially-contrived townships (ghettos) of South Africa, development programmes seek to create a vibrant living environment by utilizing large open spaces for development projects; integrating shopping, residential and recreational areas; and providing meaningful employment programmes and recreational facilities (cf CCT, 1991, CCT, 1992, CCT, 1994a, CCT, 1994b and CCT, 1995).

Capacity building/self-reliance, ie training and empowering officials and residents from historically marginalized communities to exercise control over the form, substance and dimensions of development planning programmes and projects in their living environments. For example, through the creation of community structures, the non-governmental organization, Planact, in the Northern Metropolitan Local Council and Diepsloot Community Forum (CDF) in the Province of Gauteng, trains and empowers ordinary people to design, implement, monitor and evaluate specific development plans and projects. Similarly, the Built Environment Support Group (BESG) and the North and South Central Local Councils in Durban recruit, train and deploy community development workers in the Province of Kwazulu-Natal to exercise a critical reflection on and, where necessary, proffer informed alternatives to existing development scenarios for areas within their jurisdiction. In a similar manner, with a view to promote self-reliance

within local communities, the East London Municipality and Buffalo Flats Community Development Trust (community-based organization) attempt to meet the housing and infrastructure needs of the poor through participatory decision-making. People from historically marginalized communities are trained to initiate social service activities like raising funds, resolve conflicts between residents and businesses, residents and landlords, and so forth. Hence, the import of information accessibility, ie initiating a referral service to provide information on development programmes, giving details with regard to available jobs, housing, financial assistance, social services, community events and so forth. In this regard, Cape Town Small Business Centre (non-governmental organization) and the South Peninsula Metropolitan Local Council in the Western Cape Province disseminate information to entrepreneurs through existing municipal infrastructure, whilst the Worcester Municipality and Foundation for Contemporary Research, also in the Western Cape Province, seek to provide reliable information for the formulation of development strategies in local communities.

The Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, National Housing Forum Trust and the Interfaith Community Development Association in the Province of Gauteng provide an easily accessible facility to promote effective provision of services and facilities. This means, amongst other things, that since societal sources of inequality are directly related to the incidence of "underdevelopment", planning programmes seek to uproot environmental conditions that give rise to community disorganization, the development of anomie and sub-cultures which threaten the cohesion of the larger society. Thus, the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, BKS Engineers and "Work-to-win" (non-governmental organization) in the Province of Gauteng are upgrading and maintaining the sewage infrastructure in Alexandra with a view to contributing towards a healthy living environment in historically deprived communities.

Public responsibility, ie encouraging local authorities to adopt city-wide policies and programmes to address conflicts arising from increased urbanization. For example, the Johannesburg City Council and the Soweto chapter of the South African National Civic Organization (SANCO) in the Province of Gauteng monitor and control pollution by assisting the community in water sampling. Yet another example of demonstrating public responsibility, the Tsogang (non-governmental organization) and Seven Transitional Councils and Development Committees (community organizations) in the Northern Province support local government and development committees with the design and implementation of specific projects. The preceding examples illustrate the varied nature in which "public responsibility", as a central planning and development principle, is being applied in the formation of a range of community-driven partnerships to serve as an effective vehicle to improve living conditions at the grassroots level. It is this concern with the "tangible" improvement of ordinary people's lives that also informs how budgetary resources are being allocated in the post-apartheid South Africa.

Accordingly, in the allocation of resources, development programmes accommodate positive discrimination policies in favour of communities that have been successively neglected for more than 300 years. According to the RDP Monitor (1999, p 1), for example, almost half of South Africa's National Budget, ie 47.9% or R104 billion (approximately US$17 billion) of the R217 billion (approximately US$35 billion) is being spent on RDP-related projects – more than 500,000 low-cost housing units have been

built, more than 600 clinics have been constructed, there are mass immunization campaigns, free health care for pregnant women and children under the age of 6 years, multi-billion infrastructure programme and spatial development initiatives such as the Maputo Corridor, land restitution, 340,000 new telephone connections and 480,000 new electrical connections a year, and clean water reaching 3 million people, with considerable health spin-off and economic multiplier effects. What should perhaps also be highlighted is that the South African government's R3.5 billion (approximately US$510 million) housing programme is now stabilizing at between 100,000 and 150,000 units per annum. "This is the highest rate of delivery yet seen in South Africa" RDP Monitor (1999, p 1). Whilst these new constructions and services certainly suggest both a quantitative and qualitative improvement in the lives of South Africans in general and ordinary people, in particular, what is, however, equally important is the concern that these forms of progress/improvement be sustainable. This point will be elaborated upon in a later section. However, suffice it to observe at this point that often there is an unwillingness by recipients of new services to pay for them, thereby aggravating the "lower than expected returns on investment [in such projects] as poverty combined with resistance to user-pays fees reduces capital, for instance, electrification, water supply and telecommunication networks" (Lewis, 1999a, p 1).

There are, however, signs that would suggest that the problematic relationship between consumers and service providers is changing, where the beneficiaries of such services are entering into partnerships with service providers and are prepared to pay for quality, readily accessible services. For example, in mid-1999, the Cape Town City Council launched the Cape Town Community Housing Company to provide low-cost housing in partnership with residents and the private sector (*Cape Times*, 23 August 1999). Between the beginning of June and the end of August, 25,000 people earning less than R3,500 (approximately US$600) per month applied to join. Applications had to be closed due to the unexpected demand. The first 300 homes were scheduled to be supplied by December 1999. They have been financed by the prospective residents' own contributions (a defining and distinguishing feature of this scheme), a state housing subsidy of R18,400 (approximately US$3000) and a City Council of Cape Town subsidy of R5000 (approximately US$800) (*Cape Times*, 27 October 1999). Also in Midrand, in the Province of Gauteng, payment for services has dramatically increased from 3% to nearly 70% in response to the provision and upgrading of infrastructure in historically neglected communities (Bukula and Memani (1998). Thus, through residents' direct contributions to the funding of planning projects and the payment for services rendered, development programmes purposefully seek to break the cycle of deprivation by examining and understanding the underlying generational and psychological constraints and inadequacies within specific communities. This is achieved by eliminating the incidence of material deprivation and fostering more integrated, self-supporting households through the provision of compensatory social work, support and self-help. For example, the Stutterheim Municipality and Stutterheim Development Foundation in the Eastern Cape Province promote integrated socio-economic development, whilst Earthlife Africa and Johannesburg Metropolitan Council in the Province of Gauteng are contributing towards sustainable development through supporting community based organizations. In addition, in the Province of Kwazulu-Natal, the Durban North Central Council and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) are promoting sustainable environmental

management through capacitating CBOs to undertake waste management and recycling (Cranko et al., 1999). The preceding examples illustrate that development programmes seek to ensure that the disadvantaged people in the marginalized communities are directly involved in the provision of basic needs, not merely as a formal constitutional requirement, but ultimately to enable people at the grassroots level to determine, direct and manage, on a sustainable basis, the form and substance of municipal services, as well as providing impetus to the structural integration of residents within and across communities.

Community integration, ie establishing neighbourhood assistance centres to provide referrals, technical assistance and social activities in an effort to create integrated living environments. For example, the People's Dialogue (non-governmental organization), Homeless People's Federation (community-based organization) and the Cape Town City Council, in the Western Cape Province, enable the poor to meet their housing needs by providing them with technical, procedural, substantive and infrastructural support. Similarly, the Housing Savings Scheme, a non-governmental organization, and municipalities in the province of Gauteng are co-ordinating and implementing community-driven housing projects on unserviced land. In addition, Pietermaritzburg-Msunduzi Transitional Council and the Built Environment Support Group in the Province of Kwazulu-Natal provide housing support services to incremental housing processes whilst stakeholder-driven integrated development – housing, services and infrastructure – is being promoted by the Piesangs Development Trust and Durban Metropolitan Council. In all the aforementioned examples, the broader society, through the indigenous concept and practice of "Ubuntu" (ie you are human through other humans) is being encouraged to reflect, enunciate and uphold the ethos and practice of interpersonal cooperation, altruism, and consideration for others. In this regard, training/capacitating programmes such as those of the Vredendal Municipality and Vredendal Local Business Service Centre (LBSC), the Blaauwberg Municipality, Atlantis Business Information Centre (ABIC) and Atlantis Development Forum in the Western Cape Province, are fostering human relationships which:

- instead of generating a low self-esteem, instill self-respect, self-acceptance, self-satisfaction, self-confidence, security, stability, self-knowledge, self-awareness, personal growth and development; and
- instead of engendering escape and fantasy, training programmes seek to promote intellectual acquisitiveness, stimulation, challenge, opportunity, achievement, accomplishment and recognition. Thus, for example, in 1996 homeless people built the Victoria Mxenge settlement in Cape Town and in 1997 won the presidential award for their successful, grassroots-driven initiative (Merten, 1999).

Participatory democracy, ie promoting active community participation in zoning/rezoning, development and urban renewal programmes through direct representation of the community on all standing committees of local authorities. For example, the Durban North and South Local Councils and Development Forums in the Province of Kwazulu-Natal, the Willowvale Transitional Local Council and the Community Development Forums in the Eastern Cape Province follow a participatory approach to development planning and implementation. In a similar way, the

Ntuthukoville Development Trust (a community based organization), the Pietersburg Msunduzi Transitional Local Council and the non-governmental organization BESG in the Province of Kwazulu-Natal promote community-controlled environmental maintenance strategies in low-income communities. They attempt to counter the incidence of institutional malfunctioning, where problems arise from the failures of planning, management or administration in the relationship between the disadvantaged and the bureaucrats. Thus, for example, the North and South Central Local Council and the Warwick Junction Stakeholders Group in Durban, Kwazulu-Natal Province, function as a local economic development agency to promote inner city renewal. Similarly, the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, hawkers and traders associations and service providers (including non-governmental organizations) in the Province of Gauteng, in partnership, are managing informal trading. In the Western Cape Province, the Business Opportunities Network (BON), the City of Cape Town Municipality and the South Peninsula Metropolitan Local Council are empowering Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMEEs) through training and capacity building, enabling them to secure public sector contracts.

As partly borne out by the preceding examples, buttressed by the provisions in the *White Paper on Local Government* of 1998, the *Green Paper on Development and Planning* of 1999, and the *Municipal Systems Bill* of 1999, it is being realized that fundamental political and economic change can only come to pass if the people at the grassroots level, in their street committees, in their local forums and in their regional structures, determine in the final analysis, the form and content of development programmes and projects. Hence, the emphasis is on bottom-up planning not top-down instructions, in the quest to change the power relations at the local, regional, and national levels. Accordingly, the "political will", expressed through the elected officials in local government, is being reconstituted and mobilized in such a way as to expedite the transformation of the unequal spatial relations of power in South Africa. Even so, this reconstitution of spatial relations of power, through the transformation of institutional practices such as planning and development, is not an unproblematic process: in many instances there are officials who served the apartheid order, occupying key posts in current institutions, who seem to be hell-bent on sabotaging, through the strategies of interposition and nullification, the transformation of society commensurate with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. This ideologically-laden, politically-motivated, historically-driven opposition to equalizing the relations of power between white and black in South Africa is, furthermore, complicated by the adverse economic conditions under which transformation occurs. Hence, the importance of socio-spatial transformation in relation to governance.

5. Socio-spatial transformation and governance

If it is true that urban transformation is aimed at fundamental change in South African cities, it is should be reasonably obvious that all forms of government, at all levels of society, should experience similar change in order to foster and sustain democratic practice (the substance of urban transformation). Hence, the importance of metropolitan restructuring, ie institutional change geared at fostering and maintaining the momentum of change within and across particular cities within a specific region.[7]

Indeed, it can be averred that urban transformation would only be sustained by programmes at the metropolitan level[8] that seek to enhance fundamental change in South African cities (RSA, 1996b; Williams, 1989 and Williams, 1999b). Hence, the importance of the politics of transformation through the particularized power relations of "decentralization", "devolution", "autonomy", "plurality", "democracy" and "legitimacy". Accordingly, since 1994, local authorities have been engaged in exercises that seek to make a functional/structural assessment of their juridical boundaries in urban South Africa, ie in terms of spatial efficiency, effectiveness and coherence of territorial and socio economic linkages (CCT, 1991, CCT, 1992, CCT, 1994a, CCT, 1994b and CCT, 1995; RSA, 1993, RSA, 1996b and RSA, 1998b; *Cape Times*, 27 July 1995). Ideally, the delimitation of metropolitan boundaries should occur with specific reference to, *inter alia*:

- the size of population;
- the size of territory;
- the economic base of territory;
- forward and backward linkages with the metropolis, ie economic linkages (labour, capital);
- political linkages (electoral, organizational);
- social linkages (lineage, familial, heritage);
- cultural linkages (religion, language, ethnic consciousness);
- available land in a specific area for expansion/development;
- human resources (labour, skills/expertise); and
- the imprint of disparate capital expenditure on specific areas (group areas, white cities/towns, grey areas, townships, squatter settlements. [cf FCR, 1999].[9]
- In this respect, at least three points should be made.

First, redrawing the boundaries of local authorities is largely aimed at coalescing territories which, in a particular metropole, for historical reasons, were economically disadvantaged.[10] Second, restructured and reconstituted metropolitan governments would essentially "ensure", though not in any overtly coercive manner, that services across cities within the metropole are rendered equitably. Third, equity in the rendering of services would not merely be measured by the quality, regularity, and type of services, but also in terms of transforming historically neglected (bleak) areas into more habitable, vibrant living environments (RSA, 1995, RSA, 1997 and RSA, 1998a; ANC, 1994; Williams, 1999b). Ideally, therefore, the provision of services should contribute towards: the deconstruction of the racially-contrived development patterns that privilege a certain section of the populace (RSA, 1999b); the promotion of compensatory programmes that seek to revitalize the ethnic enclaves-cum-townships across South Africa (RSA, 1998a); and the structural realignment and recomposition of residential areas through effective densification programmes in historically privileged neighbourhoods, where previously social attributes like "race", "ethnicity", "religion", were apparently used to exclude certain categories of people (Williams, 1999a).

The process of urban transformation is thus changing how and where people live in cities. Accordingly, in tandem with efforts at the metropolitan level, local governments are carrying out three principal tasks. First, they are making efforts to integrate separate

residential areas and promote mixed land use types by the adoption of multi-functional zoning as opposed to mono-functional zoning. In this regard they utilize open spaces and eliminate buffer zones which, thus far, to a great extent, have functioned to separate the different population groups from one another (McCarthy, 1990, Smit, 1992 and Williams, 1999b). Here the rationale is that, if a greater sense of humanity within South African cities and among people in general is to be fostered, it is important that those landmarks which are associated with the apartheid era be eliminated. Only this course of action, in the fullness of time, would result in compact urban land-use and spatially (geographically) integrated residential areas (McCarthy, 1991a and McCarthy, 1991b; Williams, 1999b).

Second, local authorities are also promoting densification programmes in residential areas which are accessible to employment opportunities. This course of action allows for people of different socio-economic backgrounds to interact socially, thus contributing significantly to the elimination of the fears and suspicions among people from different "walks of life" (Williams, 1999a). Thus, pursued, densification programmes are giving rise to a tapestry of human relations across the urban landscape, where the quality of interpersonal relationships is more important than the accidents of colour, ethnic origin and any other seemingly important social attributes.

Third, local authorities are democratizing the planning of development programmes by acknowledging the role of local communities in the initiation, formulation, implementation and evaluation of specific development programmes (RSA, 1998a and RSA, 1999a). It is being appreciated that ordinary people at the grassroots level have a great deal of initiative, skills and life-instilling expertise of survival under the worst of social conditions (Mashabela, 1990; McCarthy, 1989; Williams, 1989). It, is therefore, in the interests of society at large to utilize the "on-the-ground" experience and knowledge of people to cater meaningfully for the varied service needs of different neighbourhoods (Williams, 1999b).

Here it is important to point out that the foregoing planning measures are not being promoted and applied uniformly throughout urban South Africa. Consequently, their impact upon racially-embedded space is equally unequal. They are, nonetheless, being pursued in most official discourse, even though being applied rather selectively/intermittently in practice. Thus, there are signs of de-racialization of space amidst seemingly entrenched/revalorized forms of racialized space. It is amidst these tensions and contradictions of progressive change towards non-racialized space, equally accessible to all citizens, and the resistance to such change through the NIMBY syndrome, the skyrocketing of interest and property rates making access to such areas well-nigh impossible for the average black person, that there is the sustained struggle, at local level, to pursue the constitutional principles of non-racial planning and development in post-apartheid South Africa. The reality of the NIMBY syndrome, prompted the Mayor of Cape Town, during the launch of the city's first non-racial housing project to state: "We are going to build houses on whatever space is available and we will not tolerate delays because of racial prejudices" (*Cape Times*, 27 October 1999). Hence, the catalytic role of housing, as an integral part of integrated planning, to deracialize urban space in post-apartheid South Africa.

6. Transforming urban space: the role of integrated planning[11]

Since urban/development/service problems appear and are experienced as a predominantly residential question, it is being considered imperative by planning authorities to initiate development programmes that are informed by metropolitan-wide considerations as opposed to being driven by mere parochial concerns. Thus, in order to translate transformative projects into action, the historically-informed situations across the urban landscape that have resulted in distinct "Islands of Affluence" amidst a "Sea of Poverty" are usually being accented (Mabin, 1992; Mabin and Smit, 1997; Dewar and Uytenbogaardt, 1991; Diegel, 1990). The purpose of accenting the historical antecedents of colonial-cum-apartheid practices that engendered the current unequal access to property, services and life-enhancing opportunities, is to generate the requisite moral and material support for corrective action across the urban landscape. Consonant with, amongst others, the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996) the *White Paper on Local Government* (1998), the *Green Paper on Planning and Development* (1999), and the *Municipal Systems Bill* (1999), planning authorities, in partnership with a range of interest groups, usually take various procedural and substantive steps to construct integrated development plans by: indicating the *geographical scale* of a particular development project, delineating it as being confined to, for example, the city centre, periphery, township or non-urban area; specifying the *target group* (of a specific development project) within the existing economic structure as, for example, least income group, low income group, middle income group or racially marginalized group; defining the *goal* of the development projects as, for example, preservation, upgrading/rehabilitation, redevelopment or resettlement; selecting any combination of *methods and programmes to structure development projects*, including, *inter alia*: rendering of sites and services, legalization of land occupied/invaded, provision of technical infrastructure, communal facilities, job creation programmes and an integrated development plan for a specific community; identifying, with the necessary accuracy, the *financial wherewithal* needed to implement a particular project by indicating whether it would be based, for example, on subsidies, cost recovery schemes, technical assistance, social/political intervention by the state, a community-funded, culturally informed project; establishing the *actors for implementing the project* and indicate whether, for example, it would be through international agencies, the central/regional/local government, neighbourhood, parastatal agency, voluntary sector, cooperatives, communal/mutual self-help, individual self-help or commercial enterprise; and suggesting the means to monitor and diagnose the *reported effects* of the project by determining whether, for example, it contributes to and results in quantitative improvement, physical improvement of stock, change of social status, no change or deterioration of social conditions.

Whilst the preceding procedural and substantive aspects of development planning suggest that most, if not all, official measures are in place to drive the process of transformation, it is equally true that, in practice, there appear to be some severe delays in relation to implementing such transformative projects and programmes. In this regard, at least two points must be made. First, it should be borne in mind that any project, geared at transforming society is subject to budgetary/monetary considerations/constraints (Sosi and Hassen, 1999). Second, the lack of capacity at administrative level often hampers the effective facilitation, co-ordination and implementation of development programmes.

Hence, the importance of sustaining the transformation process through the allocation of adequate resources (cf Barberton et al., 1998).

7. Sustaining transformation: contradictions and tensions

It is axiomatic that historically under-serviced communities in South Africa require various facilities to improve their overall social conditions and to give structural effect to the official slogan of "a better life for all" (cf RSA, 1995, RSA, 1997 and RSA, 1998a; ANC, 1994). In this regard, there appear to be a number of contradictions, as borne out by the following examples (Lehulere, 1999, p 36).

When the SA government launched its "Growth, Employment and Redistribution" (GEAR) policy in 1996, it promised accelerated growth, growing employment and redistribution of wealth. However, GEAR appears to be ridden with failure as:

- Against GEAR's economic growth forecast of 6% per annum in the year 2000, growth has fallen steadily since 1996; there was negative growth in 1998.
- Against the predictions of manufacturing growth, by 1998 there was a decline in manufacturing of 1.7%.
- GEAR forecast job creation to rise steadily until 400,000 jobs per year are created by the year 2000. On the contrary, there has been a mass job loss: employment decreased 0.7% in 1996 and 1.7% in 1997. From 1998 until the present, huge job cuts have continued in mining, telecommunications and other public sectors.
- GEAR promised increased private sector investment. Instead, private sector investment fell from 6.1% in 1996 to 3.1% in 1997 and then to a negative figure of −0.7% in 1998.
- GEAR was meant to facilitate the rise of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). While FDI grew to US$1.7 billion in 1997, there was disinvestment out of South Africa of US$2.3 billion in 1997.
- GEAR promised that a smaller and smaller proportion of the national budget would go toward servicing debt. This proportion actually rose from 17.1% in 1997 to 18.1% in 1998. The ratio of Gross Domestic Savings to GDP fell from 16.9% in 1994–95 to 15.2% in 1997 and 14.2% in 1998;
- Export-led growth has also failed. The current economic deficit relative to the GDP deteriorated from 1.3% to 2.1% in 1998.

The preceding policy contradictions appear to be exacerbated by the promulgation of the Adjustment Appropriation Bill of 1998 (Cottle, 1999, pp 77–78, 80) in terms of which the South African government will: cut the education budget by R300 million (approximately US$50 million); cut the health budget by R100 million (approximately US$16 million); and cut the welfare budget by R100 million (approximately US$16 million). In real terms, the South African government cut its expenditure on: education by 3.9%; health by 0.8%; welfare by 3.7%; housing by 14.3%; water by 21.6%; transport by 3%; and land by 15.5%. All things being equal, these cuts will most probably increase the unemployment levels in the country, deepen the conditions of poverty, erode the existing municipal taxbase and, thereby, undermine the provision of sustainable, regular, and effective services, especially

to historically deprived communities, particularly in the largely black townships (ghettos) of South Africa.

Indeed, the government appears to be executing contradictory plans in relation to its reconstruction and development programme: for example, in terms of its privatization drive, it is committed to shedding between 50,000 and 70,000 civil servants (Cottle, 1999, p 78). The state-owned company Spoornet intends retrenching 27,000 workers and another, Telkom, plans to retrench 11,000 workers (Cottle, 1999, p 80). Yet, the government, in partnerships with the private sector and trade unions, aims to build 50,000–150,000 houses (of which 75% should be rental stock). This raises the obvious question: "How is housing going to be delivered with a budget reduction of 14.3%?" (Cottle, 1999, p 78). Similarly, the government committed itself to a "progressive tax system", yet it reduced the tax rate of corporations by 5%, shifting the burden of taxation to individual workers. Indeed, "[i]ndividuals' contributions make up 42% of total tax revenue, while only 15% of tax revenue is made up of corporate contributions. This has changed dramatically from 1960, where 17% of the total tax revenue came from individuals and 43% from corporations" (Cottle, 1999, p 78).

In the meanwhile, the aforementioned structural contradictions appear to be deepened by South Africa's poor economic performance, both internally and internationally, as reflected in its poor competitive rating by the World Competitiveness Report (WCR). Countries are deemed competitive when they are able to produce goods and services that meet the test of international markets, while citizens enjoy a standard of living that is both rising and sustainable (Yadavalli, 1999, p 91). The WCR is based on eight factors: domestic economy; infrastructure; internationalization; management; government policy; science and technology; finance; and people.

In terms of the aforementioned factors, South Africa has been ranked 42nd, out of a total of 47 countries. (According to the World Economic Forum's latest competitiveness report, South Africa is ranked 47 out of 59 countries.) According to the WCR there has been no significant improvement in terms of South Africa's overall ranking in 1999. The economy was ranked 42nd out of 46 countries in 1998, whereas it was ranked 42nd out of 47 countries in 1999, since Slovenia was added to the list in 1999. There have, however, been improvements in terms of the domestic economy (up five positions), internationalization (up three positions), management (up three positions), and infrastructure (up one position). The factors that registered a drop in South Africa's ranking were science and technology (down five positions), government, finance and people (down one position). These lower rankings suggest that there is an urgent need to address employment and work related issues such as: education and training; brain drain; unemployment; shortage of skilled labour; hard work and loyalty; a committed workforce; safety and security of workers; and worker motivation and the generation, acquisition, dissemination and application of appropriate knowledge and value systems (Yadavalli, 1999, p 92).

Moreover, figures provided by "Statistics South Africa" (*Cape Times*, 23 August 1999), indicate that there had been a net loss of more than 365,000 jobs in the non-agricultural sectors between 1996 and 1999 though more than 350,000 new workseekers come onto the labour market every year. More than 1,500,000 miners had lost their jobs between

1997 and 1999; in the meanwhile, six marginal mines (thought to be non-profitable mines) had notified the Gold Crisis Committee of intended retrenchments and 28,000 jobs were to be at risk in September and October 1999. In the same period, more than 110,000 jobs had gone in manufacturing and 22,000 were lost in 1998 in clothing and textiles. There had been 110,000 jobs lost in the construction industry with 30,000 more at risk. The service and transport sectors had lost 110,000 jobs, whilst finance had lost 10,000 jobs between 1994 and 1998. These structural tensions and contradictions, since the birth of the "New South Africa", in 1994, prompted the Congress of South African Trade Unions to observe, during its conference in mid-August 1999, that "[the country is] facing a national crisis of job losses and rising unemployment, which is deepening poverty and inequality and threatening the gains of [the new] democracy [in South Africa]" (*Cape Times*, 23 August 1999). In the context of the aforementioned high levels of job losses and concomitantly high levels of unemployment, it is not surprising that 250 of the 850 municipalities in South Africa are in financial trouble (*Mail and Guardian*, 20 August 1999) as their taxbase, particularly in the largely black townships of South Africa, is being severely eroded since 1994. Moreover, the apparently high incidence of corruption, fraud and overall administrative incompetence in municipalities exacerbates the lack of effective governance at local level (cf Marais, 1998, p 40, note 23).

Yet, as intimated earlier, in the drive to transform the uneven relations of power in South Africa, the provision of new facilities and the upgrading and maintenance of existing services require additional, sustainable funding. In the light of the aforementioned budgetary constraints, job retrenchments, heightening levels of unemployment and thus the depletion of a viable taxbase in most local authorities throughout South Africa, the effective funding and governance of the transformative development in South Africa is being rendered profoundly problematic. Accordingly, it has become a common concern that the future of non-racial local authorities would be even less viable unless there is a substantial change in the way they are composed, financed and administered. Hence, the efforts to introduce the "uni-city" concept in urban South Africa.[12] In terms of official reasoning (RSA, 1998a and RSA, 1998c, section 25), the uni-city makes it possible to structure, implement, and evaluate the multi-dimensional process of transformation more coherently as it allows for an integrated approach to the fiscal policy for a specific area/region, a serious weakness in existing local authorities. This efficacy of fiscal policy, and the concomitant coherence in transformative planning, is derived from the coalescing of a number of disparate local authorities into a single metropolitan authority. This eliminates the unnecessary multiplication of administrative, juridical and related services, thereby generating very important savings for the fiscus and average taxpayer. More importantly, perhaps, a uni-city, within the domain of metropolitan governance, streamlines and accents: the financial linkage between local and central government and between local economic sectors and regional, national and international economic sectors; local government finance within and across disparate local authorities, making cross-subsidization of financially weaker municipalities by financially stronger municipalities both possible and plausible; and the contextual specificity of particular planning programmes, ie internal differentiation of funding criteria within a broader democratic framework of transparency and accountability, with a view to achieve a greater degree of even development (vertical and horizontal equity) throughout a particular metropolitan region.

Equally important, though, sustaining urban transformation by means of specific development projects within and across specific living environments also means that, through the implementation of grassroots-oriented planning programmes the role of ordinary people, in fostering sound economic/fiscal/monetary policies, is being recognized as a structural determinant (Sanco, 1994; RSA, 1999a). People-driven planning accents the importance of personal/collective understanding of finance capital. Hence, the systematic training of local government officials in financial management and the introduction of monitoring mechanisms to effect sound, corruption-free government: nationally, regionally and locally.[13] In this regard, institutional transparency contributes significantly to establishing the structural nexus between political democracy and economic accountability. These transformative measures, are, however, inextricably linked to the efficacy of community structures of control and legitimation at a grassroots level (Kok and Gelderblom, 1994). Hence, the importance of facilitators/interlocutors to expedite metropolitan networking to ensure that communication channels remain open. For example, since 1994, local radio/TV services have been made more accessible to local communities. More importantly, perhaps, empowering programmes such as literacy projects are harnessing management skills within local communities to sustain the effective control and management of transformation programmes at all levels and within and across most sectors of society.

8. In lieu of a conclusion

It has been suggested at the outset of this essay that cities are a microcosm of society at large, reflecting, to a lesser or greater extent, its dominant socio-economic, and political practices. More specifically, it has been argued that, in the case of South Africa, the concept of the "Apartheid City", has been inextricably linked to the segregationist policies of former "exclusionary" governments. Accordingly, since the inception of democratic rule in South Africa, in April 1994, there has been an urgency to change the face of South African cities. This systemic need for co-ordinated change throughout all sectors of South African society has resulted in a range of legislative measures and policy initiatives to expedite the elimination of the structural effects of colonial-cum-apartheid planning of more than 300 years. This is a formidable, if not daunting, task and involves, potentially, a myriad of contradictions, tensions, and conflicts *vis-à-vis* the disparate power relations/interest groups constituting South African society at the close of the 20th century (cf Webster and Adler, 1999).

This paper has pointed out that, whilst there had been various publications on the post-apartheid city, very few attempts, however, have been made to clarify the theoretical or empirical aspects of transformation.[14] Thus, it made an attempt to address some of these lacunae by focusing on the current efforts that are being made to transform the South African city. In this regard, based on the somewhat anecdotal evidence deployed in this text, the following tentative conclusions are drawn.

It has been suggested that the genesis of the concept urban transformation is inexorably linked to the "struggle against apartheid" since it has been cities of South Africa that were often the epicentre of the struggle for social change (cf Williams, 1989; Smit, 1989; Diegel, 1990). This historical linkage to the city as a contested terrain, an arena of contradictions, tensions, conflicts, struggles and often the provenance of particular liberation

movements, eventually resulted in the formal process of measured change through a negotiated settlement (Adam and Moodley, 1993).

Both on a personal and a collective level, the existential reality of change is obvious to all those who are living at this point in the history of South Africa. To some South Africans this change appears to be too sudden, even traumatic, whilst others argue that it is too slow, leaving them disillusioned about the "new" South Africa. All the same, most people would agree that change is taking place, and it is certainly taking place in relation to what South African cities are looking like, not merely as physical entities, but how ordinary people are experiencing the form and substance of their environments in which they live, work and "play". Accordingly, the discourse of transformation expresses the totality of their very being, as humans in transition from a colonial-cum-apartheid order, on a somewhat uncertain journey to a new dispensation, where the inviolable parameters of their humanity, through the recognition of their fellow humans as intrinsically human, are constitutionally ensconced, politically mediated and existentially validated through their cumulative experiences as a people recovering from a much-maligned past, constructing a new future, a new identity and a new presence in space and time, on the African sub-continent. Thus, construed, transformation is a multi-dimensional, open-ended, fluid process of change, organically linked to the past, present and future (Saff, 1994; ANC, 1994; Cameron, 1991; Williams, 1989; Williams, 1999b).

It is in this context of social change, the unifying theme of South Africa of the 1990s, that the concept of urban transformation derives its historic and empirical validity (Gelderblom and Kok, 1994; Soni, 1992). More specifically, in the South African context, transformation is linked to a recognition that if South Africans at the local or grassroots level were ever to solve their problems, then they have to work together and not in isolation, as has been the case thus far with regard to most local authorities. This means coming to terms with the problems of homelessness, squatting and overcrowding that characterize most of the major South African cities (Friedman, 1993; Tomlinson et al., 1994).

This also means, amongst other measures, agreeing to disagree about the identification, definition and delineation of major problems, how to prioritize them and how to construct plans that can contribute towards their solution. Accordingly, in the pursuit of the goal of transforming the unequal relations of power in the South African society, the process of planning has become as important as the construction and presentation of specific planning products. Increasingly, planning authorities in partnership with interest groups are accepting that nobody has all the answers to the prevailing problems, but that all participants, as thinking, creative persons, can contribute towards their solution as provided for in, amongst others, the *White Paper on Local Government* of 1998, the *Municipal Systems Bill* of 1999, and the *Green Paper on Planning and Development* of 1999.

In practical terms, the accent is being placed on measures such as the provision of low interest rates to entrepreneurs from historically deprived communities; and the promotion of development partnerships with community-based initiatives such as "stokvels" (communal saving schemes) and related community organizations. This

partnership-driven approach to planning is implicit to the concept "sufficient consensus", through which most decisions have been reached subsequent to the negotiated settlement between the apartheid government and the liberation movements in the early 1990s (cf Adam and Moodley, 1993). The existence of public–private partnerships, however, does not mean that there are no tensions, contradictions, and conflicts in determining the substance of the consensus. On the contrary, it appears that planning, as an institutional practice, is shot through with disparate relations of power, even as it serves as purveyor and subject of transformation. This means, amongst other things, that planning itself has to be transformed in order to reflect the procedural and substantive concerns of the new order in South Africa. With a view to expedite the transformation of planning as a regulatory framework of official intervention in the "public domain" (cf Williams, 1999b), as recognized by the *Municipal Systems Bill* of 1999, it is necessary to analyze, review and if required, change:

- the particular governing strategies and structural features that shape decision-making;
- the different public, private, non-local agencies and interest groups which participate in development coalitions or regimes and the means by which they are brought together;
- intergovernmental relations and the effects they have on local institutional structures;
- the way institutional structures affect, but do not determine, the behaviour of public officials and citizenry;
- the way in which wider economic forces, including locational criteria, set the context for strategic decision-making at the local level;
- policy agendas, occupational and employment structures, local patterns of interest mobilization;
- place-boundedness and place-consciousness of public–private relations;
- the interrelationship between and effects of economic and administrative restructuring at the local level within a supra-national framework,
- The process of transformation in South Africa (cf also Williams, 1999b and Williams, 1999c) suggests that spatial change is usually facilitated by:
- the effective co-ordination, on a territorial basis, of all civil services, planning authorities and institutions intervening in the various aspects of change, including that of the physical environment;
- the construction of integrated policies for particular spatial units by overcoming the simplistic practice of preparing projects according to immediatist, *ad hoc* concerns which lack long-term vision of sustainable development;
- the departure from a linear approach of space determinism and the inculcation of an overall concern for people and their needs and not merely the mechanistic deployment of projects of spatial intervention;
- the inclusion of historically-neglected groups: hence the need for an effective information gathering and managing system;
- the means by which policies are exercised have to become richer, by adding new measures to the traditional ones and becoming more appropriate to tackle existing problems;

- planning has to acquire and strengthen a cyclic character so that there is continuity, evaluation, and eventually a redirection of policies to more appropriate objectives; and
- reforms in the planning and social policy machinery have to put as one of their primary targets the task of creating an efficient bureaucracy that can deal with these issues.

Consequently, with a view to deepen and sustain the process of transforming the South African society, it also has to be realized that management is not merely the managing of people, but most importantly, the management of time, skills, abilities, potential, aspirations in relation to specific tasks, exercises, projects and programmes. Hence, the import of intersectoral/multi-disciplinary networking, liaison and communication in defining the form and substance of development and planning. Therefore, it is suggested that, institutionally and professionally, there be:

o *Analytical rigour,* ie the willingness to identify, expose and eliminate poorly argued statements with a view to structure and advance historically-driven perspectives/proposals which are theoretically sound, sociologically tenable and empirically verifiable.

o *Structural coherence*, ie the willingness to indicate the links within and across work programmes as pursued in different sections, branches and departments in a particular council, with a view to enhance consistency of planning policies, goals and overall vision.

o *Non-technical discourse*, ie the willingness to "de-technicize" official language and to contribute rigorously to the formulation of clear, conceptual constructs that can adequately encapsulate and explain the need for and the extent of social change in society with a view to restructure fundamentally the existing relations of power – economically, politically, ideologically and theoretically – at all levels of the South African society.

o *Democratic practice*, ie the willingness to defend the right of all persons, irrespective of designation, rank or hierarchical position. To offer an equal opportunity to be heard and more importantly, perhaps, to be listened unto with a view to foster the understanding that the pursuit of truth, based on evidence that is historically sound, empirically verifiable and most importantly theoretically cogent, is the only guarantor for the Lincolnian injunction of "government of the people, by the people for the people".

The concept of "transformation" allows for the construction of a planning approach that recognizes the need to develop an integrated, multi-dimensional understanding and solution of social problems like homelessness, overcrowding and the displacement of the poor. It is an approach that shifts radically from the piecemeal engineering scenarios of the Golden Era of Apartheid. This approach is predicated upon the ethos of a caring and sharing society – a vision which most cities in South Africa are embracing, at least in prose, if not in practice.

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1   Socio-spatial refers here to the racialized character of land use patterns in colonial-cum-apartheid South Africa (cf Lemon, 1991).

2   Cognitively, these heuristic dimensions of transformation operate in dialectical unity; they are separated here merely for analytical purposes to illustrate the multi-dimensionality of its substantive form and content as, arguably, the single most important defining concept of social change in South Africa in the 1990s and beyond (cf Lodge, 1999).

3   "The people".

4   "The people's voice".

5   The argument against the construction of low-income residential areas in proximity of high-income areas is that such a course of action would lower the value of the high-income areas, ie the monetary value of the property would drop if low-income residents moved into, or too close to, the high-income area.

6   For example, according to the Urban Problems Research Unit at the University of Cape Town (*Sunday Times, Cape Metro*, 17 May 1998) there are at least 450,000 inadequately housed people in Metropolitan Cape Town and, according the City of Cape Town, there are 31,500 people on their housing waiting list.

7   Metropolitan governments coincide, more or less, with functional economic regions such as the Metropolitan Cape Town the Durban/Pine Town, Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage, and so forth. In short, the influence sphere of a specific city/urban area extends across its juridical boundaries and includes a series of suburban centres, which, juridically, could operate as independent local authorities.

8   This challenge, for example, has been addressed by the City Council of Cape Town (CCT, 1991, CCT, 1992, CCT, 1994a and CCT, 1994b).

9   Section 25a-l (RSA, 1998c) lists the criteria for a demarcation board to deterrmine municipal boundaries, namely, to fulfil constitutional obligations, advance effective local government, enable integrated development and effect an inclusive taxbase.

10   Historically disadvantaged areas in South Africa encompass largely Black areas (ie African, Coloured and Indian townships).

11   Integrated planning has been a key development measure of the South African government since April 1994 and comprises the provision of adequate infrastructural services to ensure that communities do enjoy vibrant living environments where they have easy access to basic needs such as housing,

education, health, water, recreation and so forth (cf *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996; *White Paper on Local Government*, 1998; *Green Paper on Planning and Development*, 1999; *Municipal Systems Bill*, 1999).

<u>12</u>

This may also entail a reduction in the number of muncipalities in South Africa. Such a course of action, however, would raise serious issues such as the apparently undemocratic manner in which muncipalities have been reduced and the existence of accessible, accountable local government authorities throughout South Africa, particularly in rural areas (cf <u>Bond, 1999b</u>).

<u>13</u>

This author is personally involved in these training programmes and has acted as module designer/tutor/facilitator/lecturer since March 1999, under the auspices of the University of the Western Cape, the University of Stellenbosch and the University of Fort Hare.

<u>14</u>

The inaugural edition of the South African publication *Transformation*, No 1, 1986 (<u>Freund and Morris, 1986</u>), for example, failed to provide a definition of the central concept "transformation". This omission re-occurred six years later when a special edition, entitled "Research and Social Transformation" was published (*Transformation*, No 18/19, 1992). In the latter case, however, the editors, <u>Freund and Morris (1992</u>, p vi) acknowledge this conceptual problematique.

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