

**“Post-Apartheid” or “Neo-Apartheid” Durban? Rethinking the  
Conceptualisation of Transport Linkages Policies in Post-Apartheid South  
Africa, 1956 -- 1998**

**BUNTU SIWISA**  
University of Natal  
Department of Economic History

**... recognise the significance of diversity and  
discontinuity within a process of continuity.<sup>1</sup>**

***Harold Wolpe***

**‘Welcome to the city of Harare’ the city fathers  
wrote on a large, beautiful signpost near the  
airport, positioned close to the independence  
arch carved out of some of the most expensive  
marble there is. The city of Harare indeed. If I  
were a city father, I would have written ‘Welcome  
to the cities of Harare’, for there are many cities  
in one, with different flavours, or personalities, if  
you want to put it that way.<sup>2</sup>**

***Chenjerai Hove***

---

<sup>1</sup>Wolpe, H. (1988) **Race, Class and the Apartheid State**, (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation; James Curry Ltd., & the Organisation of African Unity; London, UK; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), (p. 8)

<sup>2</sup>Hove, C. (1997) **Shebeen Tales: Messages From Harare**, (Serif, London; UK & Baobab Books, Harare; Zimbabwe), (p 24)

Township economic and socio-economic development in the post-apartheid dispensation has come not to only occupy one of the most important policy pre-occupations of local government institutions, but a fascinating field of study as well. Apart from the general objectives of development, as pursued by the policy making fraternity, the re-integration of townships into the metropolises of South African cities has accumulated great importance. This is informed by the spatial, economic, social and political fragmentation of the country's cities, as a consequence of the consistent application of apartheid African urbanisation policies. The ultimate result of the pursuit of these policies has been the creation of African townships as labour dormitory residential areas. It is very clear to the majority of policy makers, urban planners, and in much of the literature on the subject, that the re-integration of South African cities is of fundamental importance. Now, it is widely accepted that "A central goal of the new urban development strategy is the physical, social and economic integration of cities and towns through, inter alia, the rebuilding of townships and the termination of their dormitory status."<sup>3</sup> One of the crucial means of re-integrating the African townships into the metropolises of South Africa's cities is through the transport linkages policies. The paper then will endeavour to rethink the conceptualisation of the contemporary transport linkages. In doing so, the ultimate objective is to attempt to analyse the prospects of revamping the labour dormitory status of urban African townships in the post-apartheid era. Consequently, it is to prove what may be referred to as 'the continuities within the discontinuities syndrome', mainly informed by the logic of capital in the process of the spatial re-ordering of post-apartheid South African cities.

## **Evidence of the Presence of the Logic of Capital**

---

<sup>3</sup>Harrison, P., Todes, A. & Watson, V. (1997) **Transforming South Africa's Cities: Prospects for the Economic Development of Urban Townships**, in **Development Southern Africa**, (Vol. 14, No. 1, February 1997), (p. 43)

'A bastardized city structure'<sup>4</sup> has been spewed out after nearly half a century of the implementation of apartheid African urbanisation policies. Most certainly, it is the black South African township that singles itself out as the obviously glaring manifestation of 'a bastardized city structure'. It lies in the periphery of a city, and is spatially, economically, socially and politically cut off from the metropolis of the city. Townships are, fundamentally, labour dormitory residential areas located near the edges of cities and towns. They are characterised by populations with low income levels and disposable incomes, coupled with high unemployment rates. Due to long distances to work, access to employment areas is quite problematised.

The majority of South Africa's formal urban townships were conceived in the early 1950s, and established in the mid to late 1950s. This was preceded by the demolition of many shantytowns as there was a tightening of the grip in the application of the Group Areas Act. However, in trying to discern the roots of the concept of a 'township', it is apt, if not necessary, that one has to go back to the late nineteenth century. The interesting revelation about the late nineteenth century roots of the township is that it buttresses the notion that townships were set up with the intention that they form labour dormitories, to feed with labour the mining, industrial and commercial concerns nearby them. Consequently, they have come to inhabit a crucial cog in the processes of capital accumulation and circulation in South African cities. It is noted that it was the advent of the discovery and the exploitation of minerals in the 1860s that set forth the establishment and nurturing of the concept of the township. It was Kimberley's diamond mining in the late 1860s, with its labour compounds, that pre-dated the formation of formal urban townships in the mid-1950s, and consequently their construction in the late 1950s. The introduction of labour compounds in Kimberley's diamond mines is regarded as the central impetus in the development of both the so-called 'native policy' and the modern strategies of the control of African labour devised in the early and mid-1950s. The Kimberley lesson, though undermined, had long-running repercussions in the form of it acting as some form of an inspiration in controlling the African labour force within the broader

---

<sup>4</sup>Tomlinson, R. (1990) **Urbanization in Post-Apartheid South Africa**, (Unwin Hyman Ltd., London; UK), (p. 5)

context of capital accumulation and circulation. For instance, through the conceptualisation and, consequently, the formation of labour compounds in Kimberley's diamond mines; the Durban municipality took the cue at the beginning of the twentieth century. It discovered the use of an open compound system for the control of casual or '*togt*' labourers. From then on, the municipal compound system was developed. That was followed by the development of the so-called 'native hostel'. These became a common feature of municipal locations in the larger centres under the stimulus of the Urban Areas Act of 1923. Robinson further points out that:

These forms of urban organization (compounds, locations, and townships) were, Mabin suggests, 'generated in the specific process of capitalist development in South Africa' (1986: 22). There can be little doubt that the development of the compound was an integral part of capital accumulation and class struggle in Kimberley, as has been demonstrated by Worger (1983) and Turrell (1984; 1987). Worger's account is particularly interesting. He sets out to show that 'By the time the owners of the diamond mines gained firm control over their labourers, they had created the most basic institutions that were to shape the lives of black workers in South African cities: 'labour registration office, the compound and the jail' (1985: 51). Capital, together with the state, came to assert 'slowly and with great difficulty, control over the space and time through which black workers moved' (1983: 50).<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup>Robinson, J. (1996) **The Power of Apartheid: State, Power and the State in South African Cities**, (Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd., Oxford; UK), (pp. 53 - 4)

Thus far, it has been clearly proved that the major determining force behind the establishment of urban African townships is the logic of capital and, broadly, the capitalist system. That, the logic of capital and its needs, have shaped the spatial patterns of South African cities, and continue to do so currently. It is indeed, quite apparent and obvious that race and racism played a frontline role in drawing up the spatial order of both the apartheid and post-apartheid South African cities. However, the bulk of the literature and the majority of the contemporary policy making fraternity are still hinged up on the conceptualisation of the re-integration of the country's cities based on the premises of race and racism. In analysing the division of the spaces between the townships and the metropolises of South African cities, one aspect has to be clearly put across. The conceptualisation of spatial segregation in South Africa's urban areas went beyond the control of a *race group*. The objective of the apartheid state machinery could not but be interpreted as a desire to define and consolidate *labour power* that could be thoroughly proletarianised. The relationship between race and capital (and consequently class) has confused the majority of the stakeholders and the policy making fraternity in the spatial re-ordering of South African cities. They have come to accept that since the apartheid system was based on race and racism, then that should take precedence over the forces of capital and class. They all seem oblivious to the fact that capital, and consequently class, are forces much more powerful than race and racism. That race and racism are subsidiary to the forces of capital and class. It is John Rex who pointed out that "Inter-ethnic conflict never arises solely and simply because of perceived ethnic or physical difference."<sup>6</sup> Basil Davidson, in analysing Nkrumah's anti-colonial political strategies in colonial Ghana, captured this fundamental aspect of the relationship between race and class quite well. Through visiting the arguments of W.E.B. du Bois and C.L.R. James, Davidson pointed out that:

Thus the pioneer of the Pan-African idea, William Du Bois, had declared way back in 1900 that the main problem of the twentieth century was the problem of the colour line. Later in his life he came to see that he had been wrong in thinking this. The colour problem was important, and would remain important; but it was not, as he later argued, the main problem. *The main problem was the problem that*

---

<sup>6</sup>Rex, J. (1973) **Race, Colonialism and the City**, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., London; UK), (p. 3)

*made the colour line important; and this was the problem of economic and political system, the problem of historical development.* In some words of C.L.R. James, expressing the same conviction, 'the race question is subsidiary to the class question in politics, and to think of imperialism in terms of race is disastrous,' although 'neglect of the racial factor as merely incidental,' James added, 'is an error only less grave than to make it fundamental.'<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, the apartheid state set to define and arrange the South African city's spatial order on the premises of race and racism. This manifested itself in the apparent racial residential and business ecological zoning of South African cities. However, of pivotal importance was the need to create a thoroughly proletarianised urban African population that would feed the industrial and commercial concerns of the cities and in the CBDs' neighbouring industrial and commercial concerns. The capitalist logic, driven by the objective of private and public capital accumulation, fundamentally informed the apartheid state in the spatial patterning of South African cities. The urban African population were not driven to the townships merely because of some racist attitudes held by the apartheid state, but were fundamentally viewed as a source of unskilled and semi-skilled labour. Capitalist logic dictated that there be a definition and creation of a pool of labour power to further endeavour the objective of capital accumulation. *As has been clearly advanced by the revisionists mainly in the 1970s and later on in the early 1980s, the survival of apartheid was credited to its support by capital. The question that then transpires is: what does this spell for post-apartheid South Africa? It means that any attempts to outroot the spatial order of the post-apartheid cities will necessarily come back to the ways and manners in which the logic of capital dictated the construction of the apartheid urban space. That being put, it is therefore inadequate, if not inappropriate, to*

---

<sup>7</sup>Davidson, B. (1973) **Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah**, (Penguin Books, Ltd., London; UK), (Emphasis added), (pp. 41 - 2)

*conceptualise the re-integration of the city, via transport linkages, through racial lines. The conceptualisation of the city's re-integration should therefore be perceived through class lines.*

The nature of the zoning of the townships has proved that the purpose behind was to avoid and form of effective capital accumulation and circulation within the townships. Consequently, the ultimate objective was to sustain the process of proletarianisation they were being made to undergo. The apartheid local government institutions of the 1950s, during the establishment of most of the urban African townships, ensured that it quashed any forms of serious economic activities within the townships through the thwarting of any forms of effective inter-transport linkages within the townships. The apartheid state machinery wanted to sustain the core-periphery status order within the space of the city. In the planning of Durban's township's of KwaMashu in 1956, Edwards, for instance, attests to this that:

A single "spinal road" would run through the township and all Neighbourhood Units would be connected to this road by one arterial road. There would be no other direct road system connecting the various Neighbourhood Units together.<sup>8</sup>

The aspect of the development of transport linkages flowing from the townships to the CBDs and the neighbouring industrial and commercial zones is clearly established. The rationale feeding into the trajectory of the historical development of such transport linkages was to facilitate the movement of labour from the townships to the CBDs. It was developed to such an extent that any effective inter-transport linkages within the townships were avoided. This

---

<sup>8</sup>Edwards, I.L. (1989) **Mkhumbane: Our Home African Shantytown Society in Cato Manor, 1946 - 1960**, (Ph.D, Department of History, University of Natal, Durban), (p. 162)

tallied very well with the decentralisation and the labour deployment policies of the 1950s. Then, the cry, as Bourquin put it very well, was to “not put all our eggs in one basket”. The objective of the decentralisation and labour deployment policies of the 1950s was to divert the employment of labour away from the Durban’s CBD and into such industrial areas as Greenwood Park and Effingham. By the late 1970s, there was felt a need for the deployment of labour through transport linkages into Pinetown. Attesting to this is a letter dated 3 December 1976. It was from Mr. L.H.J. van Rensburg, the Director of the Technical and Building Services Department. It was relayed to its Chief Director within the auspices of the Port Natal Bantu Affairs Administration Board. The contents of the letter pertained to concerns of seeking township transport linkages with Pinetown. In a matter regarding the public transportation of the KwaNdengezi Township residents to Pinetown, van Rensburg pressed that:

As you are aware, the first houses at KwaNdengezi will be occupied by July 1977 when approximately 300 will be ready and thereafter completed houses will come on stream at about 50 to 100 per month. As far as I know, nothing has been done about arranging public transportation from KwaNdengezi to Pinetown and should the month of July come by and nothing has been arranged then the Board will, deservedly or not, have to endure much public and private criticism. I feel therefore that the Board should now take action to ensure that something is done in time.<sup>9</sup>

The policy strategy of the construction of houses for African townships ensured the social reproduction of labour. It was mainly ensured through the application of institutional and legal means of depriving the urban African labour force the ownership of property and capital, the

---

<sup>9</sup>Ref: 7/1/P/18/3/1, (3 December 1976), Port Natal Bantu Affairs Administration Board, (LHJvR / NJA).

two major aspects that define class and class struggle. In a report written by Bourquin on 9 November 1957, addressed to the Town Clerk of the Municipal Native Administration Department, the issue of housing the people in the new townships established in the late 1950s, such as KwaMashu and Umlazi, was discussed. The point of contention was whether to build for them detached or semi-detached houses. The opinion held by the majority of the decision makers within the Municipal Native Administration Department was that detached houses should not be considered. That they should not be built at all, and instead that they should construct semi-detached houses. The major rationale behind the policy of not building detached houses was to deny them the opportunity of owning property. Hence the Municipal Native Administration Department preferred semi-detached houses, for it was clear to them, and common sense and logic to everyone, that semi-detached houses meant the occupation of two families in two houses attached together and sharing the same water and sanitation amenities. One family wishing to purchase or sell the house would be unable to do so, for the other part of the house was occupied by another family. As a result, through denying them the means to buy or sell property, one of the major determinants of proletarianisation, that is, the lack of the ownership of property, was ensured. In that report addressed to the Town Clerk, Bourquin was attempting to persuade the department to adopt a compromise in their housing strategy. He pointed and pleaded for a compromise in the face of the impending shortfall of houses that were going to be built in KwaMashu. The original estimate of the houses that were going to be built was 16 000 houses, and the shortfall, at its worst was going to be 4 488 houses. At its best, the shortfall was going to be 3 260 houses. In the face of these impending shortfalls of houses, Bourquin pointed and pleaded that:

The last mentioned position can be achieved only by the complete expulsion of detached houses. African opinion is, however, clamouring for the highest possible percentage of detached houses, especially for selling purposes, but is prepared to accept some semi-detached houses for letting purposes. It will obviously be necessary to arrive at a compromise and I would therefore suggest the adoption of a 50 / 50 distribution whereby a total number of 12 129

houses in the Township could be secured.<sup>10</sup>

It has, therefore, been clearly laid out through the narration of the historical development of townships that transport linkages connecting them to the wider metropolises of cities were conceptualised along capitalist lines. That it is the logic of capital and, broadly, the needs of the capitalist system that determined and shaped the spaces of South African cities. The question then becomes: *what of the spatial patterns of the post-apartheid South African cities?* Post-1994 South African literature on urbanisation, the policy making fraternity and the urban planning regime continue to conceptualise that the fragmentation of the post-apartheid South African city is as a result of mere racial oppression. They barely see that the fragmentation of the spaces of South African cities, and the thwarting of any effective re-integration is grounded against the background of the logic of capital and, broadly, the needs of the capitalist system. The absence of any transport linkages strategies to ensure that viable economic activities and the circulation of capital within the townships occur will sustain the core-periphery order of the country's cities. It is in this vein that the hope of reconstructing a truly *post-apartheid* city is challenged by the existence of the elements that make up a *neo-apartheid* edifice. These terms, 'post-apartheid' and 'neo-apartheid,' explored within the context of the dynamics of the development of the spatial patterns of South African cities, inhabit the centre of the thesis' enquiry (ies). In that light, then, they do not deserve a passing comment, but an attempt at thoroughly explaining them within the context of an analysis of the dynamics of the development of the urban spatial order that constitute the South African cities. The term 'post' is literally a derivative of the Latin word which, basically, means 'after'. The use of the term 'post-apartheid' saw light in the late 1980s. That is so even in the new academic and policy literature and other materials. It is a politically burdened term, as much as

---

<sup>10</sup>Bourquin, S. (1957) **Re: Native Income and Capacity to Pay in Relation to the KwaMashu Scheme**, (9 November 1957, SB / SCM / 55), (KCM 55166), (p. 2)

it is a product of the political historical developments of South Africa. It has been extensively used to pave the way, and signify the extent of the way that has been paved, of the establishment of South Africa's new and democratic political terrain. It is fairly difficult to pinpoint with absolute certainty the exact time that South Africa's political terrain was transformed into a post-apartheid order. However, it is quite possible to trace the time of the political changes that brought forth the post-apartheid democratic dispensation. By mid to the late 1980s, with the internal urban and trade union movements heightened anti-apartheid activities, it dawned on both the state's and the broader anti-apartheid movement (led by the African National Congress (ANC)), that they had to face each other and negotiate. In Thabo Mbeki's biography, Hadland and Rantao describe the mood of the time very well:

The stage was set for a move away from informal chats to face-to-face talks between representatives of the South African state and the ANC. By 1988, both had reached a stalemate. On the state side, forceful repression was losing its efficacy in the face of international and domestic criticism. Sanctions preventing economic, cultural and sporting ties with the outside world were becoming stronger and more effective by the month. A little reform was likely to convince nobody and, in fact, would probably add fuel to the flames of revolt. Within the ANC, a growing number of its leaders knew that armed insurrection leading to the seizure of power by force was a pipe dream. The collapse of the communist governments in eastern Europe meant resources were more difficult to come by and the detente between Russia and the United States made the encouragement of regional conflict unappetising. The atmosphere in southern Africa was changing and it was moving away from a continuing tolerance of politics by arms. While MK struggle to make any significant impact ----- other than a few spectacular attacks on targets such as the oil refinery at Sasolburg ----- the South African Defence Force, too, had shown it was more vulnerable than many had believed when it suffered a significant defeat at the hands of Cuban and Angolan troops at Cuito Cuanavale in 1988.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Hadland, A. & Rantao, J. (1999) **The Life and Times of Thabo Mbeki**, (Zebra Press, South Africa), (pp. 60 - 1)

That, then, depicts the conditions which set into motion a total change of South Africa's political order, paving the way for the advent of the post-apartheid order. It can be argued as well that the advent of the settling of the post-apartheid dispensation could be partly traced to the ANC's Kabwe Congress meeting in Zimbabwe in 1985. As well, it can be advanced that the Harare Declaration, signed on 21 August 1989, "...contained the first real vision of a transition to democracy in South Africa."<sup>12</sup> F.W. de Klerk, in his autobiography, captures very well, though light-heartedly, the significance, the extent and the mood of South Africa's total change of its political terrain. He reminisces about the evening before he delivered his 2nd. of February 1990 speech, when his staff was busy preparing the speech in Afrikaans and English for the media. He recollects that:

This process took place in the office of my director-general, Dr. Jannie Roux. On a mantelpiece in his office there were small brass busts of South Africa's first six prime ministers. While he, Casper Venter, my press secretary, and one or two others worked through the speech, they politely turned the faces of the busts to the wall. They were pretty sure that Hendrik Verwoerd, in particular, was turning in his grave.<sup>13</sup>

The term 'neo-apartheid', on the other hand, signifies the continuity of apartheid in an altered form, either in its political, economic and social variables or in full. It signifies the continuity or the survival of the characteristics that constitute the apartheid order within another time, and within a contradictory political framework. Robinson captures very well the essence of the meaning of 'neo-apartheid', as she eventually warns us that:

Post-colonial experiences around the world have perhaps already warned us of the difficulties of revolution, of the persistence of the old order in so many guises. But it is the interpretations of the post-colonial which reminds us of the

---

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, (p. 61)

<sup>13</sup>de Klerk, F.W. (1998) **F.W. de Klerk, The Last Trek ----- A New Beginning: The Autobiography**, (McMillan Publishers Ltd., London; UK), (p. 164)

intrinsic doubleness of the world after colonization and which are perhaps more hopeful. Indeed, even aspects of apartheid ---- so frequently used as a talisman for all that is evil in the world and clearly so destructive of so many opportunities for those who lived through it ----- turn out to be curiously ambivalent. And if the colonized are (albeit uncomfortably) embedded in the modernizing world of the colonizer, the menaces of the post-apartheid era should come as no surprise.<sup>14</sup>

It amounts as less of a provocation if one pauses to think that the conceptualisation of the re-ordering of the city's space in post-apartheid South Africa is more or less the same as that of apartheid South Africa. Apparent in the urban planning is the continuation of some of the strategies applied by the apartheid regime. It is clearly stated in much of the contemporary literature and policy material that market forces currently determine the trajectory of spatial re-patterning of post-apartheid South African townships. That the re-integration of the country's cities lies in the hands of the forces of the market. Despite the vow made of avoiding the economic re-segregation of townships, nonetheless, there is a sense of resignation to market forces. Further resignation is informed by that the core-periphery order of a South African city is caused by the nature and the operation of the market. Therefore, the spatial structures of the country's cities will fundamentally remain intact for a long time. Hall maintains that:

There are, therefore, certain "harsh realities" implicit in the perspective which we are beginning to develop. It must be based on the understanding that certain features of the urban development problem will endure beyond the ending of apartheid, and will not be adequately addressed in policies which seek only to reverse the effects

---

<sup>14</sup>Robinson, J. (1996) **The Power of Apartheid: State, Power and Space in South African Cities**, (Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd., Oxford; UK), (pp. 219-20)

of apartheid. This is because many of the problems witnessed in our current urban system are a result of market based allocations of resources or opportunities and of developing country processes such as circulatory urbanisation.<sup>15</sup>

## **Evidence of the 'Continuities within the Discontinuities Syndrome**

---

<sup>15</sup>Hall, P. (1996) **Township Economic Development and Led Opportunity Zones: A Research Proposal**, (p. 6). This research proposal was derived from discussions within the Economic Unit of the Urban Strategy Department.

There are various indicators which validate what may be regarded as the 'continuities within the discontinuities syndrome'. Ever since the mid-1950s, the apartheid local government of the Greater Durban Metropolitan Area has been pre-occupied with the decentralisation of industry and commerce, and consequently the deployment of labour from mainly Durban's CBD and its neighbouring industrial and commercial zones to the Pinetown region. Other areas of decentralisation pinpointed then were Greenwood Park and Effingham. This was reverberated in Bourquin's plea to "not put all our eggs in one basket."<sup>16</sup> By the late 1970s, this concern was still apparent, if not the attempts at achieving it were not intensified. There appeared the 'T-structure', an area outside the Durban CBD where new and decentralised industrial, commercial, and consequently, employment zones emerged as distinct from the virtually saturated Durban CBD. On 3 December 1976, Mr. L.H.J. van Rensburg, the then Director of the Technical and Building Services Department within the Port Natal Bantu Affairs Administration Board; pressured the Chief Director to speed up efforts of arranging the public transportation of KwaNdengezi township residents to Pinetown. That was after 300 houses that had been built would have been occupied by July 1977.<sup>17</sup> This reflected the government's policy towards black townships. They regarded them as labour dormitories, and any spatial integration of them into the city was effected in a subordinated manner. Twenty-two years later, the Metro Durban Council entertains as well the industrial and labour decentralisation into the T-structure. In an interview I held with Teresa Dominik, the Development Manager at Urban Strategy Corporate Services, she further explains that:

But at the same time, I mean in terms of, when you look at (showing me some maps). Durban basically is a T-structure. You've got what we call the areas of greatest need, they basically don't have access to that T. So they've been sort of marginalised to the outside. Now, in terms of identifying how to bring those areas back into that system, and it's not... It has been thought of for something like twenty years. It is to bring two roads here, which they are called the Outer Ring Roads. Basically they would provide

---

<sup>16</sup>Edwards, I.L. (1989) **Mkhumbane: Our Home African Shantytown Society in Cato Manor, 1946 - 1960**, (Ph.D., Department of History, University of Natal, Durban), (p. 62)

<sup>17</sup>See p. 7 of the paper for the content of the letter dated 3 December 1976 (Ref: 7 / 1 / P / 18 / 3 / 1, 3 December 1976, Port Natal Bantu Affairs Administration Board, LHJvR / NJA)

the fabric for integrating those areas back into the city. And these roads have been planned for the last twenty years. They were designed and planned and put on transport maps. It was quite a long time ago. So it was identified that eventually you would have to, even just from a transport point of view they realised that getting all these from here into the city, there was going to be a stage where it was going to be too congested. That there are new economic opportunities in Pinetown, which now is the major sort of generator in terms of jobs. So it's kind of a long-term plan. It was always I think envisaged that it was going to be needed.<sup>18</sup>

The transport linkages policies and strategies carried forth by the Metro Durban Council and other institutional stakeholders, as published in the *KwaMashu Spatial Development Framework (1998)* indicate a sense of continuity in the re-integration of black townships to the T-structure of the Greater Durban Metropolitan Area. The proposed Primary Activity Spine Road in KwaMashu (see the map, labelled as Appendix 1) stretches from Precinct 1 (Section A) to Precinct 7. From Precinct 7, the proposed Primary Activity Spine Road, which in turn goes through to the KwaMashu Town Centre, through to the main roads leading to Durban's city centre. It is particularly interesting and quite revealing to note that the Primary Activity Spine Roads facilitate access to the neighbouring industrial and commercial zones. Precinct 1 is Section A of KwaMashu, and is characterised mainly by the presence of single male hostels and two stations off Duff's Road and Thembalihle. This is an area with a legacy for accommodating cheap African labour, with the two stations established nearby for commuting to and fro the neighbouring and commercial zones and the Durban CBD. The proposed Primary Activity Spine Road links Precinct 1 (Section A) with Precinct 7. The seventh precinct is the proposed KwaMashu North / Phoenix South sub-regional node. It is also

---

<sup>18</sup>Dominik, T. (1998) **Interview 5 with Teresa Dominik**, (09 September 1998), (Interview conducted by Buntu Siwisa), (p. 6)

characterised by its location on the old Piesang River. These transportation link developments augur well with the local government's policy of industrial decentralisation and labour deployment. The proposed Primary Activity Spine Road also goes further north to Phoenix South, an area concentrated with light industry (i.e. clothing, engineering, chemicals and wood products). Taking the development of current transport linkages policies, the question that then begs attention is: *what informs this sense of continuity in the conceptualisation of the re-integration of African townships into the Greater Durban Metropolitan Area?*

Furthermore, *does this conceptualisation, in essence, revamp the labour dormitory status of the African townships vis a vis the Greater Durban Metropolitan Area? In view of the re-patterning of the post-apartheid urban spatial order, what repercussions does this have for the reconstruction of a truly post-apartheid urban spatial order?*

The democratic post-apartheid dispensation is in itself a discontinuity from the apartheid order, yet that has not spelt the re-integration of the African townships into the South African cities in an equitable manner. It has not ensured the revamping of the apartheid urban spatial patterns. It is the logic of the capitalist system, more than anything, that has sustained the urban spatial order set up by the apartheid state machinery. The 'continuities within the discontinuities syndrome' is also informed by the mindset of the post-apartheid South African government regime. O.R. Tambo, commenting on the Freedom Charter, cleared it out that "...The Freedom Charter does not even purport to want to destroy the capitalist system."<sup>19</sup> Tomlinson further maintains that "Black nationalism, on the whole, aims at capturing

---

<sup>19</sup>Tomlinson, R. (1990) **Urbanization in Post-Apartheid South Africa**, (Unwin Hyman Ltd., London; UK), (p. 57)

capitalism for its own benefit rather than overthrowing it.”<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., (p. 58)

In conclusion, it would be utter naivety to argue that townships should be re-integrated in a manner that will spell their economic self-sufficiency. At the same time, it would be ridiculous to purport that they should not be re-integrated into the wider metropolitan areas, for "... the biggest problem is where people's jobs are, instead of how the city functions."<sup>21</sup> As well, the difficulties in re-integrating the townships into the city in an equitable hinge on certain technical problems. For instance, the Metro Durban Council is unable to determine the dynamics of the land use of the townships, due to the unavailability of information. In a sense, due to the unavailability of information of the townships' lands and their land uses, the townships' land market could be regarded as nonentities. On this point, in an interview I held with Teresa Dominik, she stresses that:

... we actually don't understand what's going on in townships. So to try to come up with a strategy before you even understand, and people don't understand the buying power in townships, what are the shopping patterns, what are the needs and demands. We don't even have that information you need to have to be able to work out a strategy ... they are very fearful of trying to set up some strategies... of going out there

---

<sup>21</sup>Watkinson, E. (1998) **Interview 1 with Eric Watkinson**, for **Interviews on the KwaMashu Station Upgrade Project**, (04 May 1998), (p. 7), (Interview conducted by Buntu Siwisa)

and let loose in the townships before they even understand what are the economic dynamics.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup>Dominik, T. (1998) **Interview 5 with Teresa Dominik**, for **Interviews on the KwaMashu Station Upgrade Project**, (09 September 1998), (p. 4), (Interview conducted by Buntu Siwisa)

Despite such technical and logistical barriers in forging attempts at the economic and socio-economic development of African townships, it should be stressed out that the major problem remains at the conceptual level. That in re-integrating the townships into the cities, that is done in a manner of them being conceptualised as labour centres. That the fragmentation of urban space in a South African city should not be regarded as being a distinction of *black* space and *white* space. Rather, it should be regarded as the fragmentation of space between the *labour* space and the space for *capital*. Therefore, having regarded the apartheid urban spatial patterns as being fundamentally determined by capital, then, how effective are capital-neglecting or capital-resigning policies in revamping the labour dormitory status of African townships? Perhaps, as Mabin suggests, the problem is that, "The narrative of contemporary change in Johannesburg and other southern African cities is partly about the problems of finding a means to handle, politically, waking up in a postmodern era while equipped only with the politics and planning practices of a modernist past."<sup>23</sup> Conclusively, the major problematic then is: *to what extent has the conceptualisation of transport linkages policies, designed to dismantle the apartheid urban spatial order, been frustrated by the lack of focus on the effects that the logic of capital has had in genuinely rooting out their peripheral status? Is it not the logic of capital that frustrates the development of the African townships' economic status? In sum, do these policies seem to set up a post-apartheid or a neo-apartheid Durban?*

---

<sup>23</sup>Mabin, A. (1995) **On the Problems and Prospects of Overcoming Segregation and Fragmentation in Southern Africa's Cities in the Postmodern Era**, (Chapter 13), in, **Postmodern Cities and Spaces**, (eds., Watson, S. & Gibson, K.), (Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge; USA), (p. 196)