Migration and Urban Spatial Structure in a Globalizing World: A Comparative Look

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This paper begins an examination of the relationship between migration and urban space. More specifically, it looks at the reciprocal impact of migration (both intra- and inter-national) and the internal structure of urban space. It is a conceptual paper, although it builds on a range of empirical work, particularly in the field of urban analysis, and on documentation of patterns of migration and of urban change in the two countries involved in the comparison: South Africa and the United States (I focus on New York City in the one case and Johannesburg in the other because they are the cities I know blest, and the most integrated into global networks.). Both are, today, deeply embedded in processes of globalization, although at quite different points, and they provide a contrast between developed and developing economies that illuminates both he generalizability and the limitations of comparative analysis.

We start with a useful formulation of the structure of urban space in contemporary societies. It is based on the parallel partitioning of the residential and the business spaces of cities into what we may call the separate quarters of the city. virtually individual cities within the jurisdictional city:

The luxury city and the city of control
The gentrified city and the city of advanced services
The suburban city and the city of direct production
The tenement city and the city of unskilled work
The abandoned city and the city of the informal economy[1]

The luxury city is the residence of the global elite: it typical form is the citadel, in which participants can live, work, shop, enjoy recreation and culture, without contact with the rest of the urban mass. Participants are those who exercise control over basic economic, and often political, decisions, with an international as well as national influence. They are not much involved in local affairs.

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[1] Cities in a Globalizing World, Global Report on Human Settlement, 2001, United Nations Center for Human Settlements, 2001, London: Earthscan Publications, p. 34. For a more detailed discussion, see Peter Marcuse, "The Layered City," 2002, in Peter Madsen and Richard Plunz, eds., The Urban Life World: Formation, Perception,

In the United States, Battery Park City is a partial example, as is Sandton, as a whole, in South Africa. In both cases, the reliance on public infrastructure and support limits the manner in which exclusion can be practiced, but the full panoply of economic and social controls serve to insulate and protect the spaces of the rich. In other cases: megaprojects in Vancouver and Shanghai and Kuala Lumpur and London and Frankfurt, the exclusion is the more complete because it is all private.

Under pressure of globalization, the size of the gentrifying group, the pmc, professional-managerial class, is steadily growing, creating on of the motor forces that influences the rest of the urban spatial structure, e.g. by its own growth and by its displacement of adjacent residents.

The gentrified city is in general located near the central business district, and is the space occupied by the professional/managerial/technical class, sometimes mistakenly referred to as the creative class. Its location will be very variable within the space of the urban field depending on history, topography, and public policy.

Brooklyn Heights, part of the Lower East Side, Clinton, Tribeca, are examples in New York City, but the process is widespread and known throughout the developed world. Out-migration from the inner cities has much to do with the pattern.[2] Greenwich Village is an earlier variation on the theme. In Johannesburg, for reasons having to do with the spatial structures left behind by apartheid, the process of gentrification narrowly defined is limited, although it is already a matter of concern in Alexandra. However, the walled and gated communities of the northern suburbs and the mid-Rand play the equivalent role there; Yeoville might have been on the way to becoming the Greenwich Village of Johannesburg, but events (having to do with in-migration) intervened; Melville may be playing the role today.

Representation. New York and London, Routledge, and Marcuse, Peter, and Ronald van Kempen, eds. Globalizing Cities: A New Spatial Order?, Oxford: Blackwell, 1999..

[2] The issue of push vs. pull in the formation of suburbs is contested, and the literature on the subject is vast, but inconclusive.

The suburban city is the city of the middle class, typically located in the suburbs, and includes among its residents small business people, skilled workers, often retirees from professional occupations.

Suburban development is well known, perhaps even the dominant pattern of housing development, in the United States today. High-density developments, like much of the Upper West Side or Stuyvesant Town in Manhattan , are the functional equivalent. The pattern is reproduced in much of middle-class South Africa, including in parts of many townships and in working-class areas of some cities, e.g. Triumph (Sophiatown) in Johannesburg, where apartheid has given working-class whites the opportunities of a middle class as a result of the enforced out-migration of Africans..

The tenement city (a term based on housing in cities like New York City and London) is home to the working class, those employed not only in factories but also in routine and lower-paid service occupations, from assembly-line and sweatshop workers to retail clerks and secretaries. The immigrant quarters of most cities are generally working-class quarters.

The Lower East Side is the classic example in New York City, and has a museum dedicated to preserving the memory of the form. Much of Harlem, much of Brooklyn were developed in similar fashion. In each case, occupancy has shifted with economic change and out-migration of industrial workers, but strong remnants remain. In South Africa, the equivalent was (and is still, largely) the segregated townships, for Africans and Colored and t a lesser extent Indians did the bulk of the heavy lifting economically; the hostels would be the classic example.

Because of apartheid, in the past middle class Africans, Colored, and Indians were forced to live in the segregated townships of the tenement city, so that in fact in South Africa it was more mixed by class/income than it is in the United States.

The abandoned city is that part of the city neglected by governing institutions of the city, excluded from the range of benefits of publicly-supported urban activities, and relying on the informal economy, from hawking goods on the street o to peddling drugs for survival.

In the United States, the abandoned areas of cities (most notorious examples: the South Bronx, Harlem, and central Brooklyn) were well known in the 1970's; their growth and shrinkage are cyclical, largely dependent on macro-economic events and the population movements they induce. The parallels in South Africa and elsewhere are the informal settlements, generally located on the edges of townships or in any unused and accessible land. But also more recently developed, inner city areas such as Hillbrow are at the brink of full-scale abandonment.

The term "ghettoization" may be applied to abandoned areas in both countries, using it in the sense of an involuntary confinement of households to limited areas based on ascribed "racial" characteristics. It seems awkward to speak of a ghettoization of the majority of a country's population, but there is no doubt this is what white rule in South Africa produced, African townships being even more homogenous in color than the classic black ghettos of the United States.

Patterns of migration, both internal and external, are directly tied to these spatial configurations.

External migration is perhaps better known in its intra-urban spatial aspect. The most-studied example is the immigrant quarter. It is sometimes referred to as an immigrant or ethnic "enclave," but I prefer to use that term in accordance with its historical origins, to denote a space in a relation of superiority to its surroundings, as in the imperial enclaves in colonies.[3] Three changes characterize the traditional immigrant quarter from many today. The first is their increasingly trans-national character, that is, while they remain clusters of co-ethnics, the communities are much more closely linked to the homeland than earlier. There has always been a limited extent of back-and-forth visiting between the place of settlement and the place of origin,

[3] See Marcuse, Peter. 1997. "The Ghetto of Exclusion and the Fortified Enclave: New Patterns in the United States. in American Behavioral Scientist special issue, The New Spatial Order of Cities, Vol 41, no. 3, November/December, pp. 311-326. Also in: H. Priemus, S. Musterd, and R. van Kempen. 1998. Towards Undivided Cities in Western Europe: New Challenges for Urban Policy. Part 7: Comparative Analysis. Pp. 5-20. For a formal definition, see Peter Marcuse, "Enclaves yes, Ghettos No," in David Varady, ed., Segregation, The Lincoln Institute, forthcoming.

but the ease of communication and of transportation, under the impact of the technological component of globalization, is immeasurably greater today than before. Thus far, in the United States, it has not increased to the point where one would speak of transience as a characteristic of the immigrant quarter, but conceivably, if the recession in the United States gets worse, there may indeed be a trend in this direction. Public policy in many European countries aimed at returning "guest workers" to their homelands when their services were no longer economically needed attempted to impose such transience on many European immigrant quarters, but largely unsuccessfully.

The second change is specific to South Africa, although it could conceivably (again, given a long-term recession) also characterize the United States. Traditionally, immigrant quarters were working-class quarters, often concentrations of laborers and low-paid wage earners involved in heavy and/or unskilled work, at least early after their arrival. In some cases they started small businesses, often retail (for instance, Koreans in the United States or Indians in South Africa), but rather than characterizing them as middle class, it would be fairer to say that, since their personal labor in fact generally resulted in low income rewards, they belonged to, and were part of, the tenement city. In South Africa today, however, we see a different phenomenon: immigrants from other African countries coming to Johannesburg without significant possibility of finding work, or starting a business, there, but escaping conditions of abject poverty or physical danger at home. They are thus, through no fault of their own, not working in or connected to the mainstream economy; they subsist on the type of informal activities characteristic of the abandoned city. The places to which they come are thus (or quickly become) abandoned, as the Nigerian sections of Yeoville[4] and the fringe informal settlements near some townships south of Johannesburg. 45% of those 15,000 or so making their living solely on the streets of Johannesburg are calculated to be foreigners.[5] Not all immigrant quarters, in a global age, are working class. (We come to upper-class clusters of immigrants below.)[6]

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[4] Lindsey Bremner, 2000, "Reinventing the Johannesburg inner city," Cities, vol 17, no. 3, p. 19, speaks also of Mozambiquen and Zimbabwean clusters.

[5] Fana Sihlongonyane, Making Johannesburg an African City: Problems and Prospects., manuscript, p. 8

[6] It is possible that a similar spatial pattern is experienced by illegal immigrants in the United States, but to my knowledge there is no evidence that that is in fact the case—that there are whole neighborhoods, or even significant spatial clusters, composed overwhelmingly of illegal immigrants. Possibly some bracero quarters in the southwest may come in this category, but the expectation is that they will be be employed in the mainstream agricultural economy, if informally.

The third aspect of the relation between immigration and spatial pattern has to do with the scale of the identity that leads to clustering in the immigrant quarter. The apartheid regime in South Africa attempted deliberately to separate the residents of townships by ethnicity, language, tribe, region of origin. Thus areas were set aside in many townships for the Sutu, the Xhosa, the Zulu. The evidence suggests that the motivation for such separation was almost entirely imposed, and that the spaces set aside for each group have merged. Similarly, limited evidence from Brazil suggests that, although rural to urban migration generally links immigrants to earlier settlers from the same village or region, those distinctions, within the general limitation of the immigrant quarter, tend to disappear. In northern United States cities, migrants from the southintially clustered with others from the same state, often the same county; those distinctions are now virtually gone. Thus local differentiation by area of origin seems in both countries to be on its way out for internal migrants.

How this plays out with external migration is not as clear. Intra-national, it seems to hold: while "lace-curtain Irish" and "shanty Irish" tended to cluster together within immigrant quarters on early arrival, those distinction rapidly gave way to simple market-based differences of residence. Rural-based Mexican immigrants to New York City tend initially to seek out others from the same areas; that clustering seems to abate with time. Nigerian immigrants to Johannesburg are often greeted at the airport by fellow villagers who arrived earlier, and are cared for by them for several months – but not long-term. As among national identities, the picture is less clear, in both countries. In Jackson Heights and Corona in New York City, for instance, while there is some clustering by country of origin, there are sharper and more durable lines of division by race, so that Dominicans, of darker complexion, are more separated from Colombians than are Colombians from (non-Indian) Ecuadoreans. Among Asians, also, there is clustering by country, but also some development of a pan-Asian community. In all cases, however, two characteristics appear: a smaller scale to the spatial clustering , and an attenuation, with dispersion, over time.[7]

[7] I am indebted to Arturo Sanchez, and in turn to the work of Alejandro Portes and colleagues, on these points, although they may well not draw the generalized conclusions from it that I do.

The evidence as to the role of class in this pattern is not yet extensive. A number of studies[8] suggest that the clustering of those with a common foreign origin in the United States endures over time, although at a scale much reduced from the time of first immigration (and much less than the lasting segregation of African-Americans). It is likely, however, that the class composition of these clusters varies significantly, and that many are in middle-class suburban-type areas, only a few in "permanent" working-class or tenement areas. If class becomes a more important determinant of location as class differences grow, the it may also be that similarity of class produces quarters that are essentially "immigrant" quarters, rather than the quarters of any particular immigrant group – leaving color aside. Jackson Heights in Queens seems to be, at least at the neighborhood if not at the building scale, a community where almost everyone is an immigrant and of largely the same class, but from widely different countries of origin.

External migration has also produced changes in the size, if not the location, of the gentrified city and the luxury city. Here movements in the United States and South Africa have gone in opposite directions. The evidence of a "brain drain" from South Africa is substantial, and immigration policy for those with high-level skills has been restrictive.[9] Thus there has been an out-migration of residents of the gentrified city, and no corresponding in-migration. The pattern in the United States seems to be largely the opposite: the recruiting of high-skilled, professional immigrants, with special provisions for their entry into the United States. There is thus an observable increase in migration to areas of the gentry, reflected in increasing residential development at the high end, including luxury, in and near the centers of global business and the citadels. Thus the areas of the gentry are growing, but for different reasons, in the two countries: in the United States both because the group itself is growing, with internal migration, and because of external migration undergirded by immigration policy. In South Africa, older areas of the gentry are shrinking because of out-migration, but newer areas, particular the walled and gated communities, are growing, both because there also the group is growing, but also because there is an in-migration from "racial" groups previously excluded from such residential areas.

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[8] See, for instance, the careful work of John Logan, in Logan, John. 2000. "Still a Global city: The Racial and Ethnic Segmentation of New York." In Marcuse and van Kempen, Globalizing Cities, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 158-185.

Whether migration has influenced the size of the citadels seems tome an open question. This is not only for lack of data, but also because of a theoretical issue: the residents and users of the citadels are among the most foot-loose of all members of modern societies. John Friedmann talks of their residences as places where they simply "touch down;"[10] they are mobile on a global basis. Thus, while citadels are of course fixed in location, their occupants may move frequently, and have many options, some being in single buildings in central cities specially secured for their use, others perhaps in exurbia reachable only by private transportation or helicopter. There is some evidence that future residents of citadel-style development in Vancouver and Toronto in fact come from places like Hong Kong, under threat of Chinese take-over, or Viet-Nam, under threat of loss of the war, or in New York City, as oil-rich citizens of Near Eastern countries extend their interests. The magnitude of such migration is, however, likely to be small.

So much as to the comparative impact of *external* migration on urban space in our age of globalization.

As to *internal* migration, the most striking single pattern in South Africa is the movement that has resulted with the ending of apartheid. This is not the place to give an extensive history of the structure of the Apartheid City; many excellent descriptions exist.[11] A generally accepted schematic presentation is in Map A. The pattern of movement, particularly since 1994, is not as well documented, but seems also quite clear; it is represented in Map B. Using my terminology above, the lines of movement go as follows:

From working class/tenement city townships to middle-class/suburban areas (all "non-white" categories), as middle-class households were able to obtain housing commensurate with their incomes and positions. A partial parallel is provided in the increased migration of middle-income African-American households from the inner cities to the suburbs in the United States, as the suburbs "opened up" under pressure of Fair Housing legislation and the civil rights movement.

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[9] See the studies of the southern African Migration Project and its Migration Policy Series, available on the web at www.queensu.ca/samp/publications/policyseries

[10] Originally in Friedmann, John, and Goetz Wolff. 1982. "World City Formation: An agenda for research and action." International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 6:309-44

[11] See the multiple works of David Smith, Alan Mabin, Llindsey Bremner, Vanessa Watson, Philip Harrison, and many others.

From informal settlements/abandoned cities to formal settlements/tenements cities, both those located on the edge of cities and those within cities, e.g. Hillbrow, from which they were previously barred. The parallel here is to the migration of Southern African-Americans to northern cities, largely to their working class and largely ghettoized quarters, during and after the Second World War.

From inner-city gentrified areas to the walled and gated exclusionary suburbs of the gentry (predominantly "white"), as others, previously barred, move into the areas of the gentry. The location of the growing areas of the gentry perhaps different in the United States than in South Africa, because the process of gentrification has been widespread and effective in the one case, but not in the other. Where inner city areas have been reclaimed from the working class to the gentry in the United States, such areas have largely moved in the opposite direction in South Africa, with working-class and the excluded (including often foreign migrants) moving in.

Suburban areas in South Africa, in ways largely similar to practices in the United States, have interfered with a “natural” pressure of migration from working-class and abandoned areas, and have used both pubic policy and social pressures to block change. The United States patterns of exclusionary zoning and racial discrimination in the real estate market are well known. In many communities in South Africa – Lindsey Bremner gives the example of the distortion of the Rapid Land Development Program in Johannesburg right after the establishment of the ANC government[12] – the NIMBY syndrome has effectively prevented a migration that both market pressures and good planning practice would have seen occur.

Among previously single-“race” settlements, thus a loosening of the single-“race” character of the Colored and Indian townships/tenement cities, with increasing in-migration of Africans, but not vice versa – African townships remaining African, with little in-migration of other groups. Again, the pattern begins to approximate that in the United States, where the process of assimilation largely explains (within limits) the movement of immigrants and ethnic

[12] Bremner

minorities, with the exception of African-Americans, who remain segregated in that Massey and Denton call "American Apartheid."[13]

From rural areas (and other countries – both internal and external migration) to the abandoned city/informal settlements, as urbanization (see below) proceeds and immigrants seek escape from intolerable conditions. Public policy is in some ways increasing the differentiation between such growing informal settlements and the more regularized and formal settlements that have been the homes of most of the non-white working class. The imposition of growth boundaries in the strategic spatial planning of Johannesburg, for instance, threatens to reduce the attention paid to settlements outside the growth boundary, denying them improvements in infrastructure, for instance, while focusing on the "better-located" settlements within the growth boundary. The net result is to increase the contrast between the working-class and the abandoned areas of the city.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the migratory pattern in South Africa thus moves towards the existing pattern in the United States, with income/class becoming the chief determinant of location, except for those at the bottom of the imposed "racial" hierarchy, who remain segregated, in the one case in the inner city ghettos of the United States, in the other in the one-race" townships and formal settlements of South Africa.

Looking at the larger patterns of migration, the same conclusion seems to hold. The three dominant large-scale patterns of movement in the United States in the twentieth century have been 1) increasing urbanization (a world-wide pattern, in the United States represented in significant part by a movement of blacks from the rural south to the urban north); 2) suburbanization, a migration from central cities to their suburbs, and 3) exurbanization, movement outward from inner to outer suburbs and to the edge cities – Mike Davis points out simple market pressures from rising prices in older suburbs is relentlessly driving Californians

[13] See Glazer, Nathan, and Daniel P. Moynihan. 1963 (2nd edition, 1970). Beyond the Melting Pot. Cambridge: MIT Press, and Massey, Douglas S., and Nancy A. Denton. 1993. American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

further and further into the "Inland Empire" of the deserts.[14] In South Africa under apartheid one spoke of displaced urbanization[15], desired migration to the cities blocked by the state's imposition of apartheid. With that block removed, the migration to the cities resumes in a pattern basically parallel to that previously found in the United States, with the resultant impact on the specific structures of cities, its quarters, outlined above. The urban population of South Africa is anticipated to grow from 50.4% in 2000 to 68.6% in 2025.[16] Thus the growth of all quarters is in part attributable to the simple process of urbanization, itself magnified in a period of globalization.[17] Suburbanization, and the expansion of the suburbs, in Johannesburg in a steady northern direction, also reflects the same trends as in the United States.

Thus the patterns of migration, internal and external, have sharp impacts on the urban spatial structures of both the United States and South Africa, both experiencing the effects of increased really existing globalization, perhaps even more dramatically[18] in South Africa than in the United States because of the blocks apartheid had created to such movements over the last almost century, now suddenly largely released.

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[14] "The Inland Empire," The Nation, April 7, 2003, p. 15-18. He argues that this movement is both of middle income folk and the gentry, but also of the "hardcore poor," the excluded, who are displaced from inner cities by gentrification. Evidence is still unsatisfactory on this score; where the poor go who are displaced by gentrification is still one of the larger mysteries of contemporary urban research. It might be argued that the similar pressures in South Africa result in a similar outward movement, but that for historical reasons having to do both with extreme poverty and the racial divide, the movement of the wealthier is northward, of the excluded soutward, in the Johannesburg region.

[15] The phrase was used in the South African context by C. Murray, 1987, "Displaced urbanization: South Africa's rural slums," African Affairs 86, (344) pp. 311-329, cited by Mabin, 1989, Pstruggle for the City: Urbanisation and Political Strategies of the the South African state," Social Dynamics 15(4), 1-28, at 1.

[16] According to calculation of the United Nations, quoted in Marie Huchzermeyer, Informal Settlements.

[17] See the data assembled in Cities in a Globalizing World, Global Report on Human Settlement, 2001, United Nations Center for Human Settlements, 2001, London: Earthscan Publications.

[18] It would be interesting to compare the gross figures for frequency of residential movement in the two countries. It is usually taken that a household in the United States moves on average once every 5-8 years; comparable figures for South Africa are not, to my knowledge, available.

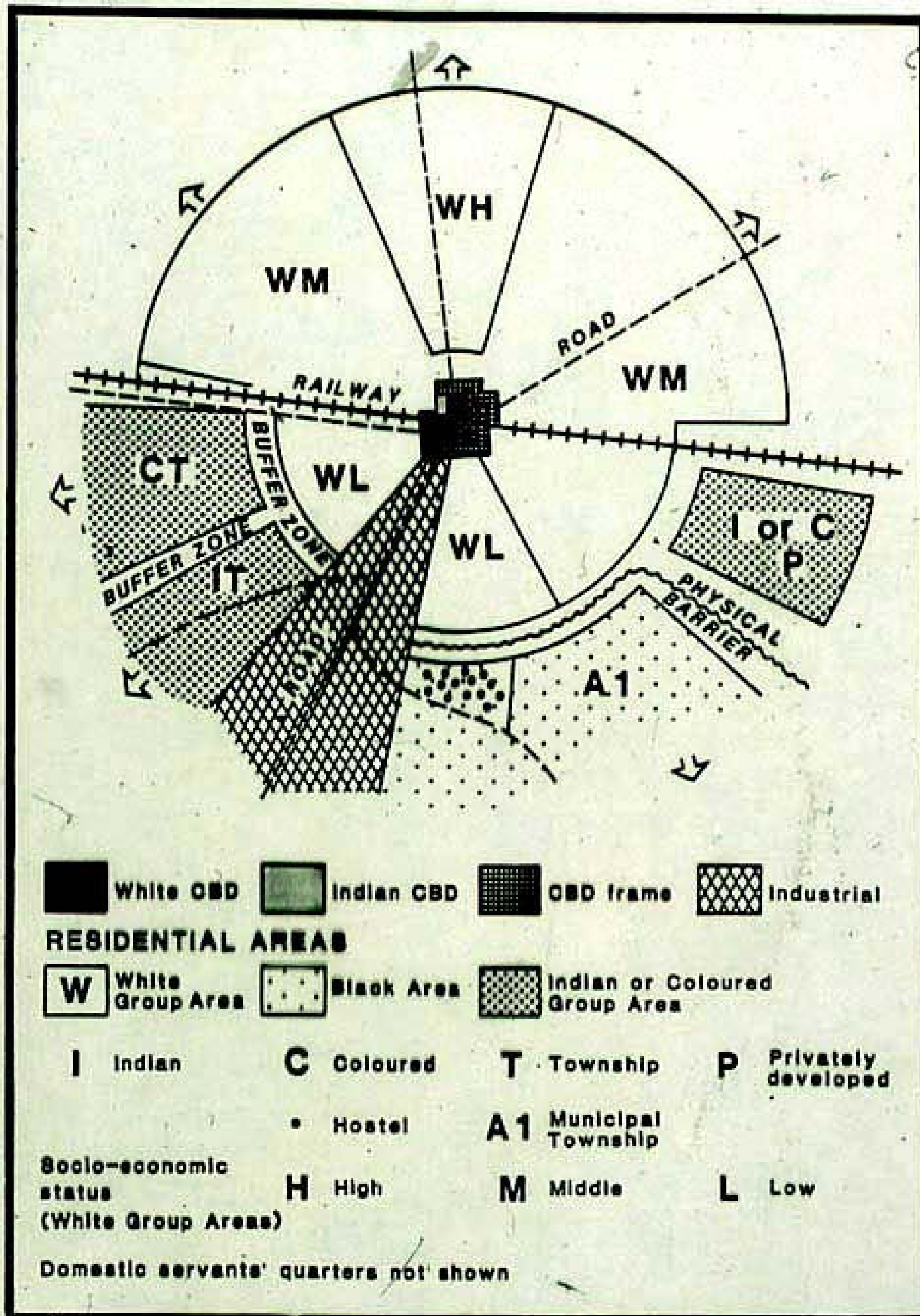

Figure 4.2 The model apartheid city

Source After R.J. Davies (1981) 'The spatial formation of the South African city', *GeoJournal*

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