Article

It's like talking about Chinatown and seeing Greeks: Gentrification and residential diversity in the Bo-Kaap, Cape Town, South Africa

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The Bo-Kaap (translated in English as "Upper Cape" and also known as Schotsche Kloof or the Malay Quarter) is an inner-city neighbourhood situated directly above Cape Town's Central Business District (CBD), within the 'City Bowl' created by Table Mountain. As the original home of freed South-East Asian slaves, it is commonly considered the birthplace of Islam in South Africa.[1] Designated a Cape Muslim or Malay area by the Apartheid Group Areas Act in 1950, it was effectively sheltered from forced removals, unlike other traditionally 'non-white' inner city areas, most famously District Six. Post-apartheid, its location and architecture have made it an extremely desirable place to live, resulting in fairly rapid changes to the character and population of the neighborhood. These changes have been commonly blamed on (or credited to) gentrification, a complex process in which relatively wealthy 'gentrifiers' move in to what was traditionally the domain of poorer residents.

Census data presented in tables 1-5 in appendix 1 below, reveals that between 1991 and 2001, the Bo-Kaap's predominantly Coloured[2] population became more diverse in terms of race, and more homogenous in terms of religion (predominantly Muslim) and language (English). Interestingly, its Muslim population became more racially diverse. The increased proportion of middle-class residents suggests that gentrification was already occurring by 2001, although this is not necessarily a reliable indicator of gentrification. There has been no new census subsequent to 2001, although substantial local media coverage suggests that the process has continued and even accelerated, with a degree of conflict arising between new or prospective buyers, landlords and poorer residents who have lived in the area for decades, often generations.[3]

This case study aims to shed light on areas of disagreement and potential conflict by revealing the different ways that gentrification is experienced and understood primarily by selected representatives of the 'gentrified' themselves. It approaches gentrification from the critical viewpoint of Diversity Studies that focuses on the power relations between different groups of people. The term 'residential diversity' is used throughout to refer to diversity of all types within a specific residential area.

Gentrification Studies

The field of Gentrification Studies has evolved steadily since its emergence in the mid-1960s. At first based mainly on empirical analysis,[4] a theoretical division between 'consumption-side' and 'production-side' approaches emerged in the 1970s and 80s. The first approach, of which David Ley is perhaps the most prominent proponent, finds causes of gentrification in human agency and freedom of choice, and focuses on the characteristics and consumption patterns of gentrifiers.[5] Those who subscribe to the production-side approach, such as Neil Smith, on the other hand, consider larger socio-economic structures to be the ultimate cause of change, with human activities offering only an intermediate explanation.[6]

Since then, authors have attempted to integrate the above approaches[7], realising that "neither side is comprehensible without the other."[8] Although studies of gentrification have steadily become more interdisciplinary, taking into account the diversity of understandings and contexts that shape the process, there has arguably been a decline in interest in gentrification since the early 1990s, in part linked to the "theoretical logjam" caused by the two different schools of thought and the search for synthesis between them.[9] Scholars of gentrification have tried hard, often in vain, to define its characteristics and causes.[10] Others have attempted to highlight the areas that supposedly have the potential to be gentrified[11] or to describe gentrifiers and their motivations.[12]   Studies   of

gentrification have become more international as the process itself has become more widespread. According to Smith, gentrification has become:

> thoroughly generalized as an urban strategy that takes over from liberal urban policy. No longer isolated […]; its incidence is global, and it is densely connected into the circuits of global capital and cultural circulation.[13]

Studies of gentrification have expanded to include the developing world, giving scholars a broader insight into the process. Sykora's study of post-communist cities, for example, insofar as it sheds light on cities opened up to capitalist forces after decades of authoritarian rule, can be compared to the case of Cape Town after apartheid.[14]

Despite the emergence of a more nuanced understanding of the topic[15] many continue to frame gentrification rather idealistically, minimising its negative consequences, particularly the threat of displacement.[16] The dominant methodological approach continues to be quantitative analysis, rather than listening to "the voices of residents, community activists and similar kinds of qualitative evidence."[17]

In reaction to the dominant tendency of defining and describing particular characteristics, Clark argues for a broader definition of gentrification.[18] He dismisses the apparently unanimous emphasis on the "chaos and complexity" of gentrification, first raised by Beauregard, but since received and used in "misdirected" ways.[19] Broadly speaking, Clark argues that the three root causes of gentrification are, quite simply, the commodification of space, polarised power relations, and a dominance of the vision belonging to who Berry terms the 'vagrant sovereign,'[20] the gentrifiers who normalise discourses of "improving" current land use to serve their own interests.[21] The dominance of one discourse over another is particularly salient to this case study and underlines the importance of uncovering the discourses employed by those who may perceive of gentrification as a threat rather than an opportunity. To those who take such a critical standpoint, gentrification is a process of conquest and displacement of rich over poor, and a function of capitalism.[22] As such, gentrification is

"colonialism on a neighbourhood scale," although the forces at play are often global.[23] Clearly, gentrification is a politically loaded term. There is a clear connection between one's ideological affiliations and whether gentrification is viewed as a problem or an opportunity[24] (suggesting that Gentrification Studies will no doubt continue to be a site of contestation and debate). Attempts to recognise the consequences of gentrification are perhaps more useful than any descriptions of its characteristics. [25] Importantly, for long-time residents, the consequences are financial as well as emotional: perceived changes to their lives and homes, loss of community, an end to a distinctive 'culture', and the threat of displacement.

Much has been written on the subject of displacement by authors over the past decades.[26] Newman and Wyly have suggested that displacement is back on the agenda today more than ever, as is the need to understand individual stories and specific neighbourhood contexts for gentrification.[27] Several authors cite the threat of displacement as the key factor in determining the likelihood of conflict be it along lines of class, race or length of residency, or among long-time residents over whether they stay or sell.[28] Yet violent conflict may arise in some areas and not in others. Other key factors determining the likelihood of conflict are common practices relating to property rights, as well as the degree of social polarization. In any polarised and unequal society, of which South Africa can be considered a good example, where the threat of displacement exists, as it apparently does in the Bo-Kaap, "the conflict inherent in gentrification becomes inflammatory."[29]

Gentrification and Diversity

Diversity Studies offers an approach to making sense of society by looking at various and interconnected ways that individuals and groups differentiate themselves from one another within power relations that are maintained by social structures. Social characteristics such as race, class and religion, among others, are not only fundamental features of individual subjectivity, they also serve to

divide people into groups that simultaneously give coherence to society and provide the fault-lines along which contestation may occur.[30]

A similar approach has been adopted by feminist scholars, most notably Nira Yuval-Davis and Patricia Hill Collins,[31] as well as others[32] focusing on 'intersectionality', who, rather than examining gender, race, class, and nation as distinctive social hierarchies, examine how they mutually construct one another.[33] Such an approach, which espouses "sensitivity to intragroup differences arising from intersections of social identities", enables a clearer, more nuanced understanding of the gentrified community of the Bo-Kaap.[34]

The question of 'balance' and whether homogeneity or heterogeneity is more desirable on a neighbourhood-scale is a subject of much debate since it was first raised.[35] On the surface, gentrification may appear to offer the opportunity for residential diversity or heterogeneity. There is, however, little evidence to suggest that gentrification will necessarily lead to real integration at all. Static studies may mistakenly conclude that a neighbourhood that is really in transition has achieved stable integration. And whereas a neighbourhood community may appear to be well integrated, closer analysis at a block- or building-level may reveal that the area is segregated into clearly defined racial, cultural and class enclaves.[36] The complexity of studying integration in gentrifying neighbourhoods is well illustrated by Butler, whose qualitative study of gentrifiers in London neighbourhoods reveals a degree of separation and polarisation despite the appearance of diversity and a strong rhetoric in favour of social integration.[37] Gentrification can play "a dangerous game" if gentrifiers appear to value the presence of others but choose not to interact with them.[38] Slater calls this 'social tectonics,' when groups overlap and run parallel to one another, without integration or interaction, despite celebrating diversity in principle.[39]

Still, gentrification does seem to offer an opportunity, however idealistic, for integration and co-operation amongst different groups. Urban policy discourse in

Europe and North America (particularly Canada) has in recent times been dominated by advocacy of social diversity (also termed social mix or balance) that maintains that at a certain spatial level (municipality, housing project or apartment building), particularly in inner-city areas, the social composition of the resident population ought to reflect the diversity of the wider society.[40] South Africa's housing policy suggests a similar outlook.[41] Generally, however, this kind of diversity is considered in terms of income or class and less so in terms of race. Gentrification provides the perfect illustration of how diversity is employed in multiple, often contradictory, ways. Most existing literature overlooks personal experiences of diversity in areas undergoing gentrification, and those that do tend to focus on the gentrifiers, politicians and corporate leaders rather than the gentrified themselves.[42] Over decades, diversity has become an unthreatening and popular word, particularly resonant for White and middle-class people, a rhetorical tool with the potential to mislead or distract from the real issues at hand. In fact, for Berrey, "diversity discourse may not be strategically useful for low income minorities, who have more to gain from a legal and rhetorical focus on justice and the right to fair housing."[43] Slater's conception of an 'emancipatory discourse' of gentrification would therefore be more useful for the poor on the receiving end of gentrification.[44]

Discussions of the consumption of cosmopolitanism[45] are also relevant to the case of gentrification in neighbourhoods such as the Bo-Kaap. Cosmopolitanism can be understood as "'openness towards peoples, places and experiences from different cultures" and "the search for, and delight in, the contrasts between societies rather than a longing for superiority or for uniformity."[46] Primarily used in consumer studies, it can be readily applied to the housing market and globalization and so, to gentrification.[47]

Whereas most studies of cosmopolitanism are more useful for understanding the gentrifiers than the gentrified, the work of Cartier is particularly relevant to this case study. Cape Town can be considered a "maritime world city," that is the "primary node" of the cosmopolitan a centre of "cultural diversity, economic power, and political leadership…where all the complexities of culture and

economy arising from historic patterns of migration and diverse forms of economic exchange have been possible and desirable"[48] Cartier's emphasis on 'cosmopolitics' is "to ask for greater accountability about the political issues at stake" and "to signal a break with the elite qualities of the idea of cosmopolitanism."[49] Like gentrification, cosmopolitanism affects all classes.[50] Cartier's emphasis on class struggle reiterates the need, when looking at gentrification, to open up the process to all concerned, particularly in the context of Cape Town and South Africa, a country of renowned diversity and deeply-entrenched inequality.

Gentrification in South Africa

Although international literature is useful, understanding gentrification in South Africa today cannot be done without knowledge of South Africa's history of racially based forced removals during apartheid.[51] Today neighbourhoods still bear the mark of the apartheid classification system and most remain relatively homogenous in terms of race and class. Apartheid will continue to shape South African cities in future.[52]

Spatial segregation has also played a major part in racial identity construction, perhaps particularly so for Coloured people, who have always been a part of South Africa's urban landscape, in areas such as the Bo-Kaap.[53] The Group Areas Act of 1950 resulted in hundreds of thousands of people being moved from well-established communities to newly built housing schemes where nobody knew who their neighour might be.[54] Forced removals represent "a series of events which has entered popular imagination via the fate of the residents of District Six" a vibrant, predominantly Coloured, inner-city area declared Whites-only, its buildings and streets demolished, and never rebuilt.[55]

Apartheid-era academic treatment of urban segregation in South Africa was dominated by an implicit acceptance of race as the primary category of inquiry, a 'racial fetishism' that limited understanding of residential segregation.[56] The significance of interracial dynamics was overlooked, as was an assessment of conflict over and resolution of specifically urban problems, and the process of

race creation itself. Instead, with the focus on wider segregationist discourse, particularly the establishment of ethnic 'reserves,' a narrow, unimaginative framework of interpretation emerged, made parochial by years of international marginalisation and "some northern arrogance in failing to take seriously and keep up with the literature from peripheral regions."[57] This helps to explain the persistent treatment of South African urban segregation as unique and the failure to acknowledge the influence of international ideas such as modernist urban planning, reducing opportunities for comparative research.[58] However, the relevance of the South African urban situation to international scholars cannot be underestimated:

> As a caricature of the social divisions that now plague cities across the 'western' and 'non-western' worlds, the apartheid city experience served as a worst-case scenario of persistent social and economic inequality, perversely making it one of the most interesting and illuminating places to be an urban scholar…While clearly fashioned by local histories and geographies, not least of which was (and is) apartheid, SA urban realities reflect the characteristics of cities elsewhere in the 'First' and 'Third' world.[59]

As apartheid drew to a close, urban studies began to open up. Parnell and others recognised that the time had come to move beyond the restrictive framework of apartheid-era urban studies and South African urban history has much to offer the rest of the world.[60]

Gentrification literature in South African urban studies is limited. Although Visser argues that this is due to gentrification's absence in South Africa until very recently, one might argue that apartheid policies allowed for land to be cleared for white 'gentrifiers'. Writing in 1992, Steinberg, van Zyl and Bond highlighted the already escalating struggle for space in South African CBDs, which signaled an acute need for further analyses.[61] The competition for space might also signal that gentrification was imminent. Arguably the most comprehensive study of gentrification undertaken in any South African city to date has been Kotze's doctoral thesis on gentrification in a number of Cape

Town inner-city neighbourhoods.[62] Like many studies elsewhere in the world, however, it focused on defining the gentrifiers in order to differentiate a narrowly defined gentrification process from other forms of urban renewal elsewhere in the inner-city.[63]

Since 1994, Cape Town has become a popular international tourist destination, with the Bo-Kaap promoted as one of numerous inner-city attractions for visitors. At the same time, the city has experienced a prolonged 'property boom' due a variety of economic and political factors[64] and spurred on by the prospect of hosting the 2010 Soccer World Cup.[65] The city's CBD has benefited financially from the tourism and property booms, particularly the huge redevelopment of its Waterfront area and the success of the Cape Town Partnership, a public-private partnership established in the late 1990s to promote inner-city investment and development, followed in November 2000 by the introduction of the Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID) to focus on security, cleansing and managing public space.[66] However, the apparent success of the CBD in general, and the Partnership in particular, has been offset, as Miraftab has illustrated, by elitist discourses to establish "once again, an exclusionary Cape Town."[67] Further, "[U]nless the structural basis of South Africa's inequalities is reformed and urban revitalization becomes rooted in the struggle there for justice and to regain the city, CIDs will find no stable ground in South Africa."[68]

On paper, the city of Cape Town is doing well. However, beneath the surface, it is another story. With the exception of District Six, where legal wrangling has prevented all but a handful of former residents from being able to move back, other inner-city suburbs, also declared White area during apartheid, such as Green Point, are currently undergoing rapid gentrification, driving up property prices and effectively preventing former residents from being able to return:

> […] for many former residents, this means that, even as the political space has opened up in which they might reacquire property in the city centre, so they face new forms of economic exclusion.[69]

Similarly, on the other side of Table Mountain, Coloured residents were evicted in the 1960s and 1970s from the Southern Suburbs such as Newlands and Claremont, where distinctive Victorian and Edwardian housing has subsequently seen significant appreciation and gentrification in the late 1990's. Suburbs on the Cape Flats, the new homes of the majority of those forcibly removed, "reflect the fairly harsh development style of modern low-income housing stock and, predictably, these areas have not appreciated as part of the 1990s Cape property boom."[70]

Today, gentrification is steadily taking place and is a fruitful avenue for academic investigation. Local urban experiences can contribute to a global understanding of gentrification while on a practical, local level, gentrification has profound implications for the transformation of post-apartheid cities and the South African economy.[71] With the past in mind, Samasuwo observes South African gentrification more closely in terms of land ownership and reform policy, within an African and global context. Post-apartheid transformation, he warns, is being hindered by the country's market-led land reform policy.[72] An unhinged desire for individual profit and the openness of the market to "investor sentiment," particularly wealthy foreigners, poses a threat to land reform, a key issue in addressing historical injustice, "a highly emotional subject" and "a source of sustained resistance for generations."[73] This echoes Miraftab's call for the underlying social inequalities to be addressed before one can talk of inner-city investment and development, including gentrification, as being truly successful, constructive or desirable. The South African city today can be studied from a number of perspectives not traditionally invoked by local urban scholars. These take into account the attitudes, identities and ideologies of individual citizens and key professionals as well as history and global economics. Most importantly, it necessitates the recognition that "urban experience is the outcome of struggle."[74] In the past, John Western has been one of the few scholars to recognise the unique and conflicting characteristics of the city.[75] Building on this, recent books, such as *Desire Lines* and *Imagining the City*, have begun to

represent Cape Town as a collection of perspectives and experiences of the people who call it home.

Still, too few attempts have been made to reveal the range of experiences of inner-city change. How is gentrification being framed by the people who were there first, the 'gentrified' rather than the gentrifiers? In their opinions, who is moving into the Bo-Kaap, why are they doing so and what changes are they causing to the area? What are some of their main arguments, the main features of the discourses they employ to speak out against or in favour of gentrification and residential diversity? How do they perceive the Bo-Kaap, past, present and future? How do the intersecting characteristics of their identities - their religion, race and class, inform their viewpoints? How much of it is simply a question of conflicting attitudes regarding the individual's role in his or her community, particularly between generations, in the face of dramatically changing social and political milieus? Finally, what lessons can be learnt from the case of the Bo-Kaap?

Methodology

As the literature shows, studies of gentrification have traditionally overlooked the personal stories and experiences of the gentrified, choosing instead to focus on the gentrifiers, causes or effects. This study aims to open space for certain representatives of the gentrified to voice their opinions. The distinction between renters and owners is largely overlooked. The exact proportion of each is unknown, although both can be considered vulnerable to gentrification. A relative lack of economic and political power means that renters are easily exploitable by landlords, while owners are often unable to resist 'buyouts' by gentrifiers.[76] It takes the form of a case study of local key informant discourses about gentrification, employing semi-structured interviews as its primary means

of data collection, as well as census data and personal observations. It seeks to understand rather than explain, to answer *what* is going on rather than *why* this is so, in the hope that "by demonstrating the existence of social problems, [it] can challenge accepted assumptions about the way things are and can provoke action."[77]

For this study, five in-depth semi-structured individual interviews and two small group interviews were conducted with key role-players in the process. First, the local estate agent has lived in the Bo-Kaap for her entire life, handles a large proportion of sales in the area and may be regarded as a gatekeeper to the area, or at least someone who is in a good position to see exactly who is moving in and out. Second, as a religious leader in a predominantly Muslim area, the imam at the Buitengracht Street mosque is well connected to the community, has a relatively privileged access to what people are thinking, particularly the youth, and is someone whose views are influential. Third, the chairman of the Bo-Kaap Civic Association has been politically active in the area since 1980 and has been prominent in the media as a spokesman for those opposed to gentrification. Fourth, a lawyer based at the University of the Western Cape co-founded the Anti-Gentrification Front several years ago as a movement seeking to educate people about gentrification, particularly from a legal perspective. Fifth, the headmaster and two teachers at Vista High School, the only high school in the area, are exposed to the children and families of the Bo-Kaap and beyond and are therefore also well placed to talk about the subject. All of these 'insider' respondents are Muslims who have spent most of their lives in the Bo-Kaap and are members of families who have been there for generations. Most were born, schooled and married in the area. Although some no longer lived in the area, all have occupations that connect them to the area.

Two of the interviews were conducted with 'outsider' respondents, people who although not residents of the area are still implicated in the gentrification process. The local government ward councillor for the City Bowl (inner-city) residential areas, including Bo-Kaap, has held the position since 1996, and as a

resident of neighboring Tamboerskloof, considers herself "very much aware of them as neighbors as well." Finally, from the city council, the Executive Director for Strategy and Development and the manager of his office are responsible for city-wide planning and the management of municipal (council-owned) property, and are therefore best placed to give the council's point of view on the matter. The manager's parents were originally from the Bo-Kaap, so he too has a personal connection to the area.

To ensure that the respondents were at ease, interviews were conducted at a venue of their choice, almost always their office. Care was taken to let the respondents speak for themselves, rather than let preconceived views and theories dictate the discussion. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. Interviews were taped, transcribed and reread closely several times to identify the common themes that emerged. These then served as categories of analysis.

The researcher must at all times take into account the power dynamics that underlie and may influence the process of data collection and interpretation.[78] As outsiders with more similarities to the gentrifiers than to the long-term residents, this was bypassed to a certain extent by speaking only to certain key representatives. The 'insider' respondents were all in positions of relative power within the community and were therefore not necessarily representative of the area's entire population. This is admittedly a major limitation to this study, although their diversity of views points to a range of discourses employed by the larger population. The fact that these community leaders do not speak with one voice highlights the contestation implicit in gentrification, in opinions as well as experiences.   In doing research into a controversial and sensitive topic such as gentrification, that many residents may well be tired of being asked about by now, caution had to be exercised so as to not intrude on the residents themselves. It was therefore regarded as appropriate to limit the scope of the fieldwork to the ten actors in the seven interviews mentioned above, contextualised by census

data, personal observations, informal conversations with current or past residents and ongoing debates in the local media.

Discussion and analysis of respondent's views

The gentrifiers: who, why, and what?
Respondents tended to agree about who was moving into the Bo-Kaap. The vast majority are White, and many are foreigners, some taking advantage of the opening up of South Africa to global property markets and relatively favourable exchange rates, although most are upwardly mobile South Africans. Of course exceptions do exist. Although the majority of new residents are considerably wealthier than the average long-term residents, not all of those moving into the area can be considered gentrifiers. Also, not all are white, and many of the gentrifiers are themselves Muslims. Census data reveals that between 1991 and 2001, the Muslim population of Bo-Kaap became more racially diverse, with the number of Black Muslims increasing from 96 (1.8% of the total) in 1996 to 568 (13.7%) in 2001. There were similar increases in the numbers of Indian, Asian and White Muslims, who together made up 10% of the total in 2001 as presented in Table 3 in appendix 1.

More complicated than simply describing the gentrifiers is trying to understand why they were moving in. "If you do not like a Muslim person, or the way they live, or the way they interact, what would you want to come and live in Bo-Kaap for?" was something that arose more than once during interviews. Whereas the estate agent had said this to justify why she thought most in-movers were respectful, the Vista staff used the same sentiment to express their disdain for what was happening. And whereas the agent was positive about the contributions gentrifiers were making to the area, the high school staff felt that the number who offered their professional skills for the upliftment of the community was but a tiny minority. Clearly, interpreting gentrification in the Bo-Kaap is a matter of personal opinion.

Interestingly, very little mention was made by respondents of the influx of businesses to the area. Developers - large building companies as well as small-

scale renovators - were met with mixed reactions, regarded as the most influential and least considerate gentrifiers. Architectural changes were seldom well received. Although some renovations are considered to have ruined the traditional facades of the buildings, more considerate restorations have, as the ward councillor pointed out, impacted on the area's run-down charm. Those buying into the area tended to worry about security and often built walls around their homes. Not only do the walls themselves influence the aesthetics of the area, but a "high wall mentality" of security, isolation and individualism was seen to prevent real integration and community spirit. In fact the Vista staff claimed that burglars often targeted these houses specifically.

Perceived uniqueness, history, and democracy

A second factor influencing respondents' views of gentrification was how they perceived the area itself. For many of the residents, the Bo-Kaap has a unique social character because of the community spirit of the people, their traditions and their history. The chairman of the civic association was particularly outspoken in this regard:

> I mean you go anywhere in South Africa and even the world, you talk Bo-Kaap, you automatically get the smell of food, you automatically see a mosque, you automatically see cobblestone.[79]

Any changes, in his opinion, therefore undermined this significance: "It's like talking about a Chinatown and seeing Greeks!" Ironically, it's these distinctive, seemingly exotic characteristics of the Bo-Kaap that attract tourists and cosmopolitan gentrifiers in the first place.

The chairman also claimed the Bo-Kaap to be the only area in Cape Town, even South Africa, where a previously disadvantaged community still has its roots. Unlike typical historical neighborhoods that experience gentrification after years of inner-city neglect, the Bo-Kaap has never been a 'White' suburb. Certainly, part of what makes the area unique is the fact that many families have lived in the same house for generations, unfortunately extremely rare for non-White urban South Africans. Those who resist gentrification, such as the Anti-Gentrification Front, highlight the fact that it is "pulling families apart", particularly if wills have not been properly drawn up.

On a more general level, those who see the area's history as an inseparable part of its present identity are prone to see any change as destructive. Seemingly emotional appeals to history are not without justification, though. Housing has always been an issue of contention in the area. In an extensive review of community participation and council involvement in the preservation of housing in the Bo-Kaap from the eighteenth century through to 1990, local historian and social worker Achmat Davids criticises the role of the city council, whose indecision and procrastination obstructed development of the area.[80] The sensitivity of older residents towards gentrification stems in part from a long history of having to fight for ownership. Through community activism, most houses were eventually transferred back to the people by the early 1990s, with few exceptions. Interestingly, respondents from the council in this study claimed to have traditionally assisted the community in improving the area by building houses and providing land.

Many respondents mentioned the impact of democracy on the area. Those who supported gentrification used democracy as a way to justify and celebrate living in integrated suburbs and learning about other people's lifestyles. Those who opposed gentrification, on the other hand, believed that democracy had come as a surprise and that the people of Bo-Kaap were not prepared for the consequences, gentrification being one. The ward councillor also pointed out that the Bo-Kaap

is politically fragmented along party lines, possibly hindering community mobilisation.

Respondents approaching the area as outsiders did not view the area in the same way. The manager of the city council's office for Strategy and Planning, whose parents were originally from the area, insisted that the Bo-Kaap of today is not restricted to its borders and its history, but rather to its importance in people's memories and, more abstractly, to the pride that they place in their homes and communities, wherever they may be. As such there exist other 'Bo-Kaaps' in the Cape, areas such as Macassar, Rylands, Athlone, or indeed anywhere where a Muslim community has taken root. According to him, the tendency by some to "linger on someone else's memory all their lives […] maybe that's part of the problem."[81] The local imam held a similar view. For him, the Bo-Kaap would always survive in people's memories. Changes today were inevitable, even desirable. If its Muslim residents could remain in touch with their faith and their roots, he felt, then the Bo-Kaap, although changing, is not under any threat. Clearly, those who acknowledge the Bo-Kaap's history but leave it in the past are able to look to the future without a sense of being threatened and are thus able to embrace change.

Wendy Shaw's study of postcolonial Sydney illustrates how gentrification can foster strategic interpretations of history. She explains how a yearning for "the good old days" tends to be "indifferent to recalling those aspects of class and race relations that make the memories less palatable."[82] Interestingly, in Sydney, this discourse was employed by the gentrifiers to justify their moving in, whereas in the Bo-Kaap, it is being employed by the gentrified themselves to hang on. It is not a colonial nostalgia in a postcolonial city, nor an apartheid nostalgia in a post apartheid city, but rather an isolationist attitude in a city no longer forcibly segregated. The Bo-Kaap is not unique in this regard:

> In what may seem to be increasingly pluralistic city spaces, specific exclusionary politics are increasingly associated with gentrification. The remembrance of specific versions of history in

cities around the world brings with it the capacity for malevolent escapism, strategies for retreat from the realities of everyday life.[83]

The Bo-Kaap, as unique as it may seem or feel to its residents, highlights the heritage-making discourses typical of gentrification that legitimise 'certain presences, in the present' rendering all other concerns inconsequential[84] For Hall and Bombardella, "nostalgia's timelessness, coupled with a consumer-oriented desire, allows the paradox of a yearning for a 'future home' that is envisaged though references to the past."[85] "Contemporary South Africa," Hall elaborates, "is particularly susceptible to this combination of nostalgia, desire and consumerism, which provides new senses of home in a burgeoning, but markedly unequal, economy."[86]

South Africa's history of forced removals, particularly its impact on the identity construction of Coloured people, most romantically in District Six, underlines local opposition to gentrification in the Bo-Kaap. District six was destroyed and not rebuilt. Aside from a handful of new developments and years of promises, for the vast majority of its former residents, only its memory remains. Its reality, arguably, as a vibrant Coloured community in the heart of the city and not banished to the Cape Flats, lives on in the Bo-Kaap. The fact that gentrification is occuring all over the city since the property boom of the 1990s, in areas where non-white people were forcibly removed decades ago, does not make a difference to those opposed to gentrification in the Bo-Kaap.

Strategic interpretations of Islam

Census data reveals that although the area was becoming slightly more diverse in terms of non-Muslims moving in, Islam in the Bo-Kaap, at least until 2001, was showing no sign of diminishing in numbers, with Muslims making up almost 90% of the total population in both 1996 and 2001 as presented in table 2 in appendix 1. However, religion is still a major factor in arguments both for and against gentrification. Respondents tended to refer to Islam in three different ways. First, some saw Islam as a part of their lives and a culture in itself that was

being threatened by outside influences. Second, some criticised the way that religion was being used as an "excuse" to further individual agendas. Third, some appealed to the importance in Islam of helping one's neighbour.

For those opposed to gentrification, Islam was something tangible and concrete. Gentrifiers were generally seen to be intolerant of others and ignorant of their traditions. Respondents cited specific behavior on the part of in-movers, such as complaining about the noise of the mosques' calls to prayer, drinking in public during these times, and even complaining about children playing in the streets. The civic chairman admitted that for an outsider, the Bo-Kaap's community could be quite restrictive in its adherence to certain ways of life. Hosting drunken and noisy parties, he felt, was likely to be taken as a sign of disrespect: "I don't think partying is a big thing in Bo-Kaap…partying is a no-no in Bo-Kaap."[87]

What worried people most was the influence that disrespectful outside influences might have on their children. By being exposed to certain religious taboos (such as alcohol, gambling, pork, or even loud music) particularly during times of religious observance, they might come to think that these are acceptable, become confused instead of learning "proper" cultural practices, and be hindered in their spiritual development, leading to a weakening of the religious integrity of the community. Despite the fact that democracy has opened up the area in other ways, and that the loss of traditional spirituality could just as easily be the result of the youth being able to go out of the area (to work, study or visit friends, for example) as of influences entering the community, blame is placed firmly on the "others" now becoming neighbours.

Another view was that using Islam to capitalise on gentrification was hypocritical. The estate agent cited two similar examples where old residents in need of money were persuaded sell their house to a "local" for sometimes one fifth of what it was worth, and the new owner would sell it within months for a

huge profit: "What did the neighbour do? He used Islam. To me, it leaves a very bitter taste in my mouth. We don't use religion, we don't use race, we don't use gentrification, we don't do those things!" Evidently, some local residents are getting rich off gentrification, while others are not, further complicating class relations and exacerbating intragroup conflict within the local context.

Already suggested by census data, the imam and the estate agent were both quick to point out that non-Muslims have lived in the area for a long time, long before gentrification began to occur. There is a church in the area, St. Paul's, around which lives a large Christian parish. The church has its own Christian primary school, which many Muslim children have attended over the years. Similarly, Christian children would participate in Ramadaan at their neighbour's houses. There has long been harmony between Muslims and Christians in the area, when both were of a similar race or class. The estate agent therefore questioned why people who opposed gentrification should now claim to feel threatened by Christianity.

The religious community appeared divided on the subject of gentrification. Although the imam who was interviewed embraced change, he does not speak for the entire religious community. Some of gentrification's most vocal critics have been imams, many of whom have moved out of the area as it has become gentrified. [88] Those who supported gentrification appealed to the fact that Islam teaches one to care for one's neighbour, regardless of race, religion or origin, even before one's family. The estate agent noted that Islam makes no mention of race and therefore does not teach Muslims to be racist. Instead it teaches Muslims "to live in harmony with each and every creation of God... He created all of us. So what makes me superior to anyone else?"

Racialised arguments
Despite the fact that Muslims of different races have been moving to the Bo-Kaap, the estate agent interpreted frequent objections to selling property to non-Muslims as being a racial issue rather than religiously motivated. "There's never been race in Islam, so I don't understand where the race issue comes now, why

race is being used to win a battle". She illustrated how many residents themselves question the validity of the racial argument:

> Those who were saying 'don't sell to Whites' do realise that they're fighting a   losing   battle […] A lot of people have walked out of the meeting and say 'they shouldn't tell us […] who we should sell to. My White neighbour's treating me better than they ever treated me! [89]

The Anti-Gentrification Front was quick to point out that although they were not against diversity, they would not tolerate gentrifiers with the wrong attitude. The lawyer criticised some White inmovers who did not acknowledge the privileges that apartheid had afforded them, benefits that in many ways make it possible for them to now be able to move into the area. "I'm not against White people!" she stressed. "I've got friends [of] different races, but I've got a problem with people not understanding the consequences of their actions, and still saying 'I never benefited. I'm but a poor soul coming into the area.'"

As Davids shows, a degree of racial diversity has always existed in the Bo-Kaap. From the 19th century through to the 1920s, the poor of all races lived together in the area.[90] The Group Areas Act of 1950 enforced racial homogeneity until it was repealed in 1991, although census data from that year reveals that some exceptions did exist and this is presented in table 1 in appendix 1. It is only recently, however, that significant numbers of relatively wealthy people of other races have begun to move in. Furthermore, gentrification is not the only factor influencing the racial diversity of the Bo-Kaap. Respondents reported that middle-class Black Africans (including skilled professionals and foreigners) constitute a fairly insignificant proportion of gentrifiers in relation to White people. An increase in poorer Black people can be attributed not to gentrification but to the growth of an informal settlement in the nearby quarry. As with religion, the debate around gentrification and changes to the Bo-Kaap cannot be reduced to a simple racial issue. Beyond race, then, it is also an issue of class.

Class-based explanations: money, morality, and the market

The Bo-Kaap has traditionally been a working-class neighbourhood. Census data reveals that since 1991, higher income groups have been moving into the area, while the number of residents belonging to occupational classes associated with the working-class has declined as shown in table 5 in appendix 1.

As with religion, money was used by both sides to explain gentrification and its consequences. Those who resisted gentrification most vehemently tended to emphasise their relative poverty and powerlessness, as well as their historical disadvantages. For them, gentrification is simply unfair, being driven ultimately by class interests. The lawyer from the Anti-Gentrification Front pointed out that many of the wealthier long-time residents could afford to remain in the area. For poorer residents who consider themselves powerless in relation to wealthier gentrifiers, change was effectively out of their control. What opportunities they did have were being usurped by wealthy inmovers. Any accusation of religious or racial prejudice was simply "a mechanism to get us off the track", to distract from the reality, an "economic apartheid" that discriminates according to class. The civic chairman believed that the community of the Bo-Kaap was being undermined, "ravaged … in the most vital and the most fragile of ways: money."

For the civic chairman, it was a matter of moral principle. Gentrification, he felt, feeds off "that type of immorality that breeds the other type of capitalism: don't give a damn, as long as we can make the quick buck." Similarly, the imam condemned the materialism that had crept into the community. A teacher at Vista summed it all up: "money's money you know. The colour of money is green and people will always be people." The issue of economics is compounded, again, by history. After the council expropriated houses during slums clearance, community activism enabled residents to buy back their houses relatively cheaply.[91] According to the civic chairman:

> It irks me because I do believe in a buy-and-sell type of
> mentality, but I don't believe that if the community has made
> so much effort for you to get that house, you have the right to
> sell it at that indecent price that you are…If the community
> like myself and others that has been there, that took the brunt

and the fall for you to get the house, then I say it is immoral
for you to sell…but if you bought your house on the free open
market and you get offered today R1.5 million, I say 'go for
it.'[92]

The buyers do not deserve all the blame, the civic chairman pointed out. Without a willing seller, the can be no willing buyer. For him, "there is no doubt that the main culprit is ourselves…we don't doubt that for one minute." For most poor people, the lure of money is too great to resist. The temptation never lets up, with prospective gentrifiers making offers on a weekly basis, offering more and more money. "They hound[…]and it looks like the harder we fight to preserve, the more we push up the price." Many locals seek to capitalize on these rising prices. The sense of frustration and helplessness of those opposed to gentrification is clear.

Local government and the city council, as outsiders, both looked at the process in terms of "the realities" of living in a free-market capitalist society that made the property market difficult to control. Where there is competition, they felt, those with money will trump people without. Even if one wanted to encourage residential diversity and integration, assisting gentrification would not be the most effective means of doing so. The council's view was that gentrification does not assist diversity at all, but can actually prove an obstacle to it. They cited examples such as the V&A Waterfront, where poor coloureds were forced out; and De Waterkant, where Europeans have displaced South Africans and gays have displaced families with children. It is thus, they felt, "very difficult to make a positive case for gentrification, if you have any social consciousness. The market will make a case for gentrification […] we live in a market society, so it's part of life, gentrification." The estate agent, obviously benefiting financially from the large amount of sales in the Bo-Kaap, was strongly in favour of letting people buy and sell as they wished. In the new South Africa, she felt, one can choose to live anywhere that one can afford.

There was a basic disagreement as to the threat of displacement, whether residents are forced out or choose to leave out of their own free will. The true

extent of the pressures faced by residents is unclear and subjective, depending on a number of factors, of which money is certainly one. But how one relates to the changes and threats brought about by gentrification comes down to more than just one's income – it also depends on one's personal outlook.

Attitudes: individual versus community

Responses suggest that age is an influential factor. There exists in the Bo-Kaap an ideological divide between generations. The strongest resistance to gentrification comes from older residents, who grew up during apartheid and feel a greater sense of attachment to the area. The youth, on the other hand, tended to be more accepting of the changes. Respondents opposed to gentrification criticised the youth for their political apathy and materialism, whereas those who supported it praised their open-mindedness and their ability to adapt and to make use of the opportunities afforded by democracy. It was felt that they live in a different world from previous generations of Bo-Kaap residents, and have a different understanding of- and connection to the area.

A shift in value system, a tendency towards a neo-liberal, individualist ideology, seems to be accompanying the influences coming into the area. This would begin to answer why the civic chairman is so strongly opposed to the process. He compared the Bo-Kaap to places like District Six and Sophiatown, not in the sense that people had been forced out so much as because it is a:

> […] community that has been so long established, where one knew the neighbour, knew everybody. It's a *helpmekaar* (help each other) community type of situation. And gentrification is one of the guises that is eating at the […] fabric of this community, every day. They don't relent![93]

As someone who during apartheid fought and sacrificed for his community, and who now sees personal financial advantage being prioritised over the community's wellbeing, the ideological shift seems to invoke a degree of shame at what the community has become, as well as frustration that his hard work has been for nothing.

Recognising this ideological shift makes it easier to see how both the gentrifiers and gentrified are responsible for gentrification (as the civic chairman himself conceded) and why gentrification has caused not only divisions between the gentrified and the gentrifier, but also a degree of conflict amongst the gentrified themselves, especially between young and old. It therefore seems to be the ideological dichotomy between community and individual, between past and present, as people get more deeply interpolated into global neoliberal logics, that is key to understanding conflicting responses to change in general, and gentrification in particular, in the Bo-Kaap.

Despite the Bo-Kaap's image as a homogenous Muslim, Coloured, working-class area, this has never really been the case, as historically there has been a measure of integration within the community. Gentrification over the past 10 to 15 years has, however, has brought to the Bo-Kaap diversity on a far greater scale, and for the first time it is being seen as a threat. Ironically, the apartheid Group Areas Act protected the area and fostered a sense of an intact, 'embedded'[94] and self-reproducing[95] community that is now threatened to an extent by post-apartheid democracy and market policy.

The case of the Bo-Kaap shows that the discourses employed by respondents both for and against gentrification revolved around common themes. Strategic interpretations of history, religion, race and class were employed to justify a point of view, for or against. All respondents believed that people have a natural propensity to want to keep to themselves. Particularly, they felt, if one grew up in a relatively homogenous area, that homogeneity provides security and familiarity. This self-image and way of life is being challenged as the area diversifies. According to the Vista staff, it is not that they are against any other group or that they think they are better, it is simply that they feel distinct cultures can only thrive if they are kept separate. Differences between religions, and the lifestyles that accompany them, are seen as being so fundamental that they are to an extent incompatible.

Not all those who oppose gentrification might be accused of resisting integration or wishing to remain amongst themselves, isolated and segregated. The civic chairman was quick to dispel the perception, saying that he would welcome anyone who shows respect and a willingness to be a part of the community. Still others felt that homogeneity belongs to the past, and that the nostalgia for that notion of 'home' should be managed at a symbolic level, considering the general need in South African to embrace heterogeneity and diversity.[96] The fact that segregation is a desired objective for some community leaders, who during apartheid fought against legalised segregation, is an irony worth noting.

Conclusion

Whether or not any gentrification process can be accompanied by integrated diversity is open to debate, as is the question of whether gentrification is in fact the best means of achieving residential diversity. The fact remains, however, that gentrification is occurring rapidly in the Bo-Kaap and that it is very unlikely that this will change in the near future. In South Africa, particularly, where government espouses the rights of the underprivileged and previously disenfranchised, the issue of gentrification is loaded with political implications. Apartheid's legacy of spatial segregation has given gentrification a unique character and a particular significance to post-apartheid transformation. Those involved therefore need to agree on how best to manage it so that the people who are vulnerable to its consequences do not suffer and that the influx of middle-class gentrifiers does not heighten social inequality and promote conflict.

Finding a suitable approach to handling gentrification requires listening to the needs and ideas of all those concerned, regardless of their relative power and wealth. This article has given voice, through opinion leaders, to some of those most closely affected. A more comprehensive study of the area would do well to incorporate the views of the population at large, distinguish between renters and owners, and look at certain key sites in the area. Also, a spatial understanding of certain hindrances to gentrification (such as perceived crime hotspots like the public park, unsafe street parking), as well as obstacles to integrated residential

diversity (eg. gentrifiers choosing to live on the second floor, not ground level, or in certain parts of the Bo-Kaap, and not others). This would give a far more nuanced look at the complex set of factors at play in the area.

Most importantly, from a diversity perspective, gentrification needs to be framed and managed without creating discourses of exclusion and exclusivity that reinforce categories of 'otherness'. The success of efforts to minimise conflict "depends on our willingness to face up to the 'faces of oppression'" and "to participate far more courageously in the political challenge it presents."[97] Steps need to be taken from outside the area, by the government and the city council, and from within the area, through community initiatives, local organisations and individuals, both to ensure that axes of difference are not mobilised in ways that inflame exclusionary sentiment, as well as to promote respectful attitudes on the part of those who come to live in this historic neighbourhood, or indeed in any other neighbourhood anywhere in the world where gentrification is occurring. The Bo-Kaap serves as an exemplary case, where all of these intersecting axes are at play in the same place and at the same time, in a country of great diversity and inequality, and where market-generated urban changes that are present all over the world are, given South Africa's history, rendered particularly obvious.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 1. Racial diversity of Bo-Kaap

	1991	1996	2001	1991 (%)	1996 (%)	2001 (%)
African/Black	60	123	641	1.3	2.6	13.8
Coloured	4,540	3,703	3,434	95.2	79.0	73.7
Indian/Asian	153	174	286	3.2	3.7	6.1
White	15	127	300	0.3	2.7	6.4
Unspecified	n.a.	560	n.a.	n.a.	11.9 [a]	n.a.
Total	4,767	4,687	4,661	100	100	100

SOURCES: Census data, 1991, 1996 and 2001.

a. The substantial decrease in the proportion of Coloureds, as well as the increase in the proportions of other racial groups, are perhaps skewed by the fact the 1996 census provided an "unspecified" racial category.

Table 2. Religious diversity of Bo-Kaap

	1991	1996	2001	1991 (%)	1996 (%)	2001 (%)
Islam	2,892	4,145	4,160	60.7	88.5	89.3
Christianity	249	331	379	5.2	7.1	8.1
Hinduism	n.a.	7	9	n.a.	0.1	0.2

Judaism	n.a.	0	9	n.a.	0.0	0.2
African traditional	n.a.	3	0	n.a.	0.1	0.0
Other	17 [b]	3	3	0.4 [b]	0.1	0.1
None	n.a.	48	66	n.a.	1.0	1.4
Unspecified	1,611 [b]	112	33	33.8 [b]	2.4	0.7
Total	4,768	4,685	4,660	100	100	100

SOURCES: Census data, 1991, 1996 and 2001

b. may include Hinduism, Judaism, African Traditional & None.

Table 3. Racial diversity of Muslims in Bo-Kaap

	1991	1996	2001	1991 (%)	1996 (%)	2001 (%)
Coloured	2,807	3,336	3,196	97.1	80.5	76.8
Black/African	-	73	568	-	1.8	13.7
Indian/Asian	85	156	273	2.9	3.8	6.6
White	-	49	124	-	1.2	3.0
Unspecified	-	531	-	-	12.8	-
Total	2,892	4,145	4,160	100	100	100

SOURCES: Census data, 1991, 1996 and 2001

Table 4. Linguistic diversity of Bo-Kaap

	1991	1996	2001	1991 (%)	1996 (%)	2001 (%)
English	2,766	3,382	3,526	58.3	72.2	75.7
Afrikaans	1,843	1,230	1,061	38.8	26.3	22.8
Xhosa	35	25	24	0.7	0.5	0.5
Other (SA)	4	17	24	0.1	0.4	0.5
Other (Eur)	7	12	24	0.1	0.3	0.5
Unspecified	-	19		-	0.4	-
Total	4,746 [c]	4,685	4,659	100	100	100

SOURCES: Census data, 1991, 1996 and 2001

c, in 1991, 91 people were classified in a separate section 'both English and Afrikaans.'

Table 5. Class structure (occupational sectors)

OCCUPATION	1991	1996	2001	1991 (%)	1996 (%)	2001 (%)
A (legislator; manager; Exec; admin; senior official)	50	94	111	3.1	5.9	6.7

B (professional; semi-professional; technical)	186	322	348	11.5	20.2	21.0
C (clerical; sales; service; transport; delivery; communications)	756	481	458	46.9	30.2	27.6
D (agric; artisan; apprentice; trade worker)	259	275	175	16.1	17.3	10.6
E (elementary; plant/machine operator/assembler)	360	420	207	22.3	26.4	12.5
F (unspecified / undertermined)	-	-	359	-	-	21.7
Total (employed)	1,611	1,592	1,658	100	100	100

SOURCES: Census data, 1991, 1996 and 2001