A HISTORY OF AFRICANS IN PRETORIA
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MARABASTAD
1902-1923

By

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JANUARY 1994
DECLARATION

"I declare that A History of Africans in Pretoria with special reference to Marabastad, 1902-1923 is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references."

Michelle Friedman

January 1994
ABSTRACT

A History of Africans in Pretoria with special reference to Marabastad, 1902-1923
By M. Friedman

Degree: Master of Arts
Subject: History
Supervisor: Professor A.M. Grundlingh
Joint Supervisor: Dr F.J. Nöthling

This dissertation examines the growth and development of an urban African population in Pretoria from 1902 to 1923. African urbanisation in Pretoria took place within the context of limited industrial development and gave rise to a distinctive population, with an important permanently settled component. This study charts the struggles that ensued between the Town Council and the African population. The responses of the urban African population took on two forms: informal, defensive strategies and formal political organisation. In the early twentieth century Pretoria formed the locus of regional African political activity. However, the attempts of formal organisations to challenge the state were essentially conservative. It was rather in the realm of working class culture that real challenges were made to the municipal authorities' vision of an ordered urban environment and a controlled African proletariat.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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<td>African National Political Union</td>
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<td>African Political Organisation</td>
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<td>BMB</td>
<td>Berliner Missionsberichte</td>
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INTRODUCTION

"Happy the country or town that has no history!"¹

With these words, Joy Collier, in her comparative history of Pretoria and Johannesburg, eradicates the Africans of Pretoria from the history books and condemns them to an existence in which they have no past and in which they have made no contribution towards history. The above statement is contextualised in a comparison with Johannesburg which was unfortunate enough to have suffered from 'labour problems' in the early 1900s.² While her history of Johannesburg merits a brief discussion of Soweto, Collier's analysis of the history of Pretoria contains no references to Marabastad or other African locations in Pretoria and there is no mention of Africans. In Collier's view, the absence of major labour disputes has rendered the Africans of Pretoria invisible. Collier, like most historians of Pretoria's past, sees Africans as merely tangential to the growth and development of the town. Historians have focused more on the political history of the town, Kruger's government, Pretoria's role in the Anglo-Boer War; and its contribution to the administrative development of the Transvaal.

It is the purpose of this study to try to restore the past to some of the ordinary African people of Pretoria - to give them a voice and to give their past a content which situates them as active participants in the complex development of Pretoria as a town. It therefore seeks to rescue, as E.P. Thompson put it, the working class "from the enormous condescension of posterity."³ This study will show that the emerging African working class in Pretoria played a crucial role in shaping their world and in so doing, forced the urban planners continually to adapt their vision of an ordered urban environment over which they sought complete control. The role of ordinary people in shaping their society is thus highlighted, in an attempt to demonstrate that

² Ibid.
"urban dwellers, as well as industrialists and planners, gave shape to the configurations of family and community which emerged in the cities."  

In this regard, this study locates itself within two important paradigms in history - social history and studies in African urbanisation. The discourse of social history operates within the framework of historical materialism but explores the uses of experiential and oral history and popular culture, in an attempt to recover a history from below. The role of human agency is central to this approach. Africans are regarded as actors and participants whose culture and consciousness was shaped through the complex interplay of their own actions and those of the ruling classes who sought to dominate them.

Consequently the major focus of the dissertation is not Pretoria itself, but Marabastad, a collective term used to describe the African locations of Old and New Marabastad, and to a lesser extent, the adjacent Schoolplaats - the central locus of African settlement. It explores the history of the African community in Pretoria from the years 1902 when there was a fairly well-established African presence in Pretoria until 1923 when the Natives (Urban Areas) Act was promulgated. In 1902 Pretoria gained municipal status and from this point local government in Pretoria was locked in a struggle to control all aspects of the lives of Africans living in Pretoria. This engaged the Town Council in a struggle on two levels: one with the African population itself, whose attempts to evade this control form a central part of this thesis; the other with central government over the question of responsibility for the African working class. Clear areas of jurisdiction were established with the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 which placed the control and administration of urban Africans firmly in the hands of local government. This study is therefore concerned with African urbanisation in the early twentieth century and the evolution of urban African policy prior to the formal proclamation of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act.

Although historical research on Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand has increasingly fallen into the realm of social history, most historians of Pretoria's past have not identified themselves with these developments. To a large extent this is due to the fact that much of the

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4 B.Bozzoli and P.Delius, "Radical History and South African Society", *Radical History Review*, 46/7, 1990, p.31

research on early Pretoria and its black inhabitants has been conducted by historians whose guiding light was Afrikaner Nationalism. This has resulted in a particular rendering of the past which has failed to place the lives of the working classes at the centre of its discourse. Afrikaner nationalist historiography itself can be periodised into two distinct eras, the studies on Pretoria reflecting this trend. Prior to the 1970s, the dual principles of "volksgeskiedenis" and "objective-scientific" history dominated Afrikaans historiography. Albert Grundlingh has shown how this approach to history promoted a past that was infused with a specific Afrikaner national identity and culture, and legitimated Afrikaner nationalism. Its tools were a densely-laden factual text, with an absence of authorial voice (although this approach to history articulated clearly the historian's worldview). There was no attempt at analysis or interpretation of the facts, and if blacks were mentioned at all, it was within a one-dimensional, peripheral framework. There are a number of works on Pretoria during the Republican era which fall into this category. The struggle to establish Pretoria is presented within the context of the survival of the Boer Republics from British threat; the role of Kruger dominates, and Afrikaner heritage is stressed.

Studies in this mould dealing directly with the period of this dissertation are presented by E.F.W.Gey van Pittius and J.J.N.Cloete. Gey van Pittius' brief account and Cloete's more detailed thesis on the development of municipal government in Pretoria provide descriptions of the building of local government, but with no apparent analysis. The concept of the state is accepted uncritically, and no evidence is presented of the struggles between central and local government that fashioned the creation of municipal government in Pretoria.

The official history of Pretoria published by the Municipality to celebrate Pretoria's centenary in 1955 is offered as a showpiece of Pretorian history and achievement. It is often anecdotal, and promotes the accomplishments of the Pretoria administration. H.P.Junod's chapter on Pretoria's African population reflects this bias, where, following a brief anthropological overview of the tribes found in Pretoria, he lauds the Pretoria City Council for their achievements in the provision of housing and amenities in the various African locations. As this study will demonstrate, the Pretoria Town Council was particularly lax in the provision of fundamental urban resources for the African population. Furthermore, their housing policy was characterised by neglect, and slum conditions rapidly developed in the Pretoria locations.

In the wake of the revisionist historiography that emerged in the 1970s, it appears that Afrikaner historians faced a crisis of legitimacy. Their work was increasingly marginalised and seen to be irrelevant, and the threat of English-speaking historians encroaching on what they perceived as their terrain, forced a change in direction. Afrikaner historians attempted to move into the mainstream of South African historiography and studies in which black issues were the main focus began to appear.

Yet despite this change in terms of subject matter, the approach to history has remained within the 'scientific-objective' mould. Furthermore, although the history of blacks form the basis of the discourse, blacks are not portrayed as active agents of their own history and experience. Class formation, class struggles and cultural nuances form little part of their analysis.

The most significant study in terms of Pretoria was F.J.Nöthling's doctoral thesis which provides an extensively detailed study of the settlement of blacks in and around Pretoria.

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between 1900 and 1914. It is a pioneering account of the Pretoria Town Council’s administration of blacks in Pretoria, but its main focus is not the internal history and historical experience per se of the black communities. Nevertheless, bearing in mind that it was written before the boom in social history and had different aims in its conception, it made a valuable contribution to a generally under-researched area.

J.S.Bergh too, has written about the early establishment of Schoolplaats, and in particular, focuses on the role of the Berlin Missionaries and their work in Pretoria. He has documented many of the reports of the Berlin Mission journals which provide a useful background to the early development of an African community in Pretoria. Yet the work remains a detailed descriptive and largely uncritical account of early African urbanisation.

In the mid-1980s, the University of Pretoria launched a history project, the intention of which was to provide a detailed history of Pretoria and its African population. Honours and Masters students are currently documenting such histories as "A Biography of S.M.Makgatho, a history of Lady Selborne, and black urbanisation in Pretoria. The completed "History of Schoolplaats" by K.Vickers is a factual recording of Schoolplaats and suggests that the agenda for these other histories will not differ substantially from the 'scientific-objective' histories that preceded them.

Tom Lodge has provided some measure of research on the Pretoria townships. However,

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his major focus is an analysis of political organisation in Pretoria’s locations and townships in a much later period, 1940 to 1963, and the urbanisation of the African population is taken as given.

This dissertation seeks to fill in some of the gaps left by these historians of Pretoria’s past. It examines the urbanisation and creation of an African working class in Pretoria in the years 1902 to 1923 through an analysis of three important themes. The first deals with the patterns of urbanisation of the African population in Pretoria, delineating its growth and development. The second theme highlights the attempts by the Pretoria Town Council to establish control over the African population, while the third analyses African responses to this imposed control.

Studies of African urbanisation form the second major paradigm within which this dissertation seeks to locate itself. Patterns of urbanisation reflect and shed light on class formation, industrialisation and the development of capitalism. The proximity of Pretoria to Johannesburg, and yet, its different patterns of settlement and class formation provide a useful context for comparison, and highlight the importance of local conditions in determining patterns and processes of urbanisation.

The most concentrated area of industrial expansion and capital advancement in the Transvaal following the discovery of mineral wealth was undoubtedly the Rand. The social and economic upheavals caused by the discovery of gold and the intrusion of mining capitalism have made the Rand the natural focus of studies on African urbanisation. The characteristic features that emerged were the presence of a large male migrant population, housed in single-sex compounds, and in the early years, the relative absence of women. African urbanisation was clearly linked to industrialisation, and it was only with the growth of the mining industry that the presence of blacks on the Rand took on significant proportions.

Yet the uniqueness of the Johannesburg experience makes it impossible to generalise about African urbanisation or about the intrusion of capital into urban areas. The path to capitalism in the Transvaal was neither uniform nor even. The specificity of local conditions in local areas determined the nature of economic development and concomitantly, the settlement of
Africans in urban areas.

Charles Van Onselen has demonstrated that the

"South African transition to capitalism...was fraught with contradictions and conflicts and...there certainly was always more than one route into or out of the working class."\(^{16}\)

A study of early African urbanisation in Pretoria suggests a range of different patterns of accommodation and settlement. Importantly, the economic base of Pretoria differed substantially from the Rand, yet its close proximity to Johannesburg had important consequences for its development. Pretoria began as a relatively small market town, and the absence of a large-scale industrial base until the establishment of ISCOR in the 1930s highlights the uneven development of capitalism in the Transvaal and its impact on the processes of urbanisation and proletarianisation. Notably the size and scale of African urbanisation in Pretoria was far smaller than in Johannesburg. Missionaries played an important role in shaping the early experience of urban Africans, providing them with both accommodation and education, and a mission-context to the urban environment. Furthermore African urbanisation began far earlier in Pretoria, and the creation of a permanently settled urban African community with its own particular identity can be traced to 1867 with the establishment of the mission station, Schoolplaats.

The proliferation of urban studies on Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand has suggested a range of potential questions and issues which are pertinent to this study. In his work on Benoni, Philip Bonner has pointed to the fluidity of the urban African population and has demonstrated the need to disaggregate it.\(^{17}\) The nature and social differentiation of the African population in Pretoria is a key concern of this dissertation. The urban African population comprised a permanently settled community which had few ties to a rural past;


a floating population which used Pretoria as a key entry point into the labour market before moving on to the larger and possibly harsher industrial environment of the Reef; and a regular workforce who were often migrants contracted to work in Pretoria for a period of time.

The early urban dwellers in Pretoria were largely oorlams, Africans who had usually grown up on Boer farms and identified with both an urban and Boer culture. They were usually skilled in a trade and spoke Afrikaans. As a consequence they were largely indistinguishable from Coloureds. This dissertation argues that the development of a permanent population who were skilled in trades and who often were indistinguishable from the Coloureds played an important role in the evolution of an urban policy. Firstly, the presence of an urban settled African population made it crucial that urban policy be created as quickly as possible. Secondly, because the oorlams were largely indistinguishable from Coloureds, the Town Council sought to bring Coloureds within their ambit of control.

African women were also an important facet of the urban milieu. Women have played a key role in the urbanisation process and recently, a number of urban studies have focused on the particular role of African women in towns. These studies have highlighted the active role that women played, both in terms of challenging the local state and in terms of the contribution they made to working class culture. Hilary Sapire’s analysis of the conditions and community of the Brakpan Location has highlighted the significant role of women in the economic life of the community and in the Brakpan stay-away of 1944. Julia Wells has

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portrayed women as determined and active resisters to attempts by the state to impose pass laws on women and suggests that it was as a result of their actions that such legislation was not implemented until the 1950s. Kathy Eales insists that economistic explanations of urban African policy are inadequate and a sensitivity to the politics of gender is required in order to understand the formulation of policy and in particular, as an explanation for women’s exemption from the pass laws.

This study intends to add to this growing body of knowledge on the role of African women in towns. Women formed a crucial component of the urban African population in Pretoria and from the earliest beginnings of African settlement, there was almost an equal number of men and women living in Schoolplaats and Marabastad. An important focus of this dissertation will be the crucial role that women played in shaping the particular character of the urban environment and in the dominant role they played in the creation of a working class culture. It will also examine the local state’s attempts to impose controls on African women through the imposition of medical examinations.

The struggles between the Pretoria Town Council, central government and the local African population were pivotal to the creation of an urban African policy. The African community in Pretoria was never allowed to develop freely. From the time of its creation, the African population was subject to successive bids by various authorities to establish control over it and it is these attempts which form the second central concern of this study. This is a familiar theme in recent studies of African urbanisation on the Rand. Noreen Kagan’s study of early African settlement in Johannesburg has focused on the development of policy in relation to the growing African population, the areas of settlement that resulted, and African responses to their situation. Kagan has highlighted the conflict between central and local government in their attempts to control the lives of the growing urban African population in Johannesburg. Andre Proctor too has indicated the conflicts between central and local

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interests in the formulation of segregationist policies. Studies of later black urbanisation have emphasised the development of secondary industry along the Reef and the struggles that emerged as a result. Although they largely fall outside of the period of this research, they too highlight the need to focus on the struggle between the Town Councils and the urban African population. These studies provide a key perspective for the history of Marabastad, and highlight its distinctiveness.

In the Republican era, the missionaries operating in Pretoria attempted to establish hegemony over the African community, seeking to impose a particular ideology and work ethic on the community. Education was an important avenue through which this was to be achieved. As a result a particular section of the African community were educated and were to form the basis of the emergent petty bourgeoisie in Pretoria who in the early twentieth century, were active politically.

In the early twentieth century, local government authorities sought to impose their mark of control over the urban African proletariat. With the establishment of local government in Pretoria, the evolution of an urban African policy became a priority. The Pretoria Town Council was concerned to create an ordered urban environment which hinged, to a large extent, on a compliant and orderly work-force. The implementation of effective influx controls, the comprehensive regulation of both the economic and social lives of the African population, and ultimately, the removal of Marabastad, were central to their image of the city. Urban policy often proved to be inconclusive and erratic as the Council’s vision was continually thwarted by struggles with both the central government and the local African population.


From the outset, the control of the African population was a contested terrain between central and local government. Central government was determined to establish uniform policy throughout the country, whereas the Pretoria Town Council was concerned to create policy specific to the needs of Pretoria. In particular, the difficulties of determining Coloured identity posed by the strong oorlams influence in Pretoria impacted on the Council’s desire to include Coloureds within the sphere of 'native' policy.

The relative openness of Marabastad, its haphazard housing, its existing cultural forms were antithetical to the Council’s vision of a planned urban environment. The Council sought the solution to this perceived blight on the urban landscape in complete removal. The intended removal of Marabastad from as early as 1903 shaped the nature of urban policy in Pretoria as urban planners refused to waste expenditure on adequate amenities or improving conditions on a location that was to be removed.

Thirdly, this study explores African responses to urbanisation and proletarianisation. These took on two forms, both of which threatened the authorities’ urban vision: the informal cultural responses and defensive strategies for survival created by the urban African community; and formal political organisation. The independent shebeen brewer undermined the principle of a stable work-force; the prostitute and gambler underscored the state’s perceptions of the criminality and illegality of the underclasses; the squatter, landlord and sub-tenant all thwarted rigid influx control measures and the authorities’ vision of regulated housing. The proliferation of political organisations in Pretoria in the first decade of the century was viewed as a threat to the tractability of the working class.

In this way, the urban environment was forged as much by the underclasses as by the urban authorities, as they carved a life for themselves amidst harsh and alienating circumstances. These responses shaped the identity of the emergent African working classes and continually forced the urban planners to adapt their own concept of urban policy.

Charles van Onselen’s studies of the Amawasha, the Ninevites, prostitution and the resistance displayed by Amalaita gangs provide valuable accounts of different forms of resistance to proletarianisation and of the cultural and criminal responses of the black working classes on
the Witwatersrand to the attempts by the state and capital to control their lives. Marabastad’s history should highlight the cultural forms that developed in Pretoria. Many of these features were similar in origin and composition to the Rand. The cultural milieu was based largely on illegal beer brewing by a predominantly female population, prostitution was rife and gangs of Amalaita marched through Pretoria’s streets on Sundays. The dominant role of women in the informal sector and in illegal enterprises of the locations suggest however that these were not so much an attempt by women to resist proletarianisation, but that women were denied access to wage labour, and thus sought to survive through activities in the informal sector.

Eddie Koch emphasised an important dimension to early black urbanisation in Johannesburg by situating resistance to social control in a cultural framework, focusing specifically on the development of the ‘marabi’ culture in the slumyards of Johannesburg. Koch’s work provides important comparative insights for a study of the development of popular culture in Marabastad. The existence of an earlier established, permanent African population in Pretoria however suggests the development of earlier cultural forms than were present on the Rand.

Coplan likewise has focused on the development of popular music, dance and theatre as an assertion of cultural identity. Of particular use to this study is Coplan’s analysis of the origins and development of earlier popular urban music and cultural forms. He has examined the role of the oorlams in Kimberley, whose musical forms and culture were diffused through a Cape Coloured tradition, and has indicated how a syncretic African choral music developed from mission school blacks who were confronted with Christian choral music and brass bands, yet were determined to retain a degree of cultural autonomy.


These studies have highlighted the organisational forms that the African working class developed as it became entrenched in towns. They have however stressed the discovery of mineral wealth and industrialisation as the major factors in the creation of a permanent African working class on the Rand. However, the initial development of an urban African population in Pretoria took place within the context of limited local industry, and this provides a key contrast with most locations and townships that developed on the Witwatersrand.

Chapter One provides an overview of the period 1855, when Pretoria was first established, to 1902. It focuses on the role played by various missionary societies in shaping the identity an urban African community. It also traces the growth and development of the African working class in Pretoria.

Chapter Two focuses on the establishment of municipal government in Pretoria from 1902 to 1912 and examines the transition from a state controlled administration to a system of local government. This chapter indicates that one of the most contested areas proved to be the control of the black population of Pretoria. The Town Council was also concerned to bring Coloureds under their control and this too led them to a protracted struggle with central government over the right of Coloureds to walk on Pretoria's sidewalks.

Chapter Three focuses on the political economy of Pretoria and an attempt is made to situate the urban African population within the context of the economic character of Pretoria, which lacked a strong industrial base. The nature of the African population, and where they lived and worked, is analysed.

Chapter Four focuses on the attempts of the Pretoria Town Council to achieve control over the urban African population. It explores the administration of Marabastad which was characterised by neglect, and the Town Council's rigorous policy of social control. The housing policy of the Pretoria Town Council which centred on the removal of its inner-city locations is also considered.

In Chapter Five the responses of the African community, both informal and formal, are
examined. The defensive strategies that the emerging working class in Marabastad engaged in in order to survive the harsh urban environment are explored. The impetus towards formal organisational responses in Marabastad came largely from prominent church leaders, usually from the independent church movements that were prolific in Marabastad, and from the educated elite whose schooling had been centred around Kilnerton. In the first decade of the century, Marabastad was a hive of political activity, and many of the dominant political figures, such as S.M. Makgatho, came to play a central role in emerging national politics.

The availability of sources has shaped to some extent the nature of this dissertation. By far the richest source on the black population of Pretoria is the archives of the Municipality of Pretoria. These records are readily available from the turn of the century, and this history of Marabastad begins therefore in 1902 with the establishment of municipal government in Pretoria. Information prior to 1902 is relatively scant, the documents on Marabastad having been apparently lost during the Anglo-Boer War.

The reliance on municipal records has placed several constraints on the direction and scope of this study. It has, of necessity, focused on the role of local government and its attempts to establish control over the black population of Pretoria. As a result, the history of Marabastad emerges through the documentation generated by the dominant classes. Where the voices of the African people are heard, through Commissions of Enquiries, newspapers, petitions and grievances, they are usually articulated by an educated, petty bourgeoisie class whose interests often were not the same as workers.
CHAPTER ONE: AFRICAN URBANISATION IN PRETORIA PRIOR TO 1902

In 1853 M.W. Pretorius bought two farms on the banks of the Apies river, Elandspoort and Daspoort, from settlers J.J.P. Prinsloo and A. van der Walt for £600. A number of Boer trekkers had settled in the area, and it began to attract traders, prospectors and professional hunters.\(^1\) Pretorius' intention was to create a permanent seat for the nomadic parliament of the Transvaal Republic and to provide for a central gathering place for worship.\(^2\) In November 1855 the Volksraad agreed to the establishment of a town on these farms, to be called Pretoria.\(^3\) The town was situated in a valley formed by the range of hills running parallel with the Magaliesberg. It was well laid out, with an abundant water supply. Church Square was the centre of the town, and was in essence, the market square and hub of economic activity of Pretoria.\(^4\)

This dissertation will focus on African urbanisation in Pretoria in the early twentieth century, with Marabastad forming the central locus for discussion. Although the study is situated in the early twentieth century, it would be misleading to begin a discussion of urbanisation and settlement patterns in 1902. At the turn of the century Pretoria was not a new town such as those springing up on the Rand but had almost half a century of history which shaped the development of the town and its inhabitants in the twentieth century. As a result, this

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\(^4\) Archives of the Municipality of Pretoria (MPA) 3/600: Pretoria: General features and history, 1855-1911. During the course of this research, the Archives of the Municipality of Pretoria (MPA) were resorted and refiled. As a result, some of the numbers for the MPA files reflect the old file numbers, and some reflect the new. The index to the Archives of the Municipality of Pretoria does however give both numbers and therefore, it is possible to identify the correct file.
background chapter provides the framework crucial to an understanding of the history of Marabastad in the twentieth century.

The early years witnessed the establishment of patterns of accommodation and resistance that influenced the path of later social developments and conflict between the urban African population, the town council and central government. The specific identity of the urban African community, its strong church influence, and the existing controls imposed by the state were inherited by a municipality concerned to determine its own strategy of control. The nature of urban policy that emerged in the first decades of the twentieth century was dictated to a large extent by the patterns and circumstances established in the Republican era.

This chapter falls into two parts. The first will demonstrate that the African population was not allowed to develop without being subjected to complex interference and attempts at control on the part of local missionaries and the state. Although by the end of the century the influence of the church had diminished considerably, the various missionary societies operating in the Pretoria area played an extremely important role in shaping the identity of the permanent African community in Pretoria. Thus the role of the church will be examined in some detail. Secondly, it will examine the emergence and growth of an African working class in Pretoria in the nineteenth century. It will illustrate the distinctive aspects of this population, in particular its permanence and the important component of oorlams in its composition.

MISSIONARIES AND MARABASTAD: EARLY CONTROL OF THE AFRICAN COMMUNITY IN PRETORIA

In the nineteenth century the missionary movement played an important role in shaping the urban experience and identity of African newcomers to Pretoria. Pretoria was perceived as fertile ground for mission work; the existence of a fairly stable urban African population, and the centrality of Pretoria within the Transvaal meant that a mission would be an important centre for new converts in the area. Pretoria thus became the site of important struggles between different mission societies to gain control over this newly urbanising population. These attempts to control their religious, educational and general urban experience were not always met passively. In Pretoria, the earliest origins of an Ethiopian movement can be
traced back to struggles between the missions and their Christian converts.

Two distinct periods of missionary activity emerged, the first centred on the role of the Berlin Mission Society, and the second on the work of other missionary societies, culminating in the growth of independent African church movements. In the years 1867 to 1888, the locus of African settlement was centred in Schoolplaats under the auspices of the Berlin Mission Society (BMS). The existence of the mission provided the Berlin missionaries with a firm foothold among the African population and their stern, paternalistic form of discipline and authority predominated. From 1888 the state assumed control of the urban African population with the establishment of the government-controlled location, Marabastad. This shift in control made it possible for other missionaries to operate in Pretoria, and seek to gain influence over the African population. In particular, the Church of England and the Wesleyan missionaries were active in this area, and their particular style of missionary practice both spawned independent African church movements. These independent church movements represented a strong force of African resistance to church control.

The Berlin Missionaries, Paternalism and Control

In 1866 the Berlin Mission Society began making moves to establish a mission station in Pretoria. The establishment of an urban mission represented a change of direction for the Berlin missionaries, whose previous work had been purely rural-based. The established missionary ethos had been to establish a station in outlying rural districts in order "to give converts an opportunity to assimilate civilization's 'virtues' before encountering its more seductive 'vices'." In early 1866 however, the three Berlin Mission stations based within the Pedi polity had been abandoned due to the hostility of the population towards the missionaries and their new converts. The missionaries believed that the establishment of an urban mission would allow them to continue their work, without being hampered by chiefly

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5 See P.Delius, *The Land Belongs To Us: The Pedi Polity, the Boers and the British in the Nineteenth Century Transvaal*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983, Chapter Five


7 P.Delius, *The Land Belongs To Us*, p. 108

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authority. Furthermore, it is not inconceivable that missionaries perceived the number of migrants passing through Pretoria on their way to the diamond fields as a means of spreading Christianity to the rural areas through migrancy.

The South African Republic (ZAR) government was seen as the conduit through which the Berlin missionaries could gain access to the growing African population in the towns. Historically, the Berlin missionaries enjoyed a sound relationship with the South African Republic government, having pledged their support and willingness to recognise the authority of the Boer state. This contrasted sharply with the relationship between the South African Republic and the English missionaries which was characterised by government hostility and suspicion towards their missionary endeavours.

The first application, made by the Superintendent of the Berlin Mission Society, Alexander Merensky, for permission to establish a mission station was rejected by President M.W. Pretorius on the grounds that it was the responsibility of a chief to request missionary work for his people. The Berlin missionaries argued that there was no chiefly authority within the urban areas. Permission was subsequently granted on 22 August 1866 on condition that Africans seeking religious instruction gained written consent from their employers. It appears that "the Boers generally were sullenly opposed to the Christianisation of the natives". The government believed that employers would be opposed to their employees receiving religious and educational instruction and in this way would prevent the spread of missionary influence.

The missionary, Carl Knothe was stationed in Pretoria and he purchased four connected plots in Visagie and Andries streets, on which he built a small house for his mission. Night classes were held at this venue but there was no provision for permanent accommodation. The Berlin mission

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8 P. Delius, *The Land Belongs to Us*, pp. 118-119; Historical Papers Library, University of the Witwatersrand (UWL), AB 1449: Roberts Papers, The Foundation of the Native Mission in Pretoria

9 J.S. Bergh, "Die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap in Pretoria en omgewing, 1866-1881", pp. 15-17

10 UWL, AB 1449: Roberts Papers, The Foundation of the Native Mission in Pretoria
Mission Society wished to establish a firmer hold amongst the African population and consequently in 1867, they applied to the government for additional ground. On 5 June 1867, the government granted the Berlin Mission twelve erfs situated just outside the town. This land, called 'Frischgewaagd', was subsequently transferred to the mission in 1870 for the sum of £300. The property was registered in the name of A. Merensky in trust for the Berlin Mission Society. This area of land, which came to be called Schoolplaats by the mission, was bordered by the Apies River in the north, Boom street in the south, Steenovenspruit in the west and farm land in the east. Schoolplaats comprised 23 morgen 25 sq. roods of land, which was divided into ninety eight stands varying from 100 square feet to 50 square feet.

Schoolplaats was divided into two sections. In the first, the land was divided into plots on which Africans could live. Provision was made for 100 families, each with their own house and garden, at an annual rent of £1 payable to the mission. The second portion was set aside as agricultural land on which the residents could farm, provided they gave a portion of their returns to the mission. In this way, the Berlin Mission would derive some form of revenue from their converts. The congregation was also required to pay school fees, and contribute towards collections for the maintenance of the mission. By 1884 a mission church, a school and a parsonage had been established on the site.

The establishment of Schoolplaats clearly had important implications for newcomers to town. It offered them access to both land and education. The mission provided newcomers with a place to stay. Thus the problem of accommodation which was always a central concern for those moving to urban areas, was solved for them. School attendance at the mission was compulsory in order to facilitate effective religious instruction and conversion. The milieu of the mission provided newly urbanised Africans with a context and explanation of their new

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11 J.S. Bergh, "Die Onstaan van Pretoria se eerste Bantoewoonbuurt", p. 42
12 MPA 3/157: Secretary of Native Affairs to the Town Clerk, Pretoria, 6 August, 1909
13 MPA 3/157: Schoolplaats Location - References from Public Health Committee, 1906
14 J.S. Bergh, "Die Ontstaan van Pretoria se eerste Bantoewoonbuurt", p. 43
situation while schooling probably promoted the idea of personal mobility and progress, and encouraged the growth of a small African elite in Pretoria.

In 1870 Friedrich Grünberger took over control of missionary activity in Pretoria and in 1871 he drew up regulations aimed at the maintenance of discipline and the promotion of orderly conduct.\textsuperscript{15} As in Botshabelo where the Berlin missionaries had also established a mission station, church discipline was used to enforce adherence to the Protestant work ethic, and Grünberger fulfilled his role as a 'formidable missionary landlord'.\textsuperscript{16} Every African male living at Schoolplaats had to be in the employ of a white employer in the town. And should he leave that job he had eight days to find alternative employment or he would be forced to leave the mission. Furthermore, residents of Schoolplaats were required to give four days free labour to the community determined by the missionary.\textsuperscript{17} The Berlin missionaries were intent on establishing an orderly community over which they exercised complete control. A general trend among missionaries and one that was echoed at Schoolplaats, was the attempt by missionaries to emulate chiefly authority, dispensing justice and punishment as was the role of the chief.\textsuperscript{18} They believed that Africans needed the authority and compulsion of the missionaries in order to function, virtually as a replacement of the chiefly authority they had abandoned in the rural areas.

This attitude of paternalism characterised the missionary-convert relationship. Missionaries perceived Africans as children in need of the control of the missionary father-figure. The Berlin missionaries were adept at dispensing this type of discipline. The residents of Schoolplaats were subjected to a range of fines and punishments in the case of transgressions.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{17} J.S.Bergh, "Die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap in Pretoria", p.57-58

\textsuperscript{18} J.Campbell, "Our Fathers, Our Children: the AME Church in the USA and SA", p.84
For example, for the first two counts of drunkenness, perpetrators were subject to a fine ranging from £1 to £2.10.0, but were dismissed from the mission in the third instance. Grünberger often personally intervened in disciplining his congregation.

"Four young people were particularly problematic because of their frivolous way of life until I finally placed them under my personal observation and discipline. Since then, for the following six months, they have been quiet and hardworking, and the one who suffered most told me that he now loves me as if I were his father. (Translated from the German)"  

Attendance at school was a prerequisite for living at the mission. The Berlin missionaries taught basic skills of literacy and numeracy, alongside Christian doctrine. In providing the urbanised African with a degree of schooling, the missionaries were able to control the direction and extent of their urban experience. The Berlin missionaries did not favour excessive schooling, providing sufficient to render their converts useful, but not enough to encourage independence. It was possibly this attitude to education where Africans were not being educated 'above their station in life' which provided the context of the favourable relationship between the South African Republic and the Berlin missionaries.

The provision of education may have also been to encourage the growth of African helpers who would assist the missionary and carry out many of the missionary duties such as teaching, preaching and disciplining the congregation. Notable among these were Franz Mogobokoane and Franz Motau who both trained at Botshabelo, and Willem Sechele, known as Willem Geel because of the unusual yellow hue of his skin. William Sechele, who had "a special talent for preaching" was often sent to the kraals in the outlying districts, as well as to preach in the local prisons. As other missions moved into the area and Schoolplaats

19 J.S.Bergh, "Die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap in Pretoria", p.57
20 Berliner Missionsberichte (B.M.B.): Annual report of the Pretoria Station, 1886
21 B.Bozzoli, Women of Phokeng, p.61
22 B.M.B: Annual Report of the Pretoria Station, 1887.
24 B.M.B: Annual report of the Pretoria Station, 1887

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no longer was the sole source of accommodation, the nature of proselytising by the Berlin missionaries changed. The Berlin Mission had to actively seek out its converts. In 1888, the Berlin Mission Society listed only half the number of catechists, which usually ranged between fifty and sixty.25

The use of African converts in evangelising was consistent with missionary ideology of the time, whereby African converts were widely used as mediators between the African and European worlds. Much of the practical responsibility of mission work was placed in the hands of these African converts, thus relieving the missionaries of many onerous tasks. It also created in the African helpers higher social aspirations from which they were increasingly cut off from the 1890s as African ordinations in all major denominations decreased and African ministers were marginalised.26

Why did the Berlin missionaries establish a following among the urban African population in Pretoria? Were the newcomers to town attracted to Lutheran ideology? While it is difficult to establish the motives of the residents, a few general points do emerge. Schoolplaats provided a vital place of accommodation for Africans wishing to live in town. For newly urbanised Africans accommodation equalled security in an otherwise insecure and alien environment. For families that migrated to town, living at Schoolplaats meant that the family unit remained intact. For inboekselings27 it provided an escape from their servile status as it appeared that Boer employers were more willing to release their servants if they professed a desire to be converted to Christianity. Nevertheless, there was a price to pay for residency at Schoolplaats. Newcomers to town were subject to the control of the Berlin Mission where harsh discipline was a characteristic feature. Conversion to Christianity was a prerequisite

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25 B.M.B: Annual report of the Pretoria Station, 1888

26 J.Campbell, "Our Fathers, Our Children: the AME Church in the USA and SA", p.88

27 Inboekselings were an unfree source of labour who were indentured to Boer settlers in the interior. They comprised mostly children who had either been captured in war, seized in raids, or demanded as tribute from African societies. See P.Delius and S.Trapido, "Inboekselings and Oorlams: The Creation and Transformation of a Servile Class" in B.Bozzoli (ed), Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Responses, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1983
for residency and attendance at both school and church was compulsory. For many this must have seemed a small price, and in fact the educational benefits created the opportunity for a small urban African elite to develop.

The early settled African population in Pretoria was profoundly influenced by the Berlin Mission. They were schooled, albeit of a limited nature, and skills learned at the mission gave them greater access to better employment opportunities. They found themselves in a far more secure position by virtue of their accommodation than their urban counterparts who did not live at the station. They also acquired a distinctive Christian character, based on a German missionary ethos.

The numbers of people living in Schoolplaats increased fairly rapidly. In 1871 there were fifteen families living in Schoolplaats. By 1872 this number had increased to forty families, and to sixty two in 1873. A survey conducted in May 1875 by Landdrost Skinner indicated that there were fifty two men, forty four women and 131 children living in Schoolplaats while a census of 1884 revealed that there were seventy families, comprising sixty four men, sixty eight women and 230 children. 28 Although the numbers are small, the existence of an almost equal number of women and a large number of children within family units suggests a high level of permanency amongst the early urban black population of Pretoria.

This growth can be accounted for by both natural growth factors, a process of migration to the town of Pretoria and the movement of many inboekselings and their children from the premises of their employer to the urban mission in order to seek religious instruction. The discovery of gold on the Rand had also affected the growth of Pretoria and the population, both black and white, had increased considerably. 29 This sustained growth of the African population led to problems of accommodation. By 1887 Grünberger felt that the overcrowding at Schoolplaats would "endanger the health conditions of the congregation." 30 Grünberger was particularly concerned about the permanent African population and their

28 J.S.Bergh, "Die Berlynse Sendinggenootskap in Pretoria", p.35
29 B.M.B: Annual Report of the Pretoria Station, 1886
30 B.M.B: Annual Report of the Pretoria Station, 1887
children. By 1887 there were 350 children living in Schoolplaats who had no ties to the rural areas.

"Those who were born here and grew up here are so much involved in and used to city life and make their good living here that they are unlikely to be happy outside of Pretoria. They will not consider leaving their home."31

It was concern for this permanently urbanised sector that prompted Grünberger to ask the government for more land.32 The government agreed to set aside an area for the accommodation of Africans in Pretoria. It would however be under the control and administration of the government rather than the Berlin Mission Society. In August 1888, sixty seven erfs, west of Schoolplaats, were laid out between Skinnerspruit and the Apies River and the first African location in Pretoria came into existence.33 The area became known as Marabastad, named after Chief Maraba who had served as a translator for the Landdrost of Pretoria.34

The government became the landlord of Marabastad while the Berlin Mission Society remained in control of Schoolplaats. This created a peculiar situation whereby many of the later municipal regulations aimed at controlling the African population of Pretoria were not applicable to Schoolplaats as it was a privately owned area.

The creation of Marabastad altered fundamentally the political and social landscape of the African inhabitants of Pretoria. Schoolplaats had been directly under the control of the Berlin Mission. Its residents came under the influence of a particular kind of church, which was strong on discipline and promoted hard work and education. On the other hand, access to Marabastad was not restricted to Africans seeking conversion to Christianity. Religion and education were no longer criteria for the acquisition of a place to stay, and the provision of accommodation clearly drew in a large number of workers to Pretoria. The population in Marabastad therefore became far more diverse. And it was into this arena that missionaries

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 R.Peacock, "Die Geskiedenis van Pretoria, 1855-1902", p. 244

34 P.K.E.Sack, "Skoolplaas: 'n Persoonlike Herinnering", p. 31
from different denominations then moved in order to gain a foothold amongst the urban African population.

**The Church of England, the Wesleyans and Independent African Church Movements**

The role played by the Wesleyan missionaries and the Church of England amongst the African population of Pretoria was important. Their endeavours to subject their African converts to their particular form of church discipline and racial hierarchy resulted in schism in both churches. An attempt will be made to draw out the reasons behind, and the implications of, these events.

The activities of these missionaries in Pretoria following 1888 coincided with a broader change in missionary ethos which had important ramifications for the development of independent church movements in Pretoria. The principle of African education increasingly was questioned within the context of the discovery of mineral wealth on the Rand. Mining capital's demand for a cheap, unskilled labour force conflicted with the social aspirations and upward mobility of African elites with a mission based education. In fact, they were seen as antithetical and undesirable in terms of the demands of the market. In reviewing their education policies, missionaries felt the need to limit African education to a Standard Three level, thereby creating a labour force that was useful to the demands of capital. This fundamental change in mission ideology reflects the undeniable identification of the church with the dominant forces in society. The exclusion of African converts from their perceived social mobility was a direct cause of the growth of independent church movements in the nineteenth century.

The Church of England initially viewed mission work among the white population as their top priority and were quite content to leave the missionary work among the African population to the Berlin missionaries in Pretoria. On a visit to Pretoria in 1874, the Bishop T.E. Wilkinson of Zululand commented that

"the Native work is entirely in the hands of the Berlin Society. They are doing

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35 J. Campbell, "Our Fathers, Our Children: the AME Church in the USA and SA", pp.95-96
the work well, and most glad I am to see them here.”

In 1878 the Church of England established the Diocese of Pretoria under Bishop H.B. Bousfield. Following his first year of work, Bishop Bousfield placed the development of missionary work among the ‘natives’ at the bottom of his list of priorities on his annual report. Nevertheless, work among the Africans in the Transvaal was done, especially under Mr Clulee who established an African mission, Molote (St. Michael’s) at Potchefstroom. Bishop Bousfield also made inroads into the field of African missionary work, and attracted a number of converts most notable among them being Joseph Kanyane Napo.

Kanyane Napo, a Pedi, was born at Matlala’s Kraal in Sekukuniland in approximately 1840. He was baptised in the Independent Church by the Reverend Paterson at Uitenhage. He became a local preacher for the Independent Church for a number of years, but later left and joined the Church of England because, he stated, he "was more impressed with the teachings" of the Church of England. In April 1888, Kanyane Napo broke away from the Church of England and formed his own church, the African Church. It maintained the doctrines of the Church of England but stressed that "we are not under the control of the European authorities of that Church." Kanyane consolidated the formation of his church with the construction of a large brick church in Marabastad. The African Church drew a considerable and ever-increasing following. Of Kanyane’s fellow congregationists, many followed him simply because he was their minister. Others suggested that they preferred to

38 Pamphlet: Responses to questions about the African Church. (My thanks to Jim Campbell for this pamphlet. No details available)
39 Ibid.
be controlled by "one of my own colour and race." The evident inequalities within the Church whereby

"The natives have to learn that in Church matters, as well as in social and political, they must be subservient to the whites"

must account in part for the rapid growth of this independent church.

The records of the Church of the Province of South Africa are relatively silent on this event. They merely state that the work of Bishop Bousfield amongst the Africans suffered a severe blow when Kanyane "went into schism taking his congregationists with him." Reverend Roberts recounts a disagreement between Kanyane and a Mr Beck, a chemist and lay reader from Christiana brought in by the Bishop to aid Kanyane in his work. The details are vague - it appears that Kanyane resented Beck's control - but ultimately it is difficult to determine the exact events and motivations that led to this schism.

Nevertheless, this schism is an important event and it does raise questions about the nature of the relationship between white missionaries and their African converts. Many of the African independent church leaders did react against the racial hierarchy of the church, which exposed its teachings of man's equality before God as hypocritical. The introduction of Beck to the Pretoria mission does appear to be consistent with the practice in the late nineteenth century of bringing in younger, lesser experienced Europeans who were often arrogant and racist, and who fuelled the growing discontent of African converts over the perceived inequalities of the missionary movement. Kanyane's secession from the church was also one of the earliest events of this nature, and it is likely that the success of this venture served as a significant example to Mangena Mokone, the founder of the Ethiopian Church movement.

41 Pamphlet: Responses to questions about the African Church - Evidence of T.W. Maitland of Germiston Location

42 E.Farmer, *The Transvaal as a Mission Field*, p.106


44 UWL, AB 1449: Roberts Papers, The Foundation of the Native Mission in Pretoria
In contrast to the Church of England, the Wesleyan missionaries greeted the stronghold of the Berlin missionaries in Pretoria with some concern. In the 1870s, the Wesleyans made a concerted effort to reintroduce Methodism in the Transvaal, having failed in a previous attempt in the 1820s. Reverend Blencowe, the first Methodist missionary pioneer in the Transvaal, was dismayed however, to find that the Transvaal was

"so occupied by the Berlin and Hermannsburg Societies, that no sphere of extensive operations is left for us within its boundaries."  

It was largely as a response to this domination by the Berlin Mission Society in the missionary field in Pretoria that the Wesleyans established the Kilnerton Training College in 1886, five kilometres outside of Pretoria at Koedoespoort. The development of Kilnerton would

"..enable (the Wesleyans) to have a strong mission at and near the capital of the country."  

Not only was Kilnerton viewed as a means of gaining a foothold among the Africans, but the notion of a teacher-training institution was fundamental to the mission ideology of the Methodists. Education was considered a priority where

"the teacher and the preacher are fellow labourers in the Gospel. They are both included in the higher synthesis of the Christian ministry."  

According to Mangena Mokone, Kilnerton was bought on his advice. Mokone was a dominant figure in the Wesleyan Church but played an even more important role in founding the Ethiopian Church movement. Mangena Maake Mokone was born in Bokgaga, Sekukuniland on 14 June 1851. In 1870 he travelled with a group of men to Pietermaritzburg to work and secure rifles. He found work on a sugar plantation, earning 10/- a month. Six months later he went to Durban where he worked as a domestic servant. There, he attended night school, joined the Methodist Church and was baptised by the

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47 Ibid., p.56
Reverend D. Hlongwana. 48

From early on, Mokone was exposed to several acts of discrimination which contributed to a growing sense of discontent. In 1875, his teacher refused him permission to further his studies, stating that Standard IV was sufficient for his needs. He left the church in the same year to become a carpenter when the ministers of the church refused to allow him to go to Healdtown. Mokone continued to conduct revival meetings at night and was reputed to be "especially endowed with spiritual power in preaching." 49 In 1880 Mokone was summoned unexpectedly to the joint district conferences of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of the Cape Colony and Natal where he was ordained. In 1882 he was appointed as the first African Minister in Pretoria. 50

When Africans were disqualified from holding positions on the central board of the mission and barred from attending meetings of the white delegates at the Missionary Conference in Pretoria in 1892, Mokone withdrew from the conference and a week later, on 20 November 1892 he, with twenty others, founded the Ethiopian Church.

These challenges to the Church did much to expose the hypocrisy of the missionary movement in the eyes of African converts. They perceived mission ideology as being more concerned with the conversion and control of African souls than it was with extending 'Christian' values of equality. The competition between the different mission societies for the control of African converts reflected their endeavour as a mere 'numbers game'. Africans were scarcely treated as parishioners, the African ministry was virtually non-existent and Africans were not represented in the Councils of the Church.

These acts of discrimination in church practices undoubtedly fuelled the fires of discontent


49 UWL, A1610, Aa: Skota Papers, Reverend M. M. Mokone

50 Ibid.
amongst men like Kanyane and Mokone. Both secessions from their respective churches were a reaction to the racial hierarchy and discrimination that existed within the churches. Nevertheless, these factors may serve to explain why individuals broke away from the church; it does not explain their substantial following, nor their origins in Pretoria. Significantly, both these movements originated in Pretoria, and it must surely state something about the nature of the early African population in Pretoria. In this respect, Pretoria was fairly unique when compared to the early African population on the Rand. The population was largely a settled one, with a fairly long history of urban experience. The influence of the church on their urban experience was considerable and their growing discontent with the conditions of their urban environment may have been linked in many ways to the church. Also, the existence of an educated class of Africans in Pretoria suggests a level of awareness and of frustration in not being able to move socially upward both in the church and within their own material environment.

The birth and development of these independent church movements had important implications for the political identity of the inhabitants of Marabastad. In the nineteenth century the protests remained inward, directed against the established church. But in the twentieth century resistance expanded to embrace the powers that sought to control their lives. For the educated elite living in Marabastad, the Ethiopian movement provided them with a legacy of resistance to discrimination, and in the early 1900s, they were to play a dominant role in the formation of political organisations designed to challenge the state, albeit in a relatively conciliatory and conservative manner.

THE CREATION OF AN AFRICAN WORKING CLASS IN PRETORIA, 1855-1902

Much of the literature on African urbanisation in the Transvaal has focused on the Rand, the centre of mining and industrial development. The singularity of the Johannesburg experience makes it impossible to generalise about patterns of urbanisation and it is in the recent spate of regional studies on urbanisation that the complexity and influence of local conditions on African urbanisation is revealed.

The emergence of an African working class in Pretoria provides a key contrast to the Witwatersrand whose development of an urban African population was dependent on the
discovery of mineral wealth and industrialisation. The labour force on the Rand in the late nineteenth century was comprised predominantly of male migrants and by the beginning of World War One had developed a small permanent population, though still dominated by men. In Pretoria, early African urbanisation in the nineteenth century took place within the context of limited local industry and from the outset, the African population living in the urban mission, Schoolplaats and the government-controlled location, Marabastad, assumed a permanent character. Women were an important component of this population. The centrality of Pretoria as a stopping over point for newcomers into the labour market was also an important determinant of the nature of the urban population living in Pretoria at any given time.

Pretoria’s origins were essentially rural. Its growth was slow despite becoming the seat of government in 1860, and by 1864, the white population, which was almost exclusively Dutch, numbered between 300 to 400 people. The first African settlers in Pretoria were the servants of Trekkers, the majority of whom were inboekselings. These indentured labourers were forced to accompany their employers into town, and initially lived on their premises. Their mobility, employment opportunities and lifestyle were intimately tied to the newly arrived Trekkers who exerted full control over this population. Having been incorporated into Boer-dominated society from an early age, these inboekselings had acquired certain skills and often closely identified with Boer culture and society. In particular, the encounter with Boer society had exposed, although not necessarily converted, the inboekselings to Christianity. Thus the first African settlers in Pretoria did not come there by choice, rather an element of compulsion dictated this move.

The inboekselings and their descendants were to form the basis of the permanent African population in Pretoria. They had no ties to a rural past and viewed Pretoria as their home. Petronella, a former inboekseling, serves as an example:

"I have lived in Pretoria before Marabastad was laid out during the Kruger Regime having been brought into town as a slave. I know of no other place

\[51\] J.J.N.Cloete, *Die Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling van die Munisipale Bestuur van Pretoria tot 1910*, p.7
under the sun as being my home except Pretoria."52

Religious influences prompted the move of many inboekselings to a more independent existence. When Schoolplaats was established, many inboekselings wished to convert to Christianity and sought religious instruction at the mission. Schoolplaats therefore provided for many a respectable exit from inboekseling status.

The case of Hektor and Salfie Motau serves as an example of this process. They were both captured as children in a war fought by the Zulus and the Boers against Chief Moletse. The Zulus seized the Sothos' cattle while the children were captured and dealt out to the Boers. Hektor and Salfie were indentured to one Flip Minnaar who had a farm near Pretoria. Hektor tended Minnaar's land and cattle, while Salfie worked as a domestic in the household, cooking and cleaning. The two of them remained on the farm for many years, eventually marrying. When word reached them that a preacher had arrived in Pretoria who was teaching the word of God to Africans, they received permission to leave the services of Minaar and went to live in Pretoria. Hektor found employment with a Mr Struben, and lived in a small house in Pretoria. They later moved to Schoolplaats and their son, Frans Motau became an African helper to the missionaries of the Berlin Mission Society.53

No official census of the African population was taken in the late 19th Century, and it is difficult to ascertain the numerical and ethnic breakdown as well as the employment patterns of the early African population in Pretoria. G.K. Schuring, who studied the origins of the Sotho dialect in Pretoria, asserts that the majority of Africans living in Pretoria between 1866 and 1881 were Sotho, mostly belonging to the Kgatla ethnic group. The next largest grouping were the Kwena and then the Pedi.54 This appears to be borne out by the census of 1904

52 MPA 3/159: J.de V. de Beer, Attorney, to the Town Clerk, Pretoria - Evidence of Petronella in case against Frans Maboea and Others, 16 October 1922

53 J.Baumbach, "n Lewenskets van Eerwaarde Frans Motau" in Pretoriana, 3(1), 1953, p.2-4

which places the Sotho as the largest African population in Pretoria.\textsuperscript{55} The centrality of Pretoria between the Northern areas of the Transvaal and the Rand suggests that Africans from various parts of the Northern Transvaal and outlying districts also moved to Pretoria.

The imperatives behind their migration are difficult to uncover. It is possible however to allude to rural decline, African taxation, warfare among African states, struggles with Afrikaner settlers over land and the demand for labour generated by the growth of Pretoria as possible factors.

But the dominant feature of the African population during this period was the consolidation of a permanent urban population. These were the \textit{oortams}, descendants of the \textit{inboekselings}, permanent town dwellers with few links to a rural past. They lived in Pretoria, not because they were drawn by employment opportunities or the effects of rural decline, but because they had been born there and identified with no other place. In the years 1870 to 1888 the majority of them lived in Schoolplaats. With the establishment of Marabastad in 1888 many \textit{oortams} moved there, and formed the basis of the permanent community living in Pretoria.

The \textit{oortams} were economically active, having learned artisanal skills from their forebears and could sell their labour effectively in a growing town like Pretoria. They would, more than likely, provide competition to less skilled Afrikaners seeking similar employment in town. The \textit{oortams} were regular churchgoers and their children attended school. According to Reverend Carl Sack, a former missionary at Schoolplaats,

\begin{quote}
"die Oorlamse was doodgelukkig. Hulle het op die dorp gewerk, en op dis skoolplaas (sic) gewoon, die kinders het skool-toe gegaan en Sondae was die kerk vol!"
\end{quote}

They were also characterised as speaking a form of Dutch in the nineteenth century, and later

\textsuperscript{55} Results of a Census of the Transvaal Colony and Swaziland, 1904, Table 25 

\textsuperscript{56} P.K.E.Sack, "Skoolplaas: 'n Persoonlike Herinnering", pp.29-30 

(The Oorlams were extremely fortunate. They worked in the town and lived on Schoolplaats, the children went to school, and on Sundays, the church was full.)
in the twentieth century, a form of Afrikaans, but often no African language.\textsuperscript{57}

"Die Oorlamse mense van Bantoeherkoms wat sedert die dae van die ZAR so onder die invloed van die Westerse lewenswyse gekom het dat selfs hulle huistaal verander het."\textsuperscript{58}

But to what extent is this characterisation of the \textit{oorlams} an accurate one? Their cultural makeup appears to be complex. The loss of their language suggests a high degree of acculturation with Boer culture and their willing conversion to Christianity and the regular attendance of their children at school also indicates a strong identification with western and urban processes. David Coplan, who has provided a social history of urban black performing arts, further suggests that this process is reflected in their music performance which combined the Afrikaans influence of the \textit{tickiedraai} with developing urban African sounds.\textsuperscript{59}

Yet the loss of a rural identity did not appear to be complete. Grunberger, the Berlin missionary at Schoolplaats during the late nineteenth century, often complained of the superstitious nature of the \textit{oorlams}, and in particular complained of their belief in witchcraft.

"It is an ugly custom of the Oorlamschen to believe in witchcraft. If one of them really wants to hurt his opponent he shouts: 'I will bewitch you.'" (translated from the German)\textsuperscript{60}

These cultural overlays suggest a society in transition, one in the process of adaptation to an urban environment. The adoption of western and essentially urban mores provided the \textit{oorlams} with an entry into the nascent capitalist world that was emerging in Pretoria. The issue of language provides the clearest example of the \textit{oorlams}' attempts to enter into a world not of their own making. To what extent was the loss of their language absolute, or was it

\textsuperscript{57} Archives of the Director of Local Government (TPB) 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend E.Creux, 1 June 1910, p.23

\textsuperscript{58} R.D.Coetzee, quoted in G.K.Schuring, "Die Omgangs-Sotho van die Swart Woongebiede van Pretoria", p.68

(The \textit{oorlams} people of African origin had come under the influence of a Western lifestyle since the days of the ZAR to such an extent that even their home language had changed.)

\textsuperscript{59} D.Coplan, \textit{In Township Tonight!}, p.15

\textsuperscript{60} B.M.B: Annual Report of the Pretoria Station, 1891
a strategic, deliberate act which elevated the oorlams into a higher social category? The identification of the oorlams with the Afrikaner language and culture blurred the distinction between them and the Coloured population in Pretoria. The ability to speak Afrikaans often provided Africans with the right to claim Coloured identity. In this way oorlams would be able to enter the labour market as semi-skilled labour, a category usually reserved for Coloureds, and thus gain many of the benefits open to Coloureds, as well as evade the controls placed on the African population. While this was never explicitly stated, it does explain to some extent the Pretoria Town Council's rigid attitude towards Coloureds which was a recurrent theme in the creation of their urban black policy in the early twentieth century. Many of the Council's disputes with central government centred around their attempt to impose the applicable regulations for Africans on the Coloured population living in Pretoria.

The permanent nature of the African population from an early period was a distinctive feature of the urban African population of Pretoria. The existence of this permanently settled community in Pretoria hastened questions relating to the creation of an urban African policy. In the early twentieth century the Pretoria Town Council sought solutions first in the segregation of the African population and then in the removal of the permanent African residents of Pretoria. The removal of Marabastad, a burning issue for the Council from 1903, was considerably delayed precisely because of the existence of a settled community with few ties to a rural past. It was not possible to send them back to their rural origins and suitable alternative accommodation outside the confines of Pretoria had first to be found. 61

The discovery of gold also attracted a number of Cape Coloureds to Pretoria. In the 1890s the government set aside an area south of the Asiatic Bazaar, known as the Cape Location, for the accommodation of Coloureds. These Cape Coloureds encountered strong resentment from the local oorlams population as they began to encroach on the same employment field. Grunberger, the Berlin missionary from Schoolplaats, referred to them as "Kapscher Bastarde" who were of low morals and recounts of many fights between the "Cape boys" and

61 TPB 552, TA 1444: Minority Report of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, 1910
the members of his congregation.\textsuperscript{62}

Yet Coloureds in Pretoria enjoyed far greater status than Africans, and this in all likelihood provided the motivation for many oorlams to assume Coloured identity. Maloka Molai, a driver for Paul Kruger was clearly an exception. He stated that

"In those days only Cape Coloureds were allowed to drive. And only blacks to work in white houses...Cape Coloureds were not black. They are near white. Hulle is amper baas. When I arrived in Pretoria I addressed them as baas."

The Asiatic Bazaar, situated just south of Marabastad, was also established in this period for the settlement of the growing Indian population in Pretoria. 380 erfs to the south of Marabastad were allotted for exclusive Indian occupation.\textsuperscript{64} The penetration of Indian trade into the white market in Pretoria was perceived as a threat to white shopkeepers. Thus by enforcing the Indians to live and trade in the Asiatic Bazaar, the shopkeepers believed that they would eradicate this source of competition. However, the directives of the South African Republic government that the Asiatic community live and trade in their own location was only marginally complied with, and by 1901, only twenty five percent of the Indian population were living in the Asiatic Bazaar, the rest lived in town.\textsuperscript{65}

Thus by the turn of the century, a number of distinctive features of the African population could be identified. The population was small when compared to the Rand. Yet an important section of this population were permanently settled, with an established history of urban living and experience. They lived either in Schoolplaats or Marabastad and many of them were oorlams who possessed artisanal skills. The oorlams intersected with the Cape Coloured community and because of their language identification, it was often difficult to distinguish

\textsuperscript{62} B.M.B: Annual Report of the Pretoria Station, 1886

\textsuperscript{63} Modikwe Dikobe, "Inside the New Society", Paper presented to the History Workshop Conference, University of the Witwatersrand, 1981, p.10

\textsuperscript{64} F.Nothling, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria, 1900-1914", p.6

\textsuperscript{65} Archives of the Secretary of Native Affairs (SNA) 4: F.A.Gillam, Supervisor of Indian Immigrants to the Secretary of the Transvaal Administration, 13 June 1901.
Employment patterns for Africans in Pretoria varied considerably from the Rand. The economy of Pretoria, from its early rural beginnings until the establishment of the Iron and Steel Corporation (ISCOR) in the 1930s, remained essentially pre-industrial. Employment opportunities for the growing African working class were limited to the economic development of Pretoria itself.

In the period 1870 to 1888 the infrastructure of state machinery was gradually developed, thereby providing employment for Africans within the nascent state bureaucracy; the developing building industry; and as servants to the white settlers. The largest and most permanent sector was domestic service. Most domestic servants lived with their families in outhouses or servants’ rooms on the premises of their employers. It is difficult to determine the social composition of servants working in Pretoria as reference to domestic servants was usually in generalised terms. Although the general trend at the time in most Transvaal towns was the employment of men as domestic servants, it is likely however, that the inboekselings and their descendants living in Pretoria, made for the existence of a number of female servants.

The growing state bureaucracy created a demand for labour which was given added impetus with the British occupation of 1877. This brought an influx of administrators, both civil and military and extended the administrative tasks of the town. A number of African workers were required to fill positions as police constables, as postal workers and to maintain the roads. This component was predominantly a migrant force. Labour was usually contracted to the government by chiefs for six-month periods, during which these migrant workers were promised food, clothing and lodging in Pretoria.

The private sector also required both artisanal and unskilled labour. The burgeoning building

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67 Archives of the Landdrost of Pretoria (LP) 34: Landdros Lys to Zwartbooii; Lys to Salampa, 8 July 1879.

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industry in particular employed bricklayers, masons and master-builders to meet the demands of a growing town. Initially, the demand from this sector did not appear to have been extremely high. For example, the establishment of works to manufacture bricks and tiles by machinery in 1874 led to a request for a regular supply of twelve black labourers. Nevertheless by the twentieth century, the building industry was one of the dominant employers of African labour, employing nearly a thousand workers by 1903.

Clearly there was an important migrant population residing in Pretoria at any one time. Some migrant workers were contracted to employment in Pretoria, though there does appear to be a significant number who stopped over in Pretoria on their way to the diamond fields. They would usually work in Pretoria for a week to earn sufficient money to buy a pass. Passes could be acquired at the diamond fields for a shilling. In 1879 about 1,000 migrants passed through Pretoria on their way to the diamond fields. This view of Pretoria as a stopover point rather than a final destination for migrants suggests an important trend in patterns of migration and it is one that carried over into the early 1900s.

When gold was discovered, first in the Lowveld and then on the Rand, Pretoria as a town did not benefit materially from the commercial prosperity which swept the country, though the capital town experienced an influx of population, both black and white. Pretoria remained essentially a town of civil servants and shopkeepers. The discovery of gold did however give rise to an unprecedented increase in the activities of Government departments and there was a steady influx of professional and clerical men. Speculators and entrepreneurs also came to Pretoria, hoping to capitalise on the success of the Rand. Concessioners entrenched their business interests, receiving support from the South African Republic Government for their

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68 Archives of the Staatsekretaris (SS) 179, R 1945/74: H.Henshall to T.Burgers, 21 December 1874
69 SNA 143, NA 1454/03: Native Commissioner to the Secretary of Native Affairs, 16 July 1903
70 LP 34: Landdros Lys to the Colonial Secretary, 26 April 1879
71 G.Jenkins, "From Ivory to Isotopes - The Development of Pretoria's Industry" in S.P.Engelbrecht et al, Pretoria 1855-1955, p.366
schemes. Some of these concessioners left their mark on Pretoria, such as A.H. Nellmapius, S. Marks, M.J. Albracht and S. Neumann.

It was the prominent businessman, Sammy Marks, who was responsible for the establishment of one of Pretoria's first industries, Eerste Fabrieken, a distillery in 1883. Following a number of teething problems, the distillery began to prosper, especially after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand. It was during the 1890s that Pretoria witnessed its first spurt of industrial growth, albeit of a limited nature, as De Eerste Fabrieken Hatherley Distillery expanded rapidly, which created a demand for labour. 72 Further expansion in the building industry took place as the town of Pretoria took shape. The largest of these concerns were the Kirkness brickworks in 1890 and the Pretoria Portland Cement Company which opened in 1892. 73 The building of the Delagoa Railway line also created a demand for labour.

The outbreak of the Anglo Boer War in 1899 converted Pretoria into the headquarters of a nation at war. Allegiances within Pretoria's white population were divided, and most English traders left for the coast, while Dutch and non-British traders joined the Boer forces. Trade in Pretoria came to a virtual standstill. 74 The black population also fled the town in large numbers. Approximately fifty percent of the Indian population left for Natal just before hostilities commenced, only returning towards the end of the war. 75 Many Africans deserted their employees and Pretoria was soon faced with a major labour crisis.

How does one account for this mass exodus? Clearly the insecurities posed by a town at war were a major factor. With the breakdown of political order, crime intensified and instability increased. The cessation of trade resulted in traders, both Indian and white, fleeing Pretoria in search of more productive markets. The African population found itself subject to much

72 R. Mendelsohn, Sammy Marks: The Uncrowned King of the Transvaal, Cape Town: David Philip, 1991, pp. 31 and 56
73 Ibid., p. 362
75 SNA 4: F. A. Gillam, Supervisor of Indian immigrants, to the Secretary of the Transvaal Administration, 13 June 1901
harsher regulations, as the pass laws were more strictly applied and a rigid curfew was imposed.

The contribution of Africans in Pretoria to the war effort has not been well documented. There is evidence that during the first months of the war they worked for the Boers on the front, in the Artillery Barracks, and many were used by the NZASM to guard the railway lines until the Hollanders Corp garrizoen dienst took over, while the Landdrost office employed African constables.\textsuperscript{76} When the British occupied Pretoria, Africans were used in a similar capacity.

However, the required labour force was not readily available. The departure of many Africans from Pretoria created a severe labour shortage, the result of which, forced wages up, both in households and businesses.\textsuperscript{77} The government attempted to protect employers by pegging wages at a maximum of £1 a month, but this regulation was soon relaxed as it proved too difficult to implement.\textsuperscript{78}

The municipal sector was hardest hit by the labour shortage, largely due to the unwillingness of the Temporary and Provisional Town Council\textsuperscript{79} to pay higher wages. In 1900 the Temporary and Provisional Town Council was forced to pay 30/- a week which included accommodation in a compound and rations and even this, the workers were unwilling to

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{77} B.M. Theron, "A Social History of Pretoria during the first phase of the Anglo Boer War: October 1899-June 1900", MA Thesis, UNISA, 1984, p.259

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{79} Prior to the Anglo-Boer War, local government was established in the form of a town board. During the British occupation of Pretoria, the town board functioned as the Temporary and Provisional Town Council which was directly under the control of Major General J.G. Maxwell, the Military Governor of Pretoria. It was only in 1902 that a nominated Pretoria Town Council came into being. For a further discussion of local government structures in Pretoria, see Chapter Two.
The Temporary and Provisional Town Council attempted to alleviate the labour shortage by employing convict labour. Prisoners were given rations but no pay.\textsuperscript{80} Prisoners were used to remove and bury dead carcasses lying in the street, as well as in night soil removal. But the use of prison labour was not without problems. The risk of escape was high and thus only minor offenders were used as municipal labour, while R.K. Loveday, the Acting Burgomaster felt that the prisoners would have a demoralising influence on the permanent workers. As a result, he employed four white workers to keep an eye on the permanent workers, which led to an increase of productivity within a few days.\textsuperscript{82} In May 1901, the Temporary and Provisional Town Council was paying 4/6d per day for each worker in their employ.\textsuperscript{83}

During the course of the war a substantial African refugee population began to squat at the railway station and near the Artillery Barracks and the Brickfields. Following objections of the military, they were removed to an area adjacent to Marabastad, which became known as New Marabastad.\textsuperscript{84} In February 1901, 393 erfs were laid out between Marabastad and the Asiatic Bazaar as a temporary refugee camp for eighty families.\textsuperscript{85} Rapidly other squatter populations moved into the area and New Marabastad very quickly began to assume a permanent character, and its population was quickly absorbed into the economic life of

\textsuperscript{80} MPA 1: Minutes of the Temporary and Provisional Town Council, 31 July 1900

\textsuperscript{81} Archives of the Military Governor of Pretoria (MGP) 8: Maxwell to Burgomaster, 1900; MPA 2/94: Report of the Temporary Town Council, 21 May 1901

\textsuperscript{82} F.J. Nöthling, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria, 1900-1914", p.18

\textsuperscript{83} MPA 2/94: Report of the Temporary and Provisional Town Council, 21 May 1901; MPA 1: Minutes of the Temporary and Provisional Town Council, 19 August 1901

\textsuperscript{84} MPA 2/45: J.S. Marwick, Acting Native Commissioner to the Assistant to the Military Governor, 2 April 1901.

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
Pretoria.\textsuperscript{86} Although squatting was illegal, the Temporary and Provisional Town Council probably allowed the squatters to settle in New Marabastad initially in an attempt to alleviate the labour shortage in Pretoria.

\textbf{Conclusion}

During the period 1855 to the end of the Anglo-Boer War, the town of Pretoria had developed gradually from its rural beginnings to a small town whose dominant focus was its administrative bureaucracy as it occupied the seat of government. It remained rooted in a pre-industrial economy, there being no development of a mining industry. Many of the local industries that did exist in Pretoria during this period were directly linked to the development of the town, the foremost being the building industry. Pretoria remained a town dominated by civil servants and shopkeepers. It was within this economic climate that an African working class emerged in Pretoria. Employment opportunities were limited to domestic service, work in small private concerns which in themselves developed apace with the town, and within state services. Given the limited economic opportunities available in Pretoria, its working class was small. But by the turn of the century, it had developed a distinct identity. The \textit{oorlams} who were permanently settled in Pretoria were an important component of the African population. They were usually skilled in a trade, they spoke a form of Dutch, and later Afrikaans, had some education and many had converted to Christianity. A small urban African elite had also begun to develop in the locations. There was also a substantial migrant population who worked in Pretoria for a contracted period of time as well as casual, floating population who viewed Pretoria as a stopping over point in their entry into the labour market.

The Berlin missionaries had done much to secure accommodation for Africans living in Pretoria. The establishment of the urban mission, Schoolplaats provided newcomers with a place to stay, and in particular was a source of accommodation for African families. The Berlin missionaries were also instrumental in the creation of the government-controlled location of Marabastad in 1888 which provided Africans with a further source of accommodation.

\textsuperscript{86} MPA 2/45: C.P. Manning, Superintendent of Native Police to the Commissioner of Police, 1902 (No further date provided)
The missionaries who were active in Pretoria during the late nineteenth century played an important role in shaping the identity of the settled African population in Pretoria. Despite the specific ethos of paternalism and the harsh discipline enforced on the mission, the Berlin Mission Society did much to contribute to the identity of the settled African population in Pretoria which was both schooled and skilled in various trades. The establishment of Kilnerton by the Wesleyan missionaries had further contributed to the development of an urban African elite, of which a number of its graduates such as S.M. Makgatho and P. Maeta, were to play a leading role in African politics in the early twentieth century. The independent church movements engendered by African responses to discrimination in the Church of England and the Methodist Church were an important framework for further resistance by this African elite to the growing conditions of poverty and urban squalor and attempts by authorities to control their lives in the early twentieth century.
The urbanisation of Africans in Pretoria in the nineteenth century was characterised by attempts by the church and the South African Republic to establish control over this process. The missionaries, by providing access to land and education, sought to control both the direction and limits of the African urban experience. And with the growth of a substantial urban African community, the state intervened. Recognising the need to establish some authority over this growing population, the government established separate living areas for Africans, Indians and Coloureds, and from the 1890s the movements of Africans were restricted by the imposition of the pass law, a curfew and the restriction of blacks from walking on the sidewalks.

With the growth of the administrative functions of state, the reigns of state government were placed increasingly under pressure. The South African Republic sought to transfer some of this responsibility to local government. This proved to be an onerous task, as the white population of Pretoria at first were reluctant to assume the responsibility of government, and once in power, continually clashed with the central government over their areas of jurisdiction.

Towards the end of the Anglo-Boer War, in January 1902, Pretoria was granted municipal status and a Town Council was appointed by the government. The nominated Town Council did not however remain in power for very long. It clashed with central government and in May 1903 the entire body resigned. The government then appointed a Municipal Commission to exercise the powers of the Town Council until a new body was elected by the white population of Pretoria in November 1903. The election of a Town Council did not solve the problem of jurisdiction and the council continued to vie for the right to control its own affairs until 1912 when it finally conceded the limits placed on its authority by the central state.

This chapter examines the struggles that occurred between central and local government over the establishment and consolidation of municipal government in Pretoria. It specifically provides a detailed focus on the creation of municipal government, thereby highlighting the transition from
a state controlled administration to a system of local government. The relationship of the local state to central government will be examined in the light of the tensions that existed between the two as each tried to carve out their own areas of control. Often the area of most contested and heated debate was about who was to control the black population of Pretoria.

A number of urban studies have attempted to theorise the particular role of the local state.¹ The majority of these studies have analysed the local state within the context of advanced capitalist societies, many of which are western democracies with an enfranchised populace. Clearly any study of the historical development of the local state in South Africa needs to take into account that the largest section of the population are without any political rights. Specifically in Pretoria, the establishment of local government took place within a pre-industrialised economy. Nonetheless a number of questions raised by these studies are pertinent to an understanding of the workings of the local state in Pretoria.

According to R.Pahl, the role of the local state officials, whom he terms 'urban managers', is crucial to an understanding of the local state. He maintains that 'urban managers' are 'independent variables' despite constraints placed on them by central-local relations, the private sector and ecological restraints.² As a result, their own needs and beliefs may shape urban policy. Within this context, it becomes important to understand the councillors who comprised the Pretoria Town Council, how they stood in relation to central government, and what their own ideological and economic interests were.

Pahl further suggests that local state officials play a crucial mediating role between central government on the one hand and the local population who elected them on the other. This conception of the local state becomes difficult within a South African context. While the local

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government may be subjected to certain pressures from central government and this often forms a site of struggle between the two, it does not identify the black population as one of its constituents. Nevertheless this should not suggest that the urban black population had no impact on the creation of urban policy. Decisions made about the allocation of resources for housing for the African working classes, influx control measures, and the policing of the African population were wrought out of conflicts between central and local government. In turn, Pretoria was as much shaped by the workers and individuals who inhabited it. According to Frederick Cooper, who has done important work on spatial control and cities in Africa, this is explained by the fact that urban planners were dealing with

"not merely the mobilization of labor power, but the control of human beings, of people living in societies and immersed in cultures." 3

P.Saunders, an urban sociologist, is concerned to identify the relationship between central government and the local state. He sees the local state as being responsible for the reproduction of the labour force by providing the material means of existence. It determines the allocation and distribution of scarce urban resources such as housing. 4 These resources are usually scarce because they in turn are controlled and financed by central government. This raises the question of the autonomy of local government. Is the local state merely an agent of central government? Local authorities are often constrained by government legislation or financial controls. Yet they do tend to have a specificity of their own. The Pretoria Town Council's continuous attempts to assert its own authority was a major source of conflict with central government and a major focus of this chapter.

The Path to Municipal Government

From the earliest years of Pretoria, the South African Republic government made numerous attempts to establish a system of local self-government. These attempts were either short-lived or complete failures. To a large extent, the blame must be placed on the local white population

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who were extremely reluctant to assume responsibility. The financial obligations of government and the notion of municipal taxation appeared to have been the major deterrent to self-government.

The effort to establish local government in Pretoria during the Republican era should be viewed within the context of local administration in the Transvaal. According to the constitution of 1858, the ZAR was divided into districts which were each administered by a landdrost and heemraden. The landdrost was also responsible for the supervision of the town within the district. Although the commandants and fieldcornets were elected primarily as military officers, they assisted the landdrost with the management of particular departments or wards within the district, while a market master and a pound master assisted the landdrost specifically in town matters.\(^5\)

Despite being responsible for local administration, these officials were paid by and were directly responsible to the State. Further, all licence and market revenues were handed to the central government. There was no question of local administration being accountable in any way to the local population.

Nevertheless the residents of Pretoria could request a representative local government. It required a petition signed by twenty five people to be presented to the landdrost. Yet the local community were reluctant to take up on this opportunity. Cloete suggests that the appointment of various uncoordinated committees and commissions such as the Health Committee, the Cemetry Committee and the Burgers Park Commission, denied the local community the opportunity of deciding on the value of local self-government. Furthermore, the fact that the state financed the committees’ various undertakings convinced the local population of the validity of evading their local responsibilities.\(^6\)

In March 1864 the first experiment in local self-government in Pretoria took place when a


\(^6\) J.J.N.Cloete, *Die Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling van die Munisipale Bestuur en Administrasie van Pretoria tot 1910*, p.51
representative body known as the 'Directorate' was elected. However, by September 1864, the Secretary, J.G.C. van Leenhof requested that the government resume control of the town as the powers and finances of the Directorate were inadequate to the needs of effective government. The white population of Pretoria was relatively small, numbering approximately 500 people, and no systematic form of taxation existed. Rates and taxes were often not paid and the lack of police and a prison meant that no punitive action could be taken against tax defaulters. In this regard, Pretoria encountered the same problems as Potchefstroom whose first Municipal Board of 1863 was also rendered virtually ineffective due to financial starvation. However, in contrast to Pretoria, since 1860 the residents of Potchefstroom were and continued to be extremely anxious for a system of local government to be established.

In 1876, the local population of Pretoria were prepared to try again, and a committee of inquiry was to be appointed to institute a system of local government. Before this could take effect, Sir Theophilus Shepstone annexed the Transvaal. Under his administration, the British system of local government was introduced. On 1 June 1877, the Pretoria Municipal Board was appointed. Its main task was to guarantee the sanitary and health conditions of the town through the improvement of streets, the regulation of the water supply and the maintenance of the Town Lands.

Act No. 16 of 1880 was a comprehensive municipal code for all towns with at least 300 inhabitants. Based on the Natal model, it allowed for the election of a Town Council with a mayor, and granted this body fairly extensive powers of local government. The Act specifically compelled Pretoria to implement this law. In the ensuing election, J.C. Preller was returned as mayor. However, before the Town council could assume its duties, the First Anglo-Boer War broke out.

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7 The City of Pretoria: Official Guide, p.200
8 E.P. Green, History of Local Government in South Africa, pp. 52-53
9 Ibid., p. 55
With the restoration of the Republic in 1881, the residents of Pretoria willingly handed back control of the town to the government and the landdrost. A further attempt to establish a town council in 1890 according to Act No. 10 of 1886 failed. Once again, the people of Pretoria were reluctant to pay municipal rates and the government was prepared to meet the costs of projects that would have usually been financed from rates.\textsuperscript{11} Most of the municipal services such as the regulation of water, electricity, gas and sanititation were provided by concessioners paid by the government. An ad-hoc health committee had been formed for the prevention of smallpox. This was in contrast to the sanitary boards which had been established in the newly formed mining towns of Barberton, Johannesburg and Krugersdorp.\textsuperscript{12}

In 1897 a temporary town board (stadsbestuur) was proclaimed following a complaint from the Under-Secretary of State to the Secretary about the administrative burden of the landdrost and town engineer.\textsuperscript{13} It comprised four official members, including the landdrost, the town engineer and the district surgeon, and eleven unofficial members nominated by central government. The members of the town board felt a considerable amount of resentment towards central government. It lacked status, power and resources. Important tasks could not be fulfilled due to a lack of funds. The government continued to hold the landdrost accountable, despite the majority of the town’s work being done by the town board. All monetary matters had to be approved by the government, and effective control of Pretoria could not be imposed because the town board had no legal control over the police.\textsuperscript{14}

Towards the end of 1898 a Second Temporary Town Board was created in an attempt to give the town board more authority. The board was reorganised to consist of twelve members under the chairmanship of a mayor. It was given the power of taxation, but continued to rely on the

\textsuperscript{11} J.J.N.Cloete, \textit{Die Onstaan en Ontwikkeling van die Munisipale Bestuur en Administrasie van Pretoria tot 1910}, pp. 113-115

\textsuperscript{12} E.P.Green, \textit{History of Local Government in South Africa}, p. 61

\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 63

\textsuperscript{14} E.F.W. Gey van Pittius, “Munisipale Bestuur in Pretoria: 'n Geskiedkundige Oorsig”, pp. 52-54; E.P.Green, \textit{History of Local Government in South Africa}, p. 64
government for funds. Many residents protested against the creation of a town board. The implication that they would have to bear the costs of local government through the institution of municipal rates and taxes once again proved be the major objection. This body was shortlived due to the outbreak of war.

Immediately following the British occupation, Pretoria was placed under martial rule under the control of the Military Governor of Pretoria, Major General J.G.Maxwell. His powers were extremely far-reaching. The town board continued to function as the Temporary and Provisional Town Council but it was directly under Maxwell’s control. He also held overall responsibility for the Compensation Office, the Police, Civil Supplies, the Relief Committee, Native Affairs and the Native Pass Office.

The Nominated Town Council

Pretoria was granted municipal status on 16 January 1902. R.K.Loveday attributed the delay in the creation of municipal government in Pretoria to "the conservatism of the former government". He clearly failed to recognise the reluctance of Pretoria’s inhabitants to accept the financial responsibilities of local self-government.

With the establishment of municipal government in Pretoria, the nominated Town Council found itself in conflict almost immediately with central government. The source of this conflict centred to a large extent over the control of the black population in Pretoria. The nominated Town Council wanted to bring all aspects of the black population under their immediate control while the Reconstruction government, established in 1903, was more concerned to devise a uniform policy for African control throughout the Transvaal.

Municipal organisation was modelled on Johannesburg’s council, which had been nominated in

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16 MGP: Notes to the index to the Archives of the Military Governor, Pretoria.

17 MPA 1: Minutes of the Town Council, 1st Ordinary Meeting, 17 February 1902.
May 1901. According to Proclamation No.7 of 1902 the government nominated a Town Council. It comprised the following councillors: G.M.Bourke, E.Chappel, J.F.de Beer, J.Dougall, J.H.L.Findlay, A.Johnston, J.J.Kirkness, J.C.Poynton and W.E.Wilson. R.K.Loveday was appointed Chairman of the Council. In August 1902 the Governor appointed four additional councillors, namely D.P.Liebenberg, Melt Marais, J.Munro and Dr S.R.Savage. J.van Reesema was provisionally appointed to the post of Town Clerk.

A number of the councillors had previous experience in local government. Bourke, Chappel, De Beer, Dougall and Wilson had served on the Temporary and Provisional Town Council appointed in 1900. Loveday was one of the few councillors who had a long history of civic responsibility. He had joined the civil service of the Republic under President Burgers and had served on both the first and second Temporary Town Boards. He had also been the mayor of the Temporary and Provisional Town Council. It was likely that Loveday would take a hard line in relation to policy regarding the black population of Pretoria, he being reputed to be "one of the strongest opponents of equal rights for white and black." The majority of the councillors were English-speaking but were predominantly conservative; only Findlay, who was an advocate, and Dougall, who was an accountant and auditor, expressed "liberal" views. Dougall later became the Chairman of the Pretoria Native Welfare Association. The councillors represented the dominant business interests of Pretoria. Many had played a leading role in the commercial development of Pretoria. Chappel, Poynton and Johnston

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18 E.P.Green, *History of Local Government in South Africa*, p. 64
19 Transvaal (Colony) Government Gazette, Proclamation No. 7, 7 February 1902
20 Transvaal (Colony) Government Gazette, Notice No. 45 of 1902, 7 February 1902
21 Transvaal (Colony) Government Gazette, Notice No. 357 of 1902, 31 July 1902
22 Transvaal (Colony) Government Gazette, Notice No. 46 of 1902, 7 February 1902
24 *Men of the Times*, Transvaal Publishing Company, 1905, p.234
were all influential and high-ranking members of the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce;\textsuperscript{26} Bourke, together with his brother, E.F. Bourke, controlled the Bourke Trust and Estate Company; A.J. Johnston and Co. was one of the largest stores in the town;\textsuperscript{27} Kirkness owned the largest brickworks in Pretoria; and the Poynton brothers were hardware merchants, specifically dealing with agricultural machinery.\textsuperscript{28}

As prominent businessmen of Pretoria, it is likely that their major concern in relation to the African population would be to secure a regular supply of labour. It is also conceivable that they perceived the Indian as a particular threat to their own business concerns, and hence the need to take a hard line with the immigration of Indians into Pretoria and the control of the Asiatic Bazaar.

In creating a system of local self-government, central government stated its intention of granting local authorities a relatively high degree of autonomy.

"It is our desire to, as far as practicable, place the local authorities in such a position as to be independent of the central government in fulfilling their obligations."\textsuperscript{29}

It appears that the area of practicability extended fairly wide in Pretoria. The Reconstruction Government maintained a tight control over both the affairs of the Town Council and the local population. Possibly this had much to do with Pretoria's position as the capital city and the seat of Government. Initially it appears that the nominated Town Council was prepared to relinquish a degree of autonomy for the added prestige of being the capital city.

"For the privilege of remaining the capital, we must be prepared to sacrifice to some extent our right to absolute self-government." \textsuperscript{30}

However, members of the Town Council soon began to resent the government's interference in

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Men of the Times}, pp.104, 204, 297

\textsuperscript{27} B.M. Theron, "A Social History of Pretoria during the first phase of the Anglo-Boer War: October 1899-June 1900", p.107

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Men of the Times}, p.297

\textsuperscript{29} MPA 2/44: Address by Sir Arthur Lawley, Minutes of the 1st Annual Meeting of the Transvaal Municipal Association, 19 February 1904

\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Pretoria News}, The Penalty of Power, 17 January 1903
what they considered to be their sphere of control. Proclamation No. 7 of 1902 granted the Town Council the right to formulate bye-laws for Pretoria but these were subject to the approval of central government. The Council could also be subject to a government audit once a month. The government appointed the councillors and reserved the right to appoint the Town Clerk, Treasurer and Town Engineer.  

The appointment of the Town Clerk was one of the areas of friction between central government and the local authorities. When the government confirmed J. van Reesema's appointment in a permanent capacity in January 1903, Findlay, Bourke and Melt Marais resigned in protest. Their major objection was that the Council had not been consulted. 

Relations between central and local government became increasingly antagonistic. Matters reached a climax on 1 May 1903 when the members of the Council resigned en masse. The Council cited the government's refusal to hand over ownership of the Town Lands to the Town Council as the reason for their resignation. The Council added however that they "decided to relinquish their duties" as

"...the representations made by the present Town Council to the Government do not receive that consideration which the members have a right to expect." 

The Pretoria Town lands were of a considerable extent and clearly would have been an important municipal asset. The government's delay in taking steps to hand over the Town Lands seems to have been an assertion of its control over the Town Council. 

Yet the instances put forward by the Town Council where they did "not receive that consideration" from the Government provide further insight into the areas of control over which central and local government struggled. Importantly, most of the issues dealt directly with the

31 Transvaal (Colony) Government Gazette, Proclamation No. 7, 7 February 1902

32 Pretoria News, Clerk and Council: Case for the Council, 16 January 1903

33 MPA 1: Minutes of the Pretoria Town Council, 26 March 1903

34 Ibid.

35 C 35: Report of the Transvaal Municipal Commission, 1908, p 29
control and regulation of the black population in Pretoria. The Council complained of delays in passing the Municipal Native Pass Regulations and in handing over the management and control of the African locations. It rejected the government’s assumption of control over the 'Coolie Location', which, according to the Town Council, fell within the jurisdiction of the Municipality.  

Control of the Black Population

In Proclamation No.7/1902, granting the Town Council municipal status, the Council was given the power

"To lay out within the Municipality such locations for aboriginal natives as may be deemed desirable and to compel all aboriginal natives except such as are employed in domestic service and are lodged on the premises of their employers to reside within such locations and make regulations for the proper carrying out of the powers herein conferred and for the carrying of passes by any natives with the Municipality."  

As far as the Town Council perceived its task, these regulations did not go far enough. In particular, it objected to the term "aboriginal natives" as this excluded Coloureds from the definition and hence from control. In this, Pretoria took a stronger line than Johannesburg, insisting that Coloureds fall under the definition of 'Native'.

The attempt to apply controls over the Coloured population in Pretoria was to become a recurring theme in the confrontations between the Town Council and central government. The motivation for this attitude is difficult to uncover. A possible explanation lies in the difficulty that the authorities experienced in distinguishing the Coloured from the African population in Pretoria. William Windham, the Native Commissioner, would have like to have seen

"these 'Coloured People' 'induced' to take out Registration Certificates ...they isolate themselves as a Sect, and no matter how closely they resemble the aboriginal, expect the Police to distinguish them. This is absurd. They must bear

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36 MPA 2/6: Letter from the Town Clerk, Pretoria to the Colonial Secretary, 14 April, 1903

37 Transvaal (Colony) Government Gazette, Proclamation No. 7, 7 February 1902

38 SNA 183, NA 2865/03: Letter from the Commissioner for Native Affairs to the Attorney General, 9 March 1904
the penalties of their origin.\textsuperscript{39}

This problem of identification was compounded by the existence of the substantial \textit{oorlams} population in Pretoria. Although they were black, the distinction between \textit{oorlams} and Coloureds was made difficult by virtue of the \textit{oorlams}' ability to speak Afrikaans and their being skilled in certain trades. According to Modikwe Dikobe, who lived in Pretoria as a young man, an African was able to gain claim Coloured status through the ability to speak Afrikaans fluently. He gives the example of his sister, who lived in a hostel for girls in Pretoria, and was classified Coloured because of her fluency in Afrikaans.\textsuperscript{40}

The 1902 proclamation also gave the council no powers to deal with the Asiatic Bazaar and the growing Indian population of Pretoria, nor did it confer on the council the right to formulate regulations regarding law and order in the existing locations or with regard to New Marabastad.\textsuperscript{41} It also gave the Council no power to deal with the existing labour shortage which was crucial to their own interests.

The Pretoria Town Council believed that the delay in passing the municipal pass regulations had created a vacuum in which inadequate control of the African population became a serious problem. Specific pass regulations had been formulated by Major General Maxwell during the Anglo-Boer War to meet the exigencies of martial law. With the cessation of hostilities, the applicability of the pass laws were brought into question.

Immediately following the British occupation of Pretoria, the Military Governor had tightened up the existing pass laws. Ironically, the black population of Pretoria had welcomed the British occupation of Pretoria on 5 June 1900. They believed that the restrictions placed on them during the Republican era would be lifted and the British would provide a more enlightened rule.\textsuperscript{42} Clearly this was not to be the case. In July 1900 all passes had to be numbered in an attempt to

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{40} Interview conducted by M.Friedman with Modikwe Dikobe, April 1989

\textsuperscript{41} F.J.Nöthling, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria 1900-1914" p.49

\textsuperscript{42} B.M. Theron, "A Social History of Pretoria during the first phase of the Anglo-Boer War: October 1899-June 1900", p. 261
combat the high level of desertion that existed in Pretoria. In September 1900 three types of passes were introduced. The first was the existing 'native' pass which had been embodied in Article 37 of the Town Regulations of 1895, and was applicable throughout the Transvaal. Accordingly, every African male in towns was required to carry a printed pass with the name of their employer and the duration of their service contract. The employer would enter a full record of employment, including wages, reasons for the termination of the contract and a full reference of the employee.

The second type was a monthly pass which each employee also had to obtain at a cost of 1/- to his employer. This pass contained the employee's name, the number of his Native Pass, the period of employment, and the name, address and signature of his employer. It had to be renewed monthly for a further 1/-. Thirdly, every African seeking work in Pretoria had to obtain a work pass which entitled him to three days in which to find a job or be arrested.

The Military Authorities were concerned that Africans were serving as spies for the Boer forces and it was hoped that the stricter pass laws would prevent this likelihood. However, the new pass laws should also be viewed in the light of the severe labour shortage that existed in Pretoria during the war combined with the problem of massive desertions.

In June 1902, the Municipality requested that they take over the registration of African men in Pretoria. African women were not subjected to the pass laws and hence were exempt from regulation and control. The control of the pass system would provide the council with certain benefits. The payment of one shilling per month by employers would provide the municipality with a viable source of income. Further, the Council's demands for labour were increasing and

43 Pretoria Friend, Native Passes, 7 July 1900
44 TPB 185, TA 543: Memorandum from J.S. Marwick, Commissioner of Native Affairs, 7 July 1902; F.J. Nöthling, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria, 1900-1914", p.7
45 Transvaal (Colony) Government Gazette, Government Notice 82 of 1900, 29 August 1900
with a viable source of income. Further, the Council's demands for labour were increasing and the administration of the pass system would provide them with a means of regulating their supply.\(^\text{47}\)

The Commissioner for Native Affairs agreed that all Native residential passes for Pretoria would be governed by the Pretoria municipality. Travelling passes would be issued by the Resident Magistrate.\(^\text{48}\) This separation of passes and their control was in itself a major problem.\(^\text{49}\)

In July 1902 the Pretoria Town Council drafted municipal pass regulations in accordance with Section 27 (4) of Proclamation No. 7 of 1902. These required every 'Native' who intended to live and work in the Pretoria Municipality to be issued with an Engagement Pass. The term 'Native' was defined as

\[\text{every male person above the age of fourteen years belonging to any of the aboriginal race...and every male person one of whose parents belongs to any such race or tribe.}^{50}\]

In this way, Coloureds were included within the definition of Native and thus compelled to carry passes. This appeared to be the Town Council's way of circumventing the absence of controls placed on Coloureds in Pretoria. In September 1903 however, central government demanded that Pretoria alter their definition of 'native' to mean all African males over the age of fourteen, in order "to bring it into conformity with the general law."

The monthly pass at a payment of 1/- was retained, though was limited to a period of six months. This clearly was aimed at maintaining a migrant work force in the town. It further stated that

\(^{47}\) TPB 185, TA 543: Town Clerk to the Acting Secretary, Transvaal Administration, 4 June 1902

\(^{48}\) TPB 185, TA 543: Memorandum on Passes, 7 July 1902

\(^{49}\) The lack of a centralised and systematic pass system may have contributed to the fact that Pretoria became a well-established area for WNLA deserters to seek re-entry into the labour market. This issue will be explored further in Chapter Three.

\(^{50}\) MPA 2/6: Pretoria Municipal Native Pass Regulations, 1902

\(^{51}\) Transvaal Advertiser, Definition of Native, 2 October 1903
work seekers would be given a temporary work pass which would be issued for four days.\textsuperscript{52}

The government failed to ratify these regulations immediately. The Commissioner of Native Affairs wanted a uniformity of bye-laws on the subject of municipal passes by the two municipalities of Johannesburg and Pretoria. As a result a conference with representatives from the two councils was held.\textsuperscript{53} Here the Commissioner of Native Affairs seemingly approved the pass regulations of Pretoria and the Town Council sent the final draft to the government on 17 December 1902. Yet these regulations were only gazetted on 30 March 1903. It is not entirely clear why the government delayed passing the Pass laws though it does appear that the delay was caused by the usual bureaucratic channels which were required before the passage of a bill.\textsuperscript{54}

The control of the locations

By the end of the Anglo-Boer War, the Medical Officer of Health placed the number of Africans and Asiatics living in Pretoria at 9863.\textsuperscript{55} In 1903 Marabastad was already facing problems of overcrowding.

Proclamation No.7 failed to confer on the Town Council the right to formulate regulations for law and order in the existing locations. Moreover, the Council drew the attention of the Government to the condition of the locations

"...where numbers of undesirable people are settling while the Town Council is unable to exercise any control until the Regulations controlling the Locations shall have become effective."\textsuperscript{56}

The government in turn attributed the delay to the Town Council. They insisted that the Town Council had failed to submit the revised draft bye-laws following the joint conference with the

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{53} MPA 2/6: Assistant Colonial Secretary to the Acting Town Clerk, 3 October 1902

\textsuperscript{54} MPA 2/6: Colonial Secretary to the Town Clerk, 21 April 1903

\textsuperscript{55} Archives of the Colonial Secretary (CS) 73, 2176/02: Report of the Medical Officer of Health, February 1902

\textsuperscript{56} MPA 2/6: Town Clerk to the Colonial Secretary, 27 January 1903
Native Affairs Department and the Johannesburg and Pretoria Councils.\textsuperscript{57}

The delay in passing the regulations for locations prevented the Town Council from acting with any authority over the fate of New Marabastad. New Marabastad was originally conceived as a temporary refugee camp at the request from the military who objected to the presence of about eighty refugee families living near the Artillery Barracks and at the Brickfields.\textsuperscript{58} By February 1901 393 erfs were laid out between Marabastad and the Asiatic Bazaar for the settlement of these refugees.\textsuperscript{59} The population of New Marabastad increased rapidly. African families squatting at the Railway station were brought in. The inhabitants of 'Prinshof', which was declared an 'undesirable Native quarter', were removed to New Marabastad and a number of families from Marabastad took up erfs due to the latter being overcrowded. In addition seventy Africans from the military were supplied with permits to live away from the camps. By April 1901 there were approximately 800 people living in New Marabastad.\textsuperscript{60}

New Marabastad very quickly began to assume a permanent character. Many of the houses were of a substantial nature, built with burnt brick and corrugated iron. Two churches and a school had been opened, and a large number of the men living in New Marabastad were employed in Pretoria.\textsuperscript{61}

New Marabastad had become a major source of contention between the Town Council and J.S.Marwick, the Acting Native Commissioner. Initially the Temporary and Provisional Town Council had refused to take responsibility for the cost of New Marabastad. In particular, the town engineer, A.Karlson, stated that a considerable number of destitute refugees in New Marabastad...

\textsuperscript{57} MPA 2/6: Colonial Secretary to the Town Clerk, 21 April 1903

\textsuperscript{58} MPA 2/45: J.S.Marwick, Acting Native Commissioner to the Assistant to the Military Governor, 2 April, 1901

\textsuperscript{59} SNA 229, NA 1854/04; Superintendent of Native Affairs to the Town Engineer, 19 April 1901

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{61} MPA 2/45: C.P.Manning, Superintendent of Native Police, to the Commissioner of Police, 1902 (No further date provided).
were unable to pay the tariffs for sanitary service. The Council then deemed that free sanitary services should be provided for destitute refugees by the sanitation company, Sutherland and Co., and the Military Authorities should bear the cost as they were responsible for the creation of New Marabastad.

When the Town Council inherited this situation, it appeared as if it was in the process of being resolved. Major General Maxwell had ordered the removal of the inhabitants of New Marabastad to the Native Refugee Camp, Oliphantsfontein. The Town Council was most anxious for the removal to be effected immediately. The Acting Native Commissioner, Marwick recommended however that the location remain in existence. He argued that the location had acquired a permanency and its removal would involve the government in considerable costs as accommodation for its substantial population would have to be provided. He also stated that following an investigation there had proved to be "few, if any cases of destitution among the Natives." As a result New Marabastad remained. Until the new locations regulations were passed, the Town Council lacked the authority to remove the location.

The motivation behind the Town Council's eagerness to remove New Marabastad is not clear. However, it is likely that it was not simply the case that they were unwilling to bear the cost of the sanitation services. It is not inconceivable that pressure from white ratepayers as a result of the growth of another location in Pretoria did much to influence the Town Council's attitude.

The Government's refusal to hand over the control of the Asiatic Bazaar to the Council was also a source of contention. The Council was subordinate to the will of the Supervisor of Asiatics and as such, had no power to formulate regulations for the Asiatic Bazaar. As a result, activities

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62 MPA 2/45: City Engineer to the Superintendent of Native Affairs, 26 November, 1901
63 MPA 2/45: Acting Burgomaster to the Acting Town Clerk, 17 December 1901
64 MPA 2/45: Military Governor of Pretoria to the Acting Town Clerk, 17 February 1902
65 MPA 2/45: Acting Native Commissioner to the Assistant to the Military Governor, 2 April 1902
66 Pretoria News, 23 January 1903
that were forbidden in the African locations such as beer brewing and subletting were rife in the
Asiatic Bazaar and the Town Council was powerless to stop them.

The fear of disease closely linked with the economic competition posed by Indian traders became
a constant refrain by the Town Council to gain control of the Asiatic Bazaar. Loveday in
particular, was markedly anti-Indian. In 1900 he had complained that

"they disfigure the finest thoroughfares with wretched timbeldon wood and iron
shanties, thereby depreciating the value of property and retarding healthy European
commercial expansion."68

The newly formed Pretoria Ratepayers' Association also objected to the growing numbers of
Indians in Pretoria. They passed a resolution in which the members

"view(ed) with greatest alarm the increasing number of Arab and Coolie traders
in their midst, and also foresee danger to the public health of the town owing to
their unclean and insanitary habits..."69

The government justified their retention of control of the Asiatic Bazaar as they had not
formulated a coherent policy with regard to the Asiaties. The conflict between central and local
government over the control of the Asiatic Bazaar was only resolved in April 1907, when the
government handed over its control to the Town Council.70 The government therefore was
equally responsible for perpetuating the unsavoury conditions that existed.

The Resignation
In most accounts of the council's resignation, both official and historical, only the Town Lands
are cited as the cause of council's resignation. While the Town Lands were undoubtedly an

67 Loveday went on to become chairman of the anti-Asiatic Congress which sat in
Pretoria in 1904

68 Quoted in F.J.Nöthing, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria, 1900-
1914", p. 31; SNA 10, NA 1255/02, Letter from Acting Burgomaster to the Acting
Civil Commissioner, 2 August 1900

69 MPA 2/45: Resolution of Ratepayers Association sent to the Chairman of the
Municipality of Pretoria, 2 January 1903

70 MPA 3/531: Government Notice No. 481 of 1907
important criterion\textsuperscript{71}, the underlying conflicts with central government over the control of the black population clearly heightened the antagonisms between central and local government and played an important role in their decision to resign.

The resignation was in itself a curious decision. The actual motives of the Town Council are difficult to determine. Was it as the Colonial Secretary said, the intention of the council to cause central government a great deal embarrassment?\textsuperscript{72} The timing of the resignation was also important. The government had instituted proceedings to introduce the Municipal Ordinance Bill which would grant the municipalities the right to elect their own council. The term of office of the nominated Town Council was clearly coming to an end. Perhaps this was an attempt at a last grand stand play before their term of office expired.

The transition from a state controlled administration to a system of local government in Pretoria was not a smooth process. The Town Council, despite being nominated by the Government, claimed a certain latitude from central government. On closer analysis it becomes apparent that the council’s major struggles for autonomy during this transition period were centred around control of the town’s black population. The government was concerned to establish a system of uniformity throughout the Transvaal in the formulation of policy. The Town Council on the other hand, wanted to create a system of control that was more in line with the particular nature and needs of Pretoria. In particular, the Town Council was concerned to control the movements and actions of the Coloured population residing in Pretoria which created problems of identification between them and the substantial oorlams population living in Pretoria. The resignation of the entire council was a drastic measure in the council’s attempts to assert its autonomy.

\textsuperscript{71} During the Anglo-Boer War, the municipal area of Pretoria was defined by a proclamation during martial law that made the area as small as possible under military government in order to control it adequately. As a result, the municipal area included the town itself, and Arcadia and Sunnyside. The town lands which were of considerable extent and an important asset were not included within the municipal area. After the war, the Pretoria Town Council thus wanted the inclusion of the town lands within its boundaries to be expedited as quickly as possible. (C 35, Vol.6: Transvaal Municipal Commission - Evidence of J.G.van Boeschoten, Mayor of Pretoria, 1908)

\textsuperscript{72} MPA 2/6:W.E.Davidson, Colonial Secretary to the Town Clerk, Pretoria, 21 April 1903
Pavements and Prejudice: Municipal Government 1903-1912

Following the resignation of the nominated Town Council, an interim Municipal Commission comprising initially three and then five men was appointed by the government to conduct municipal affairs until a Town Council was elected. They were J.W.Honey, J.W.Bell, L.Curtis, T.T.C.Purland and J.G.C.Wagner. This body was not in office for a very long period and under the Municipal Elections Ordinance No.38 of 1903, the first Town Council was elected and assumed its term of office from January 1904. The mayor was E.F.Bourke, a prominent businessman in Pretoria. He controlled the Bourke Trust and Estate Company and was the Chairman of the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce. The Town Council remained similar in composition to the nominated Town Council during this period. It was dominated by the prominent businessmen of the town, the majority of whom were English-speaking. Many of the Councillors who had served on the nominated Town Council continued to be elected to office for a number of years. These included R.K.Loveday, who remained a councillor until his death in 1910, J.J.Kirkness, who served for five years, A.Johnston and E.P.A.Meintjies, who both served for four years, J.Dougall sat on the Council for three years, while both J.H.L.Findlay and E.Chappell sat for two years.

The Town Council’s struggle for autonomy from central government took on a new twist with the proclamation of the Municipal Corporations Ordinance No. 58 of 1903 which gave the municipal councils the enhanced powers they desired. With the promulgation of this ordinance, central government conceded that Proclamation No. 7 of 1902 was a temporary measure designed to meet the exigencies of the situation, while the war was in progress, and that it had never been intended to provide for the permanent administration of Pretoria. In particular the financial constraints placed on the Council under Proclamation No. 7 made it extremely difficult for the Pretoria Town Council to establish any kind of autonomy from central government. Thus, the Pretoria Town Council could not raise money on loan from anyone other than government, and

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73 MPA 6: Minutes of Municipal Commission, 4 June 1903

74 Pretoria News, Pretoria’s First Mayor, 3 December 1903


76 The City of Pretoria: Official Guide, p. 201
the government made it clear that it was not in a position to advance any loans to the Council, nor was the Council entitled to collect the erf tax granted to municipalities, and therefore suffered a loss of several thousand pounds per annum. The Council was also unable to proceed with a number of municipal works, for example, it had no power to work the tramways, nor to expend money on a fire brigade.77

Ironically, the Pretoria Town Council chose to relinquish the autonomy provided by this law, and continued to work under Proclamation No. 7 of 1902. The reason for this once again lies with Pretoria's attitude to its black population. The acceptance of Law No. 58 of 1903 would have meant the repeal of the old Town Regulations, which in turn would have meant that the Council would not have been able to prevent Coloureds from using the sidewalks in Pretoria.78 Section 36 of the Town regulations of 1899 stated that

"Coloured persons are prohibited from walking on the sidewalks of the street or on any stoep serving as a sidewalk."79

These regulations were repealed by the Municipal Ordinance No.58 of 1903, Section 72(2) and replaced by the provision that municipalities were enabled to make bye-laws for the purposes of

"regulating the use of the public streets by natives and prohibiting the carrying by them of knob-kerries (sic) and assegais or other sticks or weapons."80

'Natives' in this instance were defined as "any person both of whose parents belong to any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa."81 Although other Municipal Councils in the Transvaal initially protested against the repeal of the Town Regulations of 1899, they eventually came under the operation of the Ordinance, because full power was still given to them under to prevent

77 MPA 9: Minutes of Special Meeting of the Town Council, Letter from the Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Government, 27 May 1904; Pretoria News, Town Council and the Government, 28 May 1904


79 MPA 14: Minutes of the Town Council, Precis of facts and legislation concerning the control of Coloured persons on sidewalks, 27 February 1908

80 Ibid. (Emphasis in original text)

81 Ibid.
Africans from walking on the sidewalk. The Pretoria Town Council however, refused to be included under the new Ordinance. Anxious though it was to acquire the rights of local government proffered by the Municipal Ordinance, the Pretoria Town Council protested vigorously against the withdrawal of restrictions on Coloureds.

In 1904 the Legislative Council attempted to redress this grievance by empowering Town Councils to make bye-laws for the purpose of

"prohibiting the use of sidewalks of any public street by natives not holding letters of exemption...and by Coloured persons who are not respectably dressed and well conducted."

The Pretoria Town Council was not appeased and demanded the right to turn all Coloureds off the sidewalks. Central government refused to accede, and the Pretoria Municipality remained under a number of inadequate statutory powers which militated against the proper government of the town.

There was some opposition to the Council’s decision to remain under Proclamation No. 7 of 1902. The Pretoria News called for the imposition of "principle against prejudice" and J.H.L.Findlay, a former councillor with liberal leanings, was convinced that Pretoria’s "devotion to prejudice is costing us very dear indeed."

He cited the erf tax, which erfholders were paying close to £4,000 to the government, and which the Council would abolish if it were under Proclamation No. 58; and the costs of African passes were being borne by employers to the tune of £7,000 annually, whereas these costs would be transferred to the Africans themselves under the Proclamation. Reverend James Gray asserted that many citizens of Pretoria were not in

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82 MPA 14: Minutes of the Town Council, 24 February 1908
83 MPA 14: Minutes of the Town Council, 27 February 1908; Pretoria News, The Footpath Question, 23 August, 1905
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid.
86 Pretoria News, Proclamation 58, 10 October 1904
87 Ibid.
sympathy with the attitude of the Pretoria Town Council. He stressed the unChristian aspect of the Council's policy, stating that

"the whole practice of giving Christian enlightenment, both in secular and sacred things, to the native, and thus arousing in him legitimate Christian aspirations is a gross and heartless hypocrisy if in such a matter as walking on the footpath we are to meet him with the prohibition."  

The Council was clearly severely limited in its powers by remaining under the constraints of Proclamation No. 7 of 1902 and as a consequence sought to extend its powers which would enable it to raise loans and borrow money. In 1905 the Council applied for a Private Ordinance which incorporated a number of sections of the Municipal Corporations Ordinance of 1903 with Proclamation No. 7 of 1902. The Johannesburg Municipality functioned under a private ordinance which included the Town Regulations of 1899 under their jurisdiction, and the Pretoria Town Council believed if they too came under such an ordinance, the problem of allowing Coloureds to use the sidewalks could be bypassed. This Pretoria Municipal Extended Powers Draft Ordinance was rejected at the second reading of the Legislative Council by the Attorney General, Sir Richard Solomon, on the 9th August 1905. This heightened the antagonism between central government and the Pretoria Town Council, the Council asserting that Sir Richard Solomon,

"for the sake of allowing a few well-dressed kafirs to use the footpaths has set at naught the wishes of the people of the Capital."

Although the Council minutes are not entirely clear on the Attorney General's motivation for his rejection of the draft ordinance, they do allude to the 'colour question'. The Council thus urged

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88 Pretoria News, The Footpath Question, 23 August 1905

89 Pretoria News, The Colour Question, 19 August 1905

90 MPA 10: Minutes of the Town Council, 6 October 1904

91 MPA 11: Minutes of the Town Council, 22 June 1905 - Private Ordinance, Notice No. 68 of 1905

92 F.J.Nöthling, "Gekleurdes en Pretoria se Sypaadjies, 1900-1925", Contree, Vol.5, 1979, p.8

93 MPA 11: Minutes of the Town Council, 17 August 1905

94 Pretoria News, With Discretion, 11 August 1905
the government

"to reconsider the position, and...to accept a motion to allow the Ordinance to be read a second time, leaving the contentious question of colour for future legislation." ⁹⁵

In 1906 the Town Council introduced private legislation in order to circumvent the problems posed by Ordinance 58. The Pretoria Municipal Ordinance No.1 (Private) of 1906 was an attempt to extend the powers of the Town Council while still retaining the right to operate the Town Regulations of 1899. This too was opposed by the Legislative Council.⁹⁶

The police administered the terms of the law rigidly, turning off Africans from the sidewalk wherever they were seen to be infringing this proclamation. This was often taken to extremes, eliciting a response from a "Native", that

"this policeman would have natives either fly or walk on their heads, from the Private Boxes (of the Post Office) to the street and back to the Telegraph Offices...this man had not got even the common sense which even an idiot native has, to see that his version of the Law was absurd." ⁹⁷

The sidewalk issue dominated the Council’s position on Ordinance No. 58. In 1907 when the Transvaal gained responsible government under the Botha/Smuts Het Volk Party, the Pretoria Town Council once again applied for the introduction of a private ordinance, but the new government was unwilling to change the status quo.⁹⁸ The situation continued until 1912 when financial considerations forced Pretoria to surrender the bye-law. As a result, Pretoria was included in the general list of municipalities of the Transvaal and thereby obtained certain powers of taxation.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ MPA 11: Minutes of the Town Council, 17 August 1905
⁹⁷ Pretoria News, Municipality and Discretion as to Natives and Walks, 24 October 1904
⁹⁸ F.J.Nöthling, "Gekleurdes en Pretoria se Sypaadjies, 1900-1925", p.9
⁹⁹ The Star, Pretoria’s pavements were forbidden to Natives until 1912, 17 June 1959. In 1925 the sidewalk issue was once again placed on the agenda when the Pretoria Municipal Council attempted to revive the old bye-law, but permission was refused by General Hertzog, the Minister of Native Affairs.
More than anything however, the sidewalk issue appears to be a metaphor for the dominant attitude of white Pretorians to their black counterparts, which was characterised by overt racism.

"There was no room for the native on the side walks...The line between the white and the black races must be clearly marked." 100

D. Kennedy, in writing about settler society in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia from 1890 to 1939, suggested that the prohibition of Africans from walking on sidewalks became a symbolic boundary between black and white in a world where settlers and Africans were inescapably being brought into constant physical proximity with each other. Such petty segregation was intended to "establish a concrete and unambiguous measure of the social differences" between black and white. 101 According to Councillor Loveday, who spearheaded the opposition to Ordinance 58 in the Town Council,

"the kafir was a type of a human being, but we could never associate, as white men, with such a type." 102

Comments such as these enhance the attitudes of paternalism and racism which dominated social discourse in South Africa during this period. Saul Dubow has indicated how the tenets of eugenics and Social Darwinism informed the thinking of white South Africans at the turn of the century, and led to a society which

"presented white supremacy as part of the natural order of things in its (im)moral universe." 103

Nevertheless, these racist attitudes earned Pretoria the reputation of "a Jim Crow town." 104 Maloka Molai recalled the harshness of these attitudes:

"Pretoria was very bad. I wonder if it has changed. We were not permitted to walk

100 Pretoria News, Municipal Elections, Mr Turner's Views, 14 September, 1904


102 Pretoria News, The Question of Colour, 7 January 1904

103 S. Dubow, "Race, civilisation and culture: the elaboration of segregationist discourse in the inter-war years", in S. Marks and S. Trapido (eds), The Politics of Race, Class and Nationalism in Twentieth Century South Africa, p.75

104 E. Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue, p.106
on the pavement. We were trampled by horses."\textsuperscript{105}

In particular it reinforced the hard line adopted by the Town Council over the control of Coloureds. Why was this such a crucial issue for the Pretoria Town Council? Many of the explanations offered by Councillors offered an overtly racist point of view. F. Turner, candidate for Ward 1, considered that there was

"greater danger from this class than from the raw kafir, for they very frequently inherited the worst characteristics of both parents."\textsuperscript{106}

Councillor C. M. de Vries stated that as an Afrikaner he felt a great antipathy to the Coloured man.\textsuperscript{107} He was of the opinion that "this footpath business was the thin edge of the wedge",\textsuperscript{108} and

"to let kafirs walk on the sidewalk...would eventually lead to the coloured franchise."\textsuperscript{109}

Yet the numbers of Coloureds in Pretoria did not warrant the fear of being swamped politically. By 1904 only 1,672 Coloureds were living in Pretoria. Once again, the issue appears to be about control of the Coloured population and the oorlams who were difficult to distinguish from them. The 'educated' Coloured was the one who created resentment. This suggests that a perceived threat from the white artisanal class in Pretoria who were semi-skilled in trades and feared losing their jobs to Coloured and oorlams artisans.

Thus the attempts by the Pretoria Town Council to prevent Africans and Coloureds from walking on the sidewalks contained within them a symbolic attempt to create a social distance between black and white and a perception of the superior status of whites. The particular antipathy towards Coloureds in Pretoria however, and the willingness of the Town Council to remain under an antiquated law in order to prevent this section of the black population from walking on the sidewalks, went beyond pure racism. Embedded within these efforts was the need of the Town

\textsuperscript{105} M. Dikobe, "Inside the New Society", p. 10

\textsuperscript{106} Pretoria News, Municipal Election. Mr Turner's Views, 14 September 1904

\textsuperscript{107} Pretoria News, Municipal Elections, 13 September 1904

\textsuperscript{108} Pretoria News, The Coloured Question, 10 September 1904

\textsuperscript{109} Pretoria News, Municipal Elections, 13 September 1904
Council to bring this population under some form of control.

Conclusion
Municipal government was forged in a climate of conflict between central and local government. From its earliest beginnings, the town of Pretoria grappled with the problem of establishing a system of local government. The local white population were reluctant to assume the responsibilities of municipal government, especially the financial obligations. Once in place, local government in Pretoria continued to clash with central government over issues of autonomy and over the control of the black population. In an unprecedented move, the nominated Pretoria Town Council resigned en masse as a public statement of grievance towards central government for, in part, its lack of concern in expediting the control of the black population of Pretoria to the municipal authorities. The rigid and racist attitudes of the Pretoria Town Council to both its African and Coloured population and their concerns to bring both groupings under tight control prolonged the Council’s struggle with central government. The particular attempts to prevent Coloureds as well as Africans from walking on the sidewalks, resulted in the Pretoria Town Council remaining under an archaic law, and clearly highlighted the tensions that existed between a central government concerned to impose uniformity of policy on its town councils and a town council that was resolved to create policy that would suit the specific demands of its councillors and constituents.
CHAPTER THREE: AFRICAN URBANISATION IN PRETORIA 1902-1923

The path to capitalism in the Transvaal was neither uniform nor even. The specificity of local conditions in different areas determined the nature of economic development and concomitantly, the settlement of Africans in urban areas. A study of African urbanisation in Pretoria in the early twentieth century suggests a range of different patterns of accommodation and settlement to those of the Rand. Notably the size and scale of African urbanisation was substantially smaller. Furthermore, African urbanisation began far earlier in Pretoria, and the creation of a permanently settled urban African community with its own particular identity can be traced back to 1867 with the establishment of the mission station, Schoolplaats. This permanent population, which comprised an important female constituency, distinguished Pretoria from the Rand which was characterised by the presence of a large male migrant population housed in single-sex compounds, and in the early years, the relative absence of women. Thus an examination of African urbanisation in Pretoria offers insight into different processes of urbanisation and proletarianisation. Moreover, the patterns of migration and urbanisation for men and women in Pretoria were qualitatively different, and, once in Pretoria, their experience was substantially different. Men found employment in the formal sectors of the economy, whereas women tended to be excluded from wage labour and it was in the area of the informal sector that they not only dominated, but made an essential contribution to the working class culture that emerged in Pretoria.

An analysis of the creation of Pretoria’s working class also highlights the uneven development of capitalism in the Transvaal. Pretoria’s development took place alongside the mineral discoveries of the Rand but in itself did not participate in any such mining revolution. The town’s development was slow but its role as the centre of government gave it a particular character. In particular this chapter will attempt to show that the absence of an industrial base in Pretoria until the 1930s provided the context for a protracted conflict between African and poor white labour.

Many of the patterns of African urbanisation and employment that were established in the
nineteenth century were entrenched during the course of the early twentieth century. A large section of Africans continued to live in the locations laid out for African residential purposes; domestic servants lived on the premises of their employers; and in the early 1900s, private and municipal compounds were established to accommodate workers. The three dominant employment sectors continued to be domestic service, the private sector and state employment, both within the Pretoria Municipality and central government. A number of the African population were permanent urban dwellers, many of them having initially settled in Pretoria under missionary influence, there was a substantial female presence living in the locations, and Pretoria continued to be a major stopping over point for newcomers into the labour market.

Between 1903 and 1914 the town itself grew and the demands of town planning became far more diverse and complex. The bureaucracy of the administration during this period extended quite considerably and therefore it is possible to uncover more detailed information on the nature and development of the African community. The war years (1914-1918) are marked by the relative dearth of records of the Town Council, particularly with regard to the African population. It appears that the bureaucratic imperatives of the administration of Pretoria was considerably diminished by the participation of many of its members in the overseas war effort. It thus becomes more difficult to determine the nature of the African population during this period.

The nature of the African population in Pretoria 1902-1923
In 1904 the official census recorded the civil population of the Municipality of Pretoria as 36,839, comprising 21,114 whites, 12,263 Africans, 1,790 Asiatics and 1,672 Coloureds. Although an official census is by no means reliable, and it probably reflects a lower count than the actuality, it does provide some sense of the ethnic composition of the African population in Pretoria at the turn of the century. The dominant grouping was of Sotho origin, accounting for 7,218 of the population, but no further breakdown of this group is provided. There were 2,278 Africans from the Portuguese territories and the East Coast and 1,005 Zulus living in Pretoria, with 739 Venda and Ndebele forming the next largest grouping.
There were a further 243 Swazis, 195 Africans from Rhodesia and 126 Bechuanas.¹

The lack of an industrial base and the relatively low level of employment opportunities in Pretoria in the early twentieth century suggest that the pull of the 'bright lights' of the city cannot account for African migration to Pretoria. Rural impoverishment may account for the comparatively large number of Portuguese and East Coast Africans leaving these territories but it does not fully explain why they chose to settle in Pretoria above the more industrialised centres. Neither would ecological disasters, African taxation nor generational conflict in the rural areas account for the settlement of Africans in Pretoria in particular. In order to explain this phenomenon, one needs to look to the specific local conditions that made Pretoria attractive to newcomers to town.

Firstly, the existence of Schoolplaats, the urban mission established in 1867 and Marabastad, the government-controlled location created in 1888, meant that the newcomer could usually find accommodation in the town. They would be able to lodge with established home dwellers or in municipal lodging rooms, which had been established in Marabastad since 1905,² or sublet from landlords in the Asiatic Bazaar. Secondly, it is not inconceivable that the absence of a large industrial base in Pretoria was in itself an attraction. For the newcomer to town life, Pretoria presented a far less overwhelming urban experience than did the Rand. The town was smaller, which made it possible for the newly urbanised to become acclimatised to the rigours of urbanisation and proletarianisation before moving on to the larger industrial centres such as the Rand. And the absence of a significant mining industry in Pretoria removed the possibility of extremely harsh living conditions in prison-like compounds. The cultural milieu of tea meetings, dances and illicit beer brewing which had been existent in Marabastad from an early period also provided newcomers with mechanisms to cope with their new and often alienating environment. Ironically however, although the urban experience may have been relatively preferable to that of the larger, more industrial areas, it was in these smaller towns such as Pretoria that petty segregation was often more exacting.

¹ Results of a Census of the Transvaal Colony and Swaziland, 1904, Table 25
² MPA 13: Minutes of the Town Council, 6 December 1906
Pretoria also had an established tradition from the nineteenth century as a stopping over point for newcomers to town. It was a logical geographical stop for Africans coming from the North, being placed centrally between the northern parts of the Transvaal and the Rand. This 'Pretoria Connection', identified by both S. Moroney and A. Jeeves, was used by contracted workers as a means of gaining access to more desirable employment opportunities. They would desert the WNLA trains at Pretoria station, thereafter either working in Pretoria for a period or gaining a travelling pass to re-enter the reef without hindrance. Checks and controls were initially not as efficient in Pretoria as it was not zoned as a labour area. Migrant workers were thus able to enter the labour market as 'free' labour agents. Moreover, the nature of Pretoria's economic base with its limited industries other than services also contributed to migration patterns whereby unskilled labourers would use Pretoria as an important stopover point.

Thus in many ways, the slower, slightly more rural environment of Pretoria with its important geographical situation between the Northern Transvaal and the Rand, offered the newly urbanised many advantages over the bustling Rand, and these explain in part the movement of Africans to Pretoria.

The African population of Pretoria continued to grow between 1903 and 1921, and it became increasingly disparate. (See Table 1) Nevertheless, in comparison with the Rand, the population figures remained significantly smaller. (See Table 2) Only a small proportion of the urban African population lived in the African locations. The population of Marabastad,


4 In this, Pretoria shared similar patterns of migration with other small towns which lacked an industrial base, such as Umtata. See S. Redding, "Umtata: the Emergence of an Urban Community", Paper presented to the History Seminar, University of Cape Town, 1984
both Old and New, in 1903 was approximately 2,500 people,\(^5\) while the numbers at Schoolplaats were considerably smaller. In 1906 Reverend Sack placed the population of Schoolplaats at 708, comprising 398 adults and 310 children.\(^6\) By 1910 the Superintendent of Locations recorded the population of Marabastad as 3,750.\(^7\)

Table 1: Population figures for Africans and Whites in Pretoria, 1904-1921\(^8\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Africans</th>
<th>Whites</th>
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<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>12,295</td>
<td>21,114</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>17,660*</td>
<td>24,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>19,361</td>
<td>34,898</td>
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* No census of the Pretoria population was taken in 1911. The figure provided is a rough estimate drawn up by the Medical Officer of Health.\(^9\)

\(^5\) MPA 3/159: E.H.Schlaefli, Location Superintendent, to the Town Clerk, 25 November 1903

\(^6\) MPA 3/157: Reverend Sack to Town Clerk, 12 April 1906

\(^7\) MPA 3/157: Town Clerk to the Acting Secretary to the Administrator, 17 September 1910

\(^8\) MPA 4/1/2/1: 17th Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1920-1921

\(^9\) MPA 18: Minutes of the Town Council, 23 February 1911
Table 2: Comparison of African populations in Johannesburg and Pretoria, 1904-1921

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<thead>
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<th>Johannesburg</th>
<th>Pretoria</th>
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<tr>
<td>1904:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>55,765</td>
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<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>3,840</td>
<td>2,026</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59,605</td>
<td>12,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>97,614</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>4,357</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>101,971</td>
<td>17,660*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>102,960</td>
<td>14,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>12,160</td>
<td>5,231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115,120</td>
<td>19,361</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* No census of the Pretoria population was taken in 1911. The figure provided is a rough estimate drawn up by the Medical Officer of Health.

An analysis of population figures of Marabastad in December 1909 reveals a fairly stable and residential population. Of the total 3220, there were 1058 males, 951 females, and 583 male and 628 female children under the age of 14. Moreover, the official figures place 912 males in employment in Pretoria, with the difference being accounted to some extent by old men,

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and those employed in Marabastad as shopkeepers, teachers and ministers.\textsuperscript{11}

This trend of a small but stable population living in the locations as compared to the rest of the African population in town continued. Of the official African population of 19,361 Pretoria in 1921, only 4,833 Africans lived in Marabastad, 1,097 lived in Schoolplaats and approximately 500 lived in the New Location (Bantule) which had been developed in 1913 to deal with the growing population.\textsuperscript{12} The rest of the African population lived in town, in compounds and on employers' premises either as domestic servants or as labourers. There were also approximately 700 African tenants living in the Asiatic Bazaar.\textsuperscript{13}

By 1910 the urban African population in Pretoria was significantly stratified and it was possible to distinguish the growth of three separate groupings - a permanent population, an intermediary group, and the floating population. The urban experience and the processes of proletarianisation of each group differed accordingly.

The permanent population were to be found chiefly in the African locations of New and Old Marabastad and in the urban mission, Schoolplaats. They had emerged to a large extent from the early oorlams population of Pretoria and thus had little or no ties to a rural past. They were typically proficient in a trade, had some level of education, usually provided by the missionaries operating in the area, and were regarded by the authorities as 'respectable'. Joel Mabulelang's experience serves as an example:

"I am a child of here since 1884. I am here in Pretoria brought up here and got my education here. My trade is a carpenter, and building of iron houses."\textsuperscript{14}

Moreover, as a result of their skills, this grouping was usually more highly paid than the rest of the African working class in Pretoria.

"We have a lot of them employed by saddlers and cycle stores and those sort

\textsuperscript{11} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W. Windham, 7 June 1910, p.18
\textsuperscript{12} MPA 4/1/2/1: 17th Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1920 to 1921
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{14} MPA 3/161: J. Mabulelang to the Superintendent of Locations, March 1928
of places where they do repairs, and get a very much better wage than the average native."\textsuperscript{15}

Included in this grouping of permanent urban dwellers was a small but significant petty bourgeoisie living in Marabastad and Schoolplaats who were educated and were often school teachers, church ministers or interpreters for state functionaries. The 1904 census revealed a higher degree of educated persons in Pretoria where almost twenty three percent of Africans were literate as compared to the Rand where only seven percent were literate. Of the literate African population in Pretoria more were women than men.\textsuperscript{16} These figures suggest two things: firstly, that a component of the population of Pretoria was more stable than the Rand where a predominantly migrant, uneducated population existed, and secondly, that the higher percentage of educated women in Pretoria implies that a proportion of women who moved to Pretoria came from mission schools in the country or had grown up on Schoolplaats where they had received literacy skills.

In Pretoria there had been a fairly long tradition of schooling initiated by the missionaries. The Berlin missionaries had insisted on attendance at school as a prerequisite for living on the mission, although schooling was usually limited to a Standard Three level. The approach to higher education promoted by the Wesleyan missionaries at Kilnerton created a manifest well-educated elite based in the Pretoria locations. Many of these men were teachers and ministers within the community and a significant number became centrally active in African political organisation in Pretoria. Most notable among them were men such as S.M.Makgatho, the President of the Transvaal Native Congress, and P.T.Maeta.\textsuperscript{17}

Many of the members of this class linked into the growing political activity of Pretoria, and identified themselves with notions of respectability. Nathaniel Boya serves as a typical member of this growing elite. He had lived in Marabastad since 1887 together with his

\textsuperscript{15} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.15

\textsuperscript{16} Results of a Census of the Transvaal Colony and Swaziland 1904, Table 133

\textsuperscript{17} SNA 337, NA 2686/06: Rev.J.F.Briscoe to J.S.Marwick, Assistant Secretary for Native Affairs, 30 October 1906. The careers of Makgatho and Maeta will be discussed further in Chapter Five.
family, and was employed as a 'native' interpreter to the Sub Native Commissioner of Pretoria. He was active in politics, being a member of the Transvaal Native Union which had been established in 1903. Boya himself had social aspirations towards respectability and objected to the location being "all mixed up". He thus proposed that the new location, when established, should be divided and "respectable natives" be fenced in.\(^{18}\) Boya reflected the concerns of his social grouping and his speech is littered with references to "undesirables" who needed to be controlled and eradicated.\(^{19}\) In this he echoed the concerns of the Town Council, and he, and others like him, were often called upon by the urban authorities to give evidence in various commissions to give weight to the Town Council's desire to impose further control of this so-called 'undesirable' element.

As the permanently settled sector of the population had been established in the locations for some time, it is likely that they had access to better housing. They were able therefore to take in tenants and lodgers which would supplement their income as well as place them in positions of control and often exploitation over their tenants. This was a charge that was leveled by the Superintendent of Locations particularly at the members of the Schoolplaats Vigilance Committee, the members of which had been resident in Schoolplaats since the late nineteenth century, thus reflecting a long established and settled African population in Pretoria. With regard to their objections to the intended demolition of houses in Schoolplaats, he stated that they

> "consist of unscrupulous landlords who can very well see by demolishing a number of their rooms they will lose a very steady income, they are not so much concerned about the welfare of their people, they are concerned about their pockets."\(^{20}\)

The permanent nature of the African population from an early period was a distinctive feature of the urban African population of Pretoria, particularly when compared with the predominantly migrant nature of the Rand's early African population. It was a crucial

\(^{18}\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of N.J.Boya, 3 June 1910, p.6

\(^{19}\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of N.J.Boya, 3 June 1910, pp.9-10

\(^{20}\) MPA 3/161: Superintendent of Locations to the Town Clerk, 2 March 1933
determinant in the creation of an urban African policy in the early twentieth century. A migrant population was far more desirable to the state as it was able to keep wages low and shift responsibility for the reproduction of the working class on to the working class itself. The existence of a permanent population forced the urban authorities to assume a wider responsibility than perhaps they were willing. The creation of specific areas of accommodation for a permanent population, the provision of housing and living facilities were all issues that the authorities were forced to confront far earlier than the Johannesburg Town Council.

The regular workers, who were not necessarily permanently settled in Pretoria, formed the intermediary stratum. They comprised the bulk of the unskilled labour force. Some may have been resident in Pretoria for a number of years, while others were single men who were contracted to work in Pretoria for defined periods of time. Many of these men formed a class of domestic workers who lived on the premises of their employers. While a number of workers resided in the locations, many lived either in areas in and around town on the premises of their employers, as domestic servants or as labourers, or in makeshift compounds near their areas of work. As a result, these men came under no single authority and moved freely between their places of accommodation and the location. It was often difficult to distinguish between these single men who were constant nightly or weekend visitors to Marabastad and Schoolplaats and the regular inhabitants. Thus single men became a difficult problem of control for the municipal authorities.

At the turn of the century, no centralised compound for all municipal workers existed. The inability of the Town Council to provide accommodation for their workers accounted to some extent for their problems in attracting labour, but also exacerbated the issue of control. Consequently, in 1903, the Municipal Commission implemented plans to build a central compound which would provide accommodation for eight hundred Africans, and a place

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21 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.15

22 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of C.Sack, 1 June 1910, p.42
"where the boys could be controlled." Thus in 1903 a wood and iron house formerly occupied by squatters on ground adjacent to the stables was bought by the municipality, as well as a shed being erected on the premises. In this way 210 workers were accommodated in the municipal compound. Accommodation was also provided for sixty workers of the scavenging service at the Bloed Street stables and 130 workers for the removal service were located at the Sanitary Farm. By 1921 775 African workers where housed in the Municipal compound.

Yet the establishment of centralised compounds did not eliminate the problem of control. The compounds themselves, according to Reverend E.Creux, became centres of beer-brewing, criminality and general rowdiness. Conditions in the compounds were generally wretched with a great deal of overcrowding, poor food, unhealthy sanitary conditions and the buildings of inferior construction, and these deteriorated with time, rather than improved. These harsh living conditions in the municipal compound played a crucial role in the uprising of municipal workers that took place in the compound in 1942.

23 MPA 4: Minutes of the Town Council, J.van Reesema, Town Clerk, to Municipal Commissioners, 7 May 1903; MPA 6: Minutes of the Municipal Commission, 1 October 1903

24 MPA 6: Minutes of the Municipal Commission, 11 June 1903

25 MPA 4: Minutes of the Town Council, J.van Reesema, Town Clerk to Municipal Commissioners, 7 May 1903

26 Archives of the Director, Government Native Labour Bureau (GNLB) 333, 152/21/97: Sub-Native Commissioner, Pretoria to the Director of Native Labour, 21 June 1921

27 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend E.Creux, 1 June 1910, p.14

28 MPA 3/369: Town Clerk to the Public Health Committee, 13 March 1912; MPA 21, Minutes of the Town Council, 19 July 1912; MPA 3/369: Town Clerk to the Town Engineer and Medical Officer of Health, 3 September 1913

29 See M.Friedman, "'Tshaya! He has our money!': The uprising of the Pretoria municipal compound workers, 1942", Paper presented to the History Workshop Conference, University of the Witwatersrand, 1990
The floating population comprised casual and temporary visitors to Marabastad.\textsuperscript{30} There were usually a number of single men at any one time who were in Pretoria for a short while, often before moving on to the Rand. They were, according to W.A.King, the Sub-Native Commissioner,

"...a sort of floating population, and simply wander from one place to another. When they get into trouble in one town they go to another."\textsuperscript{31}

At least until Pretoria was zoned as a labour district, an important constituency of the floating population were migrant workers who had been recruited by Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) to work on the mines on the Rand who wished to rid themselves of this obligation and enter the labour market independently. Many of the members of this floating population were also likely to be newcomers to town who stayed briefly in Pretoria in order to acclimatise to a less rigorous urban environment before moving on to the Rand.

The Town Council viewed the floating population as an extremely undesirable element and a source of concern. In many instances the criminal element within the Pretoria municipality were identified with the floating population.\textsuperscript{32} It was the council's intention to subject this population to some form of control.

"Control of the location should be directed specially towards this end, to prevent this floating population from settling in the locations and making the location their home."\textsuperscript{33}

As a result regulations regarding casual visitors were quite rigorous. Any visitor to the locations wishing to stay longer than three hours was required to gain a lodger's permit from the Superintendent of Locations, and seek accommodation in one of the municipal lodging

\textsuperscript{30} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of C.T.Hamblin, 3 June 1910, p.30

\textsuperscript{31} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.14

\textsuperscript{32} TPB 552, TA 1444: H.Rose-Innes, Chairman of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, 1 June 1910

\textsuperscript{33} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend E.Creux, 1 June 1910, p.25
houses which had been established in Marabastad since 1906.\textsuperscript{34} However this proved difficult to control. In most cases visitors did not bother. 'Home' networks provided an easier entry into the location. It proved simpler to enter the location, look for a friend, bring him news from his part of the country about his relatives and subsequently stay there.\textsuperscript{35}

Thus far, the discussion on the African population in Pretoria has focused largely on men. Until recently, black men and migrancy were seen as the core component in the processes of urbanisation and proletarianisation in the South African context, and as a result women had been neglected. A growing concern for gender and the crucial role played by women in the urbanisation process has resulted in a number of studies focussing on the role of black women in urban studies.\textsuperscript{36} These studies have highlighted the active role that women played, both in terms of challenging the local state and in terms of the contribution they made to growing working class culture.

African women in Pretoria formed a crucial component of the urban population and played an important role both in shaping the particular character of the urban environment and in the economic life of the African community. Because women's experiences as they migrated to and settled in town differed substantially to African men, an analysis of African women's role provides insight into alternative processes of proletarianisation. In particular, African women dominated the informal sector economy and demonstrated an independence and resilience that contrasted sharply with their positions in rural society. They also were exempt from any official control and thus provided the urban authorities with a particular set of social and political problems and often urban African policy evolved in direct response to the inability of the state to control the settlement of African women.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{34} MPA 13: Minutes of the Town Council, 6 December 1906

\textsuperscript{35} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.15-17

\textsuperscript{36} For a list of references, see Introduction, Footnote 17, p.9

The presence of women in towns is vital for the growth and identification of a permanently settled urban population. From the earliest years of African settlement, there had been an established contingent of women living in Pretoria. In the urban locations, the numbers of African men and women were almost equal, though women were outnumbered by men more generally in the urban areas. Many of the women living in Pretoria were permanently settled there. This feature contrasts sharply with urbanisation patterns on the Rand where women only began to move to urban centres in significant numbers from the 1920s. Of the 12,295 Africans in Pretoria in 1904, 83.5% of the population was male, whereas women comprised 16.5%. This too contrasted with Johannesburg, where women comprised only 6.4% of the African population. By 1921 the number of woman living in Johannesburg had increased to 10.5% of the African population whereas they comprised 27% in Pretoria. By 1910 a substantial number of the women living in Pretoria had been born there and were members of families, either as mothers or as children. Most of the single women living in Pretoria however were recent arrivals in town. According to Reverend Creux of the Swiss Mission in Pretoria, a large number of these single women had come from Delagoa Bay, while others had come from "villages all around".\textsuperscript{38} Women also came from various mission stations in the district. Reverend Siebelt stated that there was an average of over forty girls from his mission station alone who came to town to work, though he did not suggest that they moved to Pretoria permanently; they often returned to the mission, with children in tow.\textsuperscript{39}

This raises the question of why women who were leaving the confines of rural society would move to Pretoria as opposed to settlements on the Rand. Work opportunities for women in Pretoria were no better than the Rand. In this period, the domestic service sector was dominated by men and formal employment for women was limited to washing. Possibly the nature of Pretoria as a small town goes some way towards explaining this phenomenon. A common pattern of African women's migration was to make a series of graded transitional moves from rural village to a nearby local farm, and from there to a small town where they would gain the experience of urbanisation in a less hostile environment before moving on to

\textsuperscript{38} Transvaal Liquor Commission (C 41), Vol.1: Transvaal Liquor Commission, 1909 - Evidence of Reverend E.Creux

\textsuperscript{39} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend Siebelt, cited by W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.30

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bigger cities. Bozzoli has demonstrated how many young girls from Phokeng followed a "hierarchy of occupations", first working on local farms and in Rustenburg; then moving to Pretoria to work as domestic servants and lastly, approaching the suburbs of Johannesburg where it was believed that domestic servants earned higher wages. Mahube Makgale's experiences highlight this particular trend. She left Phokeng following her confirmation in 1919 and worked on a farm in Thabane making jam, earning 1s. a day. She then moved to Pretoria:

"We were looking for green pastures ... where we would get a job at the highest possible salary. Most of all, we wanted to work as domestic servants."  

She finally left Pretoria in 1921 and moved to Johannesburg because she "wanted more money."  

The need to escape generational and kinship controls exerted by parents in rural society also played a part in the proliferation of single women in Marabastad. Nathaniel Boya suggests that a number of women in town had run away from their husbands or parents to live in Pretoria. Women who had been deserted by their husbands in the rural areas often came to town to look for their husbands, only to find that he had taken up with another woman. These newly arrived deserted women also formed the basis of the single women community in Pretoria. A number of migrant workers at Premier Mines often left their wives destitute in Marabastad and they were thrown on their own resources to survive.

'Home girl' networks also played a role in drawing women to certain areas. Women would

40 B. Bozzoli, Women of Phokeng, pp.94-95

41 African Studies Institute (ASI), University of the Witwatersrand: Oral History Project (OHP), Women’s Project (Phokeng), Interview with Mahube Makgale, 27 November 1981

42 Ibid.

43 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of N.J. Boya, 3 June 1910, p.11

44 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sergeant S. Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.58
go to work in Pretoria because "many girls from my village were working there already." For example, it was traditional among women from the village of Chaneng to seek work in Pretoria, and particularly in Roberts Heights, while others from the neighbouring village of Phokeng tended to find work either in Pretoria or in Parkview in Johannesburg. 'Home girl' networks provided newcomers to town with support in a new and often alienating environment and they usually ensured that they had a place to stay and some form of employment lined up for them. These home networks were informal communication systems comprising women usually from the same area who had undergone similar experiences. Josephine Mokotedi recounts how she knew where to go upon her decision to leave Phokeng in the early 1920s:

"I had friends, who were already working in Pretoria, it was they who advised me to go there and they met me at the station when I arrived. They had also found a job for me."

Single or deserted women and widows were the most vulnerable as they found themselves thrust in an essentially male-dominated environment. Without the care of a man, housing was extremely precarious, and with limited opportunities for employment in the formal sector, women in Marabastad resorted to the more informal means of earning a living, such as illicit beer brewing, prostitution and hawking. Despite the hardships facing women in Pretoria and other urban areas, many were able to establish a degree of economic and personal independence. Their activities in the informal sector did much to close the gap between wages and the cost of subsistence, as well as contributed towards the emerging working class culture of the towns.

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45 ASI, Wits: OHP, Women's Project (Phokeng), Interview with Mmamatlakala Moje, 1 October 1982

46 ASI, Wits: OHP, Women's Project (Phokeng), Interview with Josephine Mokotedi, 23 March 1983

47 ASI, Wits: OHP, Women's Project (Phokeng), Interview with Josephine Mokotedi, 25 November 1981

48 B. Bozzoli and M. Friedman, Fight Where We Stand, p. 5. For a further discussion of women's activities in the informal sector and their contribution towards a working class culture, see Chapter Five.
There was substantial prejudice against women living in town. Marabastad was perceived as being "infested with low women who live on the sale of beer and liquor."\(^{49}\) According to William Windham, the Secretary for Native Affairs, they

"not only disseminate disease but the woman is really at the bottom of all the quarrels, fights and disorder and immorality generally."\(^{50}\)

Kathy Eales, in her work on women and passes in Johannesburg, has shown that

"black female settlement in white-designated areas was blamed for an extraordinary range of urban malaises, ranging from crime, through abuse of liquor, the spread of slums, rising juvenile delinquency, to the spread of venereal diseases."\(^{51}\)

It was the absence of controls placed on women which concerned the authorities. Women were not subject to the pass laws and as such were able to enter the urban areas freely. The presence of women in towns also belied the myth of African transience in towns. In this regard, the urban authorities were particularly concerned that African women were responsible for the reproduction of 'detribalised' children who would be impossible to repatriate to rural areas and who, they believed, would make a poor class of workers.\(^{52}\) The concern to place women under some form of control manifested itself from early on in the twentieth century in Pretoria as a substantial African female population lived there. In 1911 the matter was accorded some urgency. Under the guise of disease, the authorities examined their options. The issue presented itself in a typical manner in terms of the danger of infection presented to white children through contact with "unhealthy Native nurses".\(^{53}\) The Sub-Native Commissioner cited the case of a seventeen year old African who had been

\(^{49}\) C 41, Vol 1: Transvaal Liquor Commission 1909, Evidence of Reverend Creux

\(^{50}\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W. Windham, 7 June 1910, p.23


\(^{53}\) MPA 3/195: Sub-Native Commissioner to Town Clerk, 15 December 1911
engaged as a nurse for an infant and was found to be suffering from primary syphilis. Thus calls for control of African women presented themselves in terms of demands for medical inspection.\(^{54}\) This formed part of a wider policy of the Town Council which represented itself as the "sanitation syndrome", that is, an attempt to justify control and segregation of the African population through a concern for the spread of disease.\(^{55}\)

A number of prominent white women in the Pretoria community including the wives of Louis Botha, Jan Smuts and Johan Rissik, the Minister of Native Affairs in 1910, petitioned the Mayor proposing that all African women entering Pretoria should report to an office controlled by the Native Affairs Department and that all African women over the age of fourteen years seeking employment should be subject to a medical examination. They further suggested that African women employees should be supplied with an engagement certificate, which clearly would be tantamount to a pass. They also proposed that proper housing for female domestics should be provided.\(^{56}\) This too would enhance the authorities' control over this population. In 1912 a similar petition was presented to the Mayor by 700 women as well as one from the South African Women's Federation calling for African women to be placed under the pass system.\(^{57}\) For the first time, the idea was proposed of housing African women in a central hostel where the rudiments of "health, housework, cleanliness" would be taught.\(^{58}\) The authorities clearly believed that such a scheme would eliminate the dual problems of control and disease, and would increase their productivity as domestic servants.

After inspecting Johannesburg and Pretoria, a doctor, Dr Hertslet was outraged that

"no proper organisation exists for the control and protection of the thousands

\(^{54}\) Ibid.


\(^{56}\) MPA 117: Report of the Finance Committee, 3 October 1911

\(^{57}\) MPA 117: Report of special meeting of the General Purposes Committee, 9 February 1912

\(^{58}\) MPA 3/195: Sub-Native Commissioner to the Town Clerk, 15 December 1911
of native women and girls that are to be found within the borough borders. This is a matter that so intimately affects the moral and physical health of the whole community that it is a cause for surprise that no concerted attempt has been made to handle the question."59

Eales has suggested that at the heart of the call for medical examinations for venereal diseases for African women was an attempt to check female sexuality, which was perceived by the authorities as being both immoral and as having a contaminating presence.60 While these categorisations of African woman formed an important ingredient in white perceptions of African women and played a crucial role in the attempts to place controls on them, it is questionable whether the fear of disease and woman's 'immorality' was solely at the heart of these calls for controls on women. Perhaps these cries for control of women should be located within the economic climate of the time and with the associated wave of panic known as the 'black peril' that swept the country in the 1910s.

The call for medical examinations for African women in Pretoria began in 1911, yet the presence of syphilis was widespread long before. During the pre-war years from 1908 to 1914, the South African economy experienced a slump and a concern for labour requirements during this period was in evidence. The Sub-Native Commissioner of Pretoria suggested training women in household skills in order that

"a large number of Native houseboys would then be available for the development of agricultural and mining work."61

Thus the demands of the economy required a move towards the replacement of 'houseboys' in the domestic sector. Urban authorities were faced with a dual problem: they had to push men out of the domestic sector; and the employment of women would also have to be made

59 Pretoria News, Protection of Native Women, 30 June 1914


61 MPA 3/195: Sub-Native Commissioner to the Town Clerk, 15 December 1911
attractive to employers. The former was attempted by raising the spectre of the 'black peril'. As for the latter, in order to draw African women into domestic service, some form of controls would have to be exerted over them as they were exempt from the pass laws. Passes were perceived by employers not only as a mechanism of control in that it tied workers to a labour contract, but also as an assurance that their employee was healthy. All men were medically examined before being issued with a pass, and those found to have syphilis or other diseases were sent for treatment. Employers had no such guarantees when employing women. It is in this context that one should view these urgent calls for medical examinations for African women in the early 1910s and the wave of 'black peril' panic that swept the country.

In 1908 and 1909 the Pretoria News began to report on a regular basis on cases of assault and attempted assault by African men on white women. In a strongly worded editorial, it called for

"the introduction of women servants, and the strong pressure of public opinion directed against anyone who employs full-grown natives in any capacity which brings them into familiar contact with white women."

This fear especially took hold on the Rand from 1911 and reached a crescendo shortly before the First World War. Numerous reports and charges of rape and assaults by 'houseboys' on their mistresses dominated the news in Johannesburg during this period. These reports generated a mass hysteria far beyond the Rand. Although the Commission on Assaults of Women, specifically created to investigate these fears, found the phenomenon to be less widespread in Pretoria -

"in Pretoria ... there are an exceptionally small number of such assaults,

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62 Charles van Onselen has suggested that the height of 'black peril' hysteria coincided with a downswing in the economy in the pre-war years. See C. van Onselen, *New Nineveh: Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914*, p.52


64 *Pretoria News*, The Unforgivable Crime, 21 September 1908

either by black on white or white on black, or any other colour" 66 - the panic caught hold of the white community in Pretoria and there were attempts to move towards the employment of women as domestic servants in order "that the present danger from male housemaids may greatly be lessened."

However, it does appear that it was the need to free the male domestic worker for other forms of labour that provided the context for the 'black peril' in Pretoria and for the repeated calls for medical examinations for African women. Nevertheless, medical examinations were not introduced as a result of feelings within official circles that "native sentiment is strongly opposed to the proposed measures - so strong, in fact, as to warrant its preclusion." 68

African men objected to medical examinations of women on the grounds that it would lead to the abuse of these women at the hands of white administrators, doctors and the police who would enforce such a regulation.

In 1924 the Town Council once again raised the spectre of medical examinations for African women, urging that the regulations of the Urban Areas Act include the provision that both African men and women employed in the proclaimed areas be subject to a medical examination. This point had been initially rejected by the Select Committee on the Bill but the Pretoria Town Council reinstituted the proposal in 1924 in the hope that the change in government would react more sympathetically to its inclusion. 69

From 1915 onwards, the focus of attempts to control African women shifted towards efforts to provide 'proper' and hence controlled housing for African women who were employed in Pretoria. Much of the initiative for this proposal came from church-based bodies which aimed to "save (girls coming into the towns from their kraals) from demoralising influences, and

66 K 373: Commission on Assaults on Women 1913, Evidence of B.B.Betts, Superintendent of Police
67 MPA 3/195: Sub-Native Commissioner to the Town Clerk, 15 December 1911
68 MPA 37: Minutes of the Town Council, 18 August 1924
69 Ibid.
so find them suitable situations."\textsuperscript{70} Initially Reverend Tapsfield of the Church of England approached the Town Council to erect a hostel in Proes Street on the mission's premises for this purpose.\textsuperscript{71} Although the Town Council supported the notion of controlled housing for African women, it rejected Tapsfield's scheme after canvassing the opinion of white residents who lived in the immediate vicinity of the mission premises - a petition signed by 500 residents had opposed the erection of the proposed hostel.\textsuperscript{72} By the 1920s the accommodation of single African women was an acknowledged problem. By 1921 there were 1,859 women living in white areas.\textsuperscript{73}

The Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 had stipulated that local authorities should provide accommodation for Africans in the form of hostels, and in this regard, the Town Council purchased property from the German School on the corner of Schubart and Mare Streets for £2,500 for the establishment of an hostel for African women working in Pretoria. The Town Council did not however wish to absorb the responsibility for this venture and subsequently leased the premises to the Pretoria Civic Society, a women's organisation chaired by Mrs C. Christie, who would manage the venture.\textsuperscript{74}

The urban authorities and white church-based bodies perceived hostels as places offering young African women 'protection', both from the hostile urban environment, and from themselves and the 'temptations' of their unchecked passions which would lead them astray. However an alternative view could be posed: that the urban authorities were attempting to reclaim African women's autonomy and channel them into domestic service where they would be in all likelihood subject to poor wages, bad conditions of service and household abuse. Many women living in Pretoria preferred to live on the outer margins of society where they participated in an informal sector which not only provided women with a relative

\textsuperscript{70} Pretoria News, A Native Girls' Hostel for Pretoria, 18 August 1916
\textsuperscript{71} MPA 24: Minutes of the Town Council, 8 October 1915
\textsuperscript{72} MPA 26: Minutes of the Town Council, 20 April 1917
\textsuperscript{73} MPA 3/200: Medical Officer of Health to the Town Clerk, 13 March 1925
\textsuperscript{74} MPA 3/204: Extract from the Minutes of the Town Council, 17 September 1923
degree of independence but also afforded them participation in a sub-culture that gave them economic independence, a particular urban identity, and ensured their vital contribution to the working class culture that developed in the African locations of Pretoria.

'\textit{A town martyred to a white ideal}'\textsuperscript{75}: African Labour and Employment in Pretoria 1903-1923

Employment opportunities were determined by the nature of economic development in Pretoria. During the period 1903 to 1924 Pretoria's progress proceeded at a slow and steady rate. But Pretoria at this point could not claim to be an industrial centre. By the outbreak of the World War One,

\begin{quote}
"the tempo of commercial life was restricted to the pace, and the pocket, of a population largely employed in the Government service. But industrially Pretoria had hardly stirred."\textsuperscript{76}
\end{quote}

The town had only a handful of industries including carriage building, structural engineering, a brick and tile works, a cement factory, the Union Soap Works, and saccharine and mineral water factories.\textsuperscript{77} While World War One led to pronounced industrial growth elsewhere in the country, it seemed to have had an adverse effect on Pretoria's development. This can be seen in the decreasing rates of Pretoria's valuation from £10,298,000 in 1914 to £8,236,000 in 1922.\textsuperscript{78} It was really only with the development of ISCOR, which was conceptualised in 1928 but officially opened in 1934, that Pretoria's status was elevated to that of an industrial city.

Nevertheless the growth of the white population in Pretoria created an ongoing demand for domestic service. In July 1903 the Native Pass Office accounted for 3,695 labour contracts for domestic servants being issued.\textsuperscript{79} The gender makeup of African servants in Pretoria in the early 1900s followed the general trend in the Transvaal of employing men as domestic

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Pretoria News}, The Colour Question, 12 November 1910

\textsuperscript{76} \textit{City of Pretoria, Official Guide}, p.271

\textsuperscript{77} G.Jenkins, "From Ivory to Isotopes - The Development of Pretoria's Industry", p.366

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Ibid.} p.367

\textsuperscript{79} MPA 6: Minutes of the Municipal Commission, 9 July 1903
servants. This is borne out by evidence led at the Commission on Assaults on Women where it was stated that in 1913 "practically every house in the town has its house-boy".  

Domestic servants lived on the premises of their employers, usually in outhouses. However, in 1903 the Superintendent of Locations noted that many servants preferred to stay in Marabastad so that they could participate in the social life of the location, such as tea meetings, dances and parties.

As has been discussed earlier, pressure began to mount from 1911 onwards to eliminate the male domestic servant and replace him with his female counterpart. To a large extent this can be accounted for by the widespread panic induced by the 'black peril'. Nevertheless, despite this panic, men continued to dominate domestic service in Pretoria, well into the 1930s. According to the Native Economic Commission, despite the presence of about 2,000 women in the locations, there were no female servants in white houses. While this was probably an overstatement of the situation, it does reflect the strong preference for men as domestic servants. According to Peter Ramutle, a resident of Marabastad, this was because they were able to combine numerous tasks:

"The man works in the house; he can move heavy things ...they do the garden job and the kitchen job. He does the job of four for one. And so people find out it is very much cheaper to pay one boy instead of getting four people."

Not only did employers perceive that the labour of male domestic workers could be more easily exploited, but there existed substantial prejudice against female domestics. Importantly, women did not fall under the pass laws, and thus were perceived as being difficult to tie to an employment contract. This general attitude was expressed by a Pretoria News correspondent who suggested that

"the girls of the towns are unsuitable. Having lived a life of freedom, they resent any authority and are far too independent to be satisfactory."

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80 K 373: Commission on Assaults on Women 1913, Evidence of B.B.Betts, Superintendent of Police, Pretoria

81 MPA 3/159: E.H.Schlaefli, Acting Superintendent of Locations to the Chairman of the Municipality, 18 March 1903

82 UWL, AD 1438: Native Economic Commission 1931, Box 9 -Evidence of P.Ramutle

83 Pretoria News, Female Native Servants, 2 June 1910
Nevertheless, despite this attitude, in 1921 the call to replace male domestics with females was heard once again. "Household work is women's work" became the rallying cry as industry realised that its demand for labour was not being adequately met.\textsuperscript{84} It appears that this policy began to be implemented. Certainly evidence points to a number of women being established in domestic service in Pretoria from the early 1920s. Notably, 'home girl' networks from Phokeng had established a foothold on domestic service in the Roberts Heights area. However, in the early 1920s, household duties tended to be shared with male domestic workers. For example, Mmamatlakala Moje who worked for a family in Roberts Heights, was instructed to look after the children and to clean the house, while "cooking was done by a 'boy'."\textsuperscript{85} Wages for domestic service were invariably low. In the 1920s Mmamatlakala Moje earned £2 per month, which she argued was "a lot of money because many people were getting paid £1.10s."\textsuperscript{86} While this was more than domestic servants were earning in smaller towns - Josephine Mokotedi left Rustenburg for Pretoria because she only earned a monthly wage of £1 there; Mahube Makgale eventually left her employment in Pretoria because she believed she could earn £3 per month in Johannesburg.\textsuperscript{87}

As men dominated domestic service until the 1930s, the only other formal means of employment open to African women in Pretoria was washing. For many women, washing as a source of livelihood was preferred despite it being an expensive enterprise. Profits were low and transport costs added to the washerwoman's burden - women would fetch laundry from the white suburbs, take it home to wash and then return it. Nevertheless it allowed women the freedom to work on their own terms and to be with their children and supervise their activities during the day.\textsuperscript{88} The Town Council however, discouraged this form of employment by placing limits on the activities of washerwomen. For example, washerwomen

\textsuperscript{84} Pretoria News, Female Domestics, 3 June 1921

\textsuperscript{85} ASI, Wits: OHP, Women's Project (Phokeng), Interview with Mmamatlakala Moje, 1 October 1982

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{87} ASI, Wits: OHP, Women's Project, (Phokeng), Interviews with J.Mokotedi, 25 November 1981 and M.Makgale, 27 November 1981

\textsuperscript{88} B.Bozzoli and M.Friedman, Fight Where We Stand, p.22
were not able to operate without a washing license, which by 1917 was set at 2/6d per quarter.\textsuperscript{89}

Male Africans who did not wish to work as domestic servants were able to find employment in industry in Pretoria and its immediate environs or in the municipal sector. In 1903 the Pass Office registered 6,599 industrial labour contracts.\textsuperscript{90} The building industry continued to be a major employer of labour in the private sector, with various brickworks in Irene, Daspoort, Zuurfontein and Villeria providing employment opportunities for 494 workers, the local lime works in Pretoria and in Irene accounted for 220 workers, and sixty seven workers in the Rand Brick and Tile factory. Other important employers of labour were the Hatherley Works and Villeria General Works. A significant number of workers in Pretoria were drawn into various local diamond mining industries in Pretoria and its environs such as the Schuller diamond Mining Company, the Pretoria District Mining Company and the Montrose District Mining Company.\textsuperscript{91} And with the establishment of Premier Mines in 1903 further employment opportunities for workers in Pretoria were created.\textsuperscript{92}

The state continued to be a significant employer of labour, with 3,543 labour contracts being issued to government workers in 1903.\textsuperscript{93} The majority of government workers were involved in the construction of roads and railways.\textsuperscript{94} During this period government wages compared favourably with the Pretoria Municipality which continually found itself suffering labour shortages. The Central South African Railways (CSAR) paid between £2 to £2.10 a

\begin{footnotes}
\item[89] MPA 3/158: J.Gilbert, Superintendent of Locations, to the Town Treasurer, 26 July 1917
\item[90] MPA 6: Minutes of Municipal Commission, 9 July 1903
\item[91] SNA 142, NA 1454/03: Natives employed in local industries - Native Commissioner to the Secretary of Native Affairs, 16 July 1903
\item[92] \textit{Pretoria News}, An Industry in Embryo, 3 September 1903
\item[93] MPA 6: Minutes of the Municipal Commission, 9 July 1903
\item[94] Results of a census of the Transvaal colony and Swaziland, 1904, Table 70
\end{footnotes}
month, while wages in the Department of Public Works varied from £2 to £3 per month.\(^95\) The government bureaucracy also absorbed a number of workers as messengers and servants at wages between £3 to £4 per month, while the educated African, with a basic schooling, was able to work within the growing sectors of the state and municipal bureaucratic services at a fairly high wage. Elias Chake, an established resident of Marabastad since 1897, worked as an interpreter for the Superintendent of Native Affairs at a salary of £5 with rations in 1901.\(^96\) By 1904 interpreters in the Department of Justice or Native Affairs could earn a wage of between £6 to £10 per month.\(^97\)

Independent African entrepreneurship was actively discouraged among the residents of Marabastad and Schoolplaats. In 1910 C.T.Hamblin, the Superintendent of Locations indicated that he was opposed to granting trade licences to Africans:

"The natives can always make that a complaint against me that I am rather against granting them trading rights...My experience is with natives who trade that it tends to make them loafers, because they have not the same idea to carry out a business as a white man has."\(^98\)

In 1907 the Town Council had only supplied licences for African businesses for six general dealers, five butchers and one baker.\(^99\) By 1919, the situation was not much improved. Only fourteen Africans had been granted licences to establish businesses in the locations. This contrasted with licences being granted to eighty one Indians and eighteen Chinese for business purposes in the locations.\(^100\) This situation heightened antagonisms between the African and Asiatic population in Pretoria. According to C.B. Mbolekwa of the Transvaal Native Congress in Pretoria,

\(^95\) Pretoria News, Minutes of Municipal Commission, 29 May 1903

\(^96\) SNA 1, NA 592/01: Report on routine work of the Superintendent of Native Affairs office, Pretoria, 24 August 1901

\(^97\) F.Nöthling, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria, 1900-1914", p.175

\(^98\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of C.T.Hamblin, 3 June 1910, p.39

\(^99\) MPA 4/1/1/1: Mayor’s Minutes, Year ending 30 October 1907

\(^100\) MPA 3/158: Town Treasurer to Town Clerk; List of all licence holders in the location and nature of business carried out, 1 April 1919
"Indian and Chinese give no chance to Native traders, because they are well organised. They sell very cheaply in order to keep the Native down."\textsuperscript{101}

The African working class was also able to find employment with the Pretoria Municipality, yet often the municipality was unable to fill its labour complement and periodically during the early 1900s suffered from labour shortages. These labour crises do not appear to be sparked off by an absence of labour in Pretoria; rather they were prompted by the municipality's reluctance to pay a living wage. Initially, the municipality's problems were compounded by the inability to provide accommodation for their workers though this situation improved once they began to establish compounds for their workers, and the relatively higher wages paid by private industries.\textsuperscript{102}

Thus in 1903 the municipality was able to find only 490 workers to fill the 600 available jobs in its various works departments. By June the municipality was threatened with complete paralysis unless further labour was found.\textsuperscript{103} The municipality responded to the problem in three ways: E. Schlaefli, the Municipal Native Pass Officer, tried to recruit from chiefs in the Northern Transvaal.\textsuperscript{104} He was encouraged to make contracts with Africans for not less than three months, though preferably for six months, at a wage varying from £2 to £2.10 per month.\textsuperscript{105} Secondly, the Town Council made arrangements with the Director of Prisons to supply the municipality with sixty convicts to fulfil their labour requirements.\textsuperscript{106} Finally the Town Council was forced to increase the wages of municipal workers.

Thus within the month of May 1903, the municipality was forced to increase wages from

\textsuperscript{101} UWL, AD 1438: Native Economic Commission 1931, Box 9 - Evidence of C.B. Mbolekwa
\textsuperscript{102} MPA 4: Minutes of the Town Council, 25 May 1903
\textsuperscript{103} MPA 6: Minutes of the Municipal Commission, Report of the Town Clerk, 12 August 1903
\textsuperscript{104} MPA 6: Minutes of the Municipal Commission, Report of the Town Engineer, 26 June 1903
\textsuperscript{105} MPA 6: Minutes of the Municipal Commission, 6 July 1903
\textsuperscript{106} Pretoria News, 3 July 1903
£1.10 per month, to £1.15 and further to £2 for ordinary labour within their works department.\textsuperscript{107} Other categories of work demanded higher wages. Sanitary work was regarded as highly unfavourable, it largely being night work with long hours and of an unpleasant nature. In order to fulfill the necessary 250 complement of sanitary workers, the municipality was forced to offer £2.10 to £3 per month including food and lodgings. Even then the Town Council remained twenty labourers short. Wages of cemetery workers, who were classed as more or less skilled, were increased to £4.10 per month including rations. There was an element of superstition involved in this work, and it was necessary to pay workers whatever was required in order to attract labour.\textsuperscript{108}

The difficulties of fulfilling their labour requirements continued to be a problem as the municipality persisted in paying low wages. In 1907, when the municipality experienced another labour shortage, wages for unskilled labour varied from between £2 to £2.10 including rations. This does not represent much of an improvement in wages since 1903. Semi-skilled labour received a substantially higher wage, though this varied according to skill. Blacksmiths and farriers earned between £4.5 to £5.12.6 per month without rations while stitchers earned £5 without rations. Carpenters and tinsmiths on the other hand, earned £2.10 per month. Most municipal workers were employed on monthly engagements and the municipality obtained no labour through recruitment.\textsuperscript{109}

By 1913 wage scales had not improved significantly, though the supply of labour was generally sufficient with the exception of trained female domestics, either white or black, of which there was a demand. Unskilled labour received £1.15 to £2.10 per month with housing and rations, except for workers in the sanitary service who were paid £3 to £5 per month. Masons, fitters, carpenters, smiths and other artisans received 2/6d per hour. Rates of pay of men in municipal service in 1913 were regarded as a fair criterion of wages paid in

\textsuperscript{107} Pretoria News, 29 May 1903

\textsuperscript{108} MPA 7: Minutes of the Town Council, Report of the Town Clerk, 12 August 1903; Pretoria News, Native Labour, 21 August 1903

\textsuperscript{109} MPA 2/95: Acting Town Clerk to the Director, Government Labour Bureau, 1 June 1907
An important dimension to the labour question in Pretoria was the employment of Coloured or African workers in semi-skilled employment. The oorlams in Pretoria comprised the African workers who were versed in various artisanal skills. This aroused the resentment of white semi-skilled labour who felt they were being cut out of the labour market by semi-skilled Africans. A 'British Subject', a painter by profession, found that he was unable to find employment, while African painters were being employed for £1.10 to £2 a week. He queried whether it was

"not against the laws of this country, to let kafirs (sic) take the bread out of the white man's mouth." \(^{111}\)

Another white semi-skilled worker who had been replaced by African labour complained that

"it is not only in the painting that the native is doing a white man's work, but in several branches of the building trade." \(^{112}\)

While there was growing antagonism on the part of white semi-skilled workers who were being forced out of the labour market, there was probably a similar resentment fostered among unskilled African workers who were being replaced by poor whites. The drift to Pretoria begun by poor whites in the nineteenth century, intensified after the Anglo-Boer War. Many whites were unable to make a living on farms, left the countryside and settled in Pretoria, or squatted on the Town Lands. \(^{113}\)

The state viewed white unemployment as a crucial issue, largely because they were Afrikaners, who were an important ethnic constituency in the Botha/Smuts Het Volk Party. They constituted a policing problem because they were unemployed and because they demonstrated a high degree of political consciousness - the majority favoured a return to


\(^{111}\) *Pretoria News*, The Coloured Labour Question, 17 May 1904

\(^{112}\) *Pretoria News*, The Question of Colour, 20 May 1904

\(^{113}\) *Report of the Commission into Pretoria Indigenes*, 20 September 1905

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In 1907 the Transvaal gained responsible government under the Botha/Smuts Het Volk Party. It viewed as its major concern the problem of poor whites and white unemployment. As a result, F.H.P. Creswell's "white labour policy", first proposed in 1902 and which aimed at replacing all black labour in the mining industry with white unskilled labour, was again mooted from 1907 as a solution to increasing Afrikaner unemployment.\(^{115}\)

The Pretoria Town Council, influenced by Creswell's labour policy, committed itself to providing relief for the poor whites.\(^ {116}\) In 1908, the Town Council self-consciously adopted an "all white" policy, whereby poor whites would replace African unskilled labour at twice the pay. Thus a white cleaner would be paid 5s. a day in lieu of two African cleaners each earning 2/6d per day.\(^ {117}\) The Council provided relief work for these men in the various departments of the municipality, doing repair work, as cleaners, working in Parks and Cemeteries and excavating bridges.\(^ {118}\) They were paid from £1.10 to £2.5 per week.\(^ {119}\) By 1913 semi-skilled Coloured or oorlams workers also found their jobs in jeopardy from the municipality's policy of providing relief work for whites. In 1913 the municipality agreed to replace Coloured drivers on the trolleys, who were earning 3/4d per day, to whites who would be employed at 7/6d per day, thereby adding an increased cost of £780 per annum.\(^ {120}\) The employment of poor whites pushed costs up quite considerably but the


\(^{115}\) Ibid.

\(^{116}\) *Pretoria News*, The "All-White Policy", 13 March 1908

\(^{117}\) *Pretoria News*, The "All White" Policy, 13 March 1908; White versus Coloured Labour, 14 March 1908

\(^{118}\) MPA 15: Minutes of the Town Council, 27 August 1908; MPA 17: Minutes of the Town Council, 30 June 1910

\(^{119}\) MPA 15: Minutes of the Town Council, 27 August 1908

\(^{120}\) MPA 22: Minutes of the Town Council, 6 June 1913
municipality rationalised this by insisting on the superiority of white labour.

Members of the White Labour Commission, established by the Pretoria Town Council to investigate the necessity and desirability of employing white labour, and whether such employment was economically sound, were unable to justify the policy from an economic point of view. Nevertheless, they sanctioned its implementation on the grounds that segregation between black and white was needed. G.J.M. Wolmarans of the Committee reported that

"the prevention of fusion in itself is a sufficient reason why the ratepayers should be prepared to suffer a pecuniary loss and so prevent the white labourer falling to the same level as the native labourer." 121

This policy was implemented contrary to the wishes of employers themselves, who preferred to employ African labour - they were able to pay them lower wages than white workers, and often they proved to be more efficient workers than white labour. The Town Council came under some criticism for employing white labour to repair roads in Pretoria. The Pretoria News was unmoved by the Council's enthusiasm for "the superiority of the white labourer", and complained of their laziness and inefficiency:

"when it rains this hardworking gang of 'men of our own colour' go to sleep on the nearest verandah." 122

Cresswell's all-white policy was inherently impractical, particularly where the dynamics of the economy rested on the existence of a cheap labour force. Despite the impracticalities of the "all white" labour policy, it was self-consciously adopted by the municipality and rationalised by a racial categorisation of labour. Why was this allowed to happen? An explanation for this line of action may be found in the nature of the economy in Pretoria, where there was very little by way of industrial development. As a result, the Pretoria News correctly assessed that

"Labour was more autocratic in Pretoria than capital." 123

121 Pretoria News, White Labour, 25 February 1911
122 Pretoria News, White Labour, 3 March 1904
123 Pretoria News, Ward II, 17 October 1908
The absence of an industrial base, and therefore the absence of a powerful capitalist lobby, made it possible for the Town Council to implement an essentially racist, non-economic policy. By way of contrast, Cresswell’s call for an all-white labour policy in Johannesburg was blocked by the powerful bulwark of mining capital whose aims were the effective rationalisation of cheap labour. The Transvaal Chamber of Mines argued that unskilled white labour would never be as economical as African, and African labour was inherently preferable because as a migrant force with no political rights, it was far more easily controlled.\(^\text{124}\) Thus the interests of the state, which was highly dependent on the mining industry for its revenue, bowed to capital’s demands for a cheap labour force. In Pretoria where the same pressures did not apply, the Town Council implemented a non-cost effective economic but politically appropriate policy with regard to white labour. The political makeup of Pretoria, with its status as the seat of government, and an important poor white component, probably did much to inspire the Pretoria Town Council to promote an all-white labour policy.

In Pretoria, the social and political dimensions of this policy tended to outweigh the economic realities and was not always met with approval. The *Pretoria News* castigated the Town Council for implementing such a policy:

"Economically, it is most foolish, and any attempt to enforce the white labour policy in industrial undertakings can only be fraught with absolute disaster."

\(^{125}\) Nevertheless, despite the economic hardships, the Pretoria Town Council promoted this policy for as long as was possible. Following World War One however, the Town Council was forced to review the wisdom of their "all-white" labour policy. Pretoria was badly affected by the post-war recession, and they terminated the services of all whites employed "in labouring and purely cleaning" in favour of African labour.\(^{126}\) By 1918 the economic pressures facing the town of Pretoria no longer made such a policy appropriate.

Throughout this period, African labour appeared to have been relatively acquiescent in the

\(^{124}\) D. Yudelman, *The emergence of modern South Africa*, p.64

\(^{125}\) *Pretoria News*, Industries, Bounties and White Labour, 27 March 1911

\(^{126}\) MPA 29: Minutes of the Town Council, 18 July 1918
face of this "all-white" labour onslaught. How does one account for this? Political parties did exist, yet the grievances they articulated were of a narrow and sectarian basis, identifying with the interests of the emergent African petty bourgeoisie in Pretoria rather than with those of the African working class. Only in 1920 is there any evidence of African political organisation taking up the cause of the African worker. A deputation of the Transvaal Native Congress met with the Town Council to appeal for a wage increase for Africans.127

Why 1920? From 1917 onwards there was mounting inflation. Prices spiralled while the wages of the African working class remained essentially static.128 The extremely high cost of living bore testimony to the great hardships that Africans experienced during this period. Pretoria was particularly badly affected by the rising cost of living. It was one hundred and seventy points above the national average and had experienced an almost fifty percent rise in the cost of living index, based on the cost of food, fuel, lights and rent, from the years 1910 to 1921.129 Thus, for example, in the period 1910 to 1920, the price of wheat flour had increased from £1.5 to £4.4; meat had gone up by 150% and sugar and other necessities of life by 100%.130 It was also during this period from 1918 to 1920 that the Transvaal Native Congress had undergone a radicalising process, brought about to a large extent by the 'bucket boys' workers strike in Johannesburg in 1918.131

Conclusion
In this period 1903 to 1924 the African urban population revealed a high degree of stratification and diversity. A permanent settled population lived chiefly in the locations of Marabastad and Schoolplaats, and here an almost equal number of men and women were to

127 MPA 30: Minutes of the Town Council, 18 May 1920
129 Pretoria News, Cost of Living figures, 8 April 1921
130 MPA 30: Minutes of Town Council, Petition to the Deputy Mayor, 8 May 1920

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be found. The main workforce comprised of workers who lived on the premises of their employers, either as domestic workers or in various business concerns in the town. From 1903 onwards, employees of the Pretoria Municipality were housed in municipal compounds which became increasingly congested and sources of great dissatisfaction. The floating population comprised transient labourers or work seekers who saw Pretoria as a useful stopping over point before they moved on to the Rand or some other labour district.

The established permanent sector played a significant role in the development of political consciousness, but their aims remained largely centred on their own petty bourgeois aspirations. The diversity and fluidity of the African population, particularly with its large shifting population, militated against unity and the development of a working class consciousness.

Given the absence of working class consciousness, the Pretoria Town Council was able to promote and implement their "all-white" labour policy without any comeback from the African population. It was also able to implement this non-cost effective policy because of the nature of the economic base in Pretoria. The absence of any significant industrial development and hence a strong capitalist lobby in Pretoria provided the Pretoria Town Council with the opportunity to promote its own racist tendencies and safeguard the economic interests of white, and especially poor white, labour at the expense of African labour.
CHAPTER FOUR: CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE URBAN AFRICAN POPULATION IN PRETORIA

"The Municipality is a sort of Master; it controls or administers law in this particular place."¹

African urban policy in Pretoria was forged out of conflict between central government, the municipal authorities, the white ratepayers of Pretoria and the African community. This chapter will focus on the attempts by the Town Council to establish an urban policy with regards the administration, control and housing of the black population of Pretoria from 1903 until 1923 when the Urban Areas Act of 1923 provided formal guidelines for town councils for the regulation and control of urban Africans. It will demonstrate that the specific nature of the African population and its residential patterns determined the direction of urban policy which was viewed increasingly in terms of segregation and ultimately removal. As the population increased and diversified, questions of control dominated the Council's concern. It focused much of its attention on forcing blacks to live in their designated areas and to regulate their lives so that they would in no way impinge on the lives of white Pretorians. Pass laws, a curfew and a stringent definition of the boundaries of social activity were all created with this intent.

In the early twentieth century there was no acknowledged need by state authorities for the creation of a uniform urban African policy for Africans living in towns. Paul Maylam has noted a high degree of regional autonomy in the evolution of urban African policy throughout South Africa. He indicates how the dictates of the mining industry dominated the creation of urban policy in Kimberley and Johannesburg, where the largest urban African component was regulated through the compound system and influx control; whereas social pressures steered the course of urban policy in Durban and Cape Town.² Pretoria followed more closely the path towards urban policy of Durban and Cape Town in that social considerations

¹ K 357: Native Pass Law Commission - Evidence of E.Chake, 30 January 1920
governed its direction. Metaphors of disease and sanitation dominated the discourse of the municipal authorities and was used by them to justify the administration and control of the African population increasingly in terms of segregation and ultimately removal. This attitude of the Pretoria Town Council has been identified by Maynard Swanson as the 'sanitation syndrome' wherein disease and epidemiology were important instruments in the creation of urban segregationist policies in South African towns at the turn of the century. Removal of black urban communities away from white residential areas were justified in terms of concerns for public health and the spread of disease.  

The nature of Pretoria's local economy with its lack of a grounded industrial base, together with the existence of a permanent African population since the nineteenth century determined the direction of urban policy. The absence of mining capital prompted a focus on the social concerns for segregation, while the settled African population could not be ignored and the creation of municipal regulations and a coherent policy could not be postponed. Thus African urban policy was carved out of the specificity of urban conditions and the patterns of urbanisation that prevailed in Pretoria.

The Town Council's ability to implement policy was hampered by clashes with central government who wished to establish a clearly defined authority solely responsible for the creation of urban policy but at the same time did not foresee the need for any urgent implementation of this ideal. Despite the election of a municipal government in 1903, the definition of clear areas of jurisdiction between the Town Council and the government failed to materialise for some time and provided the opportunity for many Africans to evade the restrictions imposed on them. The demands of the white ratepayers were an important determinant of urban African policy and as a grouping often accorded with the wishes of the Pretoria Town Council, particularly over concerns for public health and the removal of the African population from their environs. Yet white Pretorians clashed with the Council, particularly over the issue of housing and the site for the establishment of a new municipal location. The African population themselves resisted the various attempts to circumscribe

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3 M. Swanson, "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1905"
their lives, through evasion and defiance of the regulations, exploring legal loopholes and creating an urban environment that proved difficult to control. During the period 1903 to 1923 Marabastad continued to mushroom, and assumed its own definite character. Many of its features - a disparate population, overcrowding, inadequate housing and defensive strategies for survival - in themselves posed problems of control. These were maximised in the absence of a clearly defined policy towards the African population.

Management of Marabastad

An analysis of the Town Council’s policy regarding the administration and control of Marabastad reveals a two-sided approach. In the area of control, the Council framed rigorous regulations aimed at eliminating beer brewing, limiting social interaction and curtailing the movement of the African population. The police were responsible for implementing this control. Yet on the level of management, the council adopted a fairly indifferent stance. Limited powers were given to the Superintendent of Locations and no infrastructure was created to deal with the daily maintenance and upkeep of the locations. This often contradictory approach to the administration of Marabastad may be explained by the Town Council’s refusal to recognise the permanence of the location in Pretoria. In the early years of the twentieth century, the mismanagement of Marabastad was further compounded by the separation of jurisdictions, whereby different areas of African, Coloured and Indian residences were under various authorities.

The management of Marabastad was placed in the hands of the Superintendent of Locations. The men appointed to this position were mostly clerks who had worked their way through government or municipal services. As petty bureaucrats, these men were usually not employed for their ability to interact positively with the African population. In fact, it was clear that the most trustworthy and reliable men were not chosen for the job. In 1909 W.J.Stiemens was dismissed as Superintendent and imprisoned, following charges of "misappropriating monies belonging to the Council." His successor, C.T.Hamblin, a clerk from the municipality’s office with no previous experience with the concerns of Africans, did not even have the respect or support of the Town Council. According to W.A.King, the Sub-

4 MPA 3/157: Town Clerk to the Assistant Colonial Secretary, 25 February 1909
Native Commissioner,

"He is a nonentity as far as the Town Council are concerned. They would not listen to him."\(^5\)

Successive superintendents were often the subject of petitions and complaints. In 1916 J.M. Gilbert was accused of bribery, using abusive language and behaving tyrannically to the extent that "the whole location is most dissatisfied with the behaviour and demeanour of the said Gilbert."\(^6\)

Nevertheless these complaints did not secure his dismissal. In 1917, further charges of bribery, partiality to certain individuals, and laxity in carrying out his duties were levelled against Gilbert by the temporary Sanitary Inspector, Alexander McRae. The Finance Committee conducted an investigation, but once again Gilbert was cleared of all charges.\(^7\)

Initially the jurisdiction of the Superintendent of Locations was fairly circumscribed. Until the Native Location Regulations were ratified by the government in 1904, the acting Superintendent, E.H. Schlaefli, had no rules and regulations to guide him. His role was strictly supervisory, and was limited to issuing permits for tea meetings and dinner parties, recommending that licenses be issued to African hawkers or general dealers, and above all, collecting stand rents. There were no police to assist him in his task, and Schlaefli complained of the impossibility of his task without the proper authorities being placed in control.\(^8\)

Yet the 1904 regulations failed to confer any significantly greater powers on the Superintendent. He was required to issue stand permits, keep a register of all stands, huts or buildings, as well as a register of names and occupations of all permit holders. He was

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\(^5\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A. King, 2 June 1910, p.10

\(^6\) MPA 3/158: Findlay, MacRobert and Niemeyer to the Town Clerk, 11 March 1916

\(^7\) MPA 3/158: Statement by A. McRae to the Deputy Mayor, 11 September 1917: Report of Sub-Committee to investigate the administration of the Locations, 10 January 1918

\(^8\) MPA 4: Minutes of the Town Council, Report on the state of affairs in the Native Locations by the Acting Superintendent of Locations, 18 March 1903
granted the powers of inspection, and collection of all revenues, including stand rents, services and licences; and he monitored all births and deaths, and disease.\(^9\) The superintendent also gave permission for the sub-letting of property until 1906 when the Council instructed him to disallow the practice completely.\(^10\) Once again, his overriding task was the collection of stand rents. Marabastad residents' perception of the superintendent was that he exercised no discretion, lacked control and was nothing more than a 'revenue collector'.\(^11\)

In the formulation of the 1904 regulations the Town Council's perception of the location appeared to be almost static. The powers of the Superintendent were limited to the maintenance of the location virtually as it existed in 1903. Growth factors, the material circumstances of the residents and the growing housing crisis in the locations formed no terms of reference with regard to the regulations. Furthermore, the manpower attributed to this task was minimal and the Superintendent invariably worked alone. Although by 1917 the Superintendent had a number of assistants, he worked in isolation and with a few exceptions, he was not brought into contact with any committees of the Town Council.\(^12\)

Nevertheless, as the influx of people into Marabastad continued and housing became a scarce commodity, the power wielded by the Superintendent increased. Certainly by 1917, Alexander McRae, the temporary Sanitary Inspector stated that "everyone seems to be afraid of the Superintendent."\(^13\) His authority to issue stand permits meant that he could determine who could live in the location and who could not. Africans were usually provided with a

\(^9\) TPB 172, TA 2/504/1: Bye Laws for Native Locations, 1904

\(^10\) MPA 2/95: Town Clerk to the Municipal Pass Officer, 22 January 1906

\(^11\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.11 and N.J.Boya, 3 June 1910, p.5

\(^12\) MPA 3/158: Report of the Sub-Committee to investigate the administration of the Locations, 10 January 1918

\(^13\) MPA 3/158: A.McRae to the Deputy Mayor, June 1917
yearly permit and a month's notice which contributed considerably to their insecurity. In the early 1920s Lowe, the Superintendent of Locations exercised his full authority and he and his assistant, Hardy were responsible for having a number of residents of the various African locations prosecuted for various offences. Often they would actually physically arrest the offender, as in the case of Petrie Lewang who was "accosted by Messrs. Lowe and Hardy...taken into custody, hand-cuffed and taken to the Marabastad Police Station" for occupying a room illegally in the Cape Location. Residents were prosecuted at the instigation of the Superintendent or his assistant for a wide variety of infringements. For example, Johannes Mashao was prosecuted for trading without a licence, despite the fact that he had applied to Lowe on numerous occasions for a licence without success; John Storom and Annanias Makuoe were prosecuted under the location bye-laws for subletting rooms in Hoves Ground to African tenants; others like Lydia Mosuoe were evicted from their homes in Marabastad because they had been convicted of being in possession of Kaffir Beer.

Social Control
In terms of social control, the Council responded in a far more rigorous manner. The urban authorities adopted a paternalistic manner, in much the same way that the Berlin missionaries had responded to their congregation in the nineteenth century. The Sub-Native Commissioner, W.A.King stated that:

"Natives always appreciate control because it is in their own interests. If there is no control they are absolutely at the mercy of the lawless man." 17

To a large extent policy was framed and implemented as a response to the white electorate.

14 MPA 2/94: Interview between the Natives Chake et al and the Superintendent of the Native Locations, 18 March 1905.
15 MPA 3/159: J.deV.de Beer, Attorney, to the Town Clerk - Evidence of Petrie Lewang in the case against Frans Maboea and Others, 16 October 1922
16 MPA 3/159: J.de V.de Beer, Attorney, to the Town Clerk - Evidence of Frans Maboea and Others, 16 October 1922
17 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.17
White residents were outraged by the disorderly state of affairs in the location. Members of the church were also responsible for conveying a state of collapse and decay in the locations. Canon Farmer was a frequent critic of Marabastad, characterising it as "a pandemonium and a disgrace to any civilisation."  

The Town Council implemented regulations aimed at curtailing the social activities of Marabastad's residents. The brewing and consumption of liquor and beer were strictly prohibited and offenders were subject to expulsion from the location. Games and entertainment which were likely to create a disturbance were forbidden, and a curfew was imposed whereby no person was allowed on the streets of the location from 10pm to 4am.  

The agents of control were the police. A small police presence had been established in Pretoria under Sergeant Samuel Cowley in 1902. The policing of the location was placed under the jurisdiction of the District Commandant. As a result, the police acted virtually autonomously of the Town Council, and regarded itself as a separate authority in the locations. This system of dual control proved problematic both for the Superintendent whose prestige was often diminished, and for residents who had no recourse to complaint under such a system. The advisory committee of Marabastad protested that

"the status of the Superintendent of Location (was) obscured and the people terrorised by a police system wholly inimical to the best interests of the Council and residents of the Locations."  

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18 See MPA 4: Minutes of the Town Council, E.H.Schlaefli, Acting Superintendent of Locations to the Native Commissioner, 13 March 1903; MPA 2/12: Town Clerk to the District Commandant of Police - Petition by 76 residents in Ward 2, 11 April 1906

19 Pretoria News, Native Locations, 11 August 1903

20 TPB 172, TA 2/504/1: Bye Laws for Native Locations, 1904

21 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sgt. S.Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.53

22 MPA 3/157: E.Chake, Secretary to the Advisory Committee to the Town Clerk, 25 June 1913
S.M. Makgatho, President of the Native Vigilance Association in Marabastad complained that:

"In the night time, when people are asleep these policemen will come in. They even enter bedrooms when people are asleep and they have to get up just as they are. They ransack the room and on the whole the proceedings are improper."²³

The police not only behaved ruthlessly, with little concern for the dignity of the residents of Marabastad, but they often exceeded their authority in the locations, issuing permits for tea parties which should have been the jurisdiction of the superintendent.

By 1910 Pretoria boasted forty eight police, of which there were four or five African constables on shift duties in the locations.²⁴ Sergeant Cowley, the officer in charge of the police, was "greatly feared" by the residents of the locations.²⁵ Most of the African police were Shangaans and Zulus as the authorities regarded them as far superior and more reliable than the other tribes.²⁶ But it also created a great deal of antagonism on the part of the location residents who were predominantly Sotho. P.M. Tlabakoe, a painter who had lived in Marabastad since 1895, asserted:

"It is a well-known thing that a Zulu and a Basuto cannot drink water together. The Zulu very often in arresting and handling a Basuto is very rough."²⁷

The deliberate use of ethnicity in staffing the police force fuelled ethnic tensions and was a common device used by the authorities as a means of facilitating social control. Not only did it have the effect of creating divisions within the African community, but it militated against the development of working class consciousness. The inability of the Zulu police to talk

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²³ TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of S.M. Makgatho, 1 July 1910, p.47
²⁴ TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sergeant S. Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.53
²⁵ MPA 3/157: W.J. Stiemens, Superintendent of Native Locations to the Town Clerk, 10 March 1908
²⁶ TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sergeant S. Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.59; Evidence of W.A. King, 2 June 1910, p.22
²⁷ TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of P.M. Tlabakoe, 1 July 1910, p.57
'Dutch' also furthered tensions between the police and the residents. This would clearly be a reference to the *oorlams* population who often spoke only a form of Dutch or Afrikaans and no African language. They also represented the more established and educated sector of the population and they objected to "ignorant Zulu Police" and considered it a "disgrace and a reflection upon the Administration that educated and enlightened people should be placed at the mercy of savages."29

The general antipathy felt towards the high-handed actions of the police had the effect of uniting the African community. Members cooperated to counteract their presence, with young children often acting as look-outs, alerting beer brewers and pass offenders to a possible raid, and with people providing support systems, ranging from assisting those arrested with bail, and looking after the children of those arrested.

**Spatial control**

The Town Council’s management and control of Marabastad was hindered by the different and competing jurisdictions over the African population in Pretoria. By 1903 Marabastad and New Marabastad were under the control of the Council, these having been transferred from government hands by Proclamation No.7 of 1902. Schoolplaats on the other hand was under the jurisdiction of the Berlin Mission Society, which owned the property, the Asiatic Bazaar was controlled by central government through the Supervisor of Asiatics, and the Cape Location was under the authority of the Department of Native Affairs. The separation of authority that existed within each designated area made it virtually impossible to establish uniform policy. In turn, this separation of control often provided loopholes for the residents of one area to move into another.

The situation was somewhat improved by 1908 by which time the Town Council had

28 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of J.L.Mahoshi, 1 July 1910, p.60

29 MPA 3/157: E.H.Chake, Secretary of the Advisory Committee, Marabastad to the Town Clerk, 6 June 1913

30 Significantly, it was during this year, that administration of the locations was transferred from the Finance Committee to the Public Health Committee. This move reflected the Town Council’s growing concern to formulate policy within a
brought the Cape Location and the Asiatic Bazaar under its control. Schoolplaats however, continued to remain outside of the Town Council’s ambit.

Reverend Carl Sack, the missionary in charge of Schoolplaats, viewed himself as the 'governor' and had no desire to see it converted into a location. Although historically, the Berlin missionaries had tended to cooperate with the government, its independence meant that it remained immune from any regulations imposed by the municipality.

To circumvent this problem, the Town Council needed to proclaim Schoolplaats as a 'Native Location'. However, the Native Location Regulations prevented such a procedure as it clashed with the rights of the owners of the ground. In 1906 and again in 1909 the Town Council approached Reverend C. Sack with the intention of effecting a compromise. They proposed either leasing the ground from the Berlin Mission for a period of years or buying from the mission 17.5 morgen excluding the ground on which the church and parsonage were situated. On both occasions they failed to reach an agreement. The Berlin Mission viewed the proposals as being against their interests as they would lose substantial revenue in terms of stand fees which would then be payable to the municipality. The residents also objected to the proposed purchase which would lead to removal and ultimately to the destruction of this "self-contained community, (with) their own church, schools, customs, etc in common." Yet questions of control continued to hound the Town Council with regard to Schoolplaats. The disordered nature of the environment, where the streets were not lit up, and the large stands were overgrown with hedges, was perceived as being "a natural shelter for shebeen framework of sanitation and disease.

31 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of C.Sack, 1 June 1910, p.39

32 MPA 3/157: References from the Public Health Committee, 1906; Secretary of Native Affairs to the Town Clerk, 5 August 1909

33 MPA 3/160: Petition signed by 216 petitioners to the Mayor and Councillors of Pretoria, 7 June 1926. (The documents refer back to the earlier period.)
queens". Furthermore, its control became an increasingly pressing issue within the context of the Council's policy of removal of Marabastad.

"The removal of the natives from the old location must be accentuated with regard to Frischgewacht (Schoolplaats) by reason of its proximity to the European area."  

This was a rather spurious argument, which was neither reasonable nor honest. The 200 yards frontage on Boom Street was directly opposite Indian shops, scrap-iron dealers, and Coloured trading establishments. The nearest European residences were a considerable distance off, and were, if anything, nearer to Marabastad than Schoolplaats. The issue here was clearly one of jurisdiction. With Schoolplaats being under the authority of the Berlin missionaries, the Pretoria Town Council was unable to include Africans residing there under the location regulations, and it was unable to involve Schoolplaats residents in their removal plans. Nevertheless, during the period under review, the Town Council was unsuccessful in its attempts to bring the mission under its control. It proved more successful in the case of the Asiatic Bazaar and the Cape Location.

Initially the control of the Asiatic Bazaar was also a source of dispute between central government and the Town Council. In the 1890s, the Government allotted 388 erfs to the south of Marabastad for the settlement of the Indian population in Pretoria, and in which they were compelled to reside and trade. Although successive Landdrosts were repeatedly

34 MPA 3/161: Superintendent of Locations to the Town Clerk, 2 March 1933
35 TPB 704, TA 4/2567, Vol. 12: Memorandum - Pretoria Municipality: Purchase of Farm Frischgewacht, 7 June 1926
36 MPA 3/161: J.Findlay, Pretoria Native Welfare Association to the Town Clerk, 31 December 1933
37 The Council finally purchased Schoolplaats from the Berlin Mission Society in August 1926 for the sum of £10,000, and the area was only then brought under the control of the Superintendent of Locations.
38 The exact date of the establishment of the Asiatic Bazaar and the Cape Location is difficult to determine as the documents relating to this period were lost during the British Occupation of Pretoria in 1900.
39 F.J.Nöthling, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria, 1900-1914", p.5-6

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reminded of this fact by the Government, the law was never enforced during the Republican period. During the military occupation of Pretoria, the Military Governor implemented proceedings to remove all Indians living in town "with the exception of those of known respectability" to the Asiatic Bazaar.\(^{40}\) Although the Indian population was small in number at the turn of the century, protest to their proposed removal was vociferous and consequently the regulation was not enforced.

The creation of municipal government in Pretoria did not automatically bring the Indian population under the control of the Town Council. The Asiatic Bazaar was controlled by the Supervisor of Asians, appointed by central government, and the Council was subordinate to his will. As a consequence, there were no municipal regulations in force in the Asiatic Bazaar.\(^{41}\) Accordingly, the control of the Asiatic Bazaar was

"not nearly as efficient as is required, mainly owing to the divided authority to which the Indian Location is subject."\(^{42}\)

The Town Council lacked the authority to compel Indians to live in the Asiatic Bazaar and a number lived in town, on property they had acquired or rented in Church, Vermeulen and Prinsloo Streets.\(^{43}\)

The Town Council came under increasing pressure from the newly formed Ratepayers Association to assume control of the Asiatic Bazaar. They urged the Town Council to compel the increasing number of

"Arab and Coolie traders in their midst...(who are a) danger to the public health of the town, owing to their unclean and insanitary habits...to conform to the sanitary rules and regulations as laid down in the bye-laws, and if possible to remove all Asians to a location which should be specially set

\(^{40}\) SNA 2, NA 46/01: F.A.Gillam, Supervisor of Indian Immigrants to the Secretary of the Transvaal Administration, 13 June 1901

\(^{41}\) Pretoria News, 23 January 1903

\(^{42}\) MPA 2/8: Report of Medical Officer of Health, 19 April 1905

\(^{43}\) F.J.Nöthling, "Die vestiging van Gekleurdes in en om Pretoria 1900-1914", p.5
apart outside the Town." 44

Although many of the references to the proposed segregation of the Indian community are couched in terms of sanitary concerns, the overwhelming threat from this sector appears to be economic. The low prices offered by Indian traders threatened to undercut white economic interests. The Town Council remained powerless to deal with the Indian population.

The divided authority that existed for a number of years with regard to the Asiatic Bazaar and other areas of black settlement made it possible to subvert some of the regulations laid down by the Town Council. In particular, it provided a partial solution to Africans with regard to the problem of sub-letting. According to section 25 of the Native Location Regulations no person could

"sub-let his stand or any portion thereof, or any building thereon, without the written permission of the superintendent." 45

The Town Council frowned upon subletting and, in 1906 went so far as to forbid the superintendent to sub-let any portion of a stand in Marabastad at all. 46 If the practice was to be curtailed in Marabastad, the Asiatic Bazaar proved to be free from such control. In the context of the housing crisis that existed in Old and New Marabastad, the homeless were compelled to seek refuge in the Asiatic Bazaar despite the exorbitant rents charged.

Subletting was a characteristic feature of Asiatic Bazaars, and Pretoria was no exception. The low rentals together with the absence of any clear authority in the Asiatic Bazaar made the sub-letting of land and buildings a common and easy practice. 47 The stands, which in 1905 were usually let at an annual rental of £3 or £6 for a corner stand, were crowded with poorly constructed buildings. According to the Chief Sanitary Inspector, these buildings were

"sub-let to Kaffirs and Cape people, as well as Indians, the Lessee of the 44 MPA 2/45: Resolution of the Ratepayers Association sent to the Chairman of the Municipality of Pretoria, 2 January 1903

45 TPB 172, TA 2/504/1: Bye Laws for Native Locations, 1904

46 MPA 2/95: Town Clerk to the Municipal Pass Officer, 22 January 1906

47 MPA 2/8: Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 19 April 1905
Stand making quite a large income therefrom.\textsuperscript{48}

The Asiatic Bazaar was thus an area teeming with diverse people, each of whom theoretically fell under a separate jurisdiction. Part of the Town Council’s attempt to gain control of the Asiatic Bazaar was a bid to contain the widespread subletting in the Asiatic Bazaar.\textsuperscript{49} Despite numerous requests to the government to entrust the Town Council with the control of the Indian and Cape Locations, the Asiatic Bazaar remained under separate authority.\textsuperscript{50} The Colonial Secretary’s office decided "at the expressed wish of the Asiatics themselves" that local authorities were not to be the landlords of Asiatic Bazaars.\textsuperscript{51} Following the imposition of self-government in the Transvaal however, this policy was reversed when control was finally transferred to the Pretoria Municipality in April 1907.\textsuperscript{52}

The Cape Location was set aside in the late nineteenth century as a separate living area to the south of the Asiatic Bazaar for all 'Cape Coloureds'. The terms of its tenure are somewhat obscure, but it does appear that the Town Council was not given the power to lay out a location for Coloureds by Proclamation 7 of 1902.\textsuperscript{53} The affairs of the Cape Location were initially under the control of the Asiatic Department but by 1904 they were under the authority of the Native Affairs Department.\textsuperscript{54}

This separation of jurisdiction created conflict between the Town Council which was particularly prohibitive in terms of its policy towards Coloureds, and the Native Affairs Department which was concerned to impose standard policy throughout the Transvaal. For

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{50} CS 443: Assistant Colonial Secretary to the Town Clerk, 27 May 1904

\textsuperscript{51} CS 443: Minute of the Colonial Secretary’s Office, 19 April 1904

\textsuperscript{52} MPA 3/531: Government Notice No. 487 of 1907

\textsuperscript{53} MPA 3/161: Judgment in Case of The Superintendent of Locations and the Town Council of Pretoria vs Macdonald Molife, 27 March 1930

\textsuperscript{54} MPA 3/159: E.Schlaefli, Superintendent of Native Locations, to the Town Clerk, 11 November 1904
example, the Council was forced to rescind the imposition of a curfew for Coloureds whereby they had to remain indoors unless provided with a special night pass, as this contravened the directives of the Native Affairs Department which laid down that Coloureds did not need to be in the possession of a pass.55

In order to secure better control of the Cape Location, the Town Council incorporated the Cape Location within Marabastad on 1 December 1905.56 The effect of the incorporation was to bring the Coloured population within the African location and thereby subject it to the location regulations. In this manner the Town Council sought to meet the necessity of administering the Cape Location without having the requisite legal powers to make it a separate location. In 1908 the Town Council closed a portion of the Asiatic Bazaar and incorporated it into the Cape location in an attempt to make space for Coloureds living in town to move into their designated area.57

While the Council was able to bring the Cape Location under its control, it was unable to compel Coloureds living in town to move into the Cape Location. Numerous complaints were lodged by white residents against Coloureds who were not domestic servants but were living independently in town.58 As a result the Town Council adopted a resolution on 13 January 1910 whereby notice was served on

"all natives...and coloured persons residing in Town to quit the respective premises occupied by them and to reside at the Locations within a period of one month from the date of notice failing which legal proceedings will be

55 SNA 183, NA 2865/03: S.Bacon Watson to the Secretary of Native Affairs, 14 November 1903
56 MPA 3/161: Judgment in Case of the The Superintendent of Locations and the Town Council of Pretoria vs Macdonald Molife, 27 March 1930
57 Ibid.
58 MPA 3/203: L.Friedman to Town Clerk, 7 September 1908; Mackintosh to Town Clerk, 29 October 1908; F.Beyers to the Town Clerk, 25 August 1909; Town Clerk to Under Secretary, 23 February 1910
instituted."

The African Political Organisation, representing Coloureds in Pretoria, immediately lodged a protest as did Coloured representatives in Johannesburg and Kimberley. The Council backed down on this issue, stating it was not their intention to enforce the notice. Thus when the legality of the Council's position was in question, it retreated. The legal debate centred around the definition of 'Coloured' and legal opinion was such that the Legislature had given the municipality

"no power to prevent or prohibit coloured persons (other than aboriginal natives) from living in the town of Pretoria."

The only recourse to prosecution would be under Section 39 of the Town Regulations of 1899, which had not been repealed, and could only be instituted by the Crown against Coloureds living in places which actually adjoined or abutted on a public street.

It can be argued that the difficulty of distinguishing between Coloureds and oorlams provided a loophole for many oorlams who were able to live in the Cape Location or in town, and thus be free for a time, from the constraints of municipal regulations. This would account for the Town Council's desperate measures to include the Cape Location under its control.

Attempts to contain the black population of Pretoria geographically was at best haphazard and inconsistent. Any effective control was limited by the division of each black settlement into separate areas of jurisdiction. The black population exploited these contradictions and defined their own spatial boundaries. Schoolplaats remained outside of the the Town Council's ambit until 1926, and once it had assumed control over Indian and Coloured settlement, it found that it was unable to evict people living in areas not designated for their residence. The Town

59 MPA 3/203: Town Clerk to the Under Secretary, 23 February, 1910
60 MPA 3/203: Resolutions and letters to the Town Clerk, from the African Political Organisation, Pretoria, 10 February 1910; Johannesburg, 19 February 1910; Kimberley, 19 March 1910
61 MPA 3/170: N.J.de Wet, Counsel's opinion re Coloured persons residing in Town, 1914
62 Ibid.
Council was unable to provide alternative housing nor was it able to contest the legality of their occupation at a time when the areas fell under a different jurisdiction. Thus the Town Council was unable to effectively control the designated areas of the black residential population in Pretoria which hindered their ability to control this population.

**Conditions in Marabastad: Indifference and Removal**

The Town Council's attitude of indifference towards the management of Marabastad can be understood in terms of their policy of removal. From the outset, the Town Council refused to recognise the permanence of the African population and sought the solution in terms of removal of its inner-city location. This meant that with the passage of time, as more people moved into the locations, the material conditions of Marabastad grew considerably worse. Already in 1903 E.H.Schlaefli, the Acting Superintendent of Locations, complained that both Old and New Marabastad were "overcrowded to a dangerous extent, in a sanitary point of view." These conditions deteriorated with the growth of population and in the period 1903 to 1923 Marabastad increasingly assumed the nature of slum conditions. Marabastad was perceived as "practically nothing else than a crowd of overcrowded hovels."

The streets were in a deplorable state, covered with holes, stones, parrafin tins, filth and refuse. This was a source of grievance for standholders who paid 2/- per month for rubbish removal yet refuse remained strewn all over the streets. Inhabitants who requested that the conditions of the streets be improved were informed by the Superintendent that it was "hardly reasonable to ask the municipality to spend any money on the streets there seeing that they are just going to shift the location."

63 MPA 3/205: Findlay and Niemeyer to the Town Clerk, 1 May 1922; 3/161: Macintosh and Cross, Attorneys for the Town Council, Case for Counsel’s opinion re Asiatic Bazaar, 1 March 1930

64 MPA 3/159: Letter from E.H.Schlaefli, Acting Superintendent of Native Locations to the Chairman of the Municipality, 18 March 1903

65 MPA 3/158: A.McRae, Temporary Sanitary Inspector to M.G.Nicolson, Deputy Mayor, 11 September 1917

66 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of C.T. Hamblin, 3 June 1910, p.26
By 1910 the Town Council derived an annual revenue of about £1500 from the location yet expended nothing on its improvement. 67

There was no drainage of any kind, and the lack of an adequate sanitary service placed the health of the location residents at risk. The bucket system was in operation in the locations but collection rates were excessively set at 7/6 per month, as a result of which a large number of residents were unable to make use of the service. Whereas water was in a plentiful supply in the Asiatic Bazaar, there were no taps in the African locations. No pipes had been laid, nor was it the Council’s intention to do so, which stayed in keeping with their policy of inaction regarding the locations. The water from the river had become so polluted that the few wells that had been sunk in Old Marabastad were contaminated in turn. The consequences for the residents in terms of disease and sickness were clearly critical. 68

Residents had to acquire water from the Asiatic Bazaar. The long queues congregating at a single water tap were a meeting place, to exchange gossip, to quarrel, fight as the residents waited endlessly to collect their water. 69

Housing was haphazard and inadequate and people lived in vastly congested circumstances. Landlords took advantage of the increasing demand for accommodation and provided premises that were in a pitiful state. Sarah and September Makulu were a case in point. They had three stands of 50 square feet each on which they built thirty nine rooms which were ill-ventilated and in a squalid condition. Approximately sixty men, women and children lived in these rooms in circumstances of "gross overcrowding". 70

As the conditions degenerated, a recurrent theme in the descriptions of Marabastad were the

67 TPB 552, TA 1444: Report of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, 1910

68 MPA 2/94: E.H.Schlaefli, Superintendent of Native Locations, to the Mayor of Pretoria, 31 May 1905

69 MPA 2/95: Letter from J.B.Mgweba to Taberer, Native Commissioner, 17 July 1903; E.Mphahlele also discusses the water tap in a chapter in Down Second Avenue, pp.29-33

70 MPA 3/158: A.McRae, Temporary Sanitary Inspector to M.G.Nicholson, Deputy Mayor, 11 September 1917
dangers implicit to the white population from the unhealthy conditions prevailing there. In an article in the *Pretoria News*, Canon Farmer described Marabastad as

"an unsanitary area. Natives crowded and crowding together in this way are sure to lead unhealthy lives and become a source of danger to the white people in their vicinity." 71

He further suggested that Marabastad was

"a potential plague spot; a breeding place for smallpox and measles, and the seed plot for the first pestilence that comes along." 72

These representations of Marabastad as a breeding place for disease and as a continual danger to the health of the white population dominated both the Town Council and the white population's discourse when describing conditions in the location. Dr J. Boyd, the Medical Officer of Health in Pretoria, continually confirmed the dangers implicit to the white population from the unhealthy conditions prevailing in the African locations. For example, he stated that:

"the position of both Marabastad and Schoolplaats is objectionable owing to their proximity to European quarters. This proximity undoubtedly favours the introduction of infectious diseases into these European quarters and is otherwise objectionable." 73

This fuelled a segregationist ideology amongst the white population which was reflected increasingly through the prism of removal.

The specific status of Pretoria as initially, the capital of the Transvaal, and then the administrative capital of the Union, provided the Council with an added dimension to their segregationist policies. The Town Council believed that Pretoria, as the capital of the Transvaal, should set an example to other towns with regard to its urban African policy. The *Pretoria News* agreed that Marabastad was

"a crying disgrace to the Capital of Transvaal. A cess-pool in which the germs of half-a-hundred dread diseases may be fostered to the detriment of the city's

71 *Pretoria News*, Native Locations, 11 August 1903


73 *MPA 3/158: J. Boyd, Medical Officer of Health to the Town Clerk, 17 January 1917*
health, and to the destruction of our reputation from a sanitary point of view."\textsuperscript{74}

Within this context, removal was viewed as the only solution to presence of Africans in town.

"It's intended to remove this location, and I think that Pretoria...should set an example to the rest of South Africa in the matter of native locations. The conditions prevailing down there are a disgrace to any town of the importance of Pretoria."\textsuperscript{75}

From the moment they assumed control in 1903, the Council refused to countenance the permanence of the African population in Pretoria.

"The question of the removal of these locations will undoubtedly have to be considered very shortly as they are practically in the heart of town."\textsuperscript{76}

Removal became a catchphrase for justifying the Council's policy of inaction towards the locations. No effort was made to improve conditions, nor was there any attempt to modify existing housing to accommodate the increasing number of people in the locations. According to the Town Council, the expenditure was not warranted as the locations were to be removed shortly. As a result, overcrowding with its attendant problems of sanitation and disease became a predominant feature of location life. In turn these features served to justify the Council's policy. Ironically then, the Council's attitude, supposedly stemming from a concern for sanitation and improved health conditions, only served to increase the incidence of disease.

**Housing Policy**

A key component in the evolution of an urban African policy was the Pretoria Town Council's attitude towards African housing. The cornerstone of the Council's housing policy was the removal of its inner-city locations which evolved out of its growing concern for the health of white residents in Pretoria. Having adopted this stance, the Town Council refused to take responsibility for the provision of adequate housing for the expanding African

\textsuperscript{74} Pretoria News, Native Locations, 12 August 1903

\textsuperscript{75} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.5

\textsuperscript{76} TPB 170, TA 1444: Town Treasurer to the Assistant Colonial Secretary, 29 June 1903
population of Pretoria. A suitable site, and the question of finance, both in terms of compensation and building a new location, were problems that plagued the Council throughout this period and prevented the removal from being expedited. The Council also lacked the legal right to remove the existing location, and the requisite powers to do so would have to be obtained by legislation.77

In the years preceding the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923, the provision of black housing in South African towns was a contested area of responsibility. As the growing urban centres experienced massive influxes of Africans, and the labour forces swelled, local authorities were expected to provide accommodation for the black working classes. However municipalities complained of a lack of adequate finance to provide such amenities and looked to central government to foot the bill. The financial responsibilities were often blurred between central government, capital and local government. However, with the passage of the Urban Areas Act of 1923, the responsibility for the reproduction of the urban African working classes was placed firmly in the hands of local government. The allocation and distribution of key urban resources such as housing became formally the preserve of the municipalities of the South African towns and the creation of the Native Revenue Account was intended to finance the creation of segregated locations.

In Johannesburg, labour demands from the mining industry accounted for the massive influx of Africans in the period 1903 to 1923 and the majority of the labour force was housed in compounds. The semi-permanent and settled African population in Johannesburg lived in the slumyards that mushroomed in the Johannesburg suburbs in the 1920s. According to Koch, a shortage of revenue and administrative machinery prevented the Johannesburg City Council from providing adequate municipal accommodation for the growing African population.78 In Pretoria, the absence of any major industry until 1930 meant that the African population was always far smaller than Johannesburg. But historically the growth of the African locations coincided with the town of Pretoria and the Pretoria Town Council inherited an

77 MPA 3/157: Unsigned legal opinion to the Town Engineer, 23 May 1911


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established location whose inhabitants exhibited a high degree of permanence. As a result of many of the issues and debates around housing - segregation and removal, the allocation of resources and the search for alternative sites, - confronted the Pretoria Town Council in the early 1910s, while these issues only began to dominate in Johannesburg in the 1920s.

The housing policy of the Pretoria Town Council must be viewed both within the context of this established permanent population and the Council’s policy of removal and how these two issues intersected with each other. The Pretoria Town Council viewed the African locations as a source of accommodation for

"the natives bona-fide employed in the Municipality and who cannot be accommodated on the premises of their employers." 79

In referring to the African working class, the council appeared to have in mind a migratory labour force. Yet the reality of a permanent African population living in Schoolplaats and Marabastad could not be overlooked. This community had no ties to a rural past and it was not possible to send them back to a home in the rural areas.

"There are a good many natives who are married, who have their families and who have been bred and born in Pretoria, who have got no more ties with their tribes and who have become Pretorians through their parents being allowed to stay here." 80

The population of Marabastad, both Old and New, had grown from approximately 2,500 people in 1903 81 to a total of 3,378 in December 1910. Of these, 1,169 were men, 933 women and 1,276 children. 82 In addition to these figures, there were forty eight

79 TPB 552, TA 1444: Minority Report of A.C.Romyn of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, 1910

80 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend E.Creux, 1 June 1910, p.22

81 MPA 3/159: E.H.Schlaefli, Superintendent of Native Locations to the Town Clerk, 25 November 1903

82 TPB 170, TA 1444: Minutes of an Extraordinary meeting of the Pretoria Town Council, 16 January 1911
(These figures are by no means accurate and fail to take into account the substantial African population living in the Asiatic Bazaar, the regular weekend visitors and the unofficial occupants of the locations.)
standholders who were employed outside of Pretoria and an additional eight who were in prison. These figures tell us something about the nature of the African population resident in Marabastad: the almost equal number of women and men suggest a high level of permanence, as a significant female population are an important indicator of a settled community; while the notable number of children suggest that families were an important feature of the urban landscape. It was precisely this population - urban, settled, permanent and economically viable - that the Town Council could not ignore in their plans to remove Marabastad. In his report to the Town Council, the Town Engineer submitted that

"in the creation of any new location the population as given above must be provided for."\(^\text{84}\)

The nature of the housing in the various African places of residence varied considerably.

"You will find some very excellent brick houses, and you will find some paraffin tin shanties; some built of mud - eyesores of all kinds and there is no system. The whole place is an eye-sore at present."\(^\text{85}\)

The housing at Schoolplaats was usually of a better quality than those at Marabastad, comprising mostly brick buildings with some iron buildindgs. The stands were larger and each house had a little garden and some trees.\(^\text{86}\) Houses in Marabastad, on the other hand, were constructed from wood and iron. No brick houses were permitted.\(^\text{87}\) Furthermore, residents were forbidden by order of the Town Council to build, alter or renew their homes in Marabastad. In other words, Africans who wished to improve their living conditions were prevented from doing so. This was in keeping with the Council’s policy to remove Marabastad completely and thus no sense of permanence was encouraged.

"Most of the houses in Marabastad are of a very poor standard and

\(^\text{83}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{84}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{85}\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.14

\(^\text{86}\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend C.Sack, 1 June 1910, p.47

\(^\text{87}\) UWL, AD 1438: Native Economic Commission 1931, Box 9 -Evidence of E.Chake
The Council's policy aroused considerable resentment among the residents of Marabastad. E.H. Chake, Secretary of the Advisory Board, criticised the Council's policy, perceiving it as equal to saying:

"I don't care about your health so long as I can get money out of you." 89

Following a government-appointed commission in 1910, which reported that the location in its present site and condition was a blot on the landscape of the town of Pretoria and ought to be shifted in its totality, the Town Council took the first steps towards the removal of Marabastad. 90 In 1910 the Council declared Marabastad the site of Pretoria's new proposed sewage scheme. 91 The Town Council's motivation for establishing the sewage works in the specific area of Marabastad was never clearly stated. Did the Town Council hope to pass off the removal of Marabastad as a humanitarian move in the light of the unpleasant conditions that would be posed by the proximity to the sewage works? This remains in the realm of speculation. Nevertheless, the creation of a sewage scheme on the site of Marabastad location does make a mockery of the health and sanitation concerns of the Town Council. Such a move would only expedite the spread of disease and does suggest that the "sanitation syndrome" was merely ideological propaganda rather than a real concern for the spread of disease. Of course, the establishment of the sewage scheme and its attendant unpleasant conditions did bring a sense of urgency to the question of the removal of Marabastad.

The issue of removal raised the question of an alternative site. This proved to be no easy task and from the outset members of the Town Council were divided on the issue. The complex set of problems raised by the search for a new location site continued to plague the Pretoria

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88 MPA 3/158: J. Boyd, Medical Officer of Health to the Town Clerk, 17 January 1917
89 MPA 3/157: E.H. Chake, Secretary of the Advisory Board, 16 September 1909
90 MPA 21: Minutes of the Town Council, Special Committee re Location Site, 5 September 1912
91 TPB 170, TA 1444: Notice from the Acting Secretary to the Administrator to the Acting Secretary for Native Affairs, 18 October 1910
Council until the establishment of Atteridgeville in 1940. Members of the Town Council disagreed vociferously over locality; Pretoria ratepayers refused to countenance a location established in their midsts; and residents of Marabastad objected both to being removed and the proposed sites. In fact the resistance of the local African population to the new location, Bantule, rendered this scheme initially to be a failure and forced the Pretoria Town Council to reconsider its options.

After some consideration, four sites were proposed. Site No. 1 comprised sixty six acres of land to west of the Main Road, near Daspoort. The Town Engineer viewed this site as the most suitable as

"it is far removed from European habitation, it is no way adjacent to Pretoria West, and it cannot be claimed that it will ever be an eyesore".92

The Town Engineer also planned to screen the location from the town by establishing a belt of trees around it. The Town Engineer's account was not an entirely accurate view of the situation. The site was within close proximity to Pretoria West, and with the projected growth of both the African and white populations, it would be but a matter of time before the two areas converged on each other. As a result, the strongest objections were raised from the white residents of Pretoria West.

Site No.2 formed a portion of the northern bank of the Aapies River immediately opposite Marabastad. Objections raised to this site was that it was too small and that most of the location would be visible from Pretoria.

Site No.3 was situated 1500 feet to the west of the new cemetry immediately east of the rifle butts. It overlooked Pretoria West and the Council anticipated strong objections from this quarter. It also was a considerable distance from Pretoria and the issue of transport posed a problem.93

The Silverton site, also known as Site No.4, was recommended by the Pretoria West

92 TPB 170, TA 1444: Native Locations - Report of the Town Engineer, 28 July 1910

93 Ibid.
ratepayers and the Council considered it in "every way suitable for a location, except as to its distance from Pretoria." It was situated on the farm Koedoespoort about seven miles from Pretoria on the Delagoa Bay line. While the site was considered attractive by many members of the Town Council in that it was in no way close to any white suburbs, the failure of Klipspruit in Johannesburg was held up as an argument against establishing a location of such distance from the workplace. For once, consideration of the African population itself played a role in the Town Council's decision, fearing that removal to Site No.4 "would form an undue and unfair drain upon their resources, both in the matter of time and of money."

Yet this decision was not wholly motivated by concern for the African population. The Town Council feared the financial burden would be transferred onto the shoulders of the employers of labour in Pretoria. They also feared that it would force workers to seek illegal accommodation on private property in Pretoria itself while the established location would be sparsely occupied.

The Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, established to investigate the administration of the Marabastad and its proposed removal, recommended that Site No.1 be adopted. They did not anticipate "that such action could be taken to be an injustice to any section of the European population of the town. Whilst there is certainly a removal from one spot to another there is virtually no change of locality."

It is interesting to note that the desire to remove the African population from the confines of the town had been subverted to merely shifting a section of the population from one site to another. The change in attitude was to a large extent a result of the Council's considerations of the failure of Klipspruit and the problems of a location situated so far from Pretoria. Thus the economic realities of a demand for a conveniently situated labour force overshadowed the segregationist lobby for a complete removal of the location. Nevertheless, this was a battle

94 Ibid.
95 TPB 552, TA 1444: Report of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, 1910
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
that was not easily won by labour. A protracted struggle over the proposed new location site ensued and the rift was reflected along an East/West divide.

The East Enders, residents living on the East side of Pretoria, supported the creation of the new location at Site No. 1 while the West Enders, residents of Pretoria West, a white working class suburb, emerged as a strong segregationist lobby who opposed a location in close proximity to the European area. They advocated the Silverton site which was situated some distance away from Pretoria itself. Among others, Councillors A.C.Romyn, Advocate T.Roos and J.J.Leggett, who represented the interests of the white Pretoria West Enders, strongly objected to Site No. 1's proximity to the European area. Councillor A.C.Romyn, in his minority report of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, recommended the Silverton site. In this, these councillors were joined by the Pretoria West Vigilance Association, who were "averse to the removal of the Kaffir Location to Site No. 1." Their stated objection was that the "native location is unsightly, is dirty, and is a source of disease." 100

The Pretoria West Enders invoked powerful friends to support their cause. The Pretoria West Vigilance Association sent a deputation to Johan Rissik, the Administrator of the Transvaal, who proved sympathetic to their demands. Rissik urged the Council to reconsider their options and to investigate a new site proposed by the Vigilance Association - a portion of the farm Groenkloof which was above the town and from which the town's water supply was obtained. 101 General J.C.Smuts also indicated his support for the Pretoria West Enders, though ultimately believed that it would be out of place to interfere in municipal matters, and

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98 TPB 552. TA 1444: Minority Report of A.C.Romyn of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, 1910

99 MPA 20: Minutes of the Town Council, 15 March 1912

100 Pretoria News, The Location, 30 July 1912

101 MPA 118, Report of the General Purposes Committee, 1 April 1912; MPA 20, Minutes of the Town Council, 19 April 1912 - Letter from the Administrator of the Transvaal to the Mayor of Pretoria, 29 March 1912
thus took no action.102

The split in the Council appeared to have wider ramifications and ultimately was a contest of wills between Capital and Labour. Pretoria West was a white working class area, whereas the wealthier residents, representing the business interests of Pretoria, lived in the eastern suburbs. The West Enders believed that when

"the municipality had the placing of any disabilities, such disabilities were invariably placed in the working class areas."103

The East Enders, exemplifying the capitalist lobby, feared that the added costs involved in travel from Silverton to Pretoria would be transferred ultimately onto the shoulders of the employers of labour in Pretoria.104 Of more immediate concern to the Town Council was the lack of revenue derived from the considerable amount expended on the sewage works which were already laid down. The interests of the business-dominated East End took precedence, and after prolonged dissension and considerable delays, the Town Council adopted Site No. 1 as the new location site in 1911.105 They did however assure the Pretoria West Ratepayers that the new location would not be extended, and that they would initiate a policy which would aim at the removal of the location from the confines of the city.106

In 1912, plans to build fifty municipal huts on the new location site (soon to be known as Bantule) went ahead. As part of its scheme to create a 'model location', the Council

102 Pretoria News, The Location, 30 July 1912; The Location Question, 31 July 1912; The Woeful West: Location Site Question, 1 August 1912

103 Pretoria News, The Woeful West: The Location Site Question, 1 August 1912

104 TPB 552, TA 1444: Report of the Pretoria Native Location Enquiry Committee, June 1910

105 TPB 170, TA 1444: Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council, 16 January 1911

106 Archives of the Minister of Justice (JUS) 584, 3340/31: Letter from the Pretoria West Ratepayers' Association to the Hon.O.Pirow, Minister of Justice, 25 September 1931
commissioned these houses to be built of brick, with steel doors and windows. The council also intended to separate the residents of the new location along class lines. The location was to be divided into four separate reserves. Reserve No.1 was intended for the better class married families; reserve No.2 was to be for the poorer class married families, widows, etc; while reserve No.3 was for the single African floating population, including single men in barracks and the "lower class native women". The fourth reserve was to be for general use, including stores, a beer hall and the main administrative block. The new location was created with maximum control of the African population in mind. It can be argued that the division of the population would have had the potential effect of creating rifts within the population and to prevent the burgeoning political aspirations of the petty bourgeoisie from intersecting with the growing discontent of the poorer sections of the African community.

Nevertheless, despite the Town Council's attempts to create a model location, the New Location initially proved to be a failure. The Council struggled to find occupants for the fifty municipal houses that were being constructed in the New Location. Despite the extreme crisis in accommodation, there was considerable resistance by residents of Marabastad to move there. Marabastad residents considered the terms of occupation beyond their means: the proposed monthly rental of 20/- plus 10/- for stand rent, water and sanitary and rubbish removal, was considered too high for families earning from £2 to £3.10 a month. Moreover, the ground, 38 feet by 50 feet, was considered too small, leaving no room for a garden or to keep fowls.

In December 1912, the Council had fixed the monthly rentals for the municipal houses at 25/- but were forced to reduce them to £1 per month in February 1913 as there were no

107 MPA 118, Report of the Works Committee, 24 September 1912; MPA 21, Minutes of the Town Council, 4 October 1912

108 MPA 118: Report of the General Purposes Committee, Minutes of the Town Council, 18 March 1912

109 MPA 3/157: Sergeant Cowley to the District Commandant, Transvaal Police, 12 November 1912
takers. Furthermore the Council appeared to have been reduced to 'bribery' in order to lure residents to the New Location. Mealie meal, coal, firewood and meat were offered at reduced rates to occupants of the houses in the New Location.

In the meantime the inhabitants of Marabastad lived under rather tenuous and unpleasant conditions. By reason of its intended removal, in the majority of cases the residents of Marabastad were issued with monthly licenses only. Very few Africans held stand permits either. Work on the sewage outfall works had begun in 1911 despite the fact that inadequate provision for the accommodation of residents had been made and the inhabitants of Marabastad were subjected to a considerable amount of upheaval. Residents were liable to vacate their stands at one month's notice in the event of their land being required for the Sewage Outfall Works. In November 1911 127 standholders in the north west corner of Old Marabastad were removed to an area in New Marabastad in order to make way for a sludge area.

By September 1912, 157 standholders in Marabastad had been removed to clear the way for the sewage works and a further 206 were targeted for removal. The shortage of accommodation intensified following these removals from Marabastad. Yet despite the housing crisis, residents chose not to move to the new location. Those who had no houses sought accommodation either in town, the Cape Location or the Asiatic Bazaar where they often became victims of excessive rackrenting and landlordism.

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110 MPA 119: Report of the Finance Committee, 17 February 1913
111 MPA 3/157: Notice, Locations Department, Pretoria, 1913
112 MPA 3/157: Letter to the Town Engineer, 23 May 1911
113 MPA 19: Minutes of the Town Council, 29 May 1911; Pretoria News, Native Locations, 2 June 1911
114 MPA 117: Minutes of the Town Council, 22 November 1911
115 MPA 21, Minutes of the Town Council, 5 September 1912 - Special Committee re Location Site, I/1912 Report, 2 September 1912
116 MPA 3/158: Gilbert, Superintendent of Locations to the Town Clerk, 20 September 1915
Almost every other week houses are being demolished in Marabastad and in consequence (sic) people who were inmates of the said houses become homeless and compelled to take shelter in the Indian Bazaar, where they are charged exhorbitant rent despite prohibition under Municipal Regulations.  

Some residents rebuilt their houses in various small cross streets which were obliterated as a result, as was the area which had been set aside as a buffer area. By 1917 the buffer area was filled with houses, of which 200 out of 234 were condemned by Dr J. Boyd, the Medical Officer of Health, as being unfit for human habitation, and "all over which the smell from the septic effluent is strongly felt."  

Others sought refuge on a piece of land known as Hoves Ground. It comprised sixty acres and was situated south of Daspoort, near the new location, Bantule. Importantly, it was just outside the municipal limits. Hoves Ground consolidated the failure of the new location scheme. Within a short space of time "tin shanties of all sorts and descriptions" began to dominate the landscape of Hoves Ground, providing a stark contrast to the ordered brick huts erected in the New Location down below. As the Town Council denied all churches not under the control of whites permission to build sites, it is not surprising to find that Hoves Ground drew to it various leaders and members of independent churches. Reverend M.M. Mokone and members of the Ethiopian Church moved to Hoves Ground, failing various attempts to receive permission to build a church in Marabastad. Evidence also points to Reverend S.J. Brander of the Ethiopian Catholic Church of Zion residing there.  

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117 Ibid.  
118 TPB 170, TA 1444: Letter from F. Arnold, Department of the Interior to the Secretary of the Union of South Africa, 1 February 1912  
119 MPA 3/158: J. Boyd, Medical Officer of Health to the Town Clerk, 17 January 1917  
120 MPA 119: Report of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council, 11 February 1913  
121 Pretoria News, The Location Muddle, 11 February 1913  
123 MPA 3/130: J. Gilbert, Superintendent of Locations to the Town Clerk, 18 April 1918
Thus from the perspective of the Town Council, Hoves Ground contained within it a fairly radical element which they considered to be undesirable.

The existence of this squatter community symbolised the active resistance of the African community to the proposed new location. It also sparked off strong criticism from the white ratepayers. White residents from Pretoria West, Pretoria Gardens, Daspoort and Mountain View complained vociferously about the existence of Hoves Ground. Fears of intensified crime in the area, illicit beer drinking, and finally "the grave danger that overhangs the wives and daughters" living in these white suburbs were voiced in letters to the Editor of the *Pretoria News*.  

In November 1912, Hoves Ground had been offered to the Town Council by its owners, J.D. Celliers and others, for the sum of £2000. However, Johan Rissik, the Administrator of the Transvaal, whose consent for such a transaction was required, refused permission. He stated that because a private person had bought the land with a view to making a profit, the Council was precluded from purchasing the land. The owners then began to sell pieces of the land to Africans who immediately began to build tin huts on the ground.

The Town Council appealed to the Administrator to safeguard the interests of the Council by applying the Squatters Law. Rissik refused, stating that he would only consider it if the boundaries of the municipality were extended to include Hoves Ground. This would then allow the Council to deal with the matter themselves under the Location Bye-Laws, which prohibited Africans living anywhere in town except in locations.

The issue of the control of Hoves Ground was not resolved until August 1917 when the Town Council offered to purchase Hoves Ground from H.C. Marais, one of the previous owners.

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124 *Pretoria News*, The Location Muddle, 28 February 1913

125 *Pretoria News*, The Location Muddle, 13 February 1913

126 MPA 119: Report of an Extraordinary meeting of the Town Council, 11 February 1913; *Pretoria News*, The Location Muddle, 12-13 February 1913
owners of the land, for the sum of £1300, subject to the approval of the Administrator.\textsuperscript{127} Then Hoves Ground was incorporated into the municipal boundaries and was included as part of the New Location.

Initially the New Location failed to take off. By the end of 1916 the Town Council deemed it unsuitable on the grounds that it was too close to the town, and a new site in the direction of Quaggapoort was suggested.\textsuperscript{128} Considering that in 1910 the Town Council had found the site of the New Location suitable and not in close proximity to the town, albeit after lengthy debates, it seems strange that in 1916 the site was then considered unsuitable. While the town had undoubtedly grown in the period between 1911 and 1916, it is unlikely that there had been a convergence of the white and African populations at this point. Dr J. Boyd, the Medical Officer of Health, had reported that the position of the New Location was "quite away from European dwellings, separated therefrom by a railway line."\textsuperscript{129} A more likely explanation for the desire to build a new location was that the municipal housing in the New Location had proved a failure. The rental was beyond the means of the residents of Marabastad and they had refused to occupy the houses. This explanation holds some weight as the proposal in 1916 was that Africans be allowed to construct their own housing in the New Location rather than the Council provide municipal housing.\textsuperscript{130} The earlier debates about transport problems were to be surmounted by the creation of a railway siding to serve the area.\textsuperscript{131}

Thus the considerable opposition by the African population to being removed to a site not of their own choice and into municipal housing, forced the Town Council to reconsider their options. They objected to the fact that the African population would outgrow the site of the New Location and would thus be involved in another move further away in the not too

\textsuperscript{127} MPA 26: Minutes of the Town Council, 14 August 1917

\textsuperscript{128} MPA 3/158: Town Clerk to the Town Engineer, 10 January 1917

\textsuperscript{129} MPA 3/158: J. Boyd, Medical Officer of Health to the Town Clerk, 17 January 1917

\textsuperscript{130} MPA 3/158: Acting Town Clerk to the Town Engineer, 10 January 1917

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{Ibid.}
distant future; and they believed that the municipal housing was far too expensive given their economic status and thus refused to occupy the houses. Although the Quaggaspoort site was set aside for the moment, the Town Council was forced to pursue alternatives. Nevertheless, very little action was taken by the Town Council in the intervening years.

In the meanwhile, Marabastad continued to experience massive overcrowding and a deterioration of conditions. By 1921 the urban African population had swelled its figures to 19,361. (See Table 3) Of these, 7,796 were resident in the various locations; 699 lived in the Asiatic Bazaar and 11,565 lived in sundry European quarters in the town. 3,372 African women lived in the locations, accounting for nearly half of the locations’ population.

Table 3: Population distribution of the black population in Pretoria in 1921

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Africans</th>
<th>Coloureds</th>
<th>Indians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marabastad</td>
<td>4,833</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolplaats</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asiatic Bazaar</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>1,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal</td>
<td>1,167</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound, Cape Location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoves Ground, Pretoria West, Leper Asylum</td>
<td>1,566</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9,999</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19,361</td>
<td>1,804</td>
<td>1,671</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The growth of the African population and the fact that no new housing had been provided


133 MPA 4/1/2/1: 17th Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1920-1921

134 Ibid.
led to a situation of uncontrolled sub-letting and rack-renting, particularly in the Asiatic Bazaar. Rentals ranged from anything between 15/- to 30/- per month, with an average of 20/- per room. Indian landlords often took a very hard line with their tenants. Rent, always in advance, was collected on the first of every month, and failure to pay by the 3rd resulted in ejection and often litigation. It was also a lucrative source of income for landlords. Mohamed Essop is a case in point. He rented out forty two rooms on his stand, described by the authorities as a virtual compound of rooms, back to back, for which he charged 15/- each, thereby bringing him a monthly income of £31.10 a month. 135

The Health Department had undertaken no improvements in the existing houses in Marabastad as these had effectively been targetted for removal since 1910. 136 The fact that the residents had not been removed, contrary to the original conception of the scheme, meant that there were a considerable number of people living in the vicinity of the sewage disposal works, who were subjected to the most unhealthy conditions. The situation made for the rapid introduction and spread of disease.

Amenities were virtually non-existent, the roads being unmade and badly scavenged and there was an absence of drainage of any kind. 137 In April 1921 the Bishop of Pretoria visited Marabastad and was outraged at the "unspeakable squalor which prevails in that physical and moral cesspool." 138 Referring to the vile sanitary conditions in Marabastad, he stated, "I can't paint them. For God's sake, go and see." 139 The Bishop referred to the high mortality rate of 400 in every 1,000 and accused the Town Council of apathy and disinterest. 140

It appears that the publicity raised by the Bishop's outcry against conditions in Marabastad

135 MPA 3/158: Report of the Superintendent of Locations, 7 July 1921
136 MPA 4/1/2/1: 17th Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1920-1921
137 MPA 3/158: J.Boyd, Medical Officer of Health to the Town Clerk, 17 January 1917
138 Rand Daily Mail, Physical and Moral Cesspool, 8 April 1921
139 Ibid.
140 Pretoria News, Squalor and Degradation, 8 April 1921
caused some embarrassment to the Town Council and spurred it into action. Rather than taking responsibility for the circumstances of Marabastad, over which neglect and indifference had been its policy, the Town Council placed the blame for the lack of improvements to African housing on central government. The Town Council bemoaned the fact that "the Government Department treated Pretoria like an enemy town." It accused central government of reducing its contribution to the town's assessment rates, of appropriating revenue from African passes, and of compelling the Town Council to supply free water, all of which prohibited the Town Council from introducing the necessary innovations to their housing policy. The Town Council insinuated that it

"would be delighted to be the means of having a satisfactory and proper native location but it is the Central Government and its treatment of Pretoria that makes it impossible."  

While the Council was undoubtedly strapped for money to provide a viable housing scheme for the African population, its insistence on blaming central government tended to obfuscate the reality of the Council's enduring policy towards Marabastad: not to allow any improvements as it was to be removed!

Close on the heels of the Bishop's criticisms the Town Council began to investigate the possibility of a new housing scheme. In May 1921, the Town Council considered a new location scheme where the residents would build their own houses and the Town Council agreed to advance £15 towards the cost of labour for each house. Under the Housing Act of 1920, the Provincial Secretary granted a loan of £15,000 in December 1921 to the Council for the purposes of aiding it with its new housing scheme.  

However, the Town Council once again encountered resistance from various quarters. The Pretoria West ratepayers objected to the proposed building of houses on land west of the New Location site, between the belt of trees and the cemetery. This represented an extension of the original plans and would, according to the ratepayers lead to a depreciation of property

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141 *The Star*, The Pretoria Location, 8 April 1921

142 *Pretoria News*, The Mayor and the Bishop, 9 April 1921

143 MPA 32, Report of the Public Health Committee, 28 February 1922
owned by whites living in that vicinity. Africans voiced their objections to the proposal that they build their own homes, noting that they came home late from work and would be unable to undertake the work themselves. As a result, only forty applications for houses in the new housing scheme were received. Furthermore, African builders united on this issue and submitted tenders to build these houses at £60 a house.

The Pretoria Town Council had to continually adapt and adjust its plans to accommodate the African population living in Pretoria. When the building of the New Location finally went ahead in 1922 it fell far short of the original conceptions of the Town Council.

Conclusion
The creation of uniform urban African policy was a gradual process and it was only with the promulgation of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 that control of urban Africans was placed firmly in the hands of local government. The housing of Africans and control of their ingress into towns became the prerogative of the individual municipalities. For the Pretoria Town Council the attempts to define local government’s spheres of control with respect to the African population living in towns had been long in coming. From early in the twentieth century, the Pretoria Town Council had wanted to define clearly its areas of control and jurisdiction, and found itself in conflict with central government.

The Town Council viewed the control of the black population in Pretoria as a critical area and wished to impose uniform policy on both Africans and Coloureds. In the early twentieth century, the Town Council was unable to impose the location regulations on Africans living in the Asiatic Bazaar and the Cape Location as these fell under the jurisdiction of central government. It was particularly concerned to bring the Cape Location under its control in order to bring Coloureds under its control, a dominant theme in the Town Council’s policy aims. While the incorporation of the Cape Location and the Asiatic Bazaar under its control was achieved by 1908, the Town Council still found itself powerless with regard to Africans living in Schoolplaats.

The Pretoria Town Council’s policy towards Marabastad in the period 1903 to 1923 was characterised by two important premises, both of which interacted with each other, and
ensured each other's continuation: neglect of and indifference towards the material conditions of Marabastad; and removal of the location. The Pretoria Town Council refused to spend any money on the improvement of conditions in Marabastad because it was their intention, from as early as 1903 to remove it. As a result, conditions deteriorated rapidly, leading to vast overcrowding, widespread sub-letting, and the rapid spread of disease. The Town Council in turn justified its policy of removal through continual references to the appalling conditions in Marabastad and the dangers implicit to the health of the white population from its continued existence. It was a situation which the African residents of Marabastad could not win. Nevertheless, in many respects they thwarted the Town Council's attempts to implement their policy of removal and certainly during the period under review, it was never successfully implemented.
MAP 2: PRETORIA 1900-1914
(Map which indicates the original Sites I and II of the "New Location" Scheme)


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MAP 3: SITE OF THE NEW LOCATION

Market Square, Pretoria

1 UWL, A 2204f: Postcards
CHAPTER FIVE: AFRICAN RESPONSES TO URBANISATION

The previous chapter has shown how local authorities in Pretoria attempted to secure a tight net of control over the lives of the African population living in Marabastad and its environs. The Pretoria Town Council exhibited concern for the establishment of an ordered environment which could be easily policed and which would be preferably removed from the confines of the 'white' town. The living conditions of the location residents were grossly neglected while their mobility and freedom were continually checked by regulations aimed at controlling all aspects of their lives.

This chapter intends to explore the responses of the African population in Pretoria to these attempts to control their lives. These took on two forms: the informal cultural responses and defensive strategies for survival created by the urban African working class; and formal political organisation directed by the emerging petty bourgeoisie.

African responses to the restrictions placed upon their lives played itself out in a range of complex reactions. On the one hand they exhibited a degree of accommodation to their circumstances in that there was no visible active resistance from the African working class. On the other, the Marabastad community, through a variety of cultural responses to their environment, rejected the terms of control imposed by the Town Council and forged an ongoing struggle between themselves and the Town Council.

The urban environment was shaped as much by the working class as by the urban authorities, as they carved a life for themselves amidst harsh and alienating circumstances. The emergent African working class played an active role in shaping their own identity, displaying a resilience and a capacity for survival. Furthermore, their actions continually forced the urban planners to adapt their own concept of urban policy.

There is perhaps however, a tendency and a danger to celebrate the lives of the urban poor. The cultural milieu of shebeens, dance parties and tea meetings with its spirited music and
musicians, suggests a vibrancy and excitement which is all too easily translated by the social historian into an exotic and romantic lifestyle. It is therefore crucial to contextualise this cultural world within the extreme poverty that existed in the African locations and the discordant impact of vast overcrowding, unemployment and extreme privation on family life. The human cost was high and the disintegration of the fabric of the family was an important consequence of urban life in the African locations in Pretoria.

**INFORMAL RESPONSES**

In the struggle between the ruling and working class to clarify their own areas of control, African workers defined and shaped their own cultural identity. Conflict and complicity were two crucial ingredients which informed this process, and in the creation of an African working class culture, they operated simultaneously. In this regard, working class culture was forged out of conflict between the ruling and working class. The leisure time of urban Africans became a contested terrain and questions of who controlled and regulated the free time of the working class dominated the interaction between the two classes.

On the other hand, the African working class was not entirely free to form itself. It was only able to define itself in relation to the dominant class and culture which gave content and form to its existence. This state of tension that existed between the working class and the dominant class meant that the workers embraced a conception of themselves that was not entirely their own. In this regard, the working class adopted a supportive and complicit relationship to the dominant class, and can be said to have acquiesced in its own oppression.

The process of adaptation to urbanisation was made more difficult by economic restraints facing the African proletariat. Urban wages were inadequate to the needs of the African working class, and in many instances, women were excluded from the formal job market. There was little active resistance to the material circumstances in which the African population found themselves. Rather through a process of accommodation and adaptation, they developed mechanisms which enabled them to endure. These defensive strategies that evolved, centred to a large extent on beer brewing and a related cultural environment, were not only social defences against an antagonistic world, but were also a crucial means of survival. In Marabastad and Schoolplaats, as in other locations and townships of South
Africa, informal economic activities engendered a sense of community in which intricate networks of social interaction developed. Identification with and involvement in this cultural world ensured the redistribution of resources within the community, and often meant economic survival for the urban poor.

As rents were high and wages low, there were few in Marabastad who were afforded the luxury of not participating in some form of extra-economic activity. In 1904 the average monthly wage of Africans living in Marabastad was £2 per month, from which they were required to pay £1.7 in rent and services.¹ For the unemployed or the marginally employed in particular, economic survival was dependent on informal economic activities. In this milieu, family relationships, social networks and neighbourhood recreation were important defensive strategies for the urban poor. The forms that emerged - beer brewing, prostitution, hawking, criminality and subletting - did not differ substantially from that of other African locations and townships. Nevertheless, there were aspects to the social and cultural responses of Africans in Pretoria that contrasted with those on the Rand. The strong influence of the urban missions on social life was evident in the tea meetings, and the social forms emerged earlier in Pretoria owing to the longer history of the location.

**Beer Brewing**

Beer brewing and the drinking culture that it engendered represented an important area of black urban life where the state failed to impose its own ordered vision of the urban landscape on the working class. Illicit beer brewing and consumption became an important site of struggle between the state and the working class and often manifested itself in varying forms, encompassing a wide range of human responses. According to C.Ambler and J.Crush,

"drinking culture fostered compliance as well as resistance, passive acceptance as well as indignant action, hopelessness as well as a sense of empowerment."²

¹ MPA 3/159: E.Schlaefli, Superintendent of Locations to the Town Clerk, 22 August 1904
The Pretoria Town Council, as with the rest of the municipalities in the Transvaal, applied strict prohibition in an attempt to eradicate beer brewing. Accordingly, Article 48 of Ordinance 32 of 1902 made it a crime for Africans to be in possession of an intoxicating liquor, which included 'kaffir beer' in and around the urban centres of the Transvaal.³

Yet prohibition proved ultimately to be a failure just as the Kruger government had failed to enforce total prohibition in the 1890s. Despite regular police raids and large-scale prosecutions for liquor offences, local government in the Transvaal was unable to eradicate the brewing and consumption of beer within the confines of the urban areas. Rather, the urban environment was characterised by

"a fragmented and ineffectual prohibition amid a thriving liquor trade."⁴

In Pretoria as in other urban locations, the African working class resisted the attempts by the Town Council to impose a ban on the sale and consumption of beer through various means. The urban African community constructed an alternative cultural milieu where beer and liquor was sold and consumed, and which locked the Town Council in constant struggle with them and prevented the eradication of the illicit liquor trade. In the early 1900s in Pretoria the social construct where beer and liquor was sold and consumed, and where music and dancing formed the dominant form of social release, was referred to as the timiti - the tea meeting.⁵ The timiti reflects the antecedents of the church which influenced the early urbanisation of Africans in Pretoria and the adaptation and syncretisation of traditional social forms to the demands of a more urban culture.

This contrasted with the shebeen society of Johannesburg of the 1920s which was centred on the slumyards and marabi. E.Koch has written extensively on marabi culture, noting that marabi described a


⁴ J.Baker, "Prohibition and Illicit Liquor on the Witwatersrand, 1902-1932", p.141

⁵ The term timiti was used by Modikwe Dikobe to describe the tea meetings of Pretoria. Interview with M.Friedman, April 1989
"whole way of life (of the African slum yard dwellers), the class position they
adopted, the music they played and the way they danced."6

Koch highlights the centrality of beer brewing and the shebeen to the marabi cultural milieu.
Shebeen queens were able to carve out an economically independent existence. Music and
dancing were a crucial component of the culture and it also enabled itinerant musicians to
exist independently of wage labour.7

Thus many of the features of marabi culture in the Johannesburg slumyards bore a strong
resemblance to the night life in Marabastad where the dance parties of the timiti were centred
on beer brewing and the shebeen. These similarities between the two cultural forms has given
rise to a number of comparisons and claims that marabi originated in Marabastad. Ezekiel
Mphahlele has stated that

"the name 'Marabi' came from Marabastad. From there it went to the Reef."8

Despite conviction on the part of some Africans with the identification of marabi with
Marabastad, D.Coplan refutes this, insisting that marabi was exclusively a product of the
Johannesburg slumyards.9 Marabi was also a much later cultural form to develop, emerging
only in the 1920s. Nevertheless, given that Pretoria often served as the migrant's initial
entry into an urban world before moving on to the Rand, it is possible that there was a
transfer of some of the earlier cultural forms from Pretoria to Johannesburg. Certainly the
similarity of the two names and the analogous features of the two cultural forms such as wild
dancing, beer brewing, shebeens and live musical entertainment does suggest some linkages
between the two.

6 E.Koch, "'Without Visible Means of Subsistence': Slumyard Culture in
Johannesburg, 1918-1940", in B.Bozzoli (ed), Town and Countryside in the
Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Popular Response, Johannesburg: Ravan Press,
1983, p.159

7 Ibid., p.159-161

8 E.Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue, p.96

9 D.Coplan, In Township Tonight!, p.94-95

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In the late nineteenth century the tea meeting was a church-organised communal meeting, often sponsored in rotation by members of the church women's group. Its original intention was more in the nature of a social gathering where no liquor was consumed, and where people would pay an entrance fee, "a sixpence or three pence or a shilling or whatever it is" and in return, receive tea and cake and listen to friends perform hymns or popular songs. Often choirs would challenge each other. Yet it became clear that by the turn of the century, the nature of the timiti had changed considerably and it had expanded into a more social recreational form, centred around drink and wild dancing. In particular, the church elements had been removed from the gathering and Modikwe Dikobe suggests that it was

"the unbaptised (who) were disposed towards the dances known as 'timiti'." 

This does suggest that the particular cultural forms that emerged in Marabastad and its environs were a working class response. Although the antecedents of the timiti were rooted in the 'respectable' tea meetings of the church-going community in Schoolplaats and Marabastad, and were initially associated with attempts by the aspiring petty bourgeoisie to attain notions of respectability associated with white middle class culture, these forms were appropriated by the working class and adapted to suit their own particular requirements. The aspirant petty bourgeoisie continued to seek recreational outlets in "no other than church practices" during the evenings, while they favoured "rugby, football, cricket and tennis" as day-time leisure activities, despite there being no available facilities.

By 1903 white residents in Pretoria were outraged by the disorderly state of affairs generated

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10 Ibid., p.76

11 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sergeant S.Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.63

12 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of N.Boya, 3 June 1910, p.17

13 Modikwe Dikobe, "Inside the New Society", p.5

14 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of E.Chake, 1 July 1910, p.56
by these tea meetings and other nightly activities. They complained that they
"always degenerated in licentious meetings, where many servants employed
in town used to spend whole nights, and often whole days, rendering
themselves unfit for their work."16

Although this might well have been the case, it can also be argued from a different
perspective that these complaints exhibit the concerns of white employers to control and
discipline the labour force. More generally they reflect the racist discourse prevalent among
whites in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century which claimed that black tolerance
for alcohol was much lower than whites and that whites had to be protected from the 'evils'
of African excess.17

E.H.Schlaefli, the Superintendent of Locations, whose task it was to issue permits for tea
meetings, responded to complaints from white residents by discontinuing permission. This
did not however eradicate tea meetings; the residents of Marabastad continued to hold tea
meetings without permission, or they simply shifted the locale to the Asiatic Bazaar. A cafe
owner, Gaolom Hassain, was renowned for holding tea meetings or dances every night of
the week, to which large numbers of Africans from Marabastad would attend. Schlaefli was
powerless to prevent such occurrences as the Asiatic Bazaar did not fall within his
jurisdiction.18

Makeshift shebeens, where liquor was sold and dancing occurred, were also commonplace.
Sergeant Cowley described what he considered to be a fairly typical scene:

"There were about twenty kafirs (sic) of various ages and sexes in a large
room of the house dipping pannikins of beer out of an oil drum which stood

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15 See MPA 4: Minutes of the Town Council, E.Schlaefli, Acting Superintendent of
Locations to the Native Commissioner, 13 March 1903; MPA 2/12: Town Clerk to
the District Commandant of Police - Petition by 76 residents in Ward 2, 11 April
1906

16 MPA 3/159: E.H.Schlaefli, Acting Superintendent of Locations to the Native
Commissioner, 13 March 1903

17 C.Ambler and J.Crush, "Alcohol in Southern African Labor History", p.6

18 MPA 3/159: E.Schlaefli, Acting Superintendent of Locations, to the Native
Commissioner, 13 March 1903
like a punch bowl in the centre of the floor. They were in various stages of hilarity, and enjoyed the calm aspect of the Sabbath evening, as only a drunken native can."  

The brewing of beer involved the residents of Marabastad in a complex series of networks and associations which often proved difficult to control. Single women, widows and women whose husbands were in jail were often the known beer brewers in the location. According to Reverend E. Creux of the Swiss Mission,

"Marabastad here is infested with low women who live on the sale of beer and liquor... They make strong kaffir beer, adding sugar, ferment or methylated spirits."  

Ezekiel Mphahlele provides an alternative view, highlighting the economic necessity as well as the degree of independence beer brewing offered women:

"The same old cycle. Leave school, my daughter, and work. You cannot sit at home and have other people work for you; stand up and do the white man's washing and sell beer. That's right - that is how a woman does it; look at us, we do not sit and look up to our husbands or fathers to work alone; we have sent our children to school with money from beer selling..."

The predominance of women in the liquor trade are borne out by arrest figures. For example, in April 1913, forty one women and six men out of an approximate adult population of 100 in the New Location were arrested for being in possession of 1,074 gallons of 'kaffir beer' and ninety gallons of Iqali. Clearly women were the most economically vulnerable sector of the society, there being limited employment opportunities for women in town and beer brewing was one solution to the economic hardships facing them. However, while participation in beer brewing and other areas of the informal sector highlight the economic

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19 Pretoria News, Kafir Carousers, 20 April 1904

20 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A. King, 2 June 1910, p.35

21 C 41, Vol 1: Transvaal Liquor Commission 1909, Evidence of Reverend E. Creux

22 E. Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue, p. 44

23 MPA 3/130: Sergeant Cowley to the District Commandant SAP, 26 April 1913; MPA 3/157: Rex vs Jan Mabuya and others - Copy of evidence, April 1913. (Iqali was fermented and usually took about 12 hours to make; Kaffir beer was made from kaffir corn mealie meal)
resilience and independence of urban African women, one must not overstate its virtues. Women were largely excluded from the formal job market, and thus there was often little choice involved in their decision to brew beer. Moreover, it was often a harsh existence, surrounded by uncertainty, with women being subject to arrests and abuse by the police.

The Asiatic Bazaar was a key intermediary in the process of beer-brewing. In 1905 the Superintendent of Native Locations complained that

"the Indian location is a nest of people making and selling Caffer beer (sic); the Indians themselves making wholesale the malt used by Natives for the preparation of their beer."\(^{24}\)

According to Reverend Creux, it was the Indian who was "the principle agent of the illicit liquor trade."\(^{25}\) Indians who worked in town were easily able to bring liquor in their carriages into the Asiatic Bazaar. Furthermore, they supplied the materials necessary for the brewing of beer, namely the yeast and grain.\(^{26}\) Prior to the assumption of control of the Asiatic Bazaar by the Town Council in 1907, the Town Council claimed that it was helpless to implement any sort of control over the illicit liquor traffic in the Asiatic Bazaar.\(^{27}\) But even once the Town Council gained jurisdiction over the Asiatic Bazaar, they were unable to stamp out the illicit liquor trade.

The involvement of whites in the illicit liquor trade was also a major cause of the failure of prohibition. According to J. Baker, the contradictory legislation, which barred blacks but not whites from using alcohol, opened the door for segments of the white population to engage in the lucrative illicit liquor trade. Baker suggests that in Johannesburg it was the 'poor whites' who flocked to the urban centres who were most actively engaged in the liquor trade.\(^{28}\) In Pretoria, varying sections of the white population served as intermediaries in the

\(^{24}\) MPA 2/94: Superintendent of Native Locations to the Town Clerk, 25 April 1905

\(^{25}\) C 41, Vol 1: Transvaal Liquor Commission 1909, Evidence of Reverend Creux

\(^{26}\) TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A.King, 2 June 1910, p.27

\(^{27}\) MPA 2/12: Commissioner of Police to the Town Clerk, 25 October 1905

\(^{28}\) J. Baker, "Prohibition and Illicit Liquor on the Witwatersrand, 1902-1932", p.156
illicit liquor trade. Reverend Sack was concerned that "White men, Italians, Jews, Levantines do it." They would bring liquor into the locations, sell it directly to their "agents" who then distributed the liquor to the various houses. According to Sergeant Cowley, these agents were usually the Basutos, both men and women.

From the 1910s, Chinese residents of the Asiatic Bazaar also began to play a dominant role in the supply of liquor to Africans through the sale of 'hopan', an intoxicating brew. In order to prevent this, hopan was brought under the liquor law. The Chinese then began to sell ginger beer, but they were continually under suspicion of spiking it with alcohol.

The police themselves were not above involvement in the liquor trade. African policemen, earning as little as £3 per month in 1909, were easily subject to bribery by liquor dealers. The profits of the illicit liquor trade were so enormous that dealers were able to offer what was to an African constable a large sum of money in order to turn a blind eye to the trade. On the other hand, bribery also worked the other way. The police paid a number of 'trap boys' to assist them in liquor detection. They were usually inhabitants of the locations who would inform the police of those suspected of carrying liquor into the locations.

Why was illicit beer brewing such a burning issue for the Pretoria Town Council? Beer-brewing was a metaphor for the economic independence and resilience of the African working class. It provided an income for women who were often unable to find formal means of employment, and the sale of beer ensured that money was redistributed within the community. The proceeds from beer brewing therefore enabled many women, who were free

29 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend C.Sack, 1 June 1910, p.49
30 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sergeant S.Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.51
31 MPA 3/158: Superintendent of Locations to the Town Clerk, 20 January 1920
32 MPA 3/158: Reports of the Superintendent of Locations, 26 May 1919; 10 June 1919
33 C 41, Vol 1: Transvaal Liquor Commission 1909, Evidence of Reverend Creux
34 Pretoria News, Coloured Persons and Traps, 9 February 1905

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from any controls, to remain in the urban area.

Beer-brewing was also a visible symbol of the struggle between the dominated classes and the ruling class. The terms of the struggle were played out by the ruling class in legislation, police control, excessive raids and arrests for the possession and sale of beer; the beer-brewers defied the regulations and developed sophisticated networks of support and more ingenious methods of evading detection.

Beer brewing and drunkeness also embodied for the Town Council the disorderly urban environment over which they sought control. Furthermore, it represented a threat to production, a concern they shared with most employers of labour in Pretoria. The consumption of alcohol distorted work rhythms, particularly on Monday mornings when large numbers of workers typically were absent from work.

As a result, the Pretoria Town Council expended large amounts of manpower and resources to enforce the liquor regulations. Most police activity was directed towards beer raids. Weekly raids usually lasting two or three days were a common occurrence. In 1907 in order to combat beer brewing, police increased raids to three to four times weekly. Sergeant Cowley declared the success of such a policy, suggesting that

"the brewing of Kaffir Beer in the Pretoria Locations is practically a thing of the past." 36

He based this assumption on the fact that in the past it had been common to find as much as 500 gallons of Kaffir Beer hidden in empty houses and along the banks of the Apies River, the police then began to find only about five gallons in any single house. The hiding of beer in empty houses in the locations for storage purposes was a common practice, making it impossible to gain a conviction against the brewer. And yet the police appear to have

35 SNA 388, NA 3912/07: B. Betts, Superintendent of Police to the Deputy Commissioner of Police, 1907
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Pretoria News, Beer and Beerers, 21 June 1904
been deluding themselves. Their weekly raids were not reducing the amount of beer brewed. They merely spurred the beer-brewers to find more ingenious methods of hiding their liquor.

Prosecutions for the contravention of the liquor laws were rife, and Monday mornings at the Magistrates Courts usually saw a small army of liquor offenders pass through its halls. Prosecutions were for possession, distribution and drunkenness. The figures for 1915 give some sense of the scale of the problem. 1,873 Africans were convicted on charges connected with liquor. Of these, 1,073 were on drunken charges, 784 cases were for possession and sixteen were charged for selling of liquor. 177 Europeans were convicted for drunkenness while twenty one were convicted for selling liquor.

The costs to the Town Council were high. In 1918 the Rooth Report stated that the cost for the country for the detection and punishment of liquor related offences in terms of police, magistrates and prisons exceeded £200,000 per annum. Nevertheless, town councils continued to promote prohibition and its control thereof.

Convictions for possession varied from one to six months, though invariably whites were given more lenient sentences than African participants in the illicit liquor trade. In 1905 the magistrate sentenced four whites to six months hard labour and £150 fine. For Africans selling liquor to other Africans, sentences were far more severe; they were often given a sentence of ten months hard labour. However, a prison sentence was in no ways seen as a deterrent. Many of those convicted were habitual offenders and a spell in prison was considered as "worth it", a necessary inconvenience. The Pretoria News cited the case of Maria Booysen, who

"enters the court, smiling, looks at the Magistrate with a weary expression...gets through it smiling, and is back again in custody...very often

39 Pretoria News, The Drink Traffic, 19 April 1904; Natives and Drunkenness, 23 February 1916

40 Pretoria News, Natives and Drunkenness, 23 February 1916

41 Pretoria News, Liquor to Natives, 29 September 1918

42 MPA 2/12: Commissioner of Police to the Town Clerk, 25 October 1905
Thus, prohibition and prosecution did not in any way diminish the sale or drinking of liquor or beer among the African urban community in Pretoria and the Pretoria Town Council began to seek alternative solutions. In 1910 the Council began to consider the merits of the Natal system, whereby the sale of beer would be placed under municipal control. In 1908 the Native Beer Act had been passed in Natal which allowed Town Councils in Natal to become the only brewers and sellers of sorghum beer. In this way Natal established a system of municipal beer monopoly. The ruling class began to believe that a municipal monopoly was the only way to regulate the consumption of beer. Furthermore justification for the system of municipal control was built into the premise that the municipality would plough back all profits derived from the municipal sale of beer to the improvement of the location conditions, and generally to be used in the interests of the Africans. Central government appeared reluctant to accede to the wishes of the Council and introduce legislation on this issue. They urged the Council to consider establishing a municipal eating house on the lines adopted in Durban, but without the sale of beer. The Council viewed this as a waste of time.

Prior to its passage, there was much support for the Beer Bill in Pretoria. Africans strongly objected to prohibition and some formal organisation around the issue took place by residents of Pretoria. A number of Africans and Coloureds, meeting under a newly formed association called 'Ons Volk' and under the leadership of one Kassim, presented a petition to Parliament in which the petitioners asked for an amendment to the existing Liquor Law whereby prohibition would be lifted. Open air meetings were held in Marabastad at which Africans

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43 *Pretoria News*, Natives and Drunkenness, 23 February 1916


45 MPA 22: Minutes of the Town Council, 21 November 1913

46 *Pretoria News*, Liquor for Natives, 17 March 1908

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called for the Beer Bill to be passed and for prohibition to be abolished. The Ethiopian Church in Marabastad, which was opposed to drinking on religious grounds, turned the issue into a political one and called for the abolition of prohibition:

"We must have the same liberty as the white people, and we do not see why we should not."  

Nevertheless, despite protests from the local African inhabitants of Marabastad against prohibition and the Pretoria Town Council's continued support for the implementation of the "Natal System" in Pretoria, prohibition was maintained and continued to be enforced through arrests, prosecutions and prison sentences for offenders.

By 1924 the Pretoria Town Council conceded the failure of prohibition:

"It appears to be impossible, notwithstanding repeated arrests and convictions, to root out the offenders and to improve conditions. It would appear that the present policy of prohibition does not work."  

According to police figures (which in themselves probably do not reflect the full extent of beer brewing in the African locations) seventy five percent of householders either brewed 'Kaffir beer' or made concoctions such as Skokiaan and Khali beer. The police estimated that probably half of these brewers made the liquor for sale at sixpence a tin, while the remainder made small quantities of beer for their own consumption. Clearly the harsh measures of police control had not eliminated beer brewing in the locations.

The passage of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 provided the Pretoria Town Council with the option of allowing the domestic brewing of beer or creating a municipal monopoly whereby the manufacture and sale of beer to Africans would be placed under municipal

\[47\] C 41, Vol 1: Transvaal Native Commission 1909, Evidence of Reverend Creux

\[48\] Ibid.

\[49\] MPA 22: Minutes of the Town Council, 21 November 1913

\[50\] MPA 3/204: The Town Clerk to the District Commandant, South African Police, 21 March 1924

\[51\] MPA 3/204: Report of Lieutenant H.J.Male to the District Commandant, South African Police, 2 April 1924

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control. The issue continued to be debated among council members, representatives of the church and various temperance bodies. Given the history of failure in terms of prohibition in the Pretoria locations, it is indeed surprising that the Pretoria Town Council ultimately opted for a policy of prohibition under the Urban Areas Act in 1924, thereby setting the terrain for further and prolonged struggle between the ruling and dominated classes in Pretoria.

Criminality, Prostitution and the Disintegration of Family Life

"The Pass Law has a tendency to regard every native as a criminal, as it were, although we know that every native is not a criminal." In the prevailing conditions of poverty among the working class in Pretoria, criminality was endemic. This was a direct consequence of the development of an urban underclass accompanying the incipient growth of capitalism where the distribution of resources was skewed in favour of the ruling class. The inability of the working class to make ends meet within the framework of legal activity resulted in the manifestation of a variety of criminal activities, ranging from prostitution and gambling to petty thievery and gang activity. However, the definitions of criminal activity in South African urban society were extended beyond the range of what was accepted as orthodox criminal behaviour to encompass a wide range of activities that ensured the criminalisation of the African working class. Thus, the majority of Africans entering into the urban areas were criminalised, either by definition or by encountering the law with regard to infringements of the pass laws, beer brewing or for nonpayment of the poll tax.

Crime statistics for Africans in Pretoria, although for a later period (the six month period from July to December 1927), tend to bear this out. (See Table 4) Of the 2,984 charges,

52 MPA 3/199: Natives Urban Areas) Act 1923: Notes by Town Clerk on Draft Regulations framed by Native Affairs Department under Section 23 of the Act, and other matters.

53 MPA 3/204: The Case against Municipal Brewing, by Rev. A.J.Cook, published by The S.A. Temperance Alliance, 1924; Minutes of the Public Health Committee, 13 August 1926

54 K 357: Native Pass Law Commission, Evidence of Commissioner, 30 January 1920
1,756 were for possession of liquor, 412 were for drunkenness, and 381 were for infringements of the Tax Act. Interestingly, there were only thirty five arrests for transgression of the pass laws.\textsuperscript{55} This does suggest that the policing of the pass laws was not as severe in Pretoria as in Johannesburg, and may explain why Pretoria was favoured by many who had encountered pass problems in other urban areas.

African women living in the urban areas were not subject to the pass laws, and it was therefore important for the authorities to be able to exert some alternative form of control over them. The fact that women were the chief agents in the beer brewing process enabled the authorities to police women and through coercive actions attempt to dissuade them from remaining in town. These measures were unsuccessful. Prostitution provided the authorities with another source whereby they were able to criminalise women entering into the urban areas.

Just as beer brewing in the Pretoria locations provided many women who were economically vulnerable with a means of survival, so too did prostitution offer women an alternative source of income. Thus a number of single women who had left their homes in the rural areas or had deserted their husbands or had themselves been abandoned turned to prostitution as a livelihood. In 1910 S.M. Makgatho expressed his concern for these single women:

"We do not know how many of them live. Many of them have no visible means of sustenance, and the only conclusion that we come to is that their means of livelihood is always from the proceeds of prostitution."\textsuperscript{56}

Once again, the Indians were often the intermediaries in the procurement of sex. They served as pimps or provided accommodation for prostitutes. Subunta Khan was a well known supplier of liquor and women in the Asiatic Bazaar, and eventually went to prison for these activities.\textsuperscript{57} Women would use empty rooms in Indian houses, for which they would pay

\textsuperscript{55} MPA 3/200: Six-monthly Report of the Superintendent of Locations, ending 31 December 1927

\textsuperscript{56} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of S.M.Makgatho, 1 July 1910, p.48

\textsuperscript{57} TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sergeant S.Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.55

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According to Reverend E. Creux, in 1910 prostitution was rife. He stated that
"there are certainly about 200 women there who are simply nothing else than
prostitutes."  

Sergeant Cowley however believed that there were only fifteen to twenty known prostitutes
in Marabastad, but there was a great deal of casual prostitution. W.A. King, the Sub-
Native Commissioner did not view the phenomenon of prostitution as being particularly
widespread. He was of the opinion that single women in Pretoria generally did not turn to
prostitution, but "picked up with some man and lived with him." E.J. Krige, an
anthropologist who studied the Pretoria locations in the 1930s, determined that prostitution
in the "European sense" hardly existed. Rather, she identified many cases of "concubinage",
that is, instances where married men were known to support one or more women other than
their wives.

Clearly it is difficult to quantify the scale of prostitution in Marabastad. Moreover,
'prostitution' does not fully capture the range of relationships that existed between men and
women; prostitution was only one of many forms of sexual liaisons that occurred. It must
be borne in mind that single women in towns were extremely vulnerable - they were thrust
into a male-dominated environment, where they were regarded as legal minors and therefore
were denied access to housing. Only men were able to sign a lease for a home.

58 Ibid.
59 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Reverend
   E. Creux, 1 June 1910, p.32
60 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of Sergeant
   S. Cowley, 1 June 1910, p.56
61 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of
   W.A. King, 2 June 1910, p.30
62 E.J. Krige, "Some Social and Economic facts revealed in Native Family Budgets",
   Race Relations, 1(6), Oct-Nov. 1934, p.97
63 B. Bozzoli and M. Friedman, Fight Where We Stand, p.17
result, women would often take up with a man who could provide some form of accommodation.

Certainly, urban living contributed to the breakdown of family life and traditional forms of marriage. Modikwe Dikobe suggests that from the early 1900s parental control over young women was disintegrating and 'vat-en-sit' marriages where a man and woman lived together without formally marrying, were becoming common. This type of arrangement heightened the insecurity of women - the man was spared the obligation of bridewealth, and was free to leave whenever he wished.65

E.J.Krige's study on changing conditions in marital relations in the Pretoria locations provides useful insights into the process of disintegration within family life. Although her study was set in the early 1930s, it is clear that many of these processes were taking place in the period leading up to the 1920s. The process of disintegration within the family was in flux, with certain traditional forms either still in existence or in the process of transforming to merge with new urban forms. Thus Krige determined that the institution of lobola in marriage did still exist in the Pretoria locations, though it often took the form of a cash payment rather than cattle. An exception were the oorlams and couples brought up on mission stations. Their distinctive missionary background had inculcated a strong bias against the passing of lobola in marriage, favouring rather the more 'western' form of marriage based on a church and civil ceremony.66

African children living in urban areas were particularly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of urban life. Owing to the substantial permanent population living in the Pretoria locations, there was a significant number of children living in these areas. Moreover, children in Pretoria tended to remain in the locations, not following the custom common in Johannesburg of sending

64 Modikwe Dikobe, "Handwritten notes on Marabastad", April 1987. (I am grateful to Modikwe Dikobe for giving these notes to me.)

65 L.Longmore, The Dispossessed, p.69

66 E.J.Krige, "Changing conditions in marital relations and parental duties among urbanized natives", Africa, 9(1), 1936, p.2
children to the countryside to escape the 'depravity of urban living'. This was due in all likelihood to the fact that many of the families living in Marabastad had no ties to a rural past.

In 1928\(^{67}\) only fifty percent of children of school-going age living in the Pretoria locations attended school, while ten percent were legitimately employed and forty percent were unemployed and regarded as "loafers".\(^{68}\) Those children who worked were more often than not young girls who quite commonly sought employment from the ages of fifteen to seventeen. Economic conditions necessitated that children seek employment from an early age and with economic independence, parental control was correspondingly loosened. Linked to this was a high incidence of teenage pregnancies amongst young girls in Pretoria. In 1934-35, Krige identified fifty nine percent of births in Schoolplaats, Marabastad and Bantule to be illegitimate.\(^{69}\) Public censure was incipient and inarticulate on the issue of illegitimacy and parental control had little force.

Unemployed youths often congregated in gangs around the Pretoria West Golf Course, where they would occasionally act as caddies. Youth gangs could also be found "loafing around" the market, where pickpocketing, begging, carrying parcels and washing motor-cars and cycles would generate some form of income. The Pretoria Joint Council voiced its concern that these young boys were becoming involved in juvenile crime and smoking dagga and gambling with their earnings. They attributed the high incidence of juvenile delinquency to the extreme conditions of poverty and overcrowding; lack of parental control; defects in the education system, wherein they laid the blame on inadequate and unsuitably trained teachers;

\(^{67}\) While the data on African juveniles in the Pretoria locations comes from a report drawn up in 1928, it is possible to extrapolate much of this information to the earlier period under study.

\(^{68}\) UWL, AD 1433, Cp 9.6.3: Pretoria Joint Council of Europeans and Natives - Report of the sub-committee appointed to investigate and report upon the conditions prevailing amongst native juveniles in the urban area of Pretoria, 28 January 1928

\(^{69}\) E.J.Krige, "Changing conditions in marital relations and parental duties among urbanized natives", p.4
and finally on the absence of proper recreational facilities.\textsuperscript{70} The proliferation of youth gangs reflected the instability of the urban African family in the African locations in Pretoria and children were the most immediate victims.

Gangs were an important aspect of criminal activity in the urban terrain. The most predominant gangs in Pretoria were undoubtedly the Amalaita gangs, which established zones of informal control throughout the town. They were perceived as a real threat to the urban authorities' vision of an ordered society. The violent content of their interaction with each other and the disruption of town life as they marched on Sunday afternoons, disorganising traffic and forcing pedestrians and cars off the streets, presented a serious challenge as far as the authorities were concerned, to law and order.

The origins of the Amalaita can be traced back to the rural village gang which was probably related to the age-sets draw from Pedi society. Many of the features of the rural village gang were transferred to the urban areas and adapted to suit the requirements of the urban environment. These included gang fights, usually involving stick fighting, although in Pretoria, these tended to be more serious and often more vicious, with knives and bicycle chains being used.\textsuperscript{71}

Ninety percent of the Amalaita membership comprised young domestic workers, who were invariably new to the urban areas, and their unemployed peers; while the remaining ten percent was drawn from the compounded youths who were also recent recruits from the rural areas. An important component of each gang was its press gang which would impress young newcomers into the local gang, often through coercive means. Strict discipline was maintained in the gang through the gang captain who would enforce his authority by way of severe canings. There was also a strong sense of camaraderie among the gang members.

\textsuperscript{70} UWL, AD 1433, Cp 9.6.3: Pretoria Joint Council of Europeans and Natives - Report of the sub-committee appointed to investigate and report upon the conditions prevailing amongst native juveniles in the urban area of Pretoria, 28 January 1928

\textsuperscript{71} UWL, AD 843, B56.4: The Amalaita, by J.R.Brent, Manager: Native and Asiatic Administration Department, City Council of Pretoria, 7 December 1939
which served to heighten their cultural identity. According to W.A.King, the Native Commissioner in Pretoria, a number of single women frequently became the "confederates to native criminals, notably the Amalaita".

As a young boy, Ezekiel Mphahlele would watch the rival Amalaita gangs on a Sunday afternoon march through the streets in groups of fifty or more strong. He described them thus:

"They had on shorts, tennis caps, tennis shoes, and handkerchiefs dangled from their pockets. They crouched, shook their fists in the air so that their plastic bangles round the wrists clanged. They moved with long strides like a black army, and their legs glistened with petroleum jelly or soap grease which they smeared carefully after washing."

The Amalaita gangs would usually gather at a piece of empty land in the locations or their environs, to indulge in gruelling boxing brawls which would ultimately end up as gang fights. These showdowns between the rival Amalaita gangs were violent and inevitably led to confrontations with the police.

The criminal aspect of the Amalaita gangs was usually restricted to assaults and theft. Assaults were invariably directed against Africans, usually against rival gang members, though Mphahlele cites cases of rape and an incident of castration.

Delius suggests that "involvement in these groups helped youths to counteract the atomisation, degradation and drudgery of their working lives." The Amalaita were a group who refused to comply with the dominant culture's conception of male domestic service. As

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72 Ibid.
73 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Minute given by W.A.King to the Chairman of the Committee, 3 June 1910, p.11
74 E.Mphahlele, Down Second Avenue, p.101
75 Ibid.
a result of the trend in the early twentieth century of favouring men in domestic service, these young newcomers to town were thrust into domestic service for white women. Here they were required to assume subservient positions to women and do what was essentially perceived as women’s work. These conceptions of male domestic workers would have been alien to recent arrivals from the rural areas with its emphasis on patriarchy and male dominance. The attempts by the dominant culture to emasculate African men was met by a particular form of resistance. The *Amalaita* created a world for themselves which reasserted their maleness, restored their control, albeit for Sundays only, and which drew on aspects of their rural culture which had emphasised their dominant role. The clothes they wore, the forms of organisation and interaction with each other were all cultural expressions of their refusal to fully accommodate to the the ruling class’ conception of them.

Thus, the existence of the *Amalaita* and the way that they asserted a particular cultural identity was an important symbol of the struggle of the African working class, in this case, of male domestic servants. The police were unable to prevent their gatherings nor were they able to direct their activity in a non-violent way. Attempts by the ruling classes to draw the *Amalaita* into more ‘respectable’ leisure time activities, such as organised open air boxing matches, dancing or soccer matches were met with failure.77

**FORMAL ORGANISATION**

This section hopes to demonstrate the centrality of Pretoria in the development of early African political organisations in the Transvaal. In the first decade of the twentieth century it was possible to identify a number of African political organisations in Pretoria which largely represented the interests of the emergent petty bourgeoisie.

Studies of African political organisation in South Africa have tended to concentrate on the development of broader national politics and have been largely dismissive of early political

77 UWL, AD 843, B56.4: The Amalaita, by J.R.Brent, Manager: Native and Asiatic Administration Department, 7 December 1939
organisation as naive, unrealistic and conservative in nature. An exception had been Andre Odendaal’s study on early African politics prior to 1912. He focuses on the emergence and development of the first black political organisations and demonstrates how these regionally diverse groupings coalesced to form the South African National Native Congress in 1912. Odendaal stresses the importance of judging these political movements within the context of their own time and the value system that prevailed at the turn of the century. As such, the definitive influence of the missionaries and Christianity, and mid-Victorian political liberalism formed the basis of much of their interaction with the ruling classes. Odendaal analyses the growth of these organisations from a broad regional perspective, focusing on the Cape, Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State respectively. In this way, he demonstrates how the specific regional characteristics intersected and influenced the development of political organisation in these provinces. But this broad analysis fails to identify the specific influences that were brought to bear within smaller geographical units. Thus to talk of the Transvaal generally, and specifically the Witwatersrand is to ignore the importance of the specificity of local conditions in the creation of political organisations. In this respect, Pretoria took the lead, and while Odendaal mentions that many of the leaders of political organisations in the Transvaal came from Pretoria, he does not explore why this was the case.

Why did Pretoria occupy such a central role in the early 1900s? The answer lies in the specific local conditions that existed in Pretoria and in the very distinctive influences that developed from the town’s nineteenth century history. In particular, the development of an urban settled African population in Pretoria and the important role played by the missions shaped the nature of resistance in the twentieth century.

For the most part, the permanent African population in Pretoria at the turn of the century had

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little or no ties to a rural past. Their experience was rooted firmly in the urban environment. Thus their stake in the urban environment was significantly higher than the migrant worker who usually supported some means of livelihood and a family in the rural areas. The settled population of Pretoria, many of whom could be classified as oorlams, had also been exposed to education in varying degrees through the presence and influence of the numerous missionaries operating in the area. In particular the establishment of Kilnerton in 1886 drew together a number of African intellectuals, many of whom subsequently settled and worked in Pretoria. The specific social differentiation of the African population in Pretoria had resulted in a manifest urban elite, which was well educated, and often conversant with Christianity. This emergent petty bourgeoisie in Pretoria had social aspirations towards 'respectability' and many occupied positions as court interpreters, teachers and those of skilled artisans such as plumbers and carpenters etc. Nevertheless, they often found their material circumstances to be the same as the African working class. A.G.Cobley described this as a common problem that affected the petty bourgeoisie in South African towns:

"The emergent black petty bourgeoisie and the black working class lived cheek by jowl in badly serviced locations and townships, where the state, rather than (these) subtle class differentiations, determined the general living conditions." 80

Thus their aspirations towards 'respectability' were often thwarted by the material conditions under which they lived, and upward mobility within the context of segregated locations and restrictive legislation was often a myth. Philip Bonner has shown how the colonised African petty bourgeoisie were "both stunted and repressed" and that its own class position was often blurred between an identification with working class interests and between their own elitist aspirations. 81

The role of the Church

The significance of missionary work in Pretoria was not only in the creation of a Christian educated elite, but in the tradition of resistance engendered by the schisms and the formation of independent African church movements, especially the Ethiopian movement. In the late


nineteenth century the breakaway independent church movements were essentially inward looking and lacked a political dimension. The grievances which had manifested themselves in schism were directly related to church matters and the exclusion of Africans from advancement in the church. Following the Anglo-Boer War, the independent churches in Pretoria began to take a far more active role in criticising the government and taking up grievances of the residents of Pretoria. Some examples serve to illustrate this point. In 1907, a number of prominent clergy joined with members of the Native Vigilance Association in protesting the retrenchment of Dr E.H. Schlaefli, the Superintendent of Locations since 1903. These included J. Kanyane Napo from the breakaway African church; his son J. Kanyane Napo junior; and S. J. Brander of the Ethiopian Catholic Church of Zion.82

In 1908 a petition signed by 159 residents of Schoolplaats and Marabastad, the majority of them being women, was sent under cover of Reverend Mangena Mokone, founder of the Ethiopian Church, to the Prime Minister, Louis Botha. The petition complained of the lack of employment opportunities for both men and women in Pretoria; the heavy burden imposed on women by the 10/- laundry licence; it called for free schooling for their children and for the elimination of invasive police searches.83 The petition reflects the economic concerns of the residents and in particular, those facing women. Their livelihood, as washerwomen, was under threat from the excessive licensing fee; while the future of their children’s education was at stake. Religious factors were not an issue but the political concerns for the material conditions of the location residents were mobilised by Mokone of the Ethiopian Church.

How does one explain this change in direction? There are two possible influences which shaped the nature of protest by the Ethiopian Church. The one is the brief affiliation of the Ethiopian Church in the late nineteenth century with the American Methodist Episcopal Church under the lead of James Dwane which may have had a radicalising effect on the

82 MPA 2/94: Petition from Native Clergymen, Teachers and Members of the Native Vigilance Association, Pretoria to the Mayor and Members of the Town Council, 1907

83 SNA 404, NA 1134/08: Rev. Makoni (sic) and 159 signatories to Prime Minister, Louis Botha, 4 March 1908
movement. This was certainly the perception of various sectors of the white population of Pretoria who believed that the influence of black American political ideas "had the effect, among natives who have been subjected to negro sentiment, of drawing the best of the native labourers from the true path of industrial improvement." 84

The second and more important explanation lies in the deepening effects of urbanisation which could not be ignored. By the early years of the twentieth century, the Pretoria locations of Schoolplaats and Marabastad were subjected to vast overcrowding and neglect, resulting in the development of slum conditions. The African population were paid low wages and the emerging petty bourgeoisie found themselves subject to the same material environment as the African working class with little opportunity for social advancement. These factors contributed to a sense of hopelessness which the Ethiopian Church may have hoped to harness into more direct action.

It would however be a mistake to overemphasise the political role of the Ethiopian church. According to T. Verryn, the independent churches increased the political awareness of Africans but rarely encouraged specific political action. 85 This does appear to be true for the church-directed challenges in the Pretoria locations. Political protest was petition-based, essentially conservative and rarely, if ever, posed a threat to the ruling classes. 86

**Formal political organisations**

Formal political organisation in Pretoria predated political activity on the Rand and from the early 1900s it was possible to identify a number of active organisations functioning in Pretoria. While many of these organisations were shortlived and had limited objectives, it does reflect a unique set of circumstances in Pretoria which engendered the early growth of such organisations. The existence of a significant permanent African population from which a core of educated men could be identified, their specific experience of urbanisation, and the

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84 *Pretoria News*, One Aspect of the Native Problem, 9 January 1905

85 T. Verryn, *A History of the Order of Ethiopia*, p.4

86 Nevertheless, the urban authorities viewed the existence of the Ethiopian Church with some alarm, particularly following the Bambatha Rebellion in Natal in 1906.
fact that Pretoria was the seat of political power were important factors in the creation of early political organisations in Pretoria.

The existence of Kilnerton, just a few kilometres outside of Pretoria, was a crucial factor in the politicisation of Pretoria’s petty bourgeoisie. It was a place of tertiary education, thus drawing men from all over. Many of its graduates settled in Pretoria, either in Marabastad or its environs, and played an active role in fostering political awareness and organisation. Most notable were S.M. Makgatho and P.T. Maeta. 87

S.M. Makgatho was a dominant figure in Transvaal and national politics - he was the President General of the African National Congress from 1917 to 1924 - but he first cut his teeth on local political organisation in Pretoria. He was born in 1865 at Mphahlele’s Location in the Northern Transvaal and studied for three years in England at Ealing before settling in Pretoria. He completed his education at Kilnerton and joined the teaching staff there from 1887 to 1906. 88 P.T. Maeta, a carpenter by trade, became the Secretary of the African National Political Union. Maeta had become increasingly embittered, having encountered difficulty finding work since the Reconstruction Government had come into power. 89 In all likelihood, Maeta was a victim of the "all-white" labour policy that the Pretoria Town Council had attempted to implement.

Makgatho and Maeta were jointly involved in the founding of the African National Political Union (ANPU) in early 1906. The organisation had national aspirations, seeking "to unite all the natives of Africa into one body socially and politically" and to represent the grievances of the African population to the government. 90 Membership of the ANPU encompassed both a rural and an urban dimension. The locus of control appeared to be in

87 SNA 337, NA 2696/06: Rev. J.F. Briscoe, Kilnerton Institution, to J.S. Marwick, Assistant Secretary for Native Affairs, 30 October 1906
88 Ibid.; A. Odendaal, Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics, p. 75
89 SNA 337, NA 2686/06: Rev. J.F. Briscoe, Kilnerton Institution, to J.S. Marwick, Assistant Secretary for Native Affairs, 30 October 1906
90 A. Odendaal, Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics, p. 75
Pretoria where Makgatho and Maeta were located, though it claimed 300 members from Mphahlele's Location, Makgatho's birthplace. Moreover "agents were at work" recruiting members in areas such as Heidelberg, Klerksdorp, Rustenburg and various rural locations in Pietersburg, Waterberg and Middelburg.  

An inspection of the grievances submitted to the Commissioner of Native Affairs by the African National Political Union reflect a concern with issues that affected all Africans such as taxation and passes. The interests of chiefs in the rural areas were recognised with a call to the government to award them a grant of money. But the majority of objections related directly to the interests of the petty bourgeoisie as a class. To name a few, the African National Political Union complained of Africans not being permitted to own businesses either in the town or in the locations; they called, not for all Africans, but for those "Natives respectably dressed and well behaving" to be allowed to walk on the sidewalks; with regard to schools, they objected to African schools being excluded from government grants; and finally, they appealed for the establishment of an Advisory Board to represent the interests of Africans in the Transvaal. These grievances articulated the desires of the emergent black petty bourgeoisie to achieve 'respectability' and a stake in the South African economy. Working class interests were barely acknowledged.

The Commissioner of Native Affairs responded in a typically paternalistic manner, insisting that the Native Commissioners and Sub-Commissioners

"displayed...a warm sympathy for the Natives and listened to them and to their grievances most patiently."  

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91 SNA 337, NA 2686/06: P. T. Maeta, Secretary of the African National Political Union to the Sub-Commissioner, Pretoria, 28 September 1906

92 SNA 337, NA 2686/06: S. M. Makgatho, President of the African National Political Union to the Commissioner of Native Affairs, 6 December 1906

93 SNA 337, NA 2686/06: S. M. Makgatho, President of the African National Political Union, to the Commissioner of Native Affairs, 28 September 1906 and 6 December 1906

94 SNA 337, NA 2686/06: G. Lagden, Commissioner for Native Affairs to the Secretary for Native Affairs, November 1906
Nevertheless, the grievances of the ANPU were not met in any meaningful way and ultimately it achieved little recognition. It was absorbed firstly into the Transvaal Native Organisation (TNO) in 1910 and later into the South African Native National Congress.

While the ANPU reflected a broad regional organisation centred in Pretoria, the Native Vigilance Association was a body constituted by the Marabastad residents in about 1906 to represent their grievances to the Native Affairs Department and the Town Council. Makgatho, who clearly did not confine his interests solely to broader regional issues but demonstrated a concern for local political issues, also chaired this organisation. Elias Chake, a resident of Marabastad since 1897, served as secretary. Chake who trained as a teacher at the American Methodist Episcopal school, served as an interpreter in the Magistrate’s Court in Pretoria and was to some extent representative of the membership of the Native Vigilance Association. Members of the Native Vigilance Association were mostly drawn from the permanently settled African population of Pretoria, many of whom comprised the emergent petty bourgeoisie.

Monthly meetings were held by the Native Vigilance Association at the Wesleyan Native Church to report back and discuss important location issues. For example, in 1907 the Association reported that the Town Council had refused their request to clean and repair the streets in Marabastad. Further petitions by the Native Vigilance Association appealed against the heavy costs incurred by residents of the locations, which included the £2 poll-tax to the government, the £6 per annum to the municipality for stand rents, and from 12/- to 20/- for passes. The inability to pay high stand rents led these houses to be put up for public auction by the municipality every three to six months, which caused considerable insecurity.

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96 Pretoria News, Marabastad Affairs, 9 October 1907

97 SNA 357, NA 9571/07: Petition of the Native Vigilance Association to the Commissioner of Native Affairs, 7 March 1907
The nature of the grievances of the Native Vigilance Association reflected a concern for their material circumstances, which in this instance coincided with the general concerns of the urban African poor. They complained about the intolerable conditions of the location - lack of drainage, high rentals, want of rights of any kind, and the high-handed actions of the police.  

But in some instances a concern for their 'respectable' status in the community was also in evidence. In 1910 a deputation of the Association met with W.A. King, the Sub-Native Commissioner wherein they complained about the attitude of white boys - "Haal af u hoed, Kaffir" - who insisted that "respectable, educated natives" should take off their hats to them.

In May 1910 the most important Africans organisations and bodies that were operative in the Transvaal coalesced under the umbrella organisations the Transvaal Native Union and the Transvaal Native Organisation with the intention of promoting African unity in the Transvaal. These included the Pretoria-based organisations such as the African National Political Union and the local Native Vigilance Association together with the Transvaal Native Congress, the Transvaal Basotho Committee, and the Transvaal Native Union. Once again, Makgatho took the Chair, and according to W.Windham, the Transvaal Secretary for Native Affairs, membership of the Transvaal Native Organisation was representative of a considerable portion of the African populations in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

With the formation of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912, the

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98 TPB 552, TA 1444: Pretoria Native Location Enquiry 1910 - Evidence of W.A. King, 2 June 1910, p.7-8
99 Rand Daily Mail, Pretoria Native Vigilance Association, 13 January 1910
101 It appears that the Transvaal Native Union and the Transvaal Native Organisation were unable to resolve differences between them and thus remained as two separate organisations. See A.Odendaal, Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics, p.260
102 A.Odendaal, Vukani Bantu! The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics, p.242
centrality of Pretoria’s role in formal political organisation appears to have faded. Pretoria’s African political leadership became involved in national politics, reflected by S.M. Makgatho assuming the leadership of the SANNC in 1917. Moreover, with the rapid industrialisation of the Witwatersrand during the war years and the concomitant growth of its urban African proletariat, it was natural that the locus of political organisation would shift to Johannesburg, and it was here that the African petty bourgeoisie became briefly radicalised between 1918 and 1920.¹⁰³

The petty bourgeoisie within Pretoria remained essentially inward looking and ultimately their concerns became even more narrowly defined as they aligned themselves with the Joint Councils.

The African masses for the most part were quiescent. Membership of these political organisations was drawn from the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, and the records highlight only one instance where the masses were drawn into petty bourgeoisie politics. In April 1919 the Transvaal Native Congress held a meeting in Marabastad which was attended by about 500 Africans. The meeting was called during the anti-pass campaigns that were taking place in Johannesburg. However, the leadership failed to mobilise the anger of the working class over the issue of passes and used the meeting as a fund raising venture, calling on all present to raise a levy of 2s 6d per African for the funds of the Native Congress. The African residents protested at this call for funds, stating that

"It is not the time to speak about annual subscriptions; but about passes."¹⁰⁴

The residents’ aim was to secure amendments to the Pass Law, with a view to its simplification and the abolition of the multiplicity of passes. The residents prevented the speaker from continuing and pulled him from the floor at which point some police who were in attendance attempted to drive the crowd away, "waving their sticks". This police interference provoked a fresh wave of anger, now directed at the police themselves. Police were stoned and the police station was attacked and a number of police were injured. As a


¹⁰⁴ Rand Daily Mail, Pretoria Native Trouble, 18 April 1919
result of this outbreak of "public violence", twenty four Africans were arrested.105

How does one explain this brief explosion of anger on the part of a relatively quiescent African population? It is most likely that the African working class in Pretoria were influenced by events taking place in Johannesburg where anti-pass laws demonstrations and riots were taking place. Given this context, they felt they had been duped by the Transvaal Native Congress, who were demanding money from an already impoverished crowd of people. They realised that what they perceived as a real grievance - the hated pass law - was not going to be addressed. Their anger towards the police had more spontaneous elements to it, though it may in part be explained by the disturbances in Johannesburg, the events of which the crowd was clearly aware.

This is not to suggest that the Pretoria branch of the Transvaal Native Congress was not concerned with the pass issue. Its members, influenced by the anti-pass campaign in Johannesburg, had resolved in April 1919 to send a deputation to the Chief Magistrate and Mayor of Pretoria, requesting the abolition of the pass law.106 But their failure to mobilise the masses around an issue that both the working class and the petty bourgeoisie were subjected to, and their decision to use the public meeting as an opportunistic venture to raise funds reflected the wide gulf that existed between the African working class and the Transvaal Native Congress leadership.

Conclusion
The social differentiation of the African community living in Marabastad and its environs served to foster two quite different responses to the urban experience, and only very rarely did they intersect with each other. The African working class generated a variety of cultural responses that were in many ways defensive but often because of the illegality of the activities, plunged them headlong into struggle with the urban authorities. Beer brewing, prostitution, the prevalence of gangs and criminality were viewed by the Pretoria Town

105 Rand Daily Mail, Amendment of the Pass Law, 10 April 1919; The Star, Natives and Police, 16 April 1919

106 MPA 3/158: Resolutions of the Transvaal Native Congress (Pretoria Branch), 9 April 1919

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Council as a serious challenge to their vision of an ordered and controlled urban environment, and these activities would not go uncontested.

The emerging petty bourgeoisie in Pretoria followed the path of more formal challenges to the status quo in the form of political organisation, but rarely posed a serious threat to the ruling classes. The petty bourgeoisie were a permanently settled urban community who were concerned with issues of respectability and social mobility. To this end the leaders of this community constituted a range of formal political organisations in the early 1900s in order to seek redress of grievances. There was a flurry of political activity from this sector in Pretoria and many of the leadership played an important part in African national politics in later years. Nevertheless their concerns were limited to the social advancement of the petty bourgeoisie as a class and only seldom addressed working class issues. The form of their protest to the authorities was invariably petition-based, non-confrontational and did not constitute a serious threat to the policy-makers. The importance of their political activity stems rather from their early experience in organisational politics and their contribution to the growth of national politics in the early years of the 20th century.

Working class struggles in Pretoria were not articulated by formal organisations. Their struggles were expressed through the particular way in which they lived their lives - centred largely on beer brewing, shebeens and other forms of illegal enterprise. The very existence of these activities and the inability of the Pretoria Town Council to eradicate them often reflected the failure of the Town Council to implement urban policy to their own liking, and often it resulted in compromises and change. Thus given the impotence of formal organisational politics in the early years of the 20th century, it was the cultural milieu of the urban African proletariat living in Marabastad and its environs that did more to challenge the urban authorities' vision than formal organisation. To this end, the African working class constituted an active force in the shaping of its own identity, and was, in the words of E.P. Thompson, "present at its own making."107

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107 E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p.8
### Table 4: Crime Statistics for the period July to December 1927 and 1928

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Crime</th>
<th>July-Dec 1927</th>
<th>July-Dec 1928</th>
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<tr>
<td>Possession of Liquor</td>
<td>1756</td>
<td>1605</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>277</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bye-Laws</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>228</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thefts</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass Law</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Act</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assaults</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trespass</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of Dagga</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming Law</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Shop Hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
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108 MPA 3/200: Six monthly Reports of the Superintendent of Locations, for the period ending 31 December 1927 and 31 December 1928.
CONCLUSION

A history of Marabastad in the early twentieth century highlights the distinctive nature of the emerging African community living in Pretoria and the complex dynamic that existed between it and the various authorities that sought to control this population. This interaction not only impinged on the lives of the African population in every possible way, creating for them an extremely harsh existence, but it also forced local state authorities to continually adapt their own vision of an ordered and controlled urban environment, more often than not, not to their own liking.

The history of the urban African community living in Pretoria has until now, been largely hidden and this study has attempted to disclose the impact and contribution that the African population made to the character of Pretoria. In so doing, it serves as a template for the formation of all non-mining urban African communities in the Transvaal and therefore makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of the diffuse processes of urbanisation, industrialisation and economic development in South Africa.

The nature of the African population in the early twentieth century had its antecedents in the nineteenth century with the development of Pretoria itself. Pretoria’s social and economic development resulted in a particular kind of African settlement and it is possible to identify three definite categories of African labour. Pretoria was initially settled by Trekkers who brought with them captured indentured African labour known as inboekselings. They were largely acculturated into Boer culture, and they and their descendants were to form part of the permanently settled African community in Pretoria. Secondly, the centrality of Pretoria, located between the Northern Transvaal, an important labour catchment area, and the Witwatersrand which from the late 1880s was the industrial heartland of the Transvaal, led many workers to view Pretoria as a stopping over point before moving on to the more industrially developed areas. Thus an important dimension to the African population in Pretoria at any given time was its floating population which was temporary and transient. Thirdly, the evolution of Pretoria as a small town with no industrial development apart from
limited building concerns and a distillery in the 1890s also encouraged the development of a small labour force, many of whom were migrants contracted to work for a period of time in the various state and business concerns that sprung up in the town while others worked as domestic servants. These three divisions of the African population - a permanently settled community, a floating population and a regular, often migrant labour force, continued to be a feature in the twentieth century and gave the African community in Pretoria a distinctive quality.

While the contracted labour force often lived in town on their employers' premises, it was the permanently settled population that were to form the locus of African settlement in Marabastad. The descendants of the inboekselings, known as the oorlams, developed a specific identity which was to have important ramifications for the evolution of African urban policy in Pretoria. The oorlams were permanent urban dwellers who had little or no ties to a rural past. They were fluent in Dutch, and later Afrikaans, and very often could speak no African language. They were usually skilled in artisanal trades and had a modicum of education. The adoption of the language of the Trekkers was to have important implications for the oorlams in the early twentieth century. An ability to speak Afrikaans not only provided them with entry into the nascent capitalist world that was developing in Pretoria but it also made it difficult to separate them from Coloureds. Language was the important distinguishing factor between Africans and Coloureds, and this ability provided the oorlams with the wherewithal to assume Coloured identity and thereby evade the controls that were placed on the African population.

Much of the credit for the development of the oorlams' skills must go to the missionaries that settled in Pretoria with the specific intention of converting the African population to their particular church ideology. The Berlin Mission Society was the first to establish a foothold amongst Pretoria's African population, and through the establishment of Schoolplaats, an urban mission station, was to play a crucial role in shaping the identity of the permanent African community in Pretoria. Schoolplaats was a vital source of accommodation for Africans in town and under the aegis of the Berlin missionaries, they received a degree of education and were trained in skills. As a result, these oorlams were able to compete in the job market both against Coloureds and semi-skilled white labour.
The Wesleyan missionaries also played an important role in the creation of a small but crucial African elite through the establishment of Kilnerton in 1886. Kilnerton drew to Pretoria a range of African men seeking higher education. A number of these graduates settled in Pretoria and came to play a leading role in the development of political organisation in Pretoria in the early twentieth century.

The particular ethos of missionary education and instruction also fostered the development of two schisms in the late nineteenth century, one by Joseph Kanyane Napo who broke away from the Church of England to form the African Church, and the second by Mangena Mokone who created the Ethiopian Church as a response to racist practices in the Wesleyan Church. The fact that both these movements originated in Pretoria suggests that the particular nature of urbanisation and proletarianisation in Pretoria was an important factor in unleashing these responses to the established churches. The permanence of the urban experience of many of the African residents and the existence of an African elite with social aspirations of upward mobility made their stake in the urban environment much higher, and were therefore less likely to tolerate hindrances to their ambitions. These schisms also advanced an ideology of resistance among members, especially leaders in the African churches, and in the twentieth century they were to challenge the state, albeit in a fairly conservative manner.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw the perpetuation of many of the trends introduced in the nineteenth century. The African population remained divided into three categories, but with time had become significantly more stratified. The permanent population was differentiated within itself, comprising the oorlams who were semi-skilled artisans and tradesmen, a small but important class of teachers, ministers and interpreters for state enterprises who formed the African elite, and families, many of whom had a long history of urban experience. The majority of the permanent population lived either in Schoolplaats or Marabastad. During the Anglo-Boer War, the influx of refugees had led to the creation of New Marabastad, and this group too, had very quickly become permanently established in Pretoria.

The African working class in Pretoria in the twentieth century was still fairly small, in keeping with the size of Pretoria and its limited industrial activity. Employment opportunities
were restricted to services, which included work for the Pretoria Municipality and the state, the building industry, small business concerns, and the domestic service sector. Formal employment for African women, of whom there were a significant proportion living in the locations and mission station, was limited to washing. Domestic service was restricted to men though following World War One this trend began to shift and women in Pretoria began to work in the domestic sector. Invariably however, women made a living through various enterprises in the informal sector. Here activities such as beer brewing and prostitution provided women with a lucrative source of income as well as providing them with a resilience and an independence which was a constant source of concern to the urban authorities.

The growth and settlement of the African population prompted an immediate response from the urban authorities and the Pretoria Town Council was determined to enforce controls on this population. The establishment of local government in Pretoria was not without complications and the Pretoria Town Council was embroiled in a struggle on two levels to control the black population of Pretoria, one with central government and one with the African population itself.

From its creation in 1902, the Pretoria Town Council clashed with central government over issues of control of the black population, the antagonisms between the two eventually resulting in the resignation of the Town Council en masse in 1903. A feature that dominated the concerns of the Town Council was a desire to bring the Coloured population of Pretoria under the same regulations and controls as the African population. Thus attempts were made to secure the Coloured population under the pass laws and to restrict them from walking on the sidewalks of Pretoria.

The Pretoria Town Council’s attitude towards Coloureds reflects not only its strong racist makeup, but also demonstrates its concern to distinguish between Coloureds who were exempt from controls and oorlams who were Africans but because of their ability to speak Afrikaans and their particular artisanal skills were difficult to distinguish from their Coloured counterparts.
Through the years, the Pretoria Town Council comprised men who represented the primary commercial interests of the town. They were essentially conservative and reflected the racist discourse of their time which believed in the superiority of the white man. Their ability to implement policies was aided by the economic character of Pretoria itself. The lack of an industrial base was crucial to the Town Council's ability to implement a racist, non-cost effective "all-white" labour policy. From 1908 until the end of World War One, the Town Council favoured the employment of white labour, especially poor white labour, at twice the pay of African labour. The Pretoria Town Council was able to justify such a irrational economic policy because there was no effective capitalist lobby to block its implementation.

In Johannesburg where similar legislation was proposed, mining capital, which relied on a cheap African labour force, vetoed it. Thus African labour in Pretoria was placed at a distinct disadvantage with respect to the white working class. Little resistance was encountered from the African working class to low wages and to being marginalised by the white labour. The sharply differentiated African population militated against the development of working class consciousness and working class organisation.

The Pretoria Town Council's concern was to create an ordered urban environment where the African population was efficiently controlled and channelled into an productive and cheap work force. In this regard, they were hampered both by central government and by the African population itself. For many years the responsibility for the African population living in towns was blurred between central and local government. It was only with the promulgation of the Urban Areas Act of 1923 that responsibility was placed firmly in the hands of local government. Initially, the Pretoria Municipality had to deal with competing jurisdictions for control. The Department of Native Affairs was concerned to promote uniform policy for Africans in the Transvaal whereas the Pretoria Town Council wished to create policy that reflected its own concerns and problems in establishing a controlled urban environment.

A more protracted and costly struggle waged by the Pretoria Town Council was with the African population itself. The Town Council imposed various forms of control on Africans in the town. It determined where they were to live, either in locations set aside for them, in municipal compounds, or on the premises of employers; it attempted to control their ingress
into the town through the use of the pass laws; and it restricted the mobility of Africans by imposing a curfew and by preventing Africans (and Coloureds) from walking on the sidewalk. The Town Council also attempted to restrict the social networks and cultural forms that were created by the emerging African working class in Pretoria. The police were the regular agents of this control and their continual intrusion into the everyday lives of the working class generated a great deal of hostility and antagonism. The persistent vigilance of the police force, resulting in habitual liquor and pass raids, proved costly to the authorities, and often raised the stakes of the conflict.

The African population established nets through which they could evade many of these controls. Language was one form, by which oorlams could assume Coloured identity and thereby avoid living in African-designated areas and elude the pass laws. As a consequence the Pretoria Town Council was determined to bring Coloureds under the same legislation as Africans. It was this issue that led the Pretoria Town Council to reject Municipal Corporations Ordinance No. 58 of 1903. Rather it laboured under the antiquated Town Regulations of 1899, which denied them financial benefits as they forfeited access to their erf tax, as well as greater autonomy from central government. All this in order to keep Coloureds off Pretoria's sidewalks!

Women were by definition exempt from pass laws and therefore exempt from control. This was a source of concern to the urban authorities in Pretoria where an established, settled population of women lived in Marabastad and Schoolplaats. As women were excluded from the job market, many survived on the illegal fringes of society, through illicit beer brewing and prostitution. Arrests and prosecutions failed to eliminate these activities, and at certain points in time, when the economy demanded it, the Town Council called for the imposition of medical examinations for women. It was believed that this would ensure some form of control and also encourage the white population to employ women in domestic service. Due to the resistance from African men, medical examinations for women were never implemented. The inability to imposed checks on women represented for the Town Council a continual blight on their vision of a controlled urban landscape.

Social networks were established within the African community to assist women who were
arrested for beer brewing while young children often served as look-outs, alerting beer brewers to the presence of police. These measures did much to hamper the police’s ability to stamp out the illegal liquor trade in Marabastad while the legal process and stints in jail, which were seen as grim but endurable necessities by the brewers, proved costly to the state and ultimately did nothing to deter illegal activities. Police activity also did much to unite the community.

The Town Council’s housing policy, centred around the removal of Marabastad, was thwarted both by a lack of adequate funding, which was not forthcoming from central government, and by the nature of the settled African population itself. It’s very permanence made it impossible to repatriate this population back to the rural areas, and therefore alternative accommodation had to be found. This raised the problem of locality which involved the Town Council in struggles with the white population of Pretoria, all sectors resisting the establishment of a new location in their midsts. The creation of Bantule, a supposed model municipal location, pleased no-one. The white residents of Pretoria West objected because it did not represent a removal of the African population from their environs. Africans refused to move there due to the small stands, high rentals and the ordered nature of the location which made for easier police detection. Thus Marabastad remained and initially Bantule proved to be a failure.

Owing to its policy of removal, the Pretoria Town Council refused to expend any money on the improvement of Marabastad. Through years of official neglect, and vast overcrowding, conditions in Marabastad deteriorated rapidly. Wages for the African working class were invariably low, and it became increasingly difficult for the African proletariat’s wages to meet the demands of subsistence. In the context of stark poverty and harsh conditions, the African working class forged a cultural environment which provided some a refuge from the bleak circumstances of their existence as well as providing economic resources for beer brewers and shebeen queens.

The working class culture which emerged in Marabastad, centred around the *timiti*, was a particularly early form of urban culture, and drew its antecedents from the church which had so influenced the early development of the African working class in Pretoria. The dance
parties, music and consumption of beer at these tea meetings were essential features of this cultural milieu and provided the African working class with an escape from the harsh realities of their existence. These cultural forms were to be echoed in the marabi culture that emerged in the 1920s in the Johannesburg slumyards and therefore, it does suggest that marabi may have drawn some of its influences from the cultural life of Marabastad.

The community living in Marabastad displayed a resilience and an ability to survive, almost against all odds. The Pretoria Town Council found it impossible to eradicate the elements of the working class culture that emerged in the African locations of Pretoria, and attempts to remove Marabastad proved difficult to do. It was only from 1940 onwards with the establishment of Atteridgeville that this community was forcibly removed and Marabastad was eventually razed to the ground. Only the Asiatic Bazaar was left intact. Yet even today, this part of Pretoria has not fully disappeared. Women arriving from rural areas have settled in the remains of Marabastad, living in storage crates and wooden shelters which they have constructed as stalls from which to sell their goods. Here the women participate actively in the informal sector, hawking their goods and providing the means to support their families. Despite all attempts to destroy it, Marabastad has remained "a place of survival."  

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