

TRANSITORY CITIZENS

Contentious Housing Practices in Contemporary South Africa

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Abstract: This article examines the informal housing practices that the urban poor use to construct, transform, and access citizenship in contemporary South Africa. Following the election of Nelson Mandela in 1994, the provision of formalized housing for the urban poor has become a key metric for ‘non-racial’ political inclusion and the desegregation of apartheid cities. Yet, shack settlements—commemorated in liberation histories as apartheid-era battlegrounds—have been reclassified as ‘slums’, zones that are earmarked for clearance or development. Evictions from shack settlements to government emergency camps have been justified under the liberal logic of expanding housing rights tied to citizenship. I argue that the informal housing practices make visible the methods of managing ‘slum’ populations, as well as an emerging living politics in South African cities.

Keywords: apartheid, cities, citizenship, development, eviction, housing, poverty, race

I met Monique two weeks after the eviction. At dawn, a team of heavily armed police officers and private security guards moved into Delft, a sandy, sun-blighted township on the outskirts of the South African city of Cape Town. Delft is the site of the N2 Gateway, a national flagship project in urban housing. With armored vehicles and sniffer dogs in tow, the eviction team removed some 1,600 residents from unfinished houses they had occupied two months earlier at the alleged authorization of their local councilor. Many had moved from wood and corrugated tin shacks, located in the backyards of nearby homeowners in historically ‘colored’ (mixed-race) and ‘African’ townships. The concrete block structures that the residents occupied were called “BNG houses” after a popular 2004 national policy called “Breaking New Ground.” The policy aimed at



making state delivery more responsive and efficient, in part, by expanding the role of the private sector in housing programs.

The eviction, broadcast on the national nightly news, was violent. Without warning, police fired rubber bullets upon crowds gathered in the streets, trampling and shooting residents as they ran for cover. At least 20 injured people were rushed to the hospital, including a three-year-old child who had been shot in the foot, leg, and shoulder. With nowhere else to go, Monique and about a thousand others remained on the pavement. The municipal government, together with the Democratic Alliance (DA), the largest opposition party to the ruling African National Congress (ANC), responded by providing evicted family members with large communal tents, some of a dark green military make, others brightly striped or white with frilly awnings. Latecomers were given 'black sails', or plastic sheeting, which they used to build tiny makeshift shacks behind the tents, unseen from the surrounding highways. The camp, referred to by residents as 'Section 1', was eventually encircled with barbed wire and supplied with water taps and portable toilets.

Monique and approximately 500 other residents, however, refused to work with the DA or sign the forms required to acquire space in Section 1. Under the banner of the Anti-Eviction Campaign (AEC), then a leading poor people's movement, they instead constructed shacks out of a motley assortment of collected materials at the site of their eviction. They founded a settlement, Symphony Way, named after the highway that ran through its center, which was henceforth blockaded in a protest and land occupation that would last for more than two years. In time, the residents' collective grievances would center upon not only their eviction but also transit camps, which occupants referred to as *amathini* ('tins'/'tin cans' in isiZulu), *blikkies* ('little tins' in Afrikaans), or 'government shacks' (in English).

Transit camps are government emergency shelters located in controlled sites. The camps house those displaced by routine environmental disasters (e.g., floods or fires) in shack settlements. However, the majority of camp occupants are those displaced by processes of urban development, such as the construction of roadways, bridges, and housing projects like the N2 Gateway. Transit camps typically take the form of tent villages, like Section 1, or settlements built from corrugated tin and other 'temporary' materials. Tens of thousands reside in transit camps, and many more shack dwellers are slated for relocation. Transit camps are rapidly reshaping the urban periphery of Cape Town and other cities across the country. The largest camp in South Africa is located in Delft. State proponents of transit camps posit them as a 'formalized' stopgap toward the delivery of permanent houses. For residents refusing relocation, like those on Symphony Way, living conditions in the camps are inadequate, even by the standards of 'informal' dwelling and even if temporary.

This article examines the informal housing practices that residents like Monique and her neighbors use to construct, gain access to, and transform citizenship in the changing geographies of contemporary South Africa. Since the election of Nelson Mandela in 1994, the ANC has aimed at dismantling apartheid and extending citizenship rights enshrined in national policy and the

new South African Constitution, in part through the ‘eradication’ of slums and the provision of formalized housing on a mass scale (Makhulu 2010). Nearly 2.4 million homes have been built, but the post-apartheid state has struggled to keep pace with overwhelming demand. In 2009, the number of families on official housing waiting lists in Cape Town was estimated to rise annually by 20,000 from 400,000 (Legassick 2009). In no small measure, these numbers result from the combined forces of urbanization and mass unemployment after the fall of apartheid, which the BNG policy document flags as a significant challenge to national housing programs inherited from the previously race-based state. With the lifting of pass laws and other repressive legislation, hundreds of thousands of people moved to urban and peri-urban areas in search of work, education, and other previously unavailable social and economic opportunities, many joining the millions already living in shacks. Since the late 1990s, street protests, often centered upon land and housing, have been on the rise nationwide (Bond 2004; Patel 2008; Pithouse 2004). These protests have been officially condemned and have met with routine episodes of sanctioned violence by police and private security forces, with eight protestors’ deaths reported in January 2014 alone (Evans 2014). International news outlets, and some local ones as well, have represented these protests as pathologies of governance in South Africa, either as an outgrowth of heightened or unrealistic expectations on the part of the citizenry, or as a sign of corruption and inefficiency on the part of the post-apartheid state. However, this view does more to conceal than to reveal the complex processes by which housing policies, such as BNG, become enacted through everyday interactions over urban space between residents and state agents.

To better understand these protests, I focus upon spatial practices, which in South African cities notably include the building of shacks, the occupation of land, and the mobilization of street-based activities, such as mass gatherings and road blockades. As anthropologist Julia Elyachar (2003: 574) succinctly puts it: “When practices that violate laws are accepted as the norm, and have a legitimacy that is not the state’s, they are often called ‘informal practices.’” As housing practices, they have an ambiguous or even outright contentious relationship to institutions that govern urban areas. Yet they are so commonly enacted that they have taken on the status of an infrastructural norm. Informal practices lend insight into how housing infrastructure might be transformed by the poor, who refuse to be removed, seize access to homes by illicit occupation, or use carceral spaces like the camps as platforms for collective politics. Here I build upon anthropologist AbdouMaliq Simone’s (2004) notion of ‘people as infrastructure’. This concept suggests how urban dwellers and especially “residents of limited means” collaborate with “regularity and provisionality” in the circulation of goods, knowledge, and power to construct “a platform” that provides for and reproduces “life in the city” (ibid.: 407–408). Zeroing in on specific spatial practices of informal dwelling, such as the building of shacks at the N2 Gateway site, contributes to efforts by scholars to expand the notion of infrastructure (usually thought to be limited to, or prefigured by, formalized water pipes, roadways, housing units, and electricity cabling) to state-citizen struggles grounded in people’s day-to-day activities and material lives (see Chalfin 2014; Chu 2014).

Moreover, studying these practices at a critical juncture when the foundations of a national flagship housing project are being set helps illuminate forms of knowledge and expertise that interact with, but are not wholly determined by, formal institutions in the production of urban space. Transit camps, which look and feel very much like shacks or, worse, are tents like Section 1, suggest how informal dwellings might become taken up into the technocratic work of states and non-governmental organizations.

Recent studies of infrastructure, some following the work of urban philosopher Henri Lefebvre, have breathed new life into how theories of space and informality might be rethought and recombined in post-Cold War, post-colonial African cities. Indeed, activists too, including the AEC, have made use of Lefebvre's famous phrase "a right to the city" in their placards and press releases, emphasizing that space is not a pre-existing or empty container, but rather is lived and made (de Bruijn 2005). Where governments and corporations have failed to provide available and affordable housing, the urban (and rural) poor have constructed their own dwellings, rental schemes, property agreements, and communal lives. Those without formalized housing, in as much as they might desire and await government delivery, do not do so passively. Rather, their activities constitute an autonomous capacity for generating not only economic growth (Hart 1973) but also specific infrastructures for their lives in the city.

While it is important to recognize spatial practices of the poor as generative, scholarship of the past four decades, often critical of how the sector has been operationalized from above (see Elaychar 2003), has offered many valuable arguments against bracketing off informality. Three objections are particularly common and salient in the South African case. First, categorical or ontological distinctions between the formal and informal reinscribe old colonial antinomies of the modern and the traditional, the civilized and the unruly, the cartographic and the terra incognita, which have the potential to romanticize or pathologize the urban poor and African cities. The second is that as a hard-and-fast dichotomy it does not hold, for features of the informal sector can be found in the formal sector and vice versa, especially at a time of urbanization and unemployment in a globalized economy. The third objection is that such a multiplicity of formal and informal sectors exist and are so varied or contradictory, interconnected, and co-constitutive in their composition that the categories are too unspecified to be useful. However, rather than approaching informality etically or as an analytic, it may be more useful to examine how both activists like Monique and state agents (particularly, *vis-à-vis* the social life of policies such as BNG) mobilize local understandings of the informal, and do so tactically to achieve certain political ends. Informality, then, as both a key discursive category and an innovative set of housing practices, becomes a staging ground for contested claims over race, class, and citizenship that map onto and contribute to the production of urban space.

I base my findings upon long-term ethnographic research conducted in Cape Town between 2005 and 2013. Along with participant observation in day-to-day activities in shack settlements and transit camps, I conducted interviews and life histories with activists and ordinary residents about their lives during

and after the liberation struggle and analyzed relevant archival materials, such as national policy documents, post-apartheid legislation, mainstream news media, and texts produced by movement members. In this article, drawing from theories of urban space, studies of informal dwelling, and research on popular politics (see Anand 2011; Bertelsen et al. 2013; Breckenridge 2014; Brenner et al. 2011; Desai 2002; Fennel 2013; Ghertner 2011; Harms 2013; Harvey 2012; Herzfeld 2009; Holston 2008; Jackson 2006; Pieterse 2008; Ross 2010; Roy 2011; Seekings and Nattrass 2005; Simone 2012), I first analyze a resurgent use of the term ‘slum’ in post-apartheid South Africa, which along with evictions from ‘informal’ settlements to ‘formal’ transit camps, intensified during the build-up to the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Then, tracking evictions in Cape Town, I consider how the management of ‘slum’ populations in transit camps, while aimed at curbing urban informality by filling a gap in housing stock, spatially reproduces historically race-based inequalities and peri-urban precarity. Lastly, I demonstrate how these forced evictions have given rise to mobilizations among residents, premised upon informal dwelling and informal politics, across historically ‘colored’ (or mixed-race) and ‘African’ communities in spite of existing tensions between the two over housing allocation. In doing so, I follow Monique’s movements through the streets, the courts, and much of the housing under construction in Delft.

The Emergence of Post-apartheid ‘Slums’

In 2008, when Monique and her neighbors occupied houses in Delft, the city of Cape Town was preparing to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup. Thousands of visitors were expected to drive along the N2 highway corridor that connected the airport to swanky downtown hotels, tourist attractions, and a stadium built for the games. On either side of this corridor are the city’s most historic townships and sprawling shack settlements. In various national and local registers in contemporary South Africa, these areas are counted as heroic battlegrounds of the liberation struggle. However, in 2008, the term ‘slum’ re-emerged—in new legislation, parliamentary debates, tabloids, and television news—to describe the city’s poorest quarters earmarked for clearance or development. Since the 1930s, the term ‘slum’ in South Africa has been associated with efforts to legislate racial rezoning, often under the aegis of effective policing. The 1934 Slums Act was a colonial precursor to apartheid-era law. By proclaiming black communities ‘slums’, land was appropriated by apartheid agents, particularly on the urban periphery. While the term ‘slum’ still connotes zones of squalor and de facto criminality, it has taken on new meanings informed by the democratic transition. Slums are “bad for our country and bad for our people,” said a housing official to Parliament in 2007, speaking in support of expanding clearance programs ongoing since 2000. He continued: “We dream of a tomorrow where all of us can rightfully and proudly proclaim our citizenship ... We dream of a tomorrow that is free of slums.”¹ In this and similar statements, evictions are justified under a liberal logic of progressively realized rights,

promising a future where citizenship materialized in formalized housing acts as an equalizer in a common political community.

Yet residents in Cape Town and other cities—as many did under apartheid—have resisted the term ‘slum’ to refer to their communities. This is especially the case because the word has been used so often during forced relocations to less desirable areas and suggests impermanence compared to long-standing residency, which, in the post-apartheid period, might have viable legal standing in land tenure claims. Responding to the same 2008 parliamentary debate, Abahlali baseMjondolo, a poor people’s movement affiliated with the AEC, said in a press release that the word ‘slum’ is used “in a way that makes it sound like the places where poor people live are a problem ... because there is something wrong with poor people ... But it does not admit that the poor have been made poor [through] the same history of theft and exploitation that made the rich to be rich and it does not admit that places where poor people live often lack infrastructure and toilets because of the failure of ... the government to provide these things. The solution to the fact that we often don’t have toilets in our communities is to provide toilets where we live and not to destroy our communities and move us out of the city.”² Presenting a rebuttal to the parliamentary debates, the press release echoes sentiments regularly expressed by movement members at community meetings and mass gatherings—namely, that the term ‘slum’ pathologizes settlements, dehumanizes its residents, and elides historical struggles with the formerly race-based state over land and housing. Nevertheless, where the parliamentary debates and movement members align is that both invoke shack settlements with reference to forward-looking housing projects for the urban poor that implicitly tie inclusive citizenship with land tenure and formalized dwellings.

At the same time, the term ‘slum’ adheres to national panic over crime, which is perceived as exponentially increasing since the fall of apartheid. The BNG policy document cites “combating crime” and “promoting social cohesion” as integral parts of its “new housing vision.”³ However, crime is highly racialized in South Africa. Stereotypes of shack settlements and inner-city dwellings as the homes of gangsters and prostitutes, marked by potentially polluting moral and corporal degeneration, appear regularly in mainstream South African news and in popular media. In a representative article, a housing official characterizes “slums” as “hive[s] of crime” that are overrun with “raw sewage,” combining fears over public safety with concerns for public health.⁴ South African travel websites echo familiar middle-class warnings against visiting townships: “[C]orrugated tin shacks ... are breeding grounds for crime and violence ... The majority of all crimes occurs in these slum areas.”⁵ When a local university group visited one of the settlements where I was conducting research, their questions focused upon why shack dwellers appearing in the news had always committed crimes of a sexual nature—rape and incest. The resident tour guide responded, “This is how the media and the middle-classes see us,” adding sardonically, “If you see these things happening while you are here, please call the police.”

Residents I spoke with in Cape Town and other cities suggest that their criminalization is tied in part to spatial practices—such as the building of shacks and

the occupation of land—that are illicit and sometimes illegal but which they view as necessary to make urban life viable and secure. “The poor are criminalized for the life we are living,” said Zikode, the founding president of Abahlali (pers. comm.; see also Zikode 2006). But residents also suggest that other kinds of political activities, yet again, have been cast as a threat to public safety. Since 1994, the ANC and other political parties have endeavored to demobilize the popular street politics that characterized the late liberation struggle by cultivating participation in formal democratic institutions, such as voting, joining local ward committees, and applying for housing subsidies. The DA, which governs the city of Cape Town, has shared the ruling ANC’s official condemnation of rising street protests (Bond 2004). Officials have referred to these protesters—and Abahlali and AEC members, in particular—as a shadowy ‘criminal’ force, posing a potential “danger to democracy”⁶ or “a threat to the state” (Boyle et al. 2005). In 2005, a national intelligence investigation, usually reserved for serious threats to domestic security, was launched to identify instigators of protests across the country.

While the term ‘slum’ in South Africa is stamped with its own historically located local and national meanings, its deployment during the build-up to the 2010 FIFA World Cup reflects its resurgent use in international development. In recent decades, international institutions have launched studies, projects, and programs, including the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in 2000, to combat ‘slum growth’ on an entirely different spatial scale than national governments in developing countries, such as South Africa, Kenya, India, and Brazil (Disterhoft 2011). South Africa adopted the Millennium Development Goals with vigor, incorporating them into national policy and law. In 2007, South African officials in the province of KwaZulu-Natal passed a new Slums Act that was expected to form a national legislative template. This act, which centrally featured transit camps, aimed to “eliminate ... [and] prevent the re-emergence of slums” by the year 2014.⁷ While 2008 marked a ramping up of ‘slum clearance’ initiatives, the fact remained that in South Africa there were more people living in and moving to shacks than formalized homes could be built within the same time frame. ‘Slum eradication’ would produce a population still awaiting formalized housing, but removed from their homes in existing shack settlements. For this displaced population, there were transit camps.

Between Apocalyptic and Utopian Spatial Futures

In a growing number of recent popular representations, slums and particularly the spatial practices that build and sustain them figure powerfully in visions of apocalyptic and utopian near futures (see Rao 2006; Roy 2011). These representations resonate, often quite literally, with everyday interactions between residents and officials over urban space in Cape Town and other cities. Citing Mike Davis’s (2006) bestseller *Planet of Slums*, a national housing official in South Africa said, with overtures to apocalypse, that the N2 Project “aimed to avert an impending social catastrophe” (Kotsoane 2009), represented by shack settlements. In Davis’s work, slums appear as a scene out of *Blade Runner* or

Mad Max, where life persists upon the detritus of the informal economy, beyond the state and beyond the law. In this vein, an earlier wave of slum studies darkly casts poor communities as human ‘dumping grounds’ (see also Neuwirth 1994; Seabrook 1996). Inspired by events of past and present racial segregation in South Africa, the 2009 science fiction blockbuster, *District 9*, depicts shack dwellers as an alien species, scrapping together life in a camp abandoned to multinational corporations. What these disparate popular representations have in common is the portrayal of ‘slums’ and ‘slum’ dwellers as awaiting development in the absence of the state.

Monique’s and her neighbors’ experiences, by contrast, suggest that the state has not been absent in shack settlements. In this view, ‘the state’ should be understood not as a unified totality but as a varied set of hegemonic institutions, actors, discourses, and tactics (see Comaroff and Comaroff 2006; Foucault 1991; Gramsci 1971; Sharma and Gupta 2006). Considered thus, the state has been more than present; it has been aggressive, by way of evictions and police violence. These forms of state sovereignty are well-remembered by Monique as the defining activities of apartheid-era security forces. Slums have been a primary target of legislation, policy, and regulation, both *de facto* and governmental. Moreover, even when residents are without the services needed for a viable urban life, they tend to understand the absence of these services as the very signature of the state. That is, the state’s presence persists even when a community is without basic infrastructure, such as housing, water, and electricity.

As primary targets of state intervention and sites of contentious housing practices, shack settlements figure equally in utopian political visions of state agents and activists in post-apartheid South Africa. “If we successfully address the challenge of slums,” said a South African housing official, “we will have taken a gigantic leap toward attaining our goal of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous society.”⁸ With the fall of apartheid, ‘non-racial’ citizenship promised an equal share in political and economic life, the desegregation of social spaces and subjects, and an end to the violent, arbitrary functions of the state. For activists like Monique and for this housing official, formalized housing provides a key symbol and substantive metric for successful state transition. But legacies of colonialism and apartheid, along with new configurations occasioned by globalization, austerity, and structural adjustment, have deepened disparities between the ‘rich’ and the still racialized ‘poor’. Market principles set out by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, often glossed as economic liberalization, have oriented basic service provision. However, the ANC, whose policies have never been evenly or straightforwardly neo-liberal, continues to make shelter a cornerstone of its election platform and to champion the expansive housing rights guaranteed by the new South African Constitution. Invoking the apartheid past and the promise of a democratic future in townships and shack settlements, Section 26 of the Constitution’s Bill of Rights states: “Everyone has the right to have access to adequate housing ... No one may be evicted from their home, or have their home demolished, without an order of court.”⁹

South Africa’s new Constitutional Court, since its first session in 1995, has played a key role in adjudicating these new citizen claims to land and housing.

The Constitutional Court is South Africa's highest judicial institution. In a landmark 2000 case, named after Irene Grootboom, a shack dweller in Cape Town, South Africa's highest court found that the national housing policy fell short of its constitutional obligations (see Huchzermeyer 2004). The rewritten policy, *Breaking New Ground*, coincided with the construction of the N2 Gateway Project and names it as a "pilot project."¹⁰ Like the N2 Gateway, BNG is an exercise in the contradictions of utopian and apocalyptic impulses in housing, at once emphasizing the aim to "overcome spatial, social and economic exclusion" and authorizing the "eradication" of slums through relocations to "a range of ... housing typologies,"¹¹ notably including transit camps. Although she was ostensibly successful in the courts and contributed to a new housing vision hailed by experts and activists alike, Grootboom died in 2008 while still living in a shack in Cape Town, an oft retold story in South Africa's shack lands. These retellings usually are framed as a warning about the limitations of formal institutional politics as it touches on the actual lived experience in shack settlements.

A Recent History of Evictions in Cape Town

Along with the term 'slum', evictions in the post-apartheid period have resulted in dramatic state-citizen struggles in Cape Town and other South African cities. Monique, like her neighbors in *Symphony Way*, is a longtime resident of Delft and the Cape Flats. Under colonial and apartheid orders, evictions in Cape Town were marked by an uneven combination of race-based patronage, labor extraction, and sovereign violence. With the 1948 election of the National Party, which instituted apartheid, the government soon passed and later rigorously enforced legislation that struck out against life in shack settlements. This included the notorious 1950 Group Areas Act that led to the racial rezoning of Cape Town and the 1951 Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act. Empowered by this legislation, and in an effort to ruralize black workers when not on the job, municipalities enacted 'slum' clearance initiatives, which residents—and especially women—fought, often militantly. The most bitterly recalled removal among residents in Delft remains the demolition of the iconic community of District Six, a thriving arts and cultural center, where 60,000 people were displaced and scattered throughout townships in Cape Town. A transit camp preceded a similar forced eviction in Cato Manor in Durban, where Abahlali members past and present reside. At other times, state agents and allied corporations in the mining and textile industries sought to maintain racial segregation and the availability of cheap labor by tolerating or facilitating the growth of slums. Transit camps, then, were used for the screening and repatriation of unwanted black populations. Progressive lawyers, in the ambiguous late apartheid years, used transit camp legislation to prevent the removal of people to distant sites and service areas. In the 1970s, a time of intensified unrest, the camps also served to demobilize organized politics.

In post-apartheid South Africa, new legislation, notably the 1998 Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, put measures

in place to prevent arbitrary evictions, stipulating that “suitable alternative accommodation” must be provided to those displaced.¹² A series of court cases, including those brought by the AEC and Abahlali, have principally concerned whether transit camps qualify as such accommodation, and thus far the courts have mostly concluded that they do. However, post-1994 evictions—with and without a court order now required by law—have become routine. In Cape Town, official justifications for evictions vary and at times contradict each other. These include building infrastructure and public works projects, for example, roadways and stadiums, or enacting public safety or environmental protection measures. Most broadly, officials cite the nature and outcomes of state transition itself, which involve goals such as integrating communities, realizing new citizens’ rights, and, as brochures and billboards suggest, building future ‘world-class cities’. As scholars elsewhere have noted (e.g., Ghertner 2011), the ‘world-class city’ is a utopian project. Its aims and aesthetics may vary from place to place, but it is generally characterized by sleek modern design, high levels of state efficiency, corporate profitability, and, if not its elimination, the orderly management of poverty. In South Africa, the world-class city, as suggested by the then housing minister, Lindiwe Sisulu, is as much about racial integration as economic growth for the nation as a whole. Activists including the AEC, in typical fashion, have appropriated and redeployed the slogan, declaring that world-class cities are cities without evictions.

For Monique and her neighbors, evictions carry an excess of interpretations, including nostalgia for places of suffering and for homes and communities that were demolished long ago. There is also an affective longing for a better life, the cultivation of hope for a permanent home in one’s lifetime—what it might look like, how it would be maintained, and what kind of garden it might have. Relocations, for some, might be an opportunity to generate household income, for example, by renting or selling a BNG house or transit camp shelter. But the residents I spoke with observed, broadly and consistently, that in evictions they see continuities with apartheid-era removals and new forms of spatial exclusion at the intersections of race and class. Transit camps, residents suggest, reflect three characteristics of evictions in the post-apartheid period: (1) a containment of lives that are no longer vital to labor, in that the camps largely house the unemployed poor in remote areas; (2) a licit and illicit privatization of state functions, in that the camps are often constructed and maintained through public-private partnerships that can involve lucrative tenders and contracts; and (3) the rise of powerful technical regimes to institute policy in spheres of domestic reproduction, in that the camps demand an ever-expanding network of experts, including lawyers, environmental impact surveyors, architects, and engineers.

Housing and Evictions at the N2 Gateway

When the N2 Gateway Project broke ground, Housing Minister Sisulu—the daughter of famed ANC liberation heroes—called it “the biggest housing project ever undertaken by any Government.”¹³ The project literature proposed that

by formalizing informality, the result would be integrated and mixed-income ‘human settlements’—a gateway from the apartheid city to the world-class city yet to come. Initially a joint endeavor of various levels of government, the management of the N2 Gateway was soon outsourced to Thubelisha, a private company that was headed by the N2’s new project manager, Prince Xhanti, a successful businessman from an esteemed royal family in the Eastern Cape. A composite second tier of public-private partnerships, which included the First National Bank, operated in between the state and Thubelisha. The original plans were modified over time, not least in response to the rotation and sacking of elected officials and project partners. However, the purpose here is not to measure the extent to which policy differs from its enactment on the ground, for it will by definition. Rather, the plans lend insight into the pragmatics of a world-class city shared by state agents at various levels of government. For residents of Symphony Way, the plans—in part made public as a result of community participation exercises—are viewed as necessary in order to understand why they occupied unfinished houses and built a shack settlement at the N2 Gateway site.

Of the 25,000 homes under construction, the majority were to accrue value for investors. Rental and bonded units were too costly for shack dwellers like Monique and her neighbors. In part, their exclusion was by design. The BNG policy document identifies a middle-income population of households earning from R3,500 to R7,000 per month (i.e., approximately \$332 to \$665).¹⁴ The shack dwellers slipped through the gap between private and governmental housing markets. The inaugural residents of the low-cost rentals boycotted paying rent for several years due to Thubelisha’s failure to repair major defects, including huge cracks in the walls, leaking roofs, and faulty keys. The keys issued to residents could open not only their own flats, but also all the other flats in the building, requiring residents to devise their own security systems. The bonded units were to be built on land occupied by the longstanding Joe Slovo shack settlement, home to some 20,000 families. The last and only phase slated for ‘the poor’ consisted of subsidized housing in Delft (the same houses that Monique and her neighbors occupied) and, for those who remained on official waiting lists for formalized homes, accommodation in transit camps. Seventy percent of the houses would be allocated to shack dwellers and 30 percent to backyard dwellers (populations racially coded as ‘African’ and ‘colored’, or mixed-race), which resulted in some tension between communities that would trouble the mobilization at Symphony Way later on.

When I began my research in 2008, journalists had reported little about this new generation of transit camps populating the urban periphery. They were largely invisible from the vantage point of middle-class suburbs and the wealthy city center. After public pressure applied by poor people’s movements, particularly the Symphony Way Anti-Eviction Campaign, conditions in the camps were increasingly covered by local and international news agencies, notably during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. During my early visits, the Delft camp gates were locked at particular hours, with a police trailer and armored military vehicle stationed at the single entrance. As I found in other camps,

access inside is often controlled. The shelters in Delft and the camps in Durban and Johannesburg usually consist of a one-room, 20x26 square meter box with a corrugated tin roof and sides, which, as residents point out, leaves little room for families to change or grow. Some structures, built in rows, share a wall made of a single piece of metal sheeting. Their size compares unfavorably to Reconstruction and Development Plan houses, the most common concrete block structures built after 1994, which are about 30 square meters with two rooms. They are also smaller than the notorious 'matchbox' houses, built in townships under apartheid, which had four rooms and a living area typically of 52 square meters.

Some but not all camps have outdoor communal latrines, cold running tap water, and prepaid electricity meters. Cooking facilities depend upon whether residents have access to prepaid electricity in the camps or have an illicit connection, in which case kettles and hot plates would be used. On special occasions, when large portions of food are required, women cook over fires outside. For those who do not have electricity or cannot afford to feed the prepaid meters, the use of fires or paraffin stoves and candles for light is routine and has resulted in occasional camp conflagrations. Access to water is highly variable. Most camps are fitted with communal water taps, but when these are broken, residents frequently rely on neighbors outside the camps for water, at times causing some degree of intercommunity tension. Largely collected by women, water is stored in buckets inside the home. Communal toilets are often blocked or broken, sometimes leading residents to 'privatize' them by maintaining them and charging for their use. Without functional toilets, people typically use buckets with lime, as well as other containers or methods, such as 'fly toilets', which simply involves relieving oneself in a bag and a throwing it as far into the bushes as possible.

As for work, most residents are unemployed or work in the informal sector, for example, in construction, domestic labor, gang activities, or hawking. Some, however, have jobs in the formal sector. Formal sector work depends on where the camp is located, but across cities and regions security work is common. Most often, residents are moved—not individually but as a 'community'—and frequently are placed in the same camp as other 'communities', which in Delft particularly has brought about conflicts between rival gangs. What people do all day, of course, depends heavily on how or if they are employed, their age and gender, and other factors. There are many communal activities in camps: entrepreneurial projects such as *spaza* shops (small convenience stores) and *shabeens* (bars) that draw crowds in spite of efforts to police them; active religious groups of various kinds (Pentecostal churches and madrasas); volunteer associations (nurseries and night watches); political organizations (social movements and political party structures); and cultural committees (dance or theater troupes and football teams).

Camps typically are built far from where residents previously lived for many years. The erosion of social networks means that residents, especially women who have to be out after dark, often fear for their safety. As this suggests, location matters. Many have lost their jobs in areas where transport costs are higher

and shops less accessible. Those on HIV/AIDS medication struggle to get access to treatment at neighborhood clinics, even in the case of a short-distance move. Children in Delft, unable to be accommodated in local classrooms, have been placed in temporary camp schools. Before this development, they were bused some 25 kilometers back to their previous township schools. Some post-apartheid camps have taken on the status of permanent settlements. Happy Valley transit camp, for instance, was built 14 years ago. Red City is named after the rust that has replaced the shiny gleam of the original tin structures.

From Cape Town to Durban to Johannesburg, whether for reasons of livelihood, location, or autonomy, residents are protesting against transit camps through increasingly cross-regional and translocal political and legal networks. Residents in the Delft and other camps would hear about a march by word of mouth from neighbors, at community meetings, at the water taps or taxi stands, via cell phone text messages, or by seeing it unfold on the streets. Like Monique, those protesting have been arrested, shot at by police, and portrayed by officials as thwarting social and economic development. In contrast to the docile, fiscally disciplined, law-abiding slum populations envisioned by the N2 Gateway plans, ‘the poor’ of Symphony Way as perceived as unruly, dangerous, and criminal. The AEC and Abahlali have protested against transit camps through a series of street marches and court cases. In 2009, Abahlali—joined by residents of Symphony Way at South Africa’s highest court—successfully challenged and overturned the 2009 Slums Act. As an Abahlali press statement puts it, camps project an indefinite and precarious future for shack dwellers:

We have a situation where people are being removed from a slum, and sent to another slum. Only this time it is a government-approved slum and is called a transit area ... [The state] does not give any guaranties as to where these ‘transit areas’ will be located, what services will be provided there, if communities will be kept together or broken up ... or how long they will have to live in these places. We know that all through history and in many countries governments have put their political opponents, the very poor, people who were seen as ethnically, cultural and racially different, and people without I.D. books in camps. These camps are always supposed to be temporary—a ‘transit’ between one place and another. But very often these camps have become places of long and terrible suffering.¹⁵

Inhabiting Formalized and Informal Housing in Delft

Complicating the spatial futures projected by the N2 Gateway are the many practical ways that residents inhabit housing in Delft. Sitting with Monique on Symphony Way, outside the makeshift AEC office, we talked about how she came to reside there. For her, the story of Symphony Way begins many years earlier during her days spent cleaning homes in the city’s luxurious suburbs. She lived in a backyard shack made of wood and scrap metal that she rented from a couple—themselves barely making ends meet—who lived in a formalized state-subsidized home. When the electricity worked at all, it could be

switched off by her landlords, which left her reliant upon candles and paraffin, both hazardous and expensive.

Seeking better conditions, Monique moved to The Hague, one of the many sections of Delft with Dutch appellations, and into a council house of her own. The owners, who rented it out, lived in another area of the Cape Flats. After local officials learned of this arrangement—part of an entirely common ‘gray’ market rental of state housing, including transit camp structures—the owners, under threat of legal action by the council, arrived at 3:00 AM to evict Monique and her daughter, putting their belongings out onto the street. Monique appealed to the Delft police, explaining that she had lived in the house for over a year, had not received any notice of eviction, and had no place to go. The police told her that she could not take the matter to court, given that she was not the rightful owner of the house.

Following this eviction, Monique and her daughter lived on the street in the back of a *bakkie* (pickup truck). When her employers at the cleaning company learned of her situation, they helped her access accommodation in Delft through their connections at the N2 Gateway Project. Along with victims of a massive 2005 shack fire in the Joe Slovo shack settlement, Monique moved into a Delft transit camp called Tsunami. During her time in Tsunami, local experts discovered that the walls of the temporary structures had been made with asbestos, a matter of criminal investigation (Joubert 2007).

After her daughter developed a bronchial and skin condition, which required full-time care, she left her job. By the end of the year, with doctor fees mounting, Monique began work for a building contractor hired by Thubelisha, laying the foundations and fitting the plumbing for the N2 Gateway houses in Delft. She, along with other temporary workers, eventually went on strike, claiming that they were never paid for this work. Unable to sustain basic subsistence, Monique and her neighbors moved into the unoccupied N2 Gateway houses, using official but fraudulent allocation letters that had been issued by their DA local councilor, who was later arrested.

Thubelisha and state agents quickly sought and secured their eviction through the courts. Monique was a respondent in the failed appeal. High Court Judge Deon Van Zyl, who granted the eviction order, echoed other officials, saying that “the court can never sanction someone taking the law into their own hands. There would be anarchy in the country if this were allowed” (Hawker et al. 2008). This reference to anarchy projects another sort of apocalyptic future—the specter of failed state transition. In such comments, seizures of private property frequently are invoked. “Welcome to Zimbabwe” was one official’s comment when the 2009 Slums Act was overturned. Judge Van Zyl’s statement brings to mind living memory of the recent past, when the ANC’s call in the 1980s to render townships ‘ungovernable’ helped bring about the fall of the apartheid regime. Lastly, Monique and other residents inferred that ‘anarchy’, here, played into racialized fears of crime.

As the judge stood to leave the packed courtroom, Delft residents shouted in Afrikaans: “Ons gaan nêrens” (We are going nowhere) (Hawker et al. 2008). On the day of the eviction, Monique’s elderly neighbor recounted that after

being shot in the side with a rubber bullet and falling to the ground, a police officer kicked her and swore at her. The same day, Minister Sisulu's office issued a statement with no mention of the injuries or police violence that had been captured by news cameras. Citing the dangers of anarchy at the center of progressively realized rights, the official version of events went as follows: "This morning at dawn, the Sheriff of the Court moved into Delft, supported by police ... The rule of law must prevail ... [The] government has built ... more houses than any other country in the world ... The N2 Gateway ... is a project that should be nurtured and guarded by all South Africans."¹⁶

Transit Camps and Economic Liberalization

Recent literature in African studies and urban anthropology has stressed the interconnection of three large-scale processes in post-colonial democracies: governmentality, sovereign violence, and neo-liberalization (see Appadurai 2006; Chatterjee 2004; Ferguson 2006; Hansen and Stepputat 2005; Mamdani 2011; Mbembe 2003; McDonald and Pape 2002; Piot 2010). Transit camps, I argue, lend insight into how these processes work intimately together at the level of housing infrastructure. Often cited by this literature are Michel Foucault's late lectures, which are instructive in thinking about the N2 Gateway Project.¹⁷ According to Foucault (1991), the objective of traditional sovereignty is to strengthen and protect the fragile, synthetic link between territory, population, and rule by identifying dangers and developing techniques for manipulating relations of force. The "art of government" (*ibid.*: 87) concerns itself, by comparison, with "the right disposition of things" (*ibid.*: 93; citing Guillaume de La Perrière), where tactics—including the law itself—are deployed toward ensuring the future wealth and welfare of a "new subject: population" (*ibid.*: 101).

One of the few and rarely noted examples of governmentality offered by Foucault is a nineteenth-century housing project. For Foucault, the layout of a housing project, which at least in theory localizes poor families (one to a house) and their spatial location within the city (on the periphery), is aimed at controlling bodies by making individuals and their behavior more visible and policing more effective. In addition to these disciplinary measures aimed at bodies, there are regulatory mechanisms aimed at the population to "encourage patterns of saving related to housing ... and, in some cases, their purchase. Health-insurance systems, old-age pensions; rules on hygiene that guarantee the optimal longevity of the population; the pressures that the very organization of the town brings to bear on sexuality and therefore procreation; child care, [and] education" (Foucault 2003: 251) are among these mechanisms. At the same time, the housing project was designed to remove the urban poor from crowded, back-alley slums, long regarded as criminal—and this has as much to do with sovereignty as its gentler counterpart, the 'art of government'. What Foucault does not address, however, is how infrastructure might be transformed by spatial practices of the poor, such as refusing to be removed, seizing access to homes by illicit occupation, manipulating contracts

or rental agreements, or using carceral spaces like the camps as platforms for resilient collective politics.

Returning to the N2 Gateway Project, I argue that disciplinary and regulatory mechanisms aimed at bodies and populations of ‘the poor’ structure and are structured by sovereign violence and economic liberalization. In Delft transit camps, privatized capital flows to, among others, Thubelisha, the management company; Eskom, the formerly public multinational, which supplies residents with prepaid electricity; First National Bank, which authorizes bonds and leases; and the myriad other contractors hired to implement the project, including consultants, non-profits, construction firms, and private security companies. In this way, where sovereignty is enacted, it is diffused through public-private arrangements at various state levels and, at times, globalized institutions. Foucault suggests that the housing project can become an ever-more efficient site for control, surveillance, and policing, and while transit camps in South Africa would seem to support this vision, the camps have instead been subjected to conditions of protracted uncertainty, which impacts the potential for socio-economic mobility among the poor.

Moreover, eviction suggests how responsibility is vacated for housing demands newly legitimated by post-apartheid law. For instance, when public criticism mounted over violent evictions at the N2 Gateway, Minister Sisulu said that she had instructed Thubelisha to do “everything in their power to assist the people of Delft ... to move back to their previous places of accommodation,” and to provide them with transport for that purpose (Pillay 2008). Thubelisha’s project manager, Prince Xhanti, denied receiving any such directive and said that “the Sheriff of the Court was solely responsible” for the evictions (*ibid.*). The sheriff also denied responsibility, saying, “The order [from the court] says I must evict the people and remove their belongings to a place of safe custody and that is what I did” (*ibid.*). Monique and other residents, having given up their former backyard dwellings, had nowhere else to go after the eviction except the street, and the police spokesperson said that this too was illegal: “The court order instructed the residents to leave the entire area ... [I]t was thus illegal for them to remain on the street” (Sokopo et al. 2008). He added that a “[private security] guard was posted outside each empty house to prevent people from returning” (*ibid.*). Authorized by dispersed governmental modes of managing ‘slum’ populations, the sovereign power to evict may have aimed at control, but instead it occasioned a two-year-long protest that began and ended in peri-urban precarity.

A Living Politics of ‘the Poor’

Under these conditions, residents have mobilized a politics that is premised upon a collective identification as ‘the poor’ across historically race-based communities and that borrows from old practices of the liberation struggle such as mass gatherings and land occupations, as well as new practices such as entry into the recently desegregated courts. Poor people’s movement members refer to

this as ‘living politics’ (*ipolitiki ephilayo* in isiZulu), a term coined by Abahlali and frequently used in their meetings and public statements. Some residents of Symphony Way, especially younger people like Monique, characterize their political activities, their involvement with what they call even now ‘the struggle’ (*umzabalazo* in isiZulu), as beginning with the fall of apartheid. Others—like Monique’s neighbor, Ashraf Cassim, the founding chairperson of the AEC—were involved in various capacities with liberation movements, including the ANC, whether through military operations, local branches, or trade unions.

Sitting with Cassim on Symphony Way, he told me the origin story of the Anti-Eviction Campaign, which began in 1999 on the Cape Flats. After a stint of unemployment, Cassim worked for a printing company responsible for typesetting pocket compendiums of the new South African Constitution, which is how he learned about Section 26 and post-apartheid protections against arbitrary evictions. From the vantage of his mother’s council home—amid aggressive cost-recovery measures—removals were intensifying on the Flats. An elderly man, his mother’s neighbor, was among the first of many to be ejected from their homes. In response, residents orchestrated a mass gathering, referred to as a ‘blockade’, that overwhelmed security forces and prevented the delivery of an eviction notice as required by law.¹⁸ The police returned the next day with military personnel. In press statements, officials claimed that the AEC was a front for criminal gangs. Cassim, identified as a leader by security forces, was badly beaten, his front teeth kicked in by a steel-tipped police boot. The blockade, however, held ground, and the elderly man remains in his home to this day.

Living politics is comprised not only of street protests but also of activities that arise from daily life in townships and shack settlements, such as building without a permit or disabling state electricity meters. In this way, Monique and other residents characterize living on the pavement of the N2 Gateway—what would prove a long, hard time for many—as a mode of representing themselves in their appeal for permanent housing. Monique lived on Symphony Way in a two-room shack, which she constructed from collected scrap materials: cloth advertisements, a plastic sail, wood planks, and a patterned linoleum floor. Inside was a kitchen and sitting area, carefully fitted with Styrofoam countertops, a *bakki* seat couch with mauve and green ruffled pillows, and window curtains.

From the early weeks, tire blockades, sometimes burning, were set up on either side of the settlement so that police vehicles could not enter. A nursery, community kitchen, vegetable garden, and children’s day camp were launched, all run by volunteers. A night watch patrolled until the early hours, especially to safeguard against the hazards of unattended fires or candles. Residents held mass community meetings every night. In addition to marches in Cape Town’s city center, residents organized football tournaments and informal theater about pavement life. As word of their land occupation spread, they hosted journalists and activists from across South Africa and the globe, and their story was broadcast by a full spectrum of print and television media from *The Guardian* to Al Jazeera. Through these practices, Symphony Way visibly asserted, from

the ‘slums’ hidden from view in the city, struggles between ‘the poor’ and public-private partners over urban space in development. Living politics, then, suggests how residents can appeal to formalized institutions, for example, through constitutional clauses and existing housing policies in the courts, as well as informal activities that are conducive to particular infrastructural norms.

The Future of ‘Slum’ Elimination

In my examination of everyday interactions between residents and officials at the N2 Gateway Project, I have argued that the informal spatial practices of the poor produce infrastructures that have shaped, and continue to shape, urban space in contemporary South Africa. Moreover, these practices have changed under conditions of democratization and economic liberalization. By melding old and new practices that make ‘the poor’ spatially visible in the city, living politics responds to large-scale processes that configure local and global governance in South Africa. In the post-apartheid period, ‘slum elimination’ in Cape Town and other cities has meant the eviction of shack dwellers close to urban centers and their relocation to undesirable sites on the urban periphery that they cannot afford and where they have little incentive to remain. While transit camps are posited as more efficient sites of surveillance and policing (as well as the maintenance of the biological welfare of ‘slum’ populations), the transit camp in Delft suggests how these sites achieve the opposite of what policy anticipated

Since the time of my research, the government secured the eviction of 20,000 families from the Joe Slovo shack settlement in Langa for relocation to Delft. Residents, some of whom have lived in Joe Slovo for over two decades, went to court to appeal their removal. The Constitutional Court called for negotiations, which are still in progress, many years and violent street protests later. An AEC pamphlet describes the dilemma as follows: “It is bureaucratic madness to try to forcibly evict Joe Slovo residents to Delft, where they do not want to live, on the margins of the city, and at the same time to forcibly evict Delft residents from houses that are not wanted by Joe Slovo residents, which are desperately needed by Delft residents who have nowhere else to live” (Legassick 2008: 40). What Joe Slovo residents are asking for is “housing built in the area for them. They have a plan as to how this can be done without any forced removal at all” (ibid.: 7). Residents’ plans include in situ upgrades and interim basic services where they live, which reaffirms some of the principles set out in the BNG policy document.

As for Monique and her neighbors, after another protracted legal battle, they have been removed from Symphony Way. Some scattered to other townships and shack settlements on the Flats, while others were placed in transit camps. Those who remain are still collectively demanding permanent residence in Delft. Monique said that she has spent 19 years on the official waiting list for a house. Many claim to have spent up to 30 years and still hold on to apartheid-era documents from the 1980s to this effect. In order to determine who could qualify for a house at the N2 Gateway site, another list was compiled by the municipality, and

still another by Thubelisha. Residents signed up at police stations, in Thubelisha's offices, and various other locations. Thubelisha has since been declared insolvent after facing corruption charges in the Western Cape and other provinces, and Prince Xhanti has been replaced as project manager. Insofar as transit camps are a material manifestation of waiting lists, residents have little faith that they will lead to a brick-and-mortar home. However, some officials report that transit camp construction has been scaled back amid the public pressure exerted by residents like Monique and her neighbors (pers. comm.).

By examining how poor residents inhabit visible political roles from the margins of the city, whether on the streets, in the courts, or in global media flows, I have considered how legitimate domains of political life are being redefined through the production of new spatial forms of citizenship and identity at the intersections of race and class (see also Chari 2010). Contrary to apocalyptic or utopian representations of slums, which cast residents as either lying in wait for the developmental state or undermining it, I have demonstrated how these are places of thriving political and legal life, with complex histories that reveal the contradictions of lived experience when juxtaposed with neat distinctions of formal and informal space.

This study highlights some of the ambiguities and ambivalences in the practical ways that people experience the post-colonial world. In a time of recession and growing street protests in many parts of the globe, socio-economic rights—their meaning, adjudication, and status—are being claimed by newly assertive populations. Increasingly, these claims are being phrased as juridico-political and material demands for emancipation. In this emerging living politics, urban space is of a primary concern and raises urgent questions about liberal democratic governance, its inclusions and exclusions. As Monique said the last time I saw her before she disappeared from Symphony Way: “The reason I think I should be able to stay here is because I’m a citizen and have a right to a home. Also, it’s about the future of my child ... I never want to live in a shack or any other [such] structure again.”¹⁹

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Notes

1. Address to Parliament made by Mike Mabuyakhulu, a member of the Executive Council for Housing, Local Government and Traditional Affairs, on 19 July 2007. See also Mabaso (2007).
2. “Operation Murambatsvina Comes to KZN,” Abahlali baseMjondolo press release, 21 June 2007, <http://www.abahlali.org/node/1629> (accessed 12 July 2013).
3. See “Breaking New Ground: A Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements,” August 2004, http://www.thehda.co.za/uploads/files/BREAKING_NEW_GROUND_DOC_copy-2_1.pdf.
4. “Jo’burg Cleans Out Inner-City Slums,” IOL News, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/jo-burg-cleans-out-inner-city-slums-1.31118#.UeHAekTNob0> (accessed 12 July 2013).
5. “Safety and Crime in South Africa,” South Africa Travel, http://www.southafrica-travel.net/miscellaneous/southafrica_safety.html (accessed 12 July 2013).
6. “Mbeki Warns of ‘Threat’ from Township Rioting in South Africa,” Agence France-Presse, 25 May 2005.
7. “The KwaZulu-Natal Elimination and Prevention of Re-emergence of Slums Act, 2007,” *Extraordinary Provincial Gazette of KwaZulu-Natal*, 2 August 2007, <http://abahlali.org/files/KZN%20Slums%20Act.pdf> (accessed 31 October 2015).
8. KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature. Debates and Proceedings of the Third KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Legislature, Fourth Session: Section 8.3 Debate on the KwaZulu-Natal Elimination and Prevention of Re-Emergence of Slums Bill, 2007.
9. See <http://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/constitution/>.
10. See <http://www.gov.za/about-government/government-programmes/sustainable-human-settlements-breaking-new-ground>.
11. See http://abahlali.org/files/Breaking%20new%20ground%20New_Housing_Plan_Cabinet_approved_version.pdf.
12. See http://www.saflii.org/za/legis/consol_act/poiefauoola1998627/.
13. Media statement made by Minister Sisulu in May 2006. See <http://www.dhs.gov.za/content/media-statements/media-statement-24-may-2006>.
14. See http://abahlali.org/files/Breaking%20new%20ground%20New_Housing_Plan_Cabinet_approved_version.pdf.
15. “Eliminate the Slums Act,” Abahlali baseMjondolo press statement, 21 June 2007, <http://abahlali.org/node/1629> (accessed 28 February 2014).
16. Statement issued by the Director-General of the Department of Housing, Itumeleng Kotoane, on 19 February 2008, <http://www.dhs.gov.za/content/media-statements/media-statement-21-february-2008> (accessed 8 May 2008).
17. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1978: 95) argues that Machiavelli was “among the few ... who conceived the power of the Prince in terms of force relationships” and that his project was to take that premise one step further whereby the persona

of the Prince is replaced by other mechanisms of power. In his lectures delivered during the same years, which were later published in a collection, Foucault (2003: 59) further notes that modern disciplinary power—as a discourse that cuts off the head of the king and operates without a sovereign—must denounce the politics of the Prince as “an illusion, an instrument, or, at best, an enemy.”

18. Blockades have become the AEC’s signature response to evictions in South Africa and in Chicago, Detroit, and Los Angeles, where new branches were opened during the American foreclosure crisis.
19. Personal communication, 21 May 2008.

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