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PEOPLE-PLACE RELATIONSHIPS AT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL

CASE STUDY IN A SOUTH AFRICAN POST-APARTHEID TOWNSHIP

door

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Acknowledgements

I think I can say that the experience of doing research in South Africa really opened my eyes. It gave me the opportunity to get a better idea of what it is to live in other -sometimes very difficult- circumstances. The way people deal with their past and create new attitudes, is really interesting to study and working on this project certainly made me develop a 'taste' for research.

Since I'm back, I've noticed there are many misunderstandings about South-Africa and I'm glad that at least I can put them in perspective now. I've asked myself many questions on how to deal with all the things I saw and experienced, but I think the most important thing now, is to learn from these experiences and to try to pass the information on to others.

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I read somewhere that the final product will never be perfect in the author's eyes. We can always improve the work that we have done (or at least we believe we can) and by being too perfectionist there is a risk that the project will never be finished at all. Therefore, here and now, I dedicate my thesis to all these persons that made this project possible.

Thank you!
Baie dank!
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0. Introduction

In a world of globalisation and 'spaces of flows', the places where we actually live our everyday lives are sometimes dislodged to the background and reduced to a simple scenery for action. However, on a local scale, the meaning of seemingly mundane places like the street corner, the local store or the children's playground often holds great value in residents' lives. Personal experiences and interactions are still achieved primarily at this level.

It is necessary to get beyond the consideration of the material form of places and representations of them in order to fully understand place. How are these places socially constructed and which psychological bonds arise with these places? How are practice and place connected and how does the repetition of everyday activities produce a particular sense of place?

The fieldwork for this thesis was carried out in Wesbank, a post-apartheid township in the Cape Town Metropolitan Area. Residents' perceptions of the neighbourhood, their feelings of being at home and their sense of identity were explored in order to characterize the relationships they have with their neighbourhood.

The research questions we want to answer are:
"How does the space of a monofunctionally planned area become a place for its residents? How do Wesbank residents develop an opinion about places in their neighbourhood and how does that influence their use of those places? Which micro- and macro-elements are of importance?"

Places are important phenomena in the life world of everyday experience, but the concept of place seems complex and difficult to grasp. Important is to highlight negative aspects in the relationships to place as well, because too often this has been neglected in the literature, especially by humanist geographers. The aim of this research is thus to take a look at relationships to place at the scale of the neighbourhood and this in a post-apartheid context.

A cross-fertilisation between the different disciplines of social and environmental psychology, anthropology, sociology and of course social geography has proved to be valuable. But rather than treating material environments as inert backgrounds to social life, as is the case in much of the non-geographical literature, we will treat these as landscapes of meaning within which individuals and groups may establish rich social and psychological connections.

This thesis consists of five parts. The first part provides an overview of some relevant literature about relationships to place. In this part we draw on the general concepts of space and place and on the interpretations of the place concept during the last century. We will also take a look at some models of emotional relationships to places and will put them into a larger context. Further on in that part, we explain the discursive approach as a method to make people-place relationships operational in empirical research and we make a link to the second part of this thesis, about methodology. In the next two chapters of the literature review, we address the scale levels of our analysis: that of the home and that of the neighbourhood. We finish this literature review with some conclusions.

The second part is a methodological one. The enumeration of the chapters will go on following on the chapters in the first part. In the first chapter of this part –chapter 9 of the thesis-, we will elaborate on the philosophical position of our research. Further on, we highlight some important aspects of doing research abroad and make some ethical considerations. The biggest chapter of this part deals with the field work. In that part, the different methods that were used on the field will be discussed in detail. In chapter 13, we comment on the representativity of qualitative research, whereas in the last part we will explain the methodology we used for our analysis.

The third part of this thesis treats of the macro- and micro-characteristics of our research area. We dwell on the Cape Metropolitan Area, in which our research neighbourhood -Wesbank- is situated. Next chapter treats on South Africa's apartheid history and the country's post-apartheid challenges of housing and psychological effects of desegregation. Chapter 17 is about the Wesbank neighbourhood itself and in chapter 18, we want to explain the importance of integrated spatial planning of housing projects. We make some conclusions about our research area in the last chapter of this part.

After a broad sketch of the macro- and meso-situation of our research area in part III, in the fourth part of the thesis, we present the results of our micro-scale analysis of people's personal experiences with places in Wesbank. We will explore how macro- and meso-levels have considerable impacts on activities in and meanings of places on the micro scale level. We will dwell on 'home' and 'neighbourhood', on 'otherness' and social categories, on neighbourhood contacts and meeting places, as well as on the importance of safety and security. In the next chapter of this part, we draw a mental map of Wesbank and after that, we conclude our analytical findings.

The last part of this thesis consists of our general conclusions. It points at the revealings of our research and at the relevance of the concepts we have explained and developed. The conclusion also points to the gaps we found in the literature, and how we have tried to fill these. It refers again to the used methodologies and our general analytical findings.

Part I

Literature Review

In this first part of the thesis, we will dwell on some relevant literature considering the research topic. This part consists of 8 chapters. The first chapter deals with the general concepts of space and place. In the second chapter we will give a broad overview of how scientists have been looking to the place-concept during the last century and how place was said to be constructed and used. The 3rd chapter then looks at the emotional relationships to places – more particular to the concepts of 'sense of place' and 'place-identity' – and addresses the ignorance of negative experience in place. The fourth chapter puts those relationships to place in a broader context and introduces the concept of territoriality. In a fifth chapter, we explain the discursive approach as a method to make people-place relationships operational in empirical research and make the link to the second part of this thesis, about methodology. Chapter 6 and 7 address the most important scale levels for our analysis: that of the home and that of the neighbourhood. In the last chapter of this part, we make some conclusions about this literature review.

1. About space and place

Space and place together define the nature of geography (Tuan 1974a). **Place**, in ordinary usage, means primarily two things: one's position in society and a specific spatial location (Cresswell 2004). But, it has more substance than the word suggests at first sight. It is a unique entity and has a history and meaning. "Places incarnate the experiences and aspirations of people and are a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning" (Tuan 1974a: 213).

Space is a more abstract concept than place[1]. The interpretation of spatial elements requires an objective frame of thought, quantifiable data, and ideally the language of mathematics. Spaces have areas and volumes, places have space between them (Cresswell 2004). Yi-Fu Tuan has likened space to movement and place to pauses – stops along the way (Tuan 1977). Naming is one of the ways space can be given meaning and become place. When

[1] According to de Certeau it is the other way round: "In short, space (*espace*) is a practiced place (*lieu*). Thus the street geometrically defined by urban planning is transformed into a space by walkers (...)" (1984, 117)

humans invest meaning in a portion of space and then become attached to it in some way, it becomes a place. This is the most straightforward and common definition of place – a meaningful location (Cresswell 2004, 7). But place is a contested concept. What it is that 'place' means is very much the subject of decades of debate in human geography as well as philosophy, planning, architecture and any number of other disciplines.

The political geographer John Agnew (1987 Cresswell 2004) has outlined three fundamental aspects of place as a 'meaningful location': location, locale and sense of place.

Perhaps it seems the most obvious point that all places are located. They have fixed objective co-ordinates on the Earth's surface. The word place is often used in everyday language to simply refer to **location** – the simple notion of 'where'. But places are not always stationary. A ship, for instance, may become a special kind of place for people who share it on a long voyage, even though its location is constantly changing. In the same way a gypsy camp, an Indian camp or a circus camp can be self-contained places (Susanne Langer 1954 in Relph 1976). Location is then not a necessary or sufficient condition of place.

By **'locale'**, Agnew means the material setting for social relations – the actual shape of place within which people conduct their lives as individuals. Giddens gives a slightly different definition of locale, as a setting of interaction, but we will come back to that further on.

It is clear that places almost always have a concrete form. Places then, are material things. But even imaginary places, in books or films, have an imaginary materiality of rooms, tunnels, etc. (Cresswell 2004).

As well as being located and having a material visual form -according to Agnew- places must have some relationship to humans and the human capacity to produce and consume meaning. By **'sense of place'** Agnew means the subjective and emotional attachment people have to place. We often have a sense of place of where we live or where we lived when we were children. This is what Lucy Lippard has called 'the lure of the local'. She defines place as space plus memory, whereby she suggests the importance of knowledge of local history. A true understanding of place -she says- leads in turn to the creation of community, which grounds the individual in a web of social, political and historical relations (Heartney, 1998). But research has shown that even without having been at a certain place, we can have a sense of place about it (Meert et.al., 2004).

Most often the designation of place is given to something quite small in **scale**, but not too small. Neighbourhoods, villages, towns and cities are easily referred to as places and these are the kinds of places that most often appear in writing on place. There is little writing on the corner of a favourite room as place at one scale, or on the globe at another (Cresswell 2004).

Yet, as Tuan (1974) suggested, there is something of place in all of these. So, as it turns out, places as 'things' are quite obscure and hard to grasp.

Place is also a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world. When we look at the world as a world of places we see different things. We see attachments and connections between people and place. We see worlds of meaning and experience. Place is as much about a way of knowing as it is about a thing in the world, it is as much about epistemology as it is about ontology (Cresswell 2004). People often have an opinion about places, or show a certain **attitude towards places**, even without having ever been there (Meert et. al. 2004). This can have important stigmatizing effects, on the places, but also on the people who live there. We will discuss this issue in detail in one of the next chapters.

Since the 1970's, some authors (Relph 1976, Hay 1992) started writing on the loss of sense of place. Relph has called this **placelessness**. According to these authors, globalisation and individualisation are responsible for this growing existence of non-places. Hay (1992) says mobility and migration, patterns of urban design and economic development all tend to erode the development of a strong local sense of place. But, because of the relative unimportance of this for our research, we will not pursue this matter further.

We can see the popularity of place as an **opportunity for geography**, but it is **also a problem** as no one quite knows what they are talking about when they are talking about place (Cresswell 2004). Place is central to both geography and everyday life, but space, landscape and place are clearly highly interrelated terms and each definition is contested and depending on author, and purpose and date of writing.

2. A history of place

While we have taken a look at the differences in space and place, we have not mentioned the **'space of flows'** yet. This is a space of networks, existing of fluxes and global economical processes. According to Castells and other authors, under the influence of globalisation processes, more and more power is concentrating in this 'space of flows' (Peleman 2000). But, at the same time Castells nuances the importance of the 'space of flows', because personal experiences and social interactions are still achieved primarily in what he calls the 'space of places' (Peleman 2000).

The **'space of places'** is what we are interested in in this thesis. This is the reason we will take a look at the different point of views in history that consider place, a central concept within the discipline of geography. We will see there are many different ways of looking at the (micro and macro) place-concept and many ways of giving it meaning. Although it is not the purpose of being complete in our enumeration, we will try to give a broad overview of how place is said to be constructed and used during the last decades.

2.1 Period of the national schools (1875-1950)

At the turn of the 20th century there was a lively debate between two schools of thought, **environmental determinists** and **possibilists**, with the former advocating causal reasons for human behaviour and morphology due to environmental conditions, e.g. steep, rugged mountains produced rugged people with strong legs (Hay 1992). Ratzel's 'Antropogeographie' lies at the basics of this environmentalism (Dietvorst et. al. 1984, Meert 2003). In the early 20th century, the *genre de vie*, or way of life, of French rural towns was considered by possibilist Vidal de la Blache as evidence that there is a wide range of relationships possible between people and place (Hay 1992): "La nature propose, l' homme dispose".

In the **period between the wars**, logical, objective enquiries and empirical studies by scientists were the norm of (German and American) geography (Entrikin 1989). This was accomplished through attention to the location of objects in geometric space, with geographers like Hettner and Hartshorne delineating spatial patterns of such objects (**chorological**) and searching for relationships in the distributions of phenomena (Dietvorst et. al. 1984). The nomothetic, or law-seeking enterprise of such scientists was usual, but became idiographic when dealing with specific places, as the individuality of places and value-laden issues had to be considered (Entrikin 1989).

In contrast, **cultural geographers** like Schlüter and geographers of the **Sauer** school at Berkeley in the **middle part of the 20th century** were interested in the **chronological** dimension, as well as processes that affected the evolution of the cultural landscape (Dietvorst et. al. 1984, Hay 1992). Sauer and his followers asserted the importance of culture in transforming the natural environment. Instead of believing that culture was determined by the natural environment, they rejected this environmental determinism, just like Vidal de la Blache, and culture was given explanatory power. But this cultural geography rested a classifying of 'culture areas' (spaces of cultural communication, just like Ratzel's *Kulturkreise*) and has been critiqued on the grounds that the basis for these classifications,

such as similar farming systems or pottery styles, was always arbitrary. It was also an analysis of the ways in which cultural groups affect and change their natural habitats (Brown 2006).

Figure 1: A portion of Clark Wissler's map of the culture areas of the Native American United States. Source: Brown 2006

2.2 Behavioural geography

After World War II, a lot of things changed in the discipline of geography. In the beginning of the 50's a 'New Geography' or ' New Orientation' was proclaimed and a logical-positivistic approach triumphed. English-speaking countries were now setting the tone. While before 1950, geography developed rather isolated in the different countries, from now on there was a growing internationalisation (Dietvorst et. al. 1984).

In the **1970's and '80's**, **behavioural geographers** employed **positivistic** methods to study people's functional relationships with place (Hay 1992, Unwin 1992: for example hazard perception studies). They examined human behaviour using a **disaggregate approach**, at times looking into people's feelings for place using quantitative methods. The understanding of people-environment interaction, according to behavioural geographers, is best achieved by looking at both the psychological processes through which individual "actors" come to know the environment and the way in which these processes influence the nature of resultant behaviour. In their opinion, human geography should study people as human beings, but behaviouralism is not to be confused with the 'behaviourism' of psychologists as Pavlov and

others: behavioural geographers focus on the **cognitive processes** underlying spatial reasoning, decision making, and behaviour, instead of putting all this in a 'black box'. These cognitive processes include environmental perception and cognition, way finding, the construction of cognitive maps, **place attachment**, the **development of attitudes about space and place**, decisions and behaviour based on imperfect knowledge of one's environs, and numerous other topics (Lloyd 1998). Other common issues are issues of boundaries, 'belongingness', and insider-outsiders status to various locations.

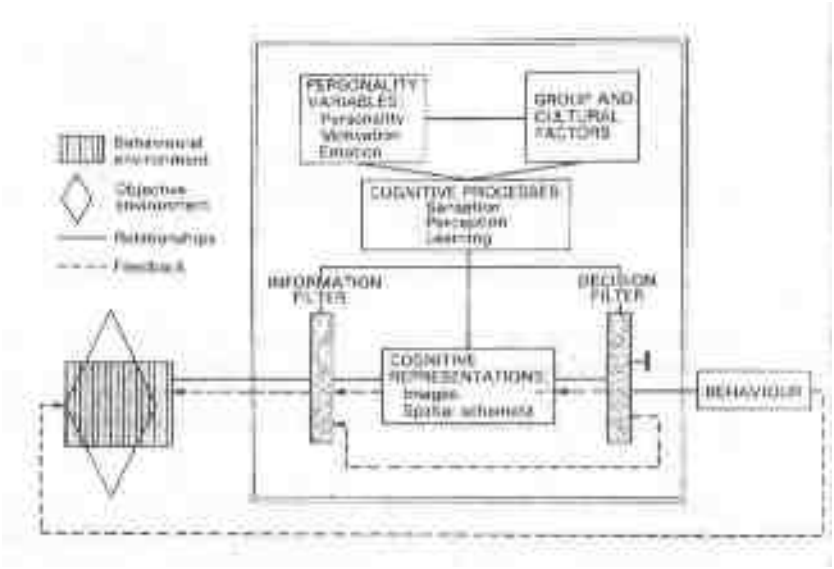

Figure 2: The process of environmental cognition: the individual as 'white box' and the spatial behaviour. Source: Walmsley & Lewis 1984

2.2.1 Hägerstrand

The need to consider behavioural variables in migration had been noted by Torsten Hägerstrand, professor in the Department of Social and Economic Geography at Sweden's Lund University. He made a plea for regional scientists to consider people and not just locations (1970), and at the heart of it was the need to examine the spatial and temporal coordinates of human activity. Here, the accent is not on the inner processes of humans and how they influence spatial behaviour, but about the **concrete man in a time-space framework**. Mental processes leading to spatial behaviour stay in a black box (Dietvorst et. al. 1984).

Hägerstrand came up with the concept of a **space-time path** to illustrate how a person navigates his or her way through the spatial-temporal environment and to demonstrate how human spatial activity is often governed by (social) limitations, and not by independent decisions by spatially or temporally autonomous individuals. He identified three categories of

limitations, or "constraints": capability-, coupling-, and authority constraints (Hägerstrand 1970, Corbett 2006).

Capability Constraints limit human activities in time and space because of constraints imposed by nature (e.g. the necessity of sleeping and eating) or availability of tools. As a consequence, the time-space surrounding of an individual has to be divided up into a series of concentric tubes or rings of accessibility. These tubes can be extended by the application of tools, e.g. telecommunication technology and transport systems. Thus, in daily life, a person lives on an ‘island’ with a size depending on the available means of transportation (and telecommunication).

If we take a closer look at the time-space volume within reach, it turns out to be not a cylinder but a prism (~prison), with time-space walls on all sides. These walls might change from day to day, however, it is impossible for the individual to appear outside the walls. The path of the individual will always be an unbroken line inside the prism.

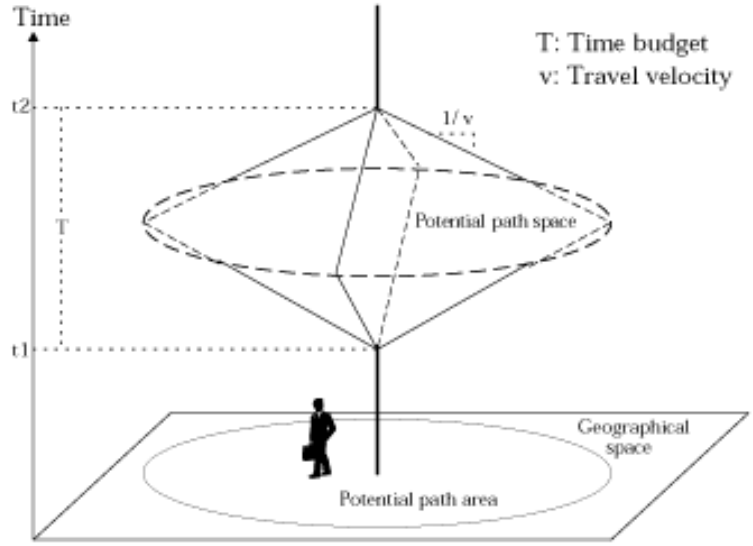

Figure 3: Concept of the time-space prism
Source: Corbett 2006

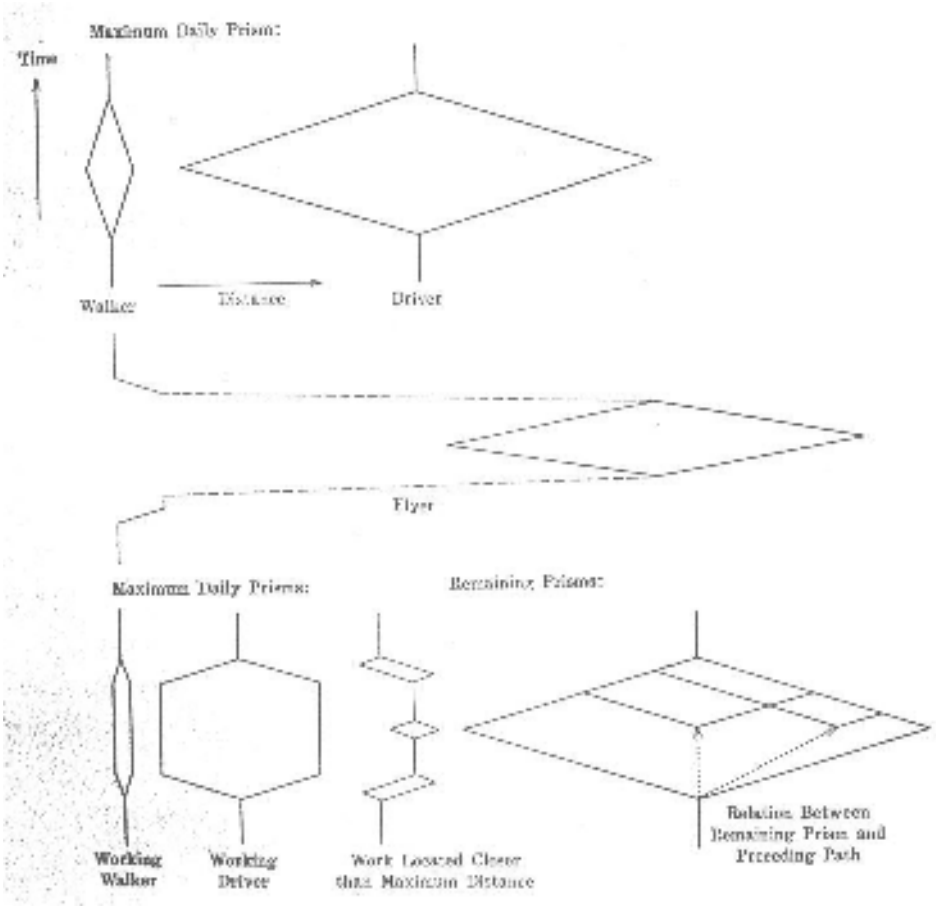

Figure 4: Space-time prisms. Source: Hägerstrand 1970

Individual paths can form bundles when coming together at a certain place, a junction. This leads us to the **coupling constraints**, a reference to the need to join with other people, organisations or capital investments (as "bundles") to accomplish an objective. This could mean anything from visiting the supermarket to going to work for the day (Corbett 2006). It is clear that a car owner has a much greater freedom to combine distant bundles than the person who has to walk or travel by public transportation.

The third family of constraints are **authority constraints**. Where and when individual or joint activities occur and who can participate is constrained by the individual or group that controls the particular piece of time-space, a control area. Working hours, land owners' property rights, zoning, curfew, public transportation schedules and routes and office hours of governments and organizations are a few examples.

The three aggregations of constraints interact in many different ways and have concealed repercussions on the daily prism of an individual. And although the inspiration for the model was derived from the study of human migration patterns, it quickly took hold across the social science spectrum during the 1970s (Corbett 2006).

2.3 Humanistic geography and the concrete everyday world

The concern for interpreting observable behaviour in terms of what goes on in the mind is also apparent in those branches of geography which adopt a humanistic approach (Walmsley & Lewis 1984). But, instead of focussing on the behavioural world, the humanistic geographers went into the phenomenal environment and took a turn to philosophical approaches like **structuralism** and **existentialism**[2]. In this way, a focus on the micro-scale of the individual can still provide insights into man-environment because the methods used take full account of how man experiences the world around him (Walmsley & Lewis 1984). This meant a break away from the positivistic, scientific view of man, and the adoption of a new, hermeneutic perspective.

Before, the definition of "phenomena" was still tied to objective science, as the humanistic approach and the phenomenological perspective had not yet been explored by geographers (Hay 1992). Too often a positivist, specialist stance was adopted by social researchers, robbing our life worlds of context and emotional fullness. This detached approach can affect research, blocking out large portions of reality (see Relph 1981). Through detachment, abstraction, objectification and classification nature becomes "a static place of objects, rather than a dynamic field of *relationships*" (Hay 1992). In the humanistic tendency, the emphasis was on **quality and meaning of the human life in the concrete everyday world**.

2.3.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a current in philosophy that takes the **intuitive experience of phenomena** (what presents itself to us in conscious experience) as its starting point, and tries to **extract the essential features** of experiences and the essence of what we experience. Most of it is based on the work of Edmund Husserl and was developed further by philosophers such as Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

As phenomenologists saw the discovery of essences as one of their principal tasks, phenomenological geographers searched for the essence of the place-concept.

> *"The essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines places as profound centres of human existence"*
>
> Relph (1976, 43).

[2] Structuralism seeks to identify human through patterns that transcent cultural differences, while existentialism sees man as striving to define a self that is given neither by nature nor by culture (Walmsley & Lewis 1984).

So rather than asking what this place or that place is like, the phenomenological approach to place asks '**what makes a place a place?**'.

At heart this phenomenological enterprise involved the acknowledgment that **to be human is to be 'in place'**. Knowledge of place is a simple fact of **experience**. Place is therefore a pre-scientific fact of life – based on the way we experience the world (Cresswell 2004). As theorists argue, 'any exploration of place as a phenomenon of direct experience must be concerned with the entire range of experiences through which we all know and make places' (Relph 1976, 6).

A phenomenological view was needed in research, because it **looks beyond the "masks" of everyday life**[3] (the taken-for-granted world) to reflect on original experiences as they are given, attempting to identify and reduce presuppositions (Hay 1992). Through phenomenology researchers could uncover how our meaningful relationships interact within our life worlds, discovering their relative effects, strengths and significances (Hay 1992).

Phenomenologists believe that we constitute our life worlds by holding objects unreflectively in our consciousness, forming a relationship with them. Phenomena are defined as the **"objects of experience",** including physical things or conceptual objects (e.g. society or place).

Phenomenological literature is an important starting point for understanding the nature of **people's emotional relationships to places**, as it provides a rich theoretical basis for study. Phenomenology focuses on the meanings and experiences of places via a **descriptive, qualitative discovery** of things in their own terms and considers 'being-in-the-world' as a fundamental, irreducible essence - environment is an integral ontological structure (Manzo 2003).

2.3.2 The discovering of place

Place became a central term in North American geography during the late 1970s and early 1980s through efforts of geographers like Relph (1980) and Tuan (1974). They traced the roots of place back to the philosophies of meaning – particularly those of **Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty** (Cresswell 2004). Empirical studies, using sensitive research methodologies,

[3] "Everyday life is the life that most of us lead most of the time" (Relph 1976).

were launched to focus on people's relationships with place. "Affective ties" (i.e. bonds) to place were examined on occasion, and were said to gradually develop through long residence in a defined place (see Tuan 1974). People were said to consider place at several levels, including one's room, home, neighbourhood, town, region and nation (Tuan 1975; Relph 1976).

In 1976, Relph remarked in his book 'Place and Placelessness' it was surprising that very little attempt had been made to actually define place and distinguish it from its sister concepts of region and area. **Place remained a largely common-sense idea** (Cresswell 2004). In the past, geographers had become dissatisfied with geography as an ideographic pursuit (see chapter 2.2) . Proper scientific disciplines, it was pointed out, liked to generalize and make laws that could be applicable anywhere (Meert 2003). Thus spatial science was born and the concept of region (that existed before) was replaced by the concept of space as a central focus of human geography. The term space appeals to the nomothetic or generalizing impulse of science. Within spatial science (positivism) a place was simply a location. Christaller's central place theory was the only area in which the term 'place' was often used and here it described locations where particular functions, services and populations were concentrated (Tuan 1975, Cresswell 2004).

Studies of **place** were often relegated to **'mere description' while space** was given the role of developing **scientific law-like generalisations.** In order to make this work, people had to be removed from the scene. This empty space could then be used to develop a kind of spatial mathematics – a geometry (Cresswell 2004).

In the 1970s **humanistic geographers** began to develop notions of place which were every bit as universal and theoretically ambitious as approaches to space had been (Cresswell 2004). The development of humanistic geography was, in part, a reaction to the new emphasis on space in spatial science (Cresswell 2004). Central to this enterprise was 'place' which, for the first time, explicitly became the central concept in geographical inquiry. Place, to geographers as Relph (1976), Tuan (1977) and Buttimer and Seamon (1980) was a concept that expressed an attitude to the world, the **emphasized subjectivity and experience** rather than the cool, hard logic of spatial science. Tuan demonstrated that the study of space (place), from the humanistic perspective, is the study of people's spatial feelings and ideas in the stream of experience (Tuan 1974a).

The humanistic geographers took a **distinctly philosophical turn**, looking to continental European philosophy for inspiration. The philosophies of phenomenology and existentialism

were central and the focus was no longer on place as a return to the ideographic concerns with particular places, that were central to human geography in the first half of the century. Rather **place was seen as a universal and transhistorical part of the human condition**. It was not so much places (in the world) that interested the humanists but 'place' as an idea, concept and way of being-in-the-world (Cresswell 2004). The two geographers who have developed this new approach to place, most thoroughly are Yi-Fu Tuan and Edward Relph.

2.3.2.1 Yi-Fu Tuan

In 'Space and Place: humanist perspective' (1974a) Tuan introduces the phenomenological perspective. With this, Yi-Fu Tuan is one of the founders of humanistic geography. He defined place through a comparison with space (Tuan 1974a, see chapter 1) and developed a sense of space as an open arena of action and movement, while place is about stopping and resting and becoming involved. While space is amenable to the abstraction of spatial science and economic rationality, place is amenable to discussions of things such as 'value' and 'belonging' (Tuan 1974a). A place is the compelling focus of a field: it is a small world, the node at which activities converge (Tuan 1974a). A street corner is a place but the street itself is not. When a street is transformed into a centre of festivities, with people milling around in no particular direction, it becomes non-directed space - and a place. Place is thus a product of '**pause'** and a chance of **attachment**. The term topophilia was developed to refer to the affective bond between people and place (Tuan 1974b, 4). This bond, this sense of **attachment**, is fundamental to the idea of place as a '**field of care'**.

Fields of care carry few signs that declare their nature: they can be known in essence only from within. Human beings establish fields of care, networks of interpersonal concern, in a physical setting. The field of care is indubitably also a place if the people are emotionally bound to their material environment, and if, further, they are conscious of its identity and spatial limit (Tuan 1974a). But the nature of the relationship between interpersonal ties on the one hand and the space over which they extend on the other is far from simple.

> *"Youth gangs have strong interpersonal ties, and they have a strong sense of the limits of space: gang members know well where their 'turf' ends and that of another begins. Yet they have no real affection for the space they are willing to defend. When better opportunity calls from the outside world, the local turf – known to the gang members themselves for its shoddiness – is abandoned without regret."*
>
> Tuan (1974a: 241)

In fields of care **time** is of the essence, since time is needed to build up experience and build up care. The sense of a place may be called forth by art as much as by the intangible net of human relations. One may argue that engineers create localities but time is needed to create places (Tuan 1974a).

But what are the means by which affective bond reaches beyond human beings to place? One is repeated experience: the feeling of place gets under our skin in the course of day-to-day contact. Repetition is of the essence. The functional pattern of our lives is capable of establishing a **sense of place**. In carrying out the **daily routines** we go regularly from one point to another, following established paths, so that in time a web of nodes and their links is imprinted in our perceptual systems and affects our bodily expectations. A 'habit field' is thus established (Tuan 1974a).

> *A key to the meaning of place lies in the expressions that people use when they want to give it a sense carrying greater emotional charge than location or functional node. People talk of the 'spirit', the 'personality' and the* ***'sense' of place****.*
>
> Tuan (1974a: 234)

For Tuan, only human beings can have a **sense of place** and place is created by human beings for human purposes.

In his books and articles (1974a, 1974b, 1975, 1977) Tuan argued that through human **perception and experience** we get to know the world through places (Cresswell 2004). The continuum which has place at one end and space at the other is simultaneously a continuum linking experience to abstraction (Tuan's 'Space and Place' is subtitled 'The Perspective of Experience'). To remain a place it has to be lived in and to live in a place is to experience it, to be aware of it in the bones as well as with the head. According to Tuan, place, at all scales, is a **construct of experience**[4].

> *The structure and feeling-tone of space is tied to the perceptual equipment, experience, mood, and purpose of the human individual. We get to know the world through the possibilities and limitations of our senses. The space that we can perceive spreads out before and around us, and is divisible into regions of differing quality.*
>
> Tuan (1974a: 224)

[4] Recent writings (Meert et. al. 2004, Schuermans et. al. 2005) have shown that place is more than only a construct of experience. By a lack of contact with a certain place, existing stereotypes keep on living and (re)constructing *topophobia*.

Tuan's attention went to spaces that are sense-bound, spaces that respond to existential cues and the urgencies of day-to-day living (Tuan 1974a). In the study of place, he says, it is possible to stay close to **experience** and yet retain the **philosophical** ideal of systematic knowledge (Tuan 1975). In other words, places are known both directly through the **senses** and indirectly through the **mind** (Tuan 1975).

> *"Seeing is thinking, in the sense that it is a discriminating and constructive activity; it creates patterns of reality adapted to human purposes. Even smell, taste, and touch are affected by thought in the above sense. (...) Place is a centre of* ***meaning*** *constructed by experience."*
>
> Tuan (1975: 152)

Moreover, emotion links all human experiences so that place can acquire deep meaning through 'the steady accretion of sentiment' (Tuan 1977, p. 33; Manzo 2003). It is possible to appreciate the visual qualities of a town in an afternoon's tour, but to know the town's characteristic odours and sounds, the textures of its pavements and walls, requires a far longer period of contact (Tuan, 1974a). Present awareness itself is imbued with **past experiences** of movement and time, with memories of past expenditures of energy, and it is drawn towards the future by the perceptual objects' call to action. Beyond the patent visual-aural zone (people and things you are engaged with and their physical setting) is the latent zone of habituality (the zone of past experiences), which is also the latent zone of potentiality (the future). Although you can not see through the walls of the patent zone, you are aware of the existence of a world beyond the walls (Tuan 1974a, 224). Experiences can be active and clear, or passive and deeply felt but difficult to articulate (Tuan 1975).

Experience constructs place at **different scales**. The word is used for phenomena that differ greatly in size and in physical character, but they are all centres of meaning to groups or individuals (Tuan 1975). 'At one extreme a favourite armchair is a place, at the other extreme the whole earth' (Tuan 1977, 149).

It seems obvious that Tuan was struggling with the abstractions of spatial science. 'Unlike the spatial analyst, who begins by making simplifying assumptions concerning man, the humanist begins with a deep commitment to the understanding of human nature in all its intricacy' (Tuan 1974, 246). Spatial science simply missed out too much of the **richness of human experience** for Tuan and despite the lip service paid to 'place' in definitions to geography no one was really bothering to figure out what it was. It could not be measured or mapped and laws could not be deduced about or from it (Cresswell 2004).

2.3.2.2 Edward Relph

Edward Relph's approach to place was more explicit in its **philosophical commitments to phenomenology**. His career began with 'Place and Placelessness' (1976), a monograph published out of his PhD studies at the University of Toronto, in which he built on what is described as our practical knowledge of places – the very everyday and mundane fact of our knowing where to enact our lives. "We live in one place, work in another, play football in another. But we are also willing to protect our place against those who do not belong there and we are frequently nostalgic for places we have left. These human responses, for Relph, reveal the deeper significance of place to human 'being'" (Cresswell 2004). Knowledge of place is a simple fact of experience (Relph 1976: 4).

Relph explicitly builds on the philosophy of Martin Heidegger's work ***Being and Time*** (Zeit und Sein) and particularly the notion of *Dasein*, the very essence of existence, the way humans exist in the world. Only because *Dasein* is essentially a Being-in-the-world (In-der-Welt-Sein), we can have something like 'average everydayness'. Heidegger attempts to look 'behind' everyday experience in order to uncover the conditions for everyday experience. This need to 'look behind' phenomena in the ordinary sense is the reason why the peculiar logos of phenomenology is hermeneutical in character (Cavalier 2006).

Relph remains dedicated to ferreting what lies beneath the visible landscape, to connect what is seen to sometimes distant processes and to doing so in a way that foregrounds the phenomenological experiences of landscapes. This requires using concepts that are connected to everyday life. In explaining why places were such an integral part of human experience, he developed the notion of ***insideness*** – the idea that the more strongly an environment generates a sense of belonging, the more strongly does that environment become a place (Seamon 1996).

2.4 Place as a social construct?

Radical geographers engage with place in a critical mode, considering space as a **concrete product of society** that reflects and maintains all social relations. They argue an intern dialectic relationship exists between space and society: the social and the spatial are 'mutually constitutive' (Meert 2003). For instance in David **Harvey's** lexicon, place is a form of fixed capital which exists in tension with other forms of (mobile) capital. The tension between the fixed and the mobile produces cycles of place investment and disinvestment

which contributes to an unstable process of uneven development across the globe (Cresswell 2004). The identification of place usually involves an us/them distinction in which the other is devaluated (see further on).

Around the late 1980's geographers began to seriously engage with the wider fields of social theory and cultural studies. The distinction between the humanistic and radical geographers began to break down and a **new cultural geography** emerged, formed by British geographer Raymond Williams and the Italian Antonio Gramsci. Rather than focusing on material culture, mainly of non-modern and rural societies, 'new' cultural geographers have started to examine culture in contemporary and urban societies, and to focus on non-material culture in such forms as literature, painting, politics, hegemony and ideology. The 'new' cultural geography is interested in how such **socially-constructed** cultural traits as values, meanings and attitudes are distributed spatially, and how they relate to the spatial distribution of such social attributes as wealth, power and justice. It is a critical and political approach grounded in the larger, interdisciplinary body of 'cultural studies' (University of Western Ontario, 2006). Issues of age, gender, class, lifestyle, sexuality and ethnicity had been largely ignored by traditions of regional and humanistic geography. Critical cultural geographers began to use place in a myriad of ways which revealed the complicated connections with meaning and power.

On both sides of the Atlantic, geographers began to confidently assert the importance of geography to critical theory. By taking space and place seriously, it was argued, we can provide another tool to demystify and understand the forces that effect and manipulate (construct) our everyday lives (Cresswell 2004). Things, people and practices are often linked to particular places, and if this link is broken, people are '**out of place**'[5]. The meaning of places, marxist geographers state, is often created by powerful people or instantions who define what is and what is not appropriate. Space is seen as the product of structuration processes that shape the societal system (Kesteloot 2004). Spatial patterns are thus reflections of social relations.

Robert Sack sought to reinstate a much more fundamental role for place in social life. He sees it as something much deeper than a social construct, as something irreducible and essential to being human. For Sack (1997 cited in Cresswell 2004) place is a force that can not be reduced to the social, the natural or the cultural. It is, rather, a phenomenon that

[5] Cresswell's most cited work is 'In Place/Out of Place' (1996). Here, he effectively discusses notions of place and practices of resistance that may shape them.

brings these worlds together and, indeed, in part produced them. Space is not only a result of social construction, it is related to a more individual experience as well (Sack 1980).

Malpass is another one to make this point: 'It is within the structure of place that the very possibility of the social arises' (Malpass 1999 cited in Cresswell 2004). They both point out that the social (and the cultural) is geographically constructed. The claims of Sack and Malpass are different from the claim that the social and the spatial are 'mutually constitutive' because of their claim that the realm of the 'social' has no particular privilege in discussions of place. While the social constructionists argue that humans construct both the meaning and the material structure of places, Malpass and Sack are arguing that humans cannot construct anything without being first in place – that place is primary to the construction of meaning and society and that place is primary because it is the experiental fact of our existence[6] (Cresswell 2004). In other words: place is a construction of humanity but a necessary one, one that human life is impossible to conceive of without[7].

2.5 Structuration theory

After reading this last chapter, we can say that if we look back to the theories of the humanist geographers, one thing that appears to be missing is any sense of the **constraints** on people's performances in places. People are not free to experience anything, anywhere, anytime. The fine **balancing of constraint and freedom** became the subject of geographers influenced by structuration theory, particularly the work of Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu (Meert 2000).

Structuration theory attempts to describe and understand the relations between the overarching structures that influence our lives and our own ability to exercise agency in our everyday lives. Our actions are neither determined by structures above and beyond us, nor are our actions completely the product of free will. According to Giddens, society has to be understood starting from a **dialectic relationship** between societal structures (of the structurism) and the acting individual (of the voluntarism), where both presuppose each other. The notion of duality of structure says **structure is as well the medium as the outcome** of the interpretative construction process. Structures can not be touched or measured, but are nevertheless assumed to be real (Unwin 1992).

[6] Remark the presence of Heidegger's philosophy.
[7] The problem with this view of the world is that it is rather short on empirical detail. Sack and Malpass made few accounts of particular places and tend to use only 'thought experiments' (Cresswell 2004).

Giddens seeks to connect the time-space constitution of social systems with structures of domination. He states that **time-space relations** and **daily routine**[8] have to be brought into the very hearth of social theory. To do so, he introduces the concept of what he terms 'time-space-distanciation'. Giddens argues that the structuration of all social systems occurs in time-space, but also brackets time-space relations; every social system in some way stretches across time and space (Unwin 1992).

The introduction of Giddens' locale-concept leads us back to the junctions of Hägerstrand, although 'locale' has a broader meaning (Meert 2000). It refers to the use of space to provide the settings of social interaction, what makes it **non-neutral space**. This is another aspect that seemed to be missing in behavioural and humanistic geography: **places are not frozen scenes** for human activity and are more than an inert experienced scene (Pred 1984). Places are never finished, but always 'becoming'.

Cultural and social expectations pervade place, but places remain the result of **practices**. The point is that human agency is not so easily structured and structures themselves are made through the repetition of practices by agents. To use the words of Pred (1984): "Common place is a process whereby an endless dialectic between practice and social structure expresses itself locally". This view is not only in contrast with the voluntaristic view of humanistic geographers, but also with taken-for-granted world of radical geographers as Ley (Bryon 2005). Later on, the definition of locale as a setting of interaction has been criticised for being too vague, passive and lacking social meaning (Unwin 1992). And indeed, the way in which everyday processes (re)produce space/place remains very vague (Bryon 2005).

2.6 Conclusion on the history of place

Place has always been central in the discipline of geography, from the early national schools on and even before, it has been studied in either a quantitative or a qualitative way, from a nomothetic or an ideographic starting point. Until the 1950's, geography was all about large regions and the dominance of physical space or large 'culture area's'. After that, behaviouralism started to stress research about the space of **everyday life**, but in a very neutral way, emphasizing cognitive processes and seeing space as an empty prison of constraints. Unfortunately this reduced people to decision making machines with a specific behaviour just as a result of the white- or black-box processes of their mind (Bryon 2005).

[8] This makes us think of Hägerstrand's social constraints and daily prisms.

Place as a concept stayed relatively undeveloped until the 1970's and the emergence of humanistic geography. The humanist geographers had placed the emphasis on the subjective and individual bond with place: the sense of place. Place became a centre of meaning and a field of care, the basis for human interaction.

Marxist, feminist and new cultural geographers showed us how places were **socially constructed**. Place became a symbol of reactionary exclusivity, constructing an 'us' and a 'them'. Sack en Malpass nuanced this point of view and pointed out the importance of the individual experience as well. Structuration theory puts this dialectic relationship between the social structures and the acting individual more in the foreground.

Place is made and remade on a daily basis and at the same time, it provides a template for practice, an unstable stage for performance. Place is the raw material for the creative production of identity rather than an a priori label of identity. It provides the conditions for creative social practice. Place becomes an event rather than a secure ontological thing of routedness and authenticity (humanist geographers) and it is marked by openness and change rather than boundedness and permanence.

Place is clearly a **complicated concept** and it is all the more confusing, because, at first glance it appears to be obvious and common-sense. In many ways geographers appear to be writing about quite different things: regional geographers see place as discrete areas of land with their own way of life, humanist geographers see it as a way of being in the world, radical geographers investigate the way places are constructed as reflections of power relations and those involved in structuration theory see places as parts of the process of the reproduction of society. Do they all hold nugget of value or do they cancel each other out? Is there one place at the centre of the debate?

We think you can look at place from different angles: the places we know almost always evoke a feeling, a sense of place. One can get attached to some favourite places and stay away from the places one does not like. But all places are indeed analysable as social, political and economic outcomes of society, and these outcomes will in their turn have an effect on the practices of the everyday life and in that way, on society.

	Neutral place?	*Static or dynamic?*	*Micro*	*Macro*
Behavioural geography (Hägerstrand)	yes	static	daily prisms of individual people	capability, coupling and authority constraints
Humanistic geography	no! meaningful relation-ships with places "field of care"	static	interpreting observable behaviour, construct of experience, free individual	
Radical geography	no! outcome of power relations	dynamic: social and spatial are mutually constitutive	(Sack related space to a more individual experience as well)	taken-for-granted-world: space as product of society
Structuration theory (Giddens)	no	dynamic locale	B R I D G E space as result of practices	cultural and social contstraints

Table 1: Summary of the history of the place-concept

3. Emotional relationships to place

The **relationships** which are often thought of as most important to modern people are those involving our mate or love "partner", nuclear family, close friends, and the home/property where we live. Beyond this first group is another, which includes work/career, extended family, community/neighbourhood, place and nation/country (Hay 1992). Tuan (1974b: 93) also pointed out that **topophilia** is not the strongest of human emotions, but on the other hand, a sense of place belonging is proved to be necessary for psychological wellness (Long 2005). Social attachment and attachment to the physical dimensions of places generally come together, and become a general affective feeling toward -for instance- the place of residence (Hidalgo & Hernández 2001).

People's emotional relationships to places encompass a broad range of physical settings and emotions. An extensive and **ever-growing body of literature** exists that explores the nature and nuances of people's emotional relationships to place (Manzo 2003). This includes writings on sense of place (see Tuan), place identity, rootedness, affective ties to place, people's feelings and ideas about place, value of a place, belonging to a place, insideness, embeddedness, affiliation, appropriation, commitment, place attachment, fields of care... concepts that not only exist in geography, but in social psychology an other disciplines as well (Giuliani & Feldman 1993, Hidalgo & Hernández 2001).

The problem is that there is **considerable overlap in the ways in which the authors conceptualize** psychological bonds with and the meaning of place (Manzo 2003). Numerous concepts have been used to refer to the similar or broadly related notions and there is a diversity of approaches available at the theoretical level as well as the empirical - such that it is often difficult to tell whether these researchers are observing, and theorizing about, the same concept with a different name or different concepts (Giuliani & Feldman 1993, Hidalgo & Hernández 2001). For example, **sense of place** is described as 'an experiential process created by the setting, combined with what a person brings to it' (Steele 1981, 9 in Manzo 2003). **Place attachment** is considered 'the bonding of people to places' (Altman & Low 1992 in Manzo 2003) and **place identity** has been defined as 'dimensions of the self that develop in relation to the physical environment' (Proshansky 1978 in Manzo 2003). While all of these concepts address people's relationships to places, the **exact connection between them remains unclear** (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996, Manzo 2003). This terminological and conceptual confusion has seriously blocked advances within this field, and many authors propose a **greater disciplinary cross-fertilization.**

What all authors explicitly or implicitly recognize, is that people can develop feelings of attachment toward places with different ranges: a house or street, children's playgrounds, a square, a neighbourhood, the forest, a city or a nation. The places to which people can be attached vary in **scale**, specificity, and tangibility, from the very small (for example, objects) to the nation, the planet Earth or the universe (Altman and Low 1992 cited in Hidalgo & Hernández 2001).

We will take a closer look at the most used concepts in describing emotional relationships to place: sense of place and place identity and will also draw attention on the negative affect and experience in place. In chapter 4 we will address the importance of the macro-context in relationships to place. Further on in chapter 5, we explore the possibilities of a discursive approach in studying people-place relationships and in chapter 6 and 7 we focus on two concepts and scale levels important for our analysis: the home and the neighbourhood.

3.1 Senses of place

We have talked about affective ties to place in the chapter about humanistic geography. The expression that is used most for indicating an **emotional tie to a place** is ‘sense of place’. ‘Sense of place’ is said to be created through **everyday experience** and origins in a person **becoming bonded to a restricted geographical locale**. According to Relph, an authentic sense of place is above all that of being inside and belonging to your place both as an individual and as a member of a community (Relph 1976: 65). Senses of place are never purely individual or purely collective, but rather the product of social interaction mediated through individual subjectivities (Butz & Eyles 1997).

The development of a sense of place is said to be particularly influenced by **residential status** (Hay 1998). If a person resides in a place for many years, he or she often develops a sense of place, **feeling at home and secure** there, with feelings of belonging for the place being **an anchor for his or her identity** (Hay 1998). Length of residence seems to be the primary factor in developing such attachment bonds. Nevertheless, sense of place is not only possible in the place of residence, but also in other spatial contexts of everyday life. Daily or **periodic (physical) contact** with a place is necessary to maintain a sense of place (Hay 1998), which is unlikely to be stable or unitary, but rather subject to the vagaries of both social and material circumstances and subjectivity formation (Butz & Eyles 1997).

Clearly, this is not an easy subject, and some authors (Relph 1976, Walmsley & Lewis 1984) say that the meaning of places can only really be uncovered by studying the intentionality

that underpins human behaviour. This means by using for instance a philosophy and methodology developed by Max Weber and thus advocating a focus on human experience (Meert 2003).

3.2 Place identity

Few authors have provided a clear and theoretically driven account of the relationship between place and identity. But overall, there are two ways in which these concepts can be related. On the one hand, places can provide an identity for people. This can happen in a positive way, from the inside, by membership of a community or a feeling of belonging somewhere and feeling home there; but identity of people living in some place or coming in some place, can also be imposed from the outside. This brings us to the other – and closely related – way of looking at place and identity, namely the way in which people can label a place with a certain 'mass identity' or stigma, and stereotype the people who live there or make use of the place. But also insiders can give identities to places they know, in a positive or negative way. Figure 5 and 6 give an overview that could help understanding the place-identity concept as described in the text below.

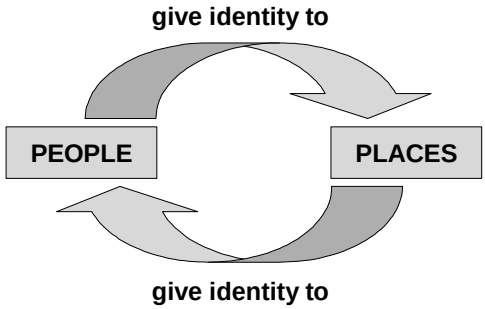

Figure 5: People's identity and place-identity are mutually constitutive (own design)

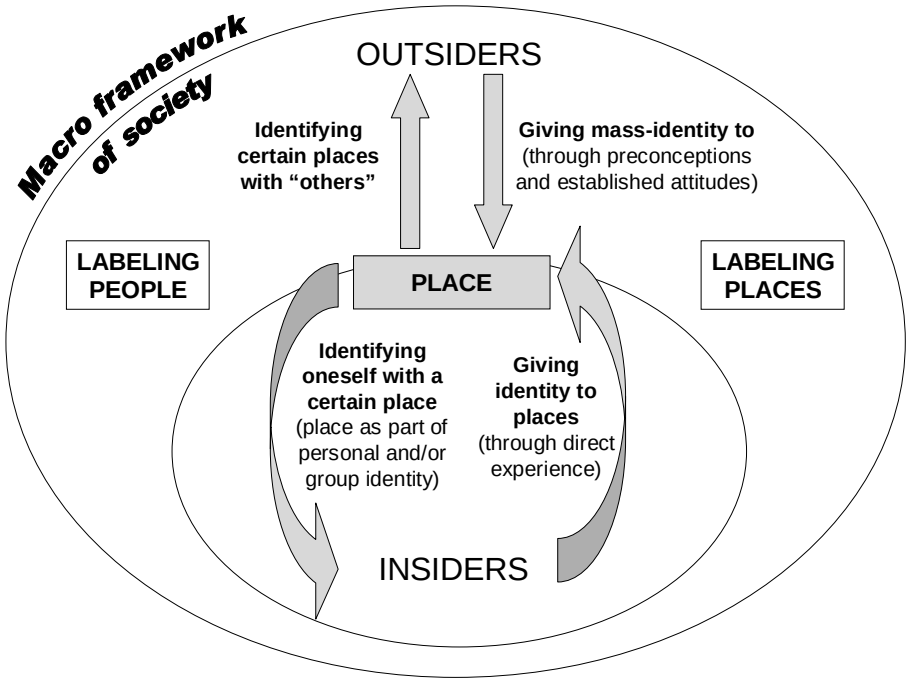

Figure 6: Relating place and identity (own design)

In the next two little chapters, we will explain the two ways of looking at the mutually constitutive place-identity relationship.

3.2.1 Places giving identity to people (labeling people)

The first way in which place can be related to identity, is what we will call **place identifications**. This refers to a person's expressed identification with a place, e.g. a person from London may refer to himself as a Londoner. In this sense, place can be considered to be a **social category** and will be subject to the same rules as a social identification within social identity theory[9]. Place identification expresses membership of a group of people who are defined by location (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996). This relationship between place and identity is not new. For ages, people have derived an identity or status from their house, street, neighbourhood or city (Van der Wouden 2005). But the territories one identifies with may be new and related to modern concepts (for instance a 'Belgian' identity).

Places are important sources for individual and communal identity, and are often profound centres of human existence to which people have deep emotional and psychological ties. A mosaic of places influences most people over the course of their lifetime and people are found to have created an '**autobiographical (or existential) insideness'**[10], dependent on personal memories in the home and neighbourhood settings (Relph 1976, Hay 1998). Research of Twigger-Ross & Uzzell (1996) supports the proposition that place is used in the active construction of identity as opposed to its function as backdrop to experience.

The significance of physical places to the development of conceptions of the self was advanced by psychologist **Harold Proshansky** et. al. in 1983 (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996, Hay 1998, Ponti 2003, Dixon & Durrheim 2004). For many years he and his colleagues at the City University of New York explored the **concept he called 'place identity'**. Their general findings suggest that place-identity is a broadly based understanding about the physical world in which each person lives, works, worships, etc. The recognition of places that we store in memory (in what we now know to be dispositional space) includes images, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and concepts of what behaviour is appropriate for

[9] We will come back to the social construction of group identity further on.
[10] Rowles (1983 in Dixon & Durrheim 2000) distinguished between three senses of 'insideness' expressing different aspects of affinity with the surroundings: physical insideness - knowledge of the physical details of place - , social insideness - sense of connection to a local community - and finally autobiographic insideness - designated their idiosyncratic sense of rootedness.

the setting. They noted the importance of people associating with 'objects and things, and the very spaces and places in which they are found', as well as **the influence of other people in those places**, to shape a person's place identity, which itself changes over the life cycle (Hay 1998). Low & Altman (1992, cited in Hay 1998) note that 'the **social relations that a place signifies may be equally or more important to the attachment process than the place qua place'**.

However, the definition of the concept rests very individualistic and apolitical. Proshansky and his colleagues established place-identity as a **substructure of an individual identity** and described it as "pot-pourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as other types of settings" (Ponti 2003 and others cited Proshansky et. al. 1983). Relph (1976: 65) also called identity in part determined by the intentions and experiences of the observer.

A **sense of belonging and attachment** grounds place-identity in the humanistic and phenomenological approach, but the problem with the definition of place-identity is that it is a vague and ill-defined construct. For example, the sense of belonging and attachment is also an aspect of a variety of analogous ideas - as we have talked about before - such as insideness, sense of place or rootedness, environmental embeddedness, community sentiment and identity, etc. Another thing is that Proshansky *et al.*'s definition reflects a view of individuals who *relate to*, and do not *interrelate with* their environment, which remains "out there". It is interesting to note that for Proshansky *et al*, place identity was not necessarily an outcome of any particular experience with the place, though it generally involved a psychological investment with the place that tends to develop over time.

3.2.2 People giving identity to places (labeling places)

In a second way, and closely related, place identity is defined by what Proshansky (1978, cited in Dixon & Durrheim 2004) called an affective-evaluative component. This finds expression within individuals' preferences for - or sense of emotional belonging to - particular environments. According to Dixon & Durrheim (2004), this takes the form of "a psychological investment with a setting that has developed over time and is captured in the everyday phrases such as feeling at home or having a sense of place", which brings us back to the previous chapter about senses of place.

The **identity of a place** is not a simple tag that can be summarised and presented in a brief factual description. Identity is neither an easily reducible nor a separable quality of places – it is neither constant and absolute, nor is it constantly changing and variable. As a humanist geographer, Relph states "the identity of place takes many forms, but it is always the very basis of our experience of *this* place as opposed to any other" (**Relph** 1976: 62). Identity of place is as much a function of **intersubjective intentions** and **experiences** as of the **appearances of buildings and scenery**, and it refers not only to the distinctiveness of individual places but also to the sameness between different places (Relph 1976: 44). The static **physical setting, the activities, and the meanings** constitute the three basic elements of the identity of places (47). Rather than of physical setting, **meanings of places are a property of human intentions and experiences**. According to Relph, a place can be quite neutral before your first arrival there, but after some experiences there, places become 'dangerous' or 'safe', 'useful' or 'inhospitable'.

But meaning is very complex, involving both individual and **cultural variations** which reflect particular interests, experiences and viewpoints. The identity of a place is an ambiguous and subjective construct. It is not inherent to a certain place, but has always been given to a place by people (Reinders 2005). It is a multi-layered phenomenon as well: places are being used in different ways, by different people and are thus given different meanings, according to the perspective of the user (Reinders 2005).

For outsiders, those who experience a place only in terms of a crass level of behavioural insideness and who know only its **mass identity**, **preconceptions and established attitudes always outweigh direct experience**[11]. Observations are gitted into the ready-made identities that have been provided by mass media, gossips or into a priori mental schemata, and inconsistencies with these are either ignored or explained away (Relph 1976). Once it has been developed, a mass-identity of a place will be maintained so long as it can be legitimated within the society. In this case, identities of places can become a stigma and change slowly, over generations rather than years. Objective reality can be manipulated to suit the interests of the identity-makers, the mass identity itself can be changed.

Mass identity is indeed little more than a superficial cloak of arbitrarily fabricated and merely acceptable sets of signs (Relph 1976). Many women for instance, have bad feelings about deserted car-parks, badly lightened tunnels and dark forests, and think those are tremendously dangerous, while most cases of aggression against women take place in their

[11] See also in Meert et. al. 2004: 'Van Balen tot Onthalen'

own ‘safe’ home environment (Schuermans et.al. 2005). Mass identity provides no roots, no sense of belonging to a place and is in marked contrast to those place-identities which have developed through profound individual and social experiences and which constitute enduring and recognisable ‘territories of symbols’ (Relph 1976: 61). However, **mass identity and individual experiences do not exclude, but complement each other in creating a (flexible) place-identity.**

3.3 Negative affect and experience in place

A review of **place attachment literature** demonstrates that attachment, meaning, sense of place, ... has been explored largely in terms of **positive affect**, but this perspective has been challenged (Giuliani & Feldman 1993, Manzo 2003). According to Butz & Eyles (1997), place always implies a sense of place, even if the experience was not particularly pleasant. Giuliani & Feldman (1993) cited Ahrentzen: '... place attachment is experienced as a central and centering bond between an individual and a particular setting, but the emotional interpretation or meaning of that bond can be positive or negative', and Rubinstein & Parmelee: 'Attachment to place is a set of feelings about a geographical location that emotionally binds a person to that place as a function of its role as a setting for experience'; 'depending upon importance and the valence of life experiences associated with a given place, attachment to it may be strong or weak, positive or negative, narrow, wide, or diffuse'.

Identity and environmental identification can indeed generate social cohesion and satisfaction on the scale of the dwelling, the immediate neighbourhood, and the city (Moser et. al. 2002), but if we accept the definitions of place attachment that it is an affective bond to place, we need to consider whether or not to **include a negative emotional relationship**. To speak of negative attachment contrasts with the everyday meaning of the word. The places where Nazi lagers were located are certainly ‘places’ with a strong emotive value, in particular for Jewish people. Would they say that they are ‘attached’ to them? (Guiliani & Feldman 1993: 272)

Feminist research best documents negative experiences in (for instance) the residence. Such critique stands in sharp contrast with the metaphorical meaning of home (Manzo 2003, see further on). Next to this, there is a growing body of literature about **geographies of exclusion**: who are places for, whom do they exclude, which stereotyped groups are ‘in place’ and which are ‘out of place’ (Sibley 1995)? Group images (stereotypes) are formulated and a particularly strong emotional bond of a certain group to a place can create landscapes of exclusion for outsiders.

Especially humanistic literature has always tended to focus on place as a source of rootedness, belonging and comfort, and has not explored the role of **negative/ambivalent feelings and experiences** as fully. While place identity was originally considered to be made up of a 'cluster of positively and negatively balanced cognitions of physical settings' (Proshansky et al., 1983, p. 62. as cited in Dixon & Durrheim 2000), the negative aspects of the phenomenon have been less explored in research (Dixon & Durrheim 2000, Manzo 2003). **This is certainly a point we will come back to in our analysis**.

4. The normative structuring and the politics of place

An important aspect of relationships to places is the **macro-context of society.** We've already mentioned this shortly at the beginning of chapter 3. The fact is that people's emotional relationships to places - on different scale levels - exist within a **larger socio-cultural, political and economic environment** (Manzo 2003). However, those different scale levels can not be studied independently. Not only neighbourhood characteristics, but also the functioning of meeting places as markets, benches and children's play gardens should be viewed within the bigger macro-economic developments (Meert et. al. 2004).

Current literature suggests that relationships to place can have a collectively shared, conscious and contested **political nature** (Dixon & Durrheim, 2000). This work, on what Keith and Pile (1993) call **'identity politics'**, connects place meaning with power relations and ideology, providing a broader, more contextualized view. In 1983, Sack already stated that territories and territorial strategies play an important role in the wielding of power over goods, services or networks. **Territoriality** is defined as the attempt to affect, influence, or control actions, interactions, or access by asserting and attempting to enforce control over a specific geographical area (Sack 1983). It is a strategy for establishing differential access to things and people (Sack 1983). Space and the appropriation of space thus serves as a means, not as a purpose. In this context, space stands for a container of power. The infringement of certain boundaries, means a weakening of the position of power, while the maintenance of boundaries stands for a strengthening of it (Meert et. al. 2004). Although Sack particularly uses the concept of territoriality on the scale of the nation state, an interpretation on a wide range of geographical scales can be useful (Paasi 2000, Peleman 2003).

Territoriality is also linked with a sense of place: "What is common to all human societies is their need for a sense of place - a feeling of living in an environment which has boundaries and identity" (Marsh 1988, 27). We can see that larger societal constraints, expectations and dynamics influence our relationships to places, but the **literature on place attachment typically does not locate emotional relationships to places in a larger socio-political context** (cf. Dixon & Durrheim, 2000).

Cresswell (1996 in Cresswell 2004) claims that the word 'place' is more than a spatial referent; it implies a sense of the proper, of something **'belonging' in one place but not in another**. In this way, **place combines the spatial with the social.** In his work, Cresswell examines the so-called' common sensical notion of 'out-of-place' and how it implicitly structures space to create a normative world (Cresswell 2004). In response to this normative structuring of space, the author uses the notion of transgression - the use of space to challenge this normative world and the taken-for-granted ideologies of place and belonging. To illustrate his point, he describes the removal of homeless people from public places like Grand Central Station in New York[12] (Manzo 2003).

This work on territoriality, exclusion and the political nature of places puts a new spin on Relph's (1976) assertion that '**to be human is to have and to know your place**' (p. 1). It also recognizes relationships to places as a distinctly political process (Manzo 2003). Exploring the politics of place also helps us to appreciate the role of negative and ambivalent feelings and experiences in places, because often the places to which we have access, or to which we are denied access, are dictated by a larger political reality.

Early work on the politics of place examines the effect of the political economy on urban spatial form, emphasizing the distribution of economic power and its impact on the creation, meanings and uses of the material world (Lefebvre 1974 as cited in Cresswell 2004). In this framework, structure and function are critical and **people are seen as passive, economic abstractions** whose subjective experiences are irrelevant. What is sorely lacking in this perspective is an appreciation for the role that individuals play as active participants in, and shapers of, their environments. This is where the literature on place attachment and place identity can make a critical contribution. But although it is possible to gain considerable insights into the nature of identity of places by considering its main components, it is nonetheless clear that identity is not a product of such components alone, but is socially structured.

[12] See Neil Smith's concept of the revanchist city.

5. A discursive approach for analysing people-place relationships?

In this chapter we will explain the discursive approach for making people-place relationships operational in empirical research. We will highlight the importance of language and speech as collective practices in the transformation of space and the origin of attitudes. Finally, we will point out the advantages and risks of this approach.

There may be a certain unease about **the identity concept**, because it **seems difficult to make operational in empirical research** (Gutting 1996). A variety of approaches to study place identity have been developed (Dixon & Durrheim 2000), and one is to **connect identity with 'narrative'**, and thereby arrive at the concept of narrative identity (Gutting 1996).

Entrikin suggested in 1991 that scientific **geography** – and the fascination with abstract space – had diminished the importance of the particular and that the particular needed to be reclaimed through a **narrative understanding of place** (Cresswell 2004). In the same year, Tuan asserted that **language** had a crucial role in human geography (Tuan 1991, Stapleton & Wilson 2003), but that it had been neglected in many researches because geographers tended to see place almost exclusively as the result of the material transformation of nature. This while according to him, **speech** is a component of the total force that transforms nature into a human place[13] (Tuan 1991). Recent developments in **social psychology** have also increasingly attended to the role of language in constituting social reality and subjectivity (Dixon & Durrheim 2000).

So how can we attempt to empirically study this social dimension of place? An empirical investigation of place-identity should not be limited to analyzing single explanatory factors, such as characteristics of individuals or groups, perceptions and conceptions of where they are, or a specific practice of regulation of space at any given time (e.g., building an office), but should recognise the **mutual constitution of place and identity** (Ponti 2003). In so doing, it would be possible to consider the area of "place communication and denomination" and study what would be called "**place discourse**" (Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995: 179 as cited in Dixon and Durrheim 2000). Dixon and Durrheim (2000) suggested that a discursive approach to analyze "**the interpersonal space of the conversation**" might help regain the significance of places for our collective selves, and highlight the **importance of collective practices** through which place-identities are formed, reproduced and changed (Ponti 2003).

[13] Tuan gives the naming of places and storytelling as examples of how a natural space can be transformed into a human place.

Indeed, a **mass identity of a place** is socially constructed through **discourses, 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak'** (Petrzelka 2004).

Participants in discourse create and re-create place symbols as they interact and attempt to understand one another. The process of communicative action ensures that life world is as much a **social** as it is a **mental construct** (Butz & Eyles 1997): **place-identity** should therefore not only be seen in a humanistic way as the outcome of **voluntary acts of self-creation**. Its **political and collectively determined dimensions** should be emphasized as well.

People who have a common history in a place are likely to share certain orientations toward that place which are reproduced through communicative action, and which are represented in things that exist at the intersection of local meaning and local knowledge. This implies that senses of place (here seen as **attitudes towards place**) are indeed dynamic and contingent, not static or originary in any sense. Place meanings may be highly private (place identity in Proshansky's version is seen as a mental entity, a cognitive structure to be discovered in the heads of individuals), but they are nevertheless grounded in a communicatively rationalized life world (Butz & Eyles 1997).

Discursive psychology views **opinions, beliefs and attitudes** ('prejudiced' or otherwise) not as a priori phenomena which need explanation, but rather as resources which members can draw upon in talk, in order to achieve rhetorical and social action (Tileaga 2006). The chats with neighbours or friends about news items, occurrences or persons contribute to the creation of all kinds of attitudes (Meert et. al. 2004). Those attitudes do not arise from objective events, but through the **subjective evaluation** of occurrences by individuals (Meert et. al. 2004), so opinions about a place do not need to arise in that specific place. Attitudes are formed by (1) superficial impressions or stereotypes, (2) general values and ideologies that people cherish and (3) by generalisations of opinions about a very specific situation (Meert et. al. 2004). The discursive psychological move is from considering underlying, cognitively represented attitudes, to evaluative **practices** that are flexibly produced for particular occasions (Tileaga 2006). Attitudes can lead to certain ways of behaviour, for example spatial avoiding strategies (Schuermans et. al. 2005) or other adaptational forms of behaviour, but there can also be a discrepancy between formulated attitudes and actual ways of behaviour in concrete situations (Meert et. al. 2004).

Because of the interconnectedness of place and identity, as alterations (physical or verbal) are made to a place, social **constructions of a place may also change**. That is, place is

‘‘**not simply an inert container** for biophysical attributes; place is constructed -and continuously reconstructed - through (micro- and macro-)**social and political processes** that assign meaning’’ (Petrzelka 2004). Attitudes do not only differ in time, but in space as well, because society and the structurating processes of society vary itself from time to time and from place to place (Meert et. al. 2005).

Identity can be reconceptualised as a discursive construction, negotiated and reproduced in everyday language (Stapleton & Wilson 2003). Language is seen here as oriented and functional. Thus, **everyday use of language is an active and goal-directed practice** whereby **entities are constructed and constituted** (rather than passively ‘reflected’ or ‘described’), and identities are actively constructed and negotiated in everyday talk and interaction (Stapleton & Wilson 2003). A discursive approach begins by relocating place-identity, by removing it from the vault of the mind and returning it to the flux of human dialogue. In that approach, individual mental processes are shifted from inside the head into ‘the interpersonal space of conversation’. In this way, place-identity becomes something that people create through talk: a social construction that allows them to make sense of their connectivity to place and to guide their actions and projects accordingly.” (Dixon & Durrheim 2000: 32).

One **advantage** of this discursive approach is that it recovers the **social origins of place identification** and highlights the individual and collective practices through which specific place identities are formed, reproduced and modified. A discursive approach thus combats the individualism and language becomes the force that binds people to places (Tuan 1991). It is through language that everyday experiences of self-in-place form and mutate, moreover, it is through language that places themselves are imaginatively constituted in ways that carry implications for ‘who we are’ (or ‘who we can claim to be’). This orientation arguably could offer new insights and understandings to those who deal with socio-spatial reorganization. Another implication of this style of research is that it **discloses the links between individual constructions of place-identity and relations of power**.

However, while this approach holds promise for recovering the intersubjective dimension of place identification, the exclusive focus on text and talk might be at the twofold risk of: (1) assuming that what people say about a place shows – in an empirically verifiable way – the meaning they ascribe to it and (2) overlooking the material activities though which people transform space into place. People need to understand space, but they also need to engage directly in collective practices of construction of place, since “while the way we come to know

a place may be largely through intuition, our actions express that knowledge concretely" (Ponti 2003).

The discursive perspective provides in any case a particular **methodological impetus**. It implies that cultural identities cannot be captured through standard psychological methods such as questionnaires, nor fully conceptualised through non-empirical modes of theorising. Rather, it requires empirical analyses of real-life discursive data, since it is here that people routinely structure, interpret and formulate locations (Stapleton & Wilson 2003). We will come back to this in the methodological part of this thesis.

6. Home

Home -according to humanistic geographers- is an exemplary kind of place where people feel a sense of **attachment** and **rootedness**. Home, more than anywhere else, is seen as a centre of meaning and a **field of care** (Cresswell 2004: 24). It is the foundation of our identity as individuals and as members of a community, the dwelling-place of our being (Relph 1976: 39). To cite Seamon (1980): "One's home environment can be understood as a place of rest, whose familiarity and security permits the person to recuperate for future ventures away from home."

The centrality of home to humanistic approaches to place owes much to both **Heidegger's** focus on 'dwelling' as the ideal kind of authentic existence and to the work of Gaston **Bachelard**, who considers the house/home as a primal space that acts as a first world or first universe that then frames our understandings of all the spaces outside. The home is an intimate space where the **experience** is particularly intense (Cresswell 2004, Mallett 2004). For Tuan (1975) the primary meaning of home is **nurturing shelter**. As the most everyday of landscapes, the house is the pivot of a **daily routine**. Home is 'a place where every day is multiplied by the days before it' (Stark 1948: 55 in Tuan 1974a). The fireplace, dining-room table and the bed are seen as centres of sentiment, but the sentiment does not often rise to the surface of our consciousness. They are known, intimately, through the more passive modes of experience (Tuan, 1975: 154). Home has **boundaries** that need to be defended against the intrusion of outsiders. Home is a place because it encloses space and thereby creates an 'inside' and an 'outside' (Tuan 1975). It protects life, not only from inclement weather and predators but also from bright sunlight and the glare of the **public eye**. It is a refuge or frame for autonomous living and growing.

Dwelling, as phenomenologists describe it, is a **way of being-in-the-world** that spans a variety of settings. Generally, phenomenologists view both dwelling and home as existential states. For example, Seamon (1979) defines 'at-homeness' as 'the usually unnoticed, **taken-for-granted-situation** of being comfortable in, and familiar with, the **everyday world** in which one lives, 'home' is used **metaphorically**; it is 'an abstract signifier of a wide set of associations and meanings' (Manzo 2003).

'Home' is the spatial metaphor for relationships to a variety of places as well as a way of being in the world, but more literal interpretations connect this term to the **residence** and **positive feelings** toward it. This has limited our understanding of a **complex and multi-faceted phenomenon**, and has led research on emotional relationships to place to focus on this place and experience. The concept of home as the primary locale of identification and commitment, too easily takes on a quasi-mystical sense, neglecting its varied social, cultural, and psychological meanings. Indeed, home may be a motor van, a bicycle, a workplace or, most unhappily, a doorway of a store at night or a public shelter (Fried 2000). The significance of any 'home', however, in its positive and (latent) negative components is that well into adulthood, role behaviour and role relationships are linked to specific places, often with socio-spatial imagery from the past (Fried 2000).

The phenomenological work on **insideness/outsideness** demonstrates a flexibility in our relationships to place that is important to this broader perspective, and offers a more flexible interpretation than the **metaphor of home** (Manzo 2003). For example, if 'home' is used to signify feelings of security and comfort, what of those who do not find this in their residence? In cases where one's residence does not feel like, or even mean, 'home', the analysis becomes decidedly more complex. While the residence can be a haven to many people in many instances, evidently this is not always the case. Again, we can state that **negative place attachment is far less being studied** (Kearns et. al. 2000), the residence being also the location for the **mundane aspects of daily life.** Home is not simply recalled or experienced in positive ways (Mallet 2004). This sense of being **bound by routine**, has been called the '**miseries of everyday life'** (Lefebvre 1974 as cited in Cresswell 2004) and the 'drudgery of place', particularly when those places to which we feel most committed feel oppressive and imprisoning (Relph 1976). As Relph points out, relationships to places need not be strong and positive; sometimes affection (**topophilia**) for particular places, may be paralleled by an aversion (**topophobia**) for other places that feel oppressive and restrictive (Relph 1976).

As above is been said, this idea of home as a fundamental place has been questioned by **feminists** as well. The feminist geographer Gillian Rose finds much to applaud in the efforts of Tuan, Relph and others to introduce issues of home and the body, that share much with the concerns of feminist geographers. But what she finds troubling, however, is the way the idea of place as home is discussed in humanistic geography. She points out that many women do not share the rosy view of home/place that humanistic geographers place at the centre of the discipline. Many women, she argues, would not recognize a view of a home/place that is "conflict-free, caring, nurturing and almost mystically venerated by the humanists" (Rose 1993 cited in Cresswell 2004), in contrary, they often suffer from domestic violence. Despite home being generally considered a feminine, nurturing space created by women themselves, they often lack both authority and a space of their own within this realm (Mallett 2004). This makes clear how 'residing' stipulates our lives, through material and emotional mechanisms of power (Vansteelant 2000). **Gender constructions** are in this way produced and reproduced. The home is often a reflection of ideas about social codes, coloured by (mostly unpronounced) convictions about 'the place of the man' and 'the place of the woman' (Vansteelant 2000). While humanists claim that place is a universal experience, they seem to fail in recognizing the differences between people and their relation to place. In the search for 'essence', 'difference' seems to have no place.

So, the humanists probably built their theory of home still too gender-neutral. But the same can be said about the orthodox-marxist geographers, who consider the household as a **reproduction unit**, without differentiating gender in function of mutual contrasts and power relations inside the household[14]. Residing is just seen as shelter, a way of reproducing labour capacity or as a form of consumption, structured by accumulation regimes and perhaps the government.

7. Neighbourhood as a place

Neighbourhoods often **lack sharp, physically defined boundaries**, and they have no distinctive skylines that can be seen from vantage points outside them. As definable spatial and social units, neighbourhoods have existed primarily in the minds of urban sociologists and planners and were/are sometimes abused as an instrument for implementing segregation of 'racial' and 'cultural' groups. A neighbourhood may be distinguished by its

[14] We should not become obsessed by looking at gender relations in the home. Other power relations can play an important role as well, for instance the relation between parents and children, or the relation with elderly or the housekeeper/cleaner living 'at home'.

ethnic composition, its socio-economic status, by the look of its houses and streets or many other things. But to use an example of Tuan (1975:158):

> *"To people of Boston's working class West End, neighbourhood is not the West End but a small part of it, a segment of the street or a street corner in whick they live and carry on their neighbouring activities. Experiences that make a corner of the street an intimately known neighbourhood are not those that can be made visible and public with ease. Such experiences of place grow imperceptibly with each subconscious imprint of taste, smell, and touch, and with unheralded acts, like* ***lending or borrowing sugar****, daily compounded".*

The larger neighbourhood stretches beyond an individual's direct experience, but for the externally defined neighbourhood, **it doesn't follow that the people who live in the area recognize it as an entity**, a focus of meaning, a place. The parts which they identify may be much smaller, for instance, **a single street or an intersection** (Tuan 1974a, 1975).

Residents not only sense, but know that their world has **an identity and a boundary** when they feel threatened. Identity is defined in competition and in conflict with others: this seems true of both individuals and communities. We owe our sense of being not only to supportive forces but also to those that pose a threat. Being has a centre and an edge: supportive forces nurture the centre while threatening forces strengthen the edge (Tuan 1974a).

A resident's association with a specific town or area of town people, enables them to **differentiate themselves from people from other parts of town**. In one of the early studies of cognitive maps and neighbourhood image, Eyles (1968 as cited in Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996) found that aspirations to have an address in a fashionable part of London resulted in the **bending of the perceived neighbourhood 'boundaries'** so that the respondent's address would be seen in Highgate Village, creating an identification to which specific attributes were ascribing, e.g. 'Highgate Village residents are smart, therefore if my address is Highgate Village, I too am smart' (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996). In this sense place functions in a similar way to a social category and therefore place identifications -again- can be thought of as comparable to social identifications (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell 1996).

The identity of a neighbourhood exists of **physical properties**, such as location and history, but also of **social properties** and the experience of the residents (Ouwehand & Van der Horst 2005). In the extreme, people-place relationships are manifest as the profound attachment people often develop to the places they live in, where they share familial,

communal, and ethnic or cultural bonds with their neighbours. These bonds can form intimate links between people and places and may extend beyond the home and the street into a wider area where a sense of belonging is established, where the places as well as the people are cherished (Fried 2000). Proprietary rights are readily assumed where property ownership is ambiguous and a specific social or ethnic group inhabits a local neighbourhood, a community playground, a gang's turf, or a whole territory or region (Fried 2000).

Research on the meaning of **public places** also illuminates our relationships to places. Hester (1993) discusses what local community residents call 'sacred structures', which are simple, seemingly mundane places like the local drugstore, restaurant or dock that hold great value in residents' lives. Low (2000 cited in Manzo 2003) describes the critical role of public plazas in people's lives. Here, attachments were particularly strong among elderly villagers who spend their days in the plaza observing daily life and meeting with friends (Manzo 2003).

In our analysis we will give much attention to the **neighbourhood and its social networks**. The level of individual encounters plays an important role on the lowest level: this of the concrete meeting places, which we can see as the bundles in Hägerstrand's time-space theory[15]. These are places where people interact and maintain their social relations: the local school, the street where one lives, the places where one spends his/her free time (Meert et al 2005). There are many forms of social organization in modern societies and communities which can provide some of the social network needs for those who have a wide range of choices. Selective social interaction is quite fundamental for most people. But for many people, that kind of community is best which is least communal, where impersonal friendliness among neighbours substitutes for friendship and mutual help. The effects of local social interactions are, thus, complex (Fried 2000).

Giuliani & Feldman (1993) see neighbouring as a superordinate concept, including social, cognitive, and affective components, which in turn include three kinds of bonds: sense of mutual aid, sense of community, and attachment to place. **Sense of community** is said to enable people to differentiate safe and sick neighbourhoods: in safe neighbourhoods everyone knows each other, shares values and beliefs, feels responsible for what could happen in the community. On the other side, degraded neighbourhoods share a perceived sense of lack of control, and feeling of powerlessness (Zani et. al. 2001).

[15] See chapter 2 about history of place.

According to Moser et. al. (2002), the habitat and the residential environment (even in the suburbs) is **certainly important** as **element of social integration**. Residential satisfaction and feeling at home in a neighbourhood is closely connected with a sense of wellbeing. Those who invest emotionally in their neighbourhood and feel good are more likely to perceive it as extending their quartier or the district itself, whereas those who do not feel at home are significantly less likely to have an extended representation of their neighbourhood (Moser et.al. 2002). These results highlight the importance of commitment in social and interpersonal relationships for the appropriation of place and residents' feeling at home. **Interpersonal relationships in the neighbourhood appear as a key element of residential satisfaction** (Moser et.al. 2002).

The mass media, consumerism and international styles of modern architecture are causing a homogenization of culture, making many urban places similar in material form through symbolization that is not tied to local culture (see Relph 1976, Tuan 1977). A sense of "dwelling" seems often lacking, in that the organic wholeness of place has become fractured. The design of office buildings, apartment blocks and suburban housing tracts is often repetitive and bland; chain retail outlets and strip developments along arterial roads are seldom aesthetically pleasing. Streets without sidewalks, walled residential enclaves and houses that lack front porches give more emphasis to commuting and security than to a feeling of neighbourhood. Though, we don't think these landscapes and cityscapes tend to create "an environment without significant places", as what Relph (1976, 143) warned for. **People will create places of their own**, and will distinguish the one place from the other, among others, **based on discourse and experience**.

We will come back to the importance of the physical component in the planning of the neighbourhood in part III of this thesis about the research area.

8. Conclusion of the literature review

As our review of the literature has shown, people-place relationships are complex and can be studied in many different ways, depending on the philosophical position of the researcher, whether he or she is a geographer or not.

In our view, Giddens' concept of place as a setting of interaction is a good starting point for looking at people's relationships with it. Interesting here is that humanistic concepts of individual emotional relationships, place attachments, meanings and attitudes towards places

are completed with the critical relevance of a higher scale level: the macro-level of society. What goes on in the mind of the individual, what he or she experiences and which ties to places are established in his or her daily life, is considered equally important as places as a product of society and a product of the power relations that exist within it. There is a dialectic relationship between these acting individuals and the social structures or the framework in which they live. Places are both medium and outcome of these interactions.

Places are not neutral, and can have different meanings for outsiders and insiders. But as people label places, places can label people as well. Mass-identity, preconceptions and established attitudes always outweigh direct experience, so gossip and a priori mental schemata are strong and often keep on flourishing despite existing inconsistencies. These mass-identities and individual experiences together create identities for places.

In Part II of this thesis, we will come back to chapter 5, considering the narrative understanding of place a sufficient way to examine people-place relationships. Part III and IV will further deal with the more concrete environments of home and neighbourhood, and the bipartition of social networks and the physical dimension of place, addressing the importance of planning for the emotional and physical experience of a place.

Part II
Methodology

Research design is an enormous theme. It covers three broad overlapping areas which are crucial to the genesis and initiation of a viable and relevant research topic (Scheyvens & Storey 2003). Firstly, research philosophy covers issues of **ontology** (theories about what the world is, about the basis of existence) and **epistemology** (theories of what is possible to know about the world and how we might come to know it, how you can claim to know something). Secondly, it flows into **methodologies** (theories of how the world can be interpreted) and **methods** (sets of techniques for interpreting the world). Finally and crucially, research 'design' also incorporates issues of research **logistics and practice** which include site selection, proposal writing, research timing, budgetary issues, and planning for ethical research. Design is a fundamental and integral part of doing research, and in most social research at least, design is likely to evolve as the subsequent phases of the project unfold and the perspectives of the researcher almost invariably shift.

In this part we will explain our research methodology. First, we will elaborate on the philosophical position of this thesis in contemporary geography. Chapter 10 deals with some important points in doing research abroad. In chapter 11, we will make some ethical considerations and the twelfth and biggest chapter of this part, deals with the field work. In that part, the different methods that were used will be discussed in detail, as well as some characteristics of the different respondents. In a fifth part we will give some comments on the representativity of qualitative research, whereas in the last part we will discuss the methodology used for our analysis.

9. Philosophical position in contemporary geography

9.1 Empiricism and hermeneutics

Any piece of geographical research is based on philosophical assumptions or choices (see chapter 2). Also in geography, the term 'science' has long been colonised by one approach which has assumed the mantle of 'scientific method' – **the empirical-analytical**

perspective, built on positivistic epistemological assumptions[16] (Scheyvens & Storey 2003). Empiricism is that sort of thinking that empirical evidence is the only valid evidence that can be used in the certification of scientific claims as knowledge (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). Causal explanations, general laws and verifying or falsifying propositions through the collection of empirical data is what these positivistic scientists are looking for. In their approach, there is no room for 'normative' or 'value' judgement based research. This is a naturalist approach, claiming that research in the social sciences is exactly the same as that in the natural sciences, like physics (Flowerdew & Martin 2005).

Historical-hermeneutic science lies at the other end of the spectrum and rejects the empirical view of the world. Facts do not exist independently of experience, and individual perception is paramount[17]. The objective becomes the **interpretation** of patterns and processes (Scheyvens & Story 2003). In order to be warranted, social science has to be supported by **'evidence'** (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). Whereas positivist social science searches explanation, hermeneutics searches **understanding** of intentions. Natural scientists do not have to deal with desires and beliefs and therefore social science is fundamentally different to natural science. The key role is given to mental qualities of human beings or as Tuan (1991b) says: "geographers now show an interest in the human being's psychological dimension". Examples of such approaches include idealism, postmodernism and phenomenology[18]. In between these two views of naturalism and anti-naturalism lie critical sciences with a moral dimension, like Marxism, feminism and realism. Contemporary human geography is characterized by a methodological diversity (Kesteloot & Saey 2003, Flowerdew & Martin 2005).

Looking at the emotional relationships to place, our approach will probably lean most against the hermeneutic approach of place. A descriptive and a social constructionist research however, will be as important to fully understand the complexity of the role of place in our research area. Some researchers avoid using phenomenological and social constructionist theories together, nevertheless many researches and theorists slip between and/or strategically employ the two approaches (Mallett 2004).

[16] See also chapter about the history of place.
[17] As pointed out in the 2nd chapter, humanistic geographers were the first to take a strongly anti-naturalistic line, basing their theories on philosophies of existentialism and phenomenology and putting the emphasis on human experience.
[18] Again, see 'A history of place', point 2.3.1.

9.2 Ethnography

Common methods used in hermeneutic science are interviews, open questionnaires, visual texts and participatory methods including participant observation and **ethnography** (Scheyvens & Storey 2003).

Ethnography is an **ambiguous term**, representing both a process and a product (Agar 1980). Historically, ethnographic research - embedded in the 'new cultural geography'[19] - has developed out of a concern to understand the world-views and ways of life of actual people from the 'inside' in the contexts of their everyday, lived experiences (Jackson in Rogers & Viles 2003, Flowerdew & Martin 2005). By closely observing what people do but also what they say about their activities, it discovers the **symbolic order behind social reality**, which is often rooted in space, expressed in the landscape (Kesteloot & Saey 2003). In this way, recurrent structures and relations of power between individuals, groups and society are disclosed. Those meanings and symbols are both place-bound and place-making.

This ethnographic position promotes both changes in methods and subjects. **Qualitative methods**, like participant observation, long interviews and discourse analysis are frequently used. Subjects like "the home" and the way our bodies relate to / produce space are central in ethnographical geography. Especially because its relative inertia, the built environment channels the use and the symbols attached to space and constitutes in that way a social memory that imposes itself to individuals (Kesteloot & Saey 2003).

Overall, ethnographic approaches aim to be **'actor-oriented'** in their attempts to convey reality from a subject's 'point of view', increasingly including those of the researcher as final author and editor of the ethnographic text. Ethnography tends therefore, to read as a conglomerate of interconnected 'facts', thoughts, perceptions and contextual material and, as such, frequently has been downplayed as less rigorous than analyses produced using quantitative approaches (Scheyvens & Storey 2003). However, there seems no real reason why the 'social facts' generated by qualitative and interpretative approaches should not be considered as 'real' and accurate as those empowered with the confidence of numbers.

When truth is depicted as the negotiated outcome of evolving transactions with the world, **different "realities" are equally possible** because different facets of the human condition will be illuminated as different questions are asked. The distinction between folk and

[19] See section 2.4

analytical constructs is thus drawn not in terms of substantive differences but in terms of the different degrees of abstraction at which the same basic sets of ethnographic data can be presented (Smith 1984). Typically, **a requirement of statistical inference, is not necessary**. Insofar as generalizations may be drawn from case studies, "the validity of the extrapolation depends not on the typicality or representativeness of the case but upon the cogency of the theoretical reasoning" (Mitchell 1983: 207, cited in Smith 1984). Similarly, validation will not come in the form of experimental replication, but through the logic of substantive argument. Clearly, therefore, the analytical case study differs from descriptive ethnography; it moves toward a firm, rigorous, and logically sound rationale.

Triangulation among ethnographic methods (observation, participation, conversation) at different sites (village, trails, pastures), with special attention to the selective perceptions of different groups, gender and the locational context of behaviour, contributed to the development of a nuanced case study (Butz & Eyles 1997). It became an **alternative to "traditional criteria like reliability and validity"**. By combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and empirical materials, researchers can hope to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single method, single-observer, and single-theory studies. **Data triangulation** -involving time, space, and persons- and **methodological triangulation** -which involves using more than one method- are the types of triangulation we used during the fieldwork. As opposed to relying on one single form of evidence or perspective as the basis for findings, multiple forms of diverse and redundant types of evidence are used to check the validity and reliability of the findings. Indeed, over-relying on any one form of evidence may impact validity of the findings.

9.3 Narrative understanding

As we have mentioned on chapter 5 of this thesis, some recent writings on human geography have taken **a linguistic turn**. This is evident in for example the **'new cultural geography'**[20]. **Text, discourse and metaphor** have become of central meaning. In the 70s, Tuan already suggested: "We instinctively try to solidify our impressions in order to express them in language. (...). Speech creates social reality" (Tuan 1974a: 218). In the 1980s, Entrikin stated that scientific geography – and the fascination with abstract space – had diminished the importance of the particular and that the particular needed to be reclaimed through a **narrative understanding of place** (Cresswell 2004). This heightened concern with language and text in human(istic) geography seems to affirm an anti-realism point of

[20] see point 2.4

view. Though, a scientific or critical realism seems appropriate here: 'real' social problems should not be trivialised. For example "poverty may be a human construct, but to emphasise its mental basis, is to run the risk that it be treated as 'mere imagination'" (Graham p.20, cited in Flowerdew & Martin 2005). Sometimes realism and anti-realism may appear to overlap. We will use this narrative approach in our analysis.

10. Research abroad

What is it that makes research abroad different? Firstly it often takes place in localities and cultures that are relatively **unfamiliar** to the researcher. Related to this first point, is a second, which concerns language. Thirdly, this research often necessarily involves a discrete period of research activity in the field with little chance of returning to 'fill the gaps'. The fact that the student is working in a European university implies that she is relatively privileged. Even if this is not the case, it is likely to be perceived as such during the fieldwork and this and other factors (as being young, 'white', female, ...) will undoubtedly **influence data collection and the outcome of research** (Scheyvens & Storey 2003).

Though, doing fieldwork abroad, especially in a development context, is **certainly not useless**. Because of the interesting cultures to be discovered, the practical problems to be conquered, the characteristics of the place to be unfolded, the personal challenge, the unforgettably interesting experience and of course because of the scientific and developmental relevance.

10.1 preparations

The better you are prepared prior to fieldwork, and the more aware you are of potential difficulties which may arise, the more likely you are to succeed (Nash 2000). Going abroad means that you will have less contact with your promoter during the fieldwork. This is why a good preparation of the questionnaire in advance is necessary. But even a more important point may be the arrangements concerning the **co-operation abroad**. Thanks to the ongoing VLIR-IUS program[21] with the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and collaboration of the Faculty of Arts and Prof. Gordon Pirie, chairperson of the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies at the UWC, this went very well. The main advantage of joining an existing project is that most logistics are in place (Nash 2000).

[21] Dynamics of building a better society, project 5: Culture, language and identity (CLIDE)

Apart from the methodological and academic matters one needs to consider, there are an enormous amount of practical issues to carefully work through, from securing research funding to language and safety.

For **funding**, we were happy to receive a travel grant from the Flemish Interuniversity Council, of course after completing the comprehensive application file, writing a letter of motivation and a curriculum vitae and getting a signed letter of recommendation by the Flemish promoter and one by the local institution (in our case this was an invitation letter from Prof. Gordon Pirie, Chairperson of the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies of the University of the Western Cape). The grant covered the air plane ticket, travel insurance and necessary vaccines.

Health is indeed an important issue, but because we weren't going to reside in the townships, but would actually live with a guest family in a middle class neighbourhood of Cape Town, the risks of getting ill would not be larger than in Belgium, although some extra vaccinations were recommended. Because of the winter season, the **climate** as well would probably cause no problems.

The **guest family** was arranged by the Faculty of Arts at the University of the Western Cape. And as far as **language** was concerned, we did not expect any serious troubles. English would be no problem and as Dutch speaking students – with a bit of practice – we would understand Afrikaans as well. Though we also tried to learn some Xhosa, this seemed far more difficult!

10.2 On the spot

Arrival and adaptation provide both personal and professional challenges to researchers. It is in no way possible to predict the situation or the feelings you will have coming in a totally new environment. **Acclimatizing** is an important first step once on the spot.

The co-operation with professor Pirie, in a whole **new geography-setting**, was an interesting point to become familiar with. Narrowing the research and leaving irrelevant questions out of the questionnaire was a first thing professor Pirie could help us with. Though, you always have to count in problems on the way. One must be prepared to refine, and in some cases, let go some plans once in the field. You have to react, adapt and revise your plans and find a **balance between rigidity and flexibility**.

Entering Wesbank – our case-area – would be the first problem. We needed a car to go there, but that alone would bring us nowhere. At the University, they had warned us for the criminality in the neighbourhood and assured us it would not be wise to go and discover the neighbourhood on our own. Quite a difficult situation because we had thought of doing door-to-door interviews. Establishing contacts in Wesbank was thus the first step we had to take, but how? Solutions often seem to come by chance. One Saturday – when we went off to Wesbank to help some local NGO by making posters for the clinic, or something – we met the gentlemen that would become our first key persons for interviewing Wesbank residents.

Finally the real fieldwork could start and the next problems could emerge. Making **appointments**, for example, did not quite seem to go as we were used to in Belgium. Our "Ok, we will meet at 9, and we will pick you up at your place", turned out in the wisdom of doing interviews before 10 or 11 in the morning was a utopia in a place like Wesbank, and soon changed in the habit of driving around looking for our friends every time we had an 'appointment'. But anyway, those are things you get used to, and before you even notice, you don't really bother much about appointments anymore yourself. Other interesting **local truths** were that you should never be in a hurry, you should never do more than 2 or 3 interviews in one day and you should not try to do interviews in rainy weather.

Regarding the language, we soon understood that interviewing 'white' and 'coloured'[22] people in Afrikaans or English would be much easier than interviewing 'black' residents, who seemed to be more on their own, with the biggest barrier of course the Xhosa language. Though – thanks to some friendly multilingual people who helped us as **interpreters** – we did succeed in interviewing some of them. In spite of this, working with an interpreter is not evident. Their comments are often much shorter then those of the interviewees and already contain an own interpretation.

Another important issue is that we soon found other **key persons** as well, who could help us with interviews (with privileged witnesses as well as residents), so that we would not stay 'fishing in the same networks' and could hear some different opinions from different groups. When we had become more familiar with the field, we also conducted interviews with people that we or our key persons did not know and just spoke to people who were walking on the street or standing at their front door.

[22] We use these terms because they are still commonly used in South African literature. We use words as 'white', 'black' or 'coloured' without any positive or negative connotation and do certainly not intend any offence. Coloured – in South African terms – refers to the unspecified 'ethnic' category consisting of 'mixed-race' descendants of white settlers, slaves and indigenous people (Prinsloo et. al. 2006).

Working in a **different cultural context** might be interesting, but it is certainly not always easy. Being a 'rich' Western student working with people in a very different life world is not that evident. Walsh (1995 in Scheyvens & Donovan Storey 2003) explains: "Like so many researchers before you, you will feel isolated and lonely, you will doubt your ability and the worth of your work and you will experience discouragement". This is all true, but it still depends on what you make of it. Having an open mind, creating a good impression by behaving and dressing appropriately, and having good contacts with the local people seems very important to me and certainly takes you on the right road of mutual understanding.

The **over-researching** of a neighbourhood can cause problems as well. In our case, for example, the focus of the CLIDE research on Wesbank, meant that some residents became fed up with all the research. "So many research, but nothing happens!", was a critique we heard quite a lot. People get tired of European students coming, asking for interviews and co-operation, when they see nothing happening with earlier studies. It would be stupid to promise that your work will make the difference for them, although that is what they hope you are there for. Listening to their problems and just talking and certainly listening to the people was my personal solution for this. I could ask questions later, but just listening to what they had to say turned out to result in interesting and instructive conversations to start with.

10.3 The return

After three months of stay in Cape Town, the time had come to leave. Gifts, like photos and chocolates were left for the participants and friends, they asking us when we would come back and whether we would keep in touch via letters and e-mail. It is important that you do not make promises you cannot keep and that you keep the promises you make.

Being back and writing our thesis, we are forced to make decisions about how the places and peoples we have visited are represented. It is sometimes hard to **communicate the intensity of your experience**, or even to find other people who are interested in or care about your work or understand what you have been through, especially when you have just arrived. Anyone who has seen a place in a picture and then visited it knows how different the reality is. "You seize the atmosphere all around you and are no longer dependent on the angle from which the picture was made. You breathe the air of the place, hear its sounds, notice how they are re-echoed by the unseen houses behind you" (Steen Rasmussen in Relph 1976).

11. Ethical considerations

Every society has its own **history, traditions and ethical codes**, and you have a responsibility to behave in a manner that respects the cultural environments you encounter. Important is the need to be sensitive to the local attitudes and customs (Nash 2000). Hay (1998) sums five points of interest in ethical research: free and informed consent, confidentiality, minimizing harm, cultural sensitivity and feed-back to participants (Hay 1998)

Fieldwork in the 'Third World' can give rise to a plethora of ethical dilemmas, many of which relate to power gradients between the researcher and the researched (Scheyvens & Storey 2003). It is crucial that any work is characterized by **respect and an awareness of the context**. Respondents have the right to be informed about the purposes of the research, about the researcher herself and about the use and the protection of the acquired data (Billiet 1990). Based on this information, the examined can voluntarily choose whether or not to co-operate (informed consent)[23]. A confidential treatment of the information should be guaranteed to all respondents and the researcher should also try to feed back any key findings to the people that collaborated (Willis 2003).

As we mentioned before, your position in class, gender and ethnicity terms may affect the ways in which people interact with you. And any research has an ethical dimension, but the particular **power relations** when researchers from economically richer countries are wording in economically poorer countries have been highlighted (Willis 2003). The process has sometimes been termed '**data-mining**' and has been equated with forms of neo-colonialism (Willis 2003). Some feel that the research-subject relationship is exploitative, helping the researcher, but doing nothing for the people studied. As a reaction to this, researchers may feel an obligation to help their subjects, but you should be wary of getting personally involved to an extend of promising more than you can deliver (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). For some people, this **power inequality** is such that they feel not comfortable doing research in this context. For others, however, the way forward is to do the research but in as harm-free and collaborative way as possible. We chose for the second option. While a general code of ethics which covers informed consent and confidentiality can provide you with useful guidelines, in many cases it are your personal characteristics – ideally, a combination of integrity, maturity and sensitivity to the local cultural context – which you will need to call on to guide you (Scheyvens & Storey 2003).

[23] Ethical statement and consent form used during the field work (oblidged by the University of the Western Cape) can be found in the appendix.

To give an example: one of the first days our key persons guided us through their neighbourhood, around one o'clock we (two Belgian students) wanted to eat the lunches that our guest mother had prepared for us so carefully. At that moment, the notion emerged that the guys who were helping us were only going to eat that evening. No money, so no lunch for them. What do you do then? In our case, we took them to the supermarket and bought something to eat for all of us. Those things are the least you should do to thank them for the great help they offer. Such things are no charity – we were not there for charity purposes – but simple acts of courtesy.

A last important thing is to thank everyone who has helped you. Giving small gifts as an expression of gratitude is one way of doing that.

12. Field work

This part of the thesis pays attention to the way the field work has been implemented. As the reader will notice, we have chosen for a **multi-method qualitative approach**. According to Parfitt (p.79 in Flowerdew & Martin 2005), data that relate to attitudes, opinions and beliefs are the most difficult data category to collect. The problems have to do with patterned responses and insincerity -particularly the tendency to want to please- and the related problem of 'attitude forcing'[24]. Furthermore, attitude questions are very susceptible to biased responses depending on how they are asked. However, these response errors can be reduced or avoided by careful and considered interview technique and various methods of triangulation.

The methods we have been used during the fieldwork, which we will discuss here, are observation, semi-structured and unstructured, open, conversation style interviews, participatory action research, participant observation and focus group interviews. We will also say something about the characteristics of our respondents and the exact ways the methods have been used (duration, place, etc.).

[24] This is the process whereby the questionnaire device itself creates attitude data, either because of a sense of embarrassment in respondents without a particurlar opinion on the subject at hand, or as a function of the way in which responses are elicited (Parfitt in Flowerdew & Martin 2005).

12.1 Observation

Observation is one of the most crucial tools for researchers, whether they result in “hard data” or merely impressions or surprises which help the way you shape and interpret your research. It “measures” and analyses human behaviour, and leads to **subjective** assessments of what is actually happening and being measured. Next to the writing down of field notes, we also made a lot of photographs and some small films in Wesbank.

Although observations can help you giving a **description of the ambience** of places, the limitation of observational technique is that nothing is learnt about the underlying factors in the behaviour observed nor the attitudes, motives and explanations.

12.2 Semi-structured interviews with residents

Conversational-style interviews were carried out with 18 Wesbank residents. A standardised questionnaire usually does not explain experiences very well, while **taped in-depth interviews** allow much more complexity and contradiction. The advantage of this approach is that it is people-oriented, allowing interviewees to construct their own words. This sort of conversation offers the chance for the researcher and interviewee to have a far more **wide-ranging discussion** than a questionnaire would allow. In the course of the interview, researchers have the chance to go back over the same ground, asking the same questions in different ways in order to explain the complexities and contradictions of their experiences and can describe the mundane details of their everyday lives (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). An other advantage is that respondents can raise issues that the interviewer may not have thought of. The result of in-depth interviews is often rich, detailed and multi-layered, producing a deeper picture than a questionnaire survey.

Unlike a questionnaire survey, the aim of an in-depth interview is **not to be (statistically) representative**, but to understand how individual people experience their lives. Positivists often criticise in-depth interviews, claiming that interviewers bias the respondents’ answers or that interviewers are not or cannot be **objective** or detached. Those who take a humanist or post-structuralist approach to research argue, however, that there is no such thing as objectivity in social science research (Valentine p. 109-110 in Flowerdew and Martin 2005). We will come back to this issue in the 11th chapter.

We did not use a probability sampling, but a **purposive sampling** to find respondents of particular types. The choice of the residents was made by possibilities and by theoretic

motivation to acquire an illustrative sample and to obtain a maximum of information. Although interviewees were not selected at random and do not constitute a representative sample of the neighbourhood, some attempt was made to 'sample for diversity' (Dixon & Durrheim 2004). For example, we were looking for people that differed in gender, age and ethnicity, living in the different 'blocks' within Wesbank. We knew **different gatekeepers** (or key persons) who helped us in finding the right people to interview. This allowed us to look from different perspectives. Most of the time the key persons stayed with us during the interview, this for safety reasons as well as to make the interviewees feel at ease.

All interviews were conducted in the house or garden of the residents, or at least close to it (interview 2 and 6 were taken in a neighbours and a friend's garden and interview 3 in front of the barber shop where the interviewees were working). This gave us the opportunity to observe the living situation as well. All 18 interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. 12 interviews were carried out in English (some of them partly in Afrikaans), 5 in Afrikaans and 1 with the help of a Xhosa and English speaking interpreter. Interviews took 45 minutes to 2 hours. After each interview, notes of thoughts on how the interview went, the key points of the conversation and some characteristics of the respondent and his or her house were written down. Interviewing with residents continued until, as suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967), no new patterns surfaced (in Petrzelka 2004).

Some parts of the interviews were conceived merely **narrative**, in order to let people tell their story in a way they found convenient, but in general, the interviews were **semi-structured**, with questions focusing on some major themes. This made it possible to compare the answers given by the different respondents.

The **interview schedule** consisted of 3 sections. The first section contained questions on some basic socio-economic characteristics of the respondent, on the evaluation of house and neighbourhood and on neighbourhood contacts. For instance, in relation to the neighbourhood, respondents were asked with how many people within their neighbourhood they exchanged small favours, as a measure of social cohesion at the micro-scale. The second section dealt with the functions of space in Wesbank. The third part was about the house moving history and origin of the respondents and about contacts with their former neighbourhoods. Sometimes part three was skipped to shorten the interview. The full questionnaire (which was used as leading thread, but was not strictly followed) can be found in the appendix.

In table 2 we give some basic characteristics of the respondents. The map in figure 7 shows the spatial distribution of the respondents' houses. Though we cannot prove this statistically, we can say that the interviewed residents are typical for the neighbourhood: the sample is taken so that people from every block and with different ethnic-, gender-, age- and other characteristics were heard. Figure 8 gives the location of the different blocks.

Interview	Date	Block	Gender	Age	Household characteristics	"Ethnicity"	Language
1	29/07/2005	B	f	30+	Brother, baby and 2 children of 12 and 8 in the weekend	c	Afrikaans and English as second language
2	10/08/2005	D	f	±30	Husband, baby of 18 months	c	Afrikaans and English as second language
3	12/08/2005	D	different m	20 to 35	4 friends in one house, no families	refugees from Kivu, Congo	'Fulero', Swahili, French and some English
4	12/08/2005	D	f	45	husband, son of 21, adopted daughter of 9, adopted sister of 27 with 2 children	c	Afrikaans and English as second language
5	12/08/2005	D	f	50+	husband and son of ±25 (has 2 adult daughters in Stellenbosch)	c	Afrikaans, English as second language an a little Xhosa
6	15/08/2005	C	f	50+	only me	c	Afrikaans and English as second language
7	15/08/2005	C	f	25 to 30	husband	c	Afrikaans and English as second language
8	15/08/2005	C	f	42	husband, 6 children (23, 19, 16, 14, 8, 2), 1 grandchild (5), husband's brother (temporary)	c	Afrikaans, English is not good
9	17/08/2005	E	f	37	husband and 2 children of 8 and 4	c	Afrikaans, English as second language an a little Xhosa
10	18/08/2005	C	m	40?	wife and son of 6 years old	Xhosa	Xhosa and English as a second language
11	18/08/2005	E	m	±40	four men living together, one is ill and stays in bed, none of them is married	c	Afrikaans
12	18/08/2005	E	f	50+	husband and 2 children of 23 and 12, one grandchild of 3	c	Afrikaans

13	18/08/2005	E	f	±60	too much! 10 people. Husband, children and children of the children. 2 have a job	Xhosa	Xhosa and a little bit English
14	24/08/2005	A	f	50	husband, son of 8, baby grandchild (two adult sons and a daughter who live in Stellenbosch in her parents' house)	c	Afrikaans and English as second language
15	24/08/2005	A	f	±40	husband, foster child (6) and two children (13 and 16)	c	Afrikaans and English as second language
16	24/08/2005	E	f	21	lives with mother, 2 sisters, brother (teenagers), child of 10 months and boyfriend	Xhosa	Xhosa, English as second language and a little bit Afrikaans
17	6/09/2005	A	f	52	with daughter of 18 and grandchild of 2 (two adult sons who are better off)	c	Afrikaans
18	6/09/2005	E	2 m	±30	two brothers and the wife and two children of the one	w	the one speaks Afrikaans, the other both Afrikaans and English

Table 2: Respondents of the semi-structured interviews

Figure 7: Map of the interviewees

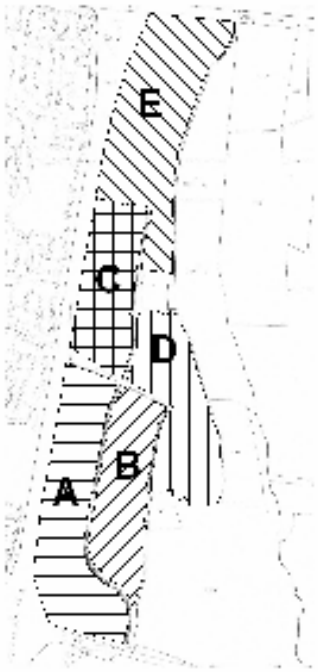

Figure 8: Location of the different 'blocks' in Wesbank

12.3 Interviews with privileged witnesses

Next to the residents, we also interviewed some privileged witnesses, persons that were in one way or another **specifically involved with the research area**, Wesbank. These interviews were not questionnaire-based in a strict sense. Some key issues were addressed, depending on the professional or other commitment of the witnesses. We tried to ensure that the main focus of the interview did not shift from the research topic. The purpose of these interviews was getting greater insights into some of the characteristics of the neighbourhood.

We did the first interview with a **minibus taxi driver** in Wesbank. This interview was mainly about his experiences in Wesbank and with the people of Wesbank. An other interview was with the head and a staff member of the **Oostenberg housing department**. This interview focused on the development of the Wesbank project: the purpose, the architecture, the problems and shortcomings and the prospects for the area. The third interview we could arrange was with a **police woman and later two police inspectors** in Kuils River. Until July 2005, they were responsible for the Wesbank area. They gave us useful insight in the crime patterns in the area and the territories of the gangs that were active in Wesbank. A last privileged witness was a **social worker** of the government, responsible for Wesbank. He told us about the social problems that are common in the neighbourhood.

Person	Date	Place of interview
Taxi driver (m)	12/08/2005	taxi rank Wesbank
Head of the Oostenberg housing department (f) and staff member (m)	17/08/2005	Oostenberg housing department, Kuils River
Social worker responsible for Wesbank (m)	19/08/2005	Provincial Administration Western Cape: Department of Social Services and Poverty Alleviation
Police woman and two male police officers	19/08/2005	Police station Kuils River

Table 3: Privileged witnesses

12.4 Unstructured (creative) interviews

During our field work and our stay in South Africa in general, we had a number of unstructured conversations, **narratives** (Meert et. al. 2004). These were conversations in which people could talk in their own way about their feelings and opinions about the Wesbank neighbourhood and the things they had experienced there, or more general equally

relevant topics. Some interesting anecdotes could be derived from these open conversations. Table 4 lists the most interesting of these narratives.

Person	Date	Place	subject or remark
A.	25/07/2005	Wesbank, Main Road	takes part in a UWC arts & crafts project
C, R, R & B, our first key persons	6/08/2005 regularly until 28/09/2005	Wesbank	gave us their oppinion on different aspects of the neighbourhood, work for the NGO Love-Life
Sister M D	10/08/2005	Wesbank, C block	mother of a big family, extremely poor and very religious
Father R.	10/08/2005	Wesbank, D block	father of one of our key persons, has strong opinion of things going on in Wesbank
Aunty M	11/08/2005 and a few times later on	Wesbank, D block	active community worker
Head of HR in Kuilsrivier municipality	11/08/2005	Kuilsrivier	gave us some background information about the Apartheid period
Th., our second key person	18/08/2005 regularly until 28/09/2005	Wesbank, Main Road	community worker, involved with street children, started a drama project for Children in Wesbank
Muslim woman	18/08/2005	Wesbank, A block	community worker and takes part in the arts & crafts project
Xhosa girl	18/08/2005 and a few times later on	Wesbank, A block	goes to school in Wesbank and takes part in the drama project of Th. Interpreted for us.
Xhosa speaking street cleaner	24/08/2005	Wesbank	member of a Xhosa community group in Wesbank, only wanted to speak Xhosa
Other street cleaning woman	24/08/2005	Wesbank	defender of women's rights with political ambitions
Man O.	24/08/2005	Wesbank	bought his house illegally
Nurse aunty M	24/08/2005 & 2 times later on	Wesbank, A block	nurse, makes soup for (street) children once a week
A number of children	sep/05	Wesbank	talk about places in Wesbank by showing photographs of the area

Number of people		in Cape Town, outside Wesbank	gave their oppinion about the Wesbank area, Apartheid and other relevant subjects

Table 4: Unstructured interviews

As can be seen in the last row of the table, we also talked with 'outsiders' about Wesbank. Most of them had never been in the area because of different reasons, but if they knew the Wesbank project or the sharply stigmatized area around it, they always provided an opinion about it.

Creative interviewing is often a matter of being **in the right place at the right time**. A good example is the evening we had planned a focus group discussion in one of the primary schools in Wesbank. But just that night there seemed to be a parents meeting, so no one of our focus group showed up. We stood there with all our Wesbank photographs with us, and because the children were not allowed to join the parents meeting, they were standing there in the same place at the same moment. So that night we made use of the situation to show the pictures to the children and hear what their comments were. This turned out to deliver some interesting narratives.

It is important when involving children and youths in your research, to ensure that participating is **enriching and mutually beneficial** for yourself and your participants (Scheyvens & Storey 2003). This can be achieved through use of child-friendly research methods which are more rewarding and less intimidating than conventional questionnaires or interviews, such as making drawings, story writing or – what we will discuss below – role play.

12.5 Role play as a research method

In recent years, researchers -especially in developing countries- were encouraged to work more *with* people, in stead of *on* them. The knowledge and experiences of participants (in this case children) are recognised as valuable and participants are encouraged to give voice to them. They can have an active role in the research, establishing a more reciprocal relationship with the researchers (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). This family of techniques and approaches that have developed are grouped under the umbrella term of '**Participatory Action Research**' (PAR) (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). The ethical reasons for doing PAR are manifold, but of course, it also has a 'scientific validity'. If you want to obtain accurate in-depth data that reveal the perspectives and experiences of participants, it makes sense to use a participatory approach and associated methods. "The epistemological foundation that

underlies all qualitative research is that **researchers need to build trusting and reciprocal relationships with 'respondents'** if they hope to gain really deep insights into their life-worlds. A participatory approach with its associated consultation involvements and reciprocity will help you do this and so, ultimately, will help you produce a valuable research project" (Kesby, Kindon and Pain, in Flowerdew and Martin 2005: 165)

In our case, we were lucky, because one of our key persons, Th., had started a drama project for children from all over Wesbank. Because we wanted to do some PAR with children, one Saturday afternoon, she let us take care of the children and we could use a class in the primary school. First, we learned to know each other a bit. In table 5, one can see the main characteristics of the children. Names have been changed. Tina and Daisy were nieces; Caroline, Ted and Benjamin were sister and brothers; and Max and Tom were brothers as well.

	gender	***age***
Tina	girl	15
Daisy	girl	13
Caroline	girl	12
Ted	boy	8?
Benjamin	boy	4
Max	boy	16
Tom	boy	13
Bart	boy	16

Table 5: Children participating in the PAR

We had made some papers ready, one to let the participants invent nicknames for Wesbank and one to let them write down there feelings about Wesbank. Pens and pencils were available. The same we did with some copies of pictures taken in Wesbank.

After a while, this became a bit boring for the children, so we decided to let them play some drama. The instructions were to **play some typical "Wesbank situations"**, taking place at particular places in Wesbank. This was very interesting to see and to get to know their view on the neighbourhood and the living there.

At last, we gave the children red and green colour pencils and a Wesbank map. In two group: the 3 oldest boys and the 3 girls, they **coloured the map** according to which places they found safe and which they found dangerous.

12.6 participant observation

Participant observation might be a big term for what I have been doing in Wesbank, but I put the meeting we had with the housing department and the Wesbank "community leaders" (11/08/2005) and the day I spend "in the everyday life of Marilyn" (7/09/2005, I've changed her name here) under this category.

In the **meeting with the housing department**, 21 people, including my fellow student Simon, PhD student Caroline Newton and the author, were involved. The Oostenberg councillor was there, two people of the housing department, as well as representatives of different organisations in Wesbank: different 'community workers', the neighbourhood watch, LoveLife NGO, an organisation for women and a pastor. The housing department wanted to hold a survey to investigate illegal subletting and selling of houses in Wesbank.

Marilyn is a 21 years old 'coloured' mother of two children of different fathers, a daughter of 5 and a son of 2 years old. Since 1999 she lives in Wesbank - D block -, while before, her family used to live in Bellville South. The house where she lives is a lot bigger than the other houses in Wesbank, they have extended it with her father's money. He is a first shipper, and is only four or five days every month he stays at home. Although Marilyn and her sister are working in KFC, he earns money for the whole family. Marilyn's mother of 47 stays at home. The one year younger sister of Marilyn lives there too, with her son, and the youngest daughter of the family still goes to high school, but has a daughter herself as well. Probably Marilyn's grandmother also lives in the house. For one day and with my notebook with me, I stepped into her life and she took me in the taxi to her to her work, to the shops she normally goes, to her friends, through Wesbank and to her house and family.

As its name suggests, participant observation involves researchers moving between **participating in a community and observing it**. As a means of inquiry, it has been interpreted for geographers by a number of authors. The approach requires "a commitment to fieldwork, with the aim of securing data lodged in the meanings ascribed to the world by active social subjects". The strength of this strategy derives from the unique insight it offers into "lay" or "folk" perceptions and behaviours (Smith 1984).

Important is what 'role' you take in the course of your work. In my case, I simply wanted to inquire what constituted the **community's everyday activities**. In both the meeting and the day with Marilyn I took an **overt role**, providing an explanation of my role and research.

Because of safety reasons the '**participatory' role was rather limited** and unobtrusive. The kind of participant observation I used, is shown symbolically in the figure.

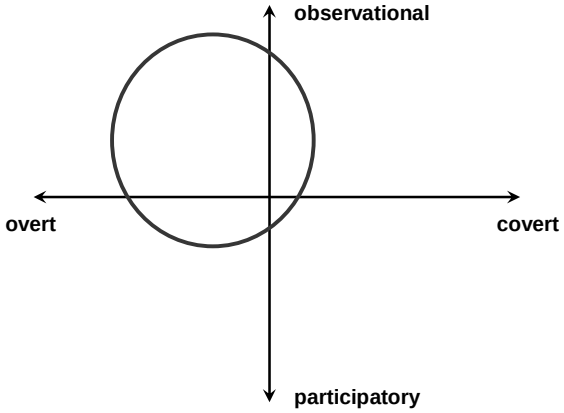

Figure 9: Kind of participant observation research used (own figure).

10.7 Focus group discussions

The basic format of a focus group is a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to **discuss and comment** on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of research (Powell et. al. as cited in Flowerdew & Martin 2005: 129). It is not just a way of collecting individual statements, but rather a means to set up a negotiation of meanings through debates. Focus group discussions are used to **gain insight** into participants' understandings and views of an issue and to find out contradictory point of views, arguments and feelings (Billiet 1990, Flowerdew & Martin 2005). In our case the group interviews were conducted when the situation in Wesbank was known well enough through the interviews that preceded, so that they could be **used for research triangulation** (check the reliability of responses from earlier sessions), dissemination of research findings and receiving feedback.

We carried out the discussions in a local primary school in the early evening. Lemonade and biscuits were provided, as well as a small gift that was given to each of the participants at the end of the interview. One of our gatekeepers organised some different Wesbank residents to come together. In our first group there were 7 participants, the second time F2 and F3 didn't come, so there were 5. We also organised a totally different group to come together in the school, but unfortunately that appointment was cancelled. Both the discussions were audio-recorded. One person made notes regarding group dynamic, mood, gesture and so forth (in the first focus discussion this was Simon Gheysen, a fellow Belgian geography student, in

the second it was the author herself), an other noted down what was said by whom (in the first case this was Nick Schuermans, a Belgian geographer and PhD student, in the second, this was Simon Gheysen). The first discussion lasted for about one and a half hour, the second (a couple of days later) for one hour.

After a short introduction of the research, people were asked to point out on a map where they lived. Afterwards the group talked about whether they liked to live there or not. Then we focused on specific places in Wesbank where they usually come. After that, we showed about 17 photographs taken in the neighbourhood and asked the participants to comment on those. The different subjects considered in advance, were raised: safety, positive and negative senses of place, problems in the neighbourhood, neighbourhood contacts, etc.

		'ethnicity'
F1	young woman, sister of F6	c
F2	silent woman	c
F3	very silent girl	c
F4	grandmother	c
F5	woman (mother)	c
F6	teenage boy, brother of F1	c
F7	silent boy	c

Table 6: Members of focus group 1

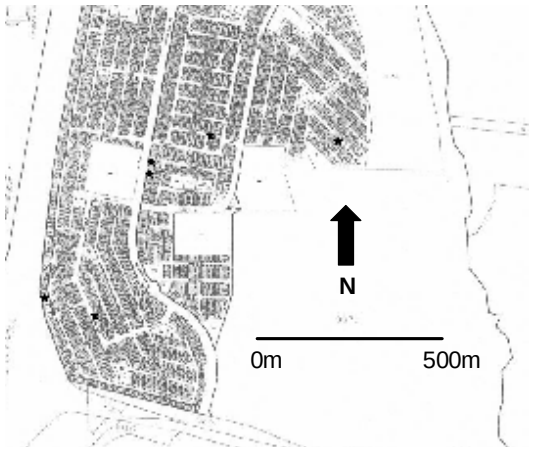

Figure 10: Houses of the focus group members

13. Qualitative research and its representativity

Qualitative methods have a reputation for being anecdotal, or associated with ideas that cannot be described with hard, secure facts. Sometimes it is implied that they are tools resorted to in situations where one cannot generate more precise and focused data. This is wrong. **Qualitative methods can provide powerful insights** into the world (Scheyvens & Storey 2003).

Qualitative research is based on other criteria than those being used in quantitative research and has a **"multiple reality"** as point of departure. It is never the purpose to achieve a statistical representativity, but to test social-scientific hypotheses thoroughly, to achieve a refined image of social reality (a refinement that is often difficult to get through statistical

generalizing). The aim is to understand the different ways of acting and thinking of individuals, to learn to view the world of individuals or groups as they themselves see it (Baxter & Eyles 1997). As pointed at in chapter 9, this is typical for research with a **hermeneutic starting point**.

So, what are the **evaluative criteria** for qualitative research to achieve what has traditionally been called 'rigour', the integrity or trustworthiness of a study? Baxter & Eyles (1997) distinguish 4 guiding principles, equivalent to those used for qualitative research (being internal validity, generalizability, reliability and objectivity): credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Baxter & Eyles 1997, Bryon 2005).

Credibility stands for "authentic representations of experience" (Baxter & Eyles 1997) and is based on the assumption that there is no single reality but rather multiple realities, mentally constructed by ourselves. It can be achieved by a careful and purposeful sampling of the respondents (in contrast to an at random sampling method). The aim of the creative and illustrative sampling should be to find information rich respondents –representative for the theories one develops- and to search actively for negative cases, for denial (Billiet 1990). The sampling rests open until the end of the investigation, because in qualitative research, representativity should be reached at the end in stead of the beginning. Sampling goes on until no new themes or constructs are found (saturation). Triangulation – as we talked about in chapter 7 – is one of the most powerful techniques to increase credibility. Using multiple methods and different key-informants in case of a setting with different networks, are certainly two important points (Billiet 1990). **Transferability** means that your findings should be valid in different contextual situations. For this, an accurate description of the specific research context you work in is necessary[25]. **Dependability** contains that theoretical concepts should frame your hermeneutic findings, so that the interpretations and explanations are reliable. This is in contrast with reliability in quantitative research, where data and results need to be reliable. The last criterion is **confirmability**. This involves that the philosophical position of the research and the researcher should be known to see what interests and motivations of the researcher could have influenced the research findings.

To resume, we can say that qualitative research is not subordinate to, but equivalent with quantitative research. It focuses on affirmation, amendment or rejection of hypotheses about social processes and structures.

[25] We deal with this in the third part of the thesis.

14. Methodology for analysis

Our analysis is based on **transcribed conversations** with the Wesbank residents and the privileged witnesses, on transcriptions of the focus group discussions and the drama plays, on the notes of the (participant) observation and on a **modest newspaper analysis**. It is crucial here to point out that these narratives were inductively arrived at during the interview (or other) process, rather than being imposed by the researcher (Gutting 1996).

From the transcripts, a number of **core analytic categories** or themes were manually identified through open coding and theoretical memos. The chapters of part IV of this thesis are based on these themes. In these categories, we tried to capture and organise the wide range of variation in the empirical data. The themes were also linked to themes from the literature analysis. We also tried to read for **unsaid structures** (reading between the lines) and tried to notice **contradictions or consistencies** in the narratives.

In narrative analysis, people, places and events are linked into stories on several levels of detail. The levels of detail and interpretations of experiences or gossips tell us something about the importance assigned to each element of the story (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). Narrative analysis is thus all about looking **how stories are being used to organise and make sense of the world** (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). The point is that most communication works through intentions. So when one says something to someone, one intends a certain message or maybe one adopts a certain role (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). Of course the other person may **misinterpret** that message. This is an important point, because the author of the analysis is a mediator to the reader and has a personal interpretation of the discourses.

It should be noted that this methodological approach does not reduce to a fixed recipe of steps, rather, it is based around the application of a more **general set of orienting principles** of textual analysis. The most important of these principles derives from the assumption that linguistic accounts of social life, including accounts of place, are **'reality-constructing'** (Dixon & Durrheim 2000).

Part III

Research area

In this third part of the thesis, we will describe some characteristics of our research area. In a first chapter, we dwell on the Cape Metropolitan Area, in which our research area -Wesbank- is situated. We will describe some of the basic characteristics of that area. The next chapter treats on South Africa's apartheid history and some of its post-apartheid challenges, more specifically on its housing policies and the psychological challenges of desegregation. Chapter 17 is about the Wesbank neighbourhood itself, on it's location, history, purpose and some of its characteristics. In chapter 18, we want to explain the importance of integrated spatial planning and in the last chapter, we jump to some conclusions about our area of research.

15. The Cape Metropolitan Area

The Cape Metropolitan Area (CMA, figure 11 and 12) is the oldest urban area in South Africa and currently - as the third largest city (after Johannesburg and Durban) - one of the most **rapidly growing** complexes in the country. Cape Town's demographics are radically different to South Africa in not accommodating a 'black' majority (only 25% of Cape Town's population), but an almost 'coloured' majority (48%), and relatively dominant 'white' minority (21%). Its spatial morphology concurs well with the **apartheid city model** (figure 14) and despite the scrapping of the Group Areas Act[26] in 1991, very little residential integration in the area is evident today (figure 15). The **South-Eastern corridor** of the city, former dumping ground of apartheid, is still marked by its unhealthy living conditions and remains the centre of poverty and a centre of criminality (Jonckers & Newton 2004) (compare figure 15 and 16). 60% of the Captonians live there, although only 16% of formal employment is located there. The **Cape Flats** – as the area is called – is a low situated, sandy area and under the Group Areas Act, it became the place for all 'non-white' Cape Town residents. 'White' people would live on the slopes of Table- and other 'mountain(s)' and could literally look down on the other 'racial' groups.

[26] During apartheid all South Africans were officially classified according to skin colour, history and language by the 1950 'Population Registration Act'. The 'Group Areas Acts' (1950 and 1966) projected these population groups into specific urban spaces, separated by buffer-zones of open land. This urban re-design sought to minimise racial interaction, allocating preferential urban space to mirror socio-political positions

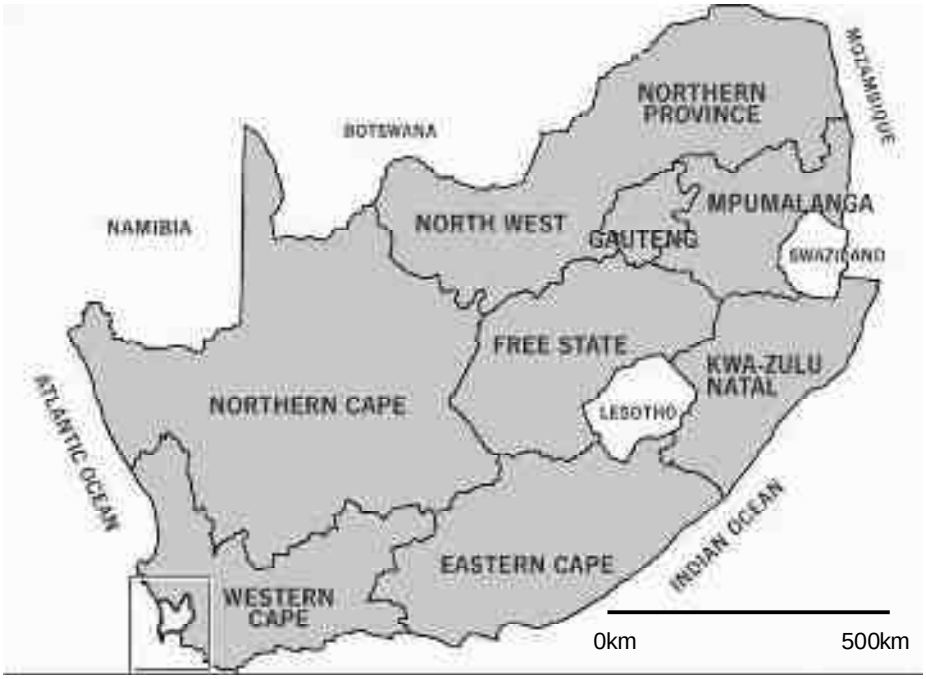

Figure 11: The Cape Metropolitan Region in South African context. Source: CMC 1996

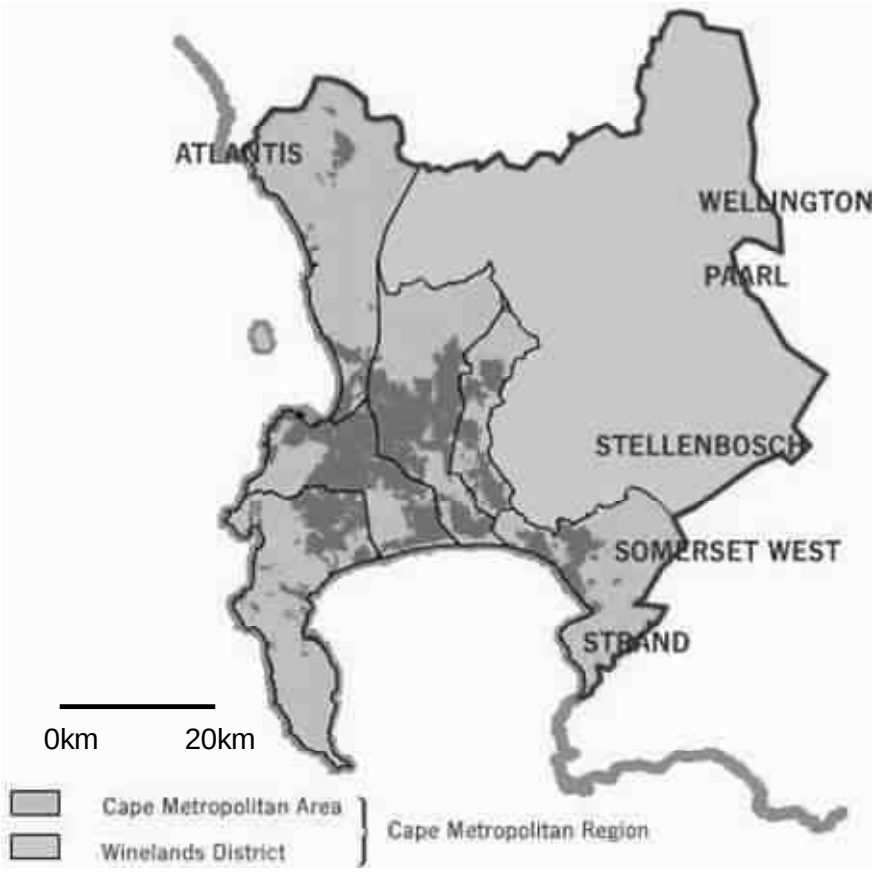

Figure 12: The Cape Metropolitan Region.
Source: CMC 1996

Figure 13: The Cape Flats (indicated area).
Source: www.capeflats.org.za

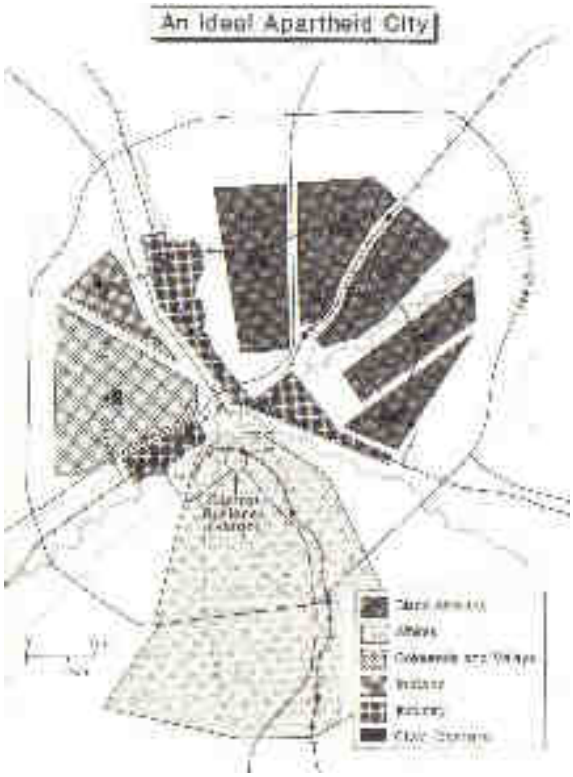

Figure 14: The ideal apartheid city.
Source: Western 1996

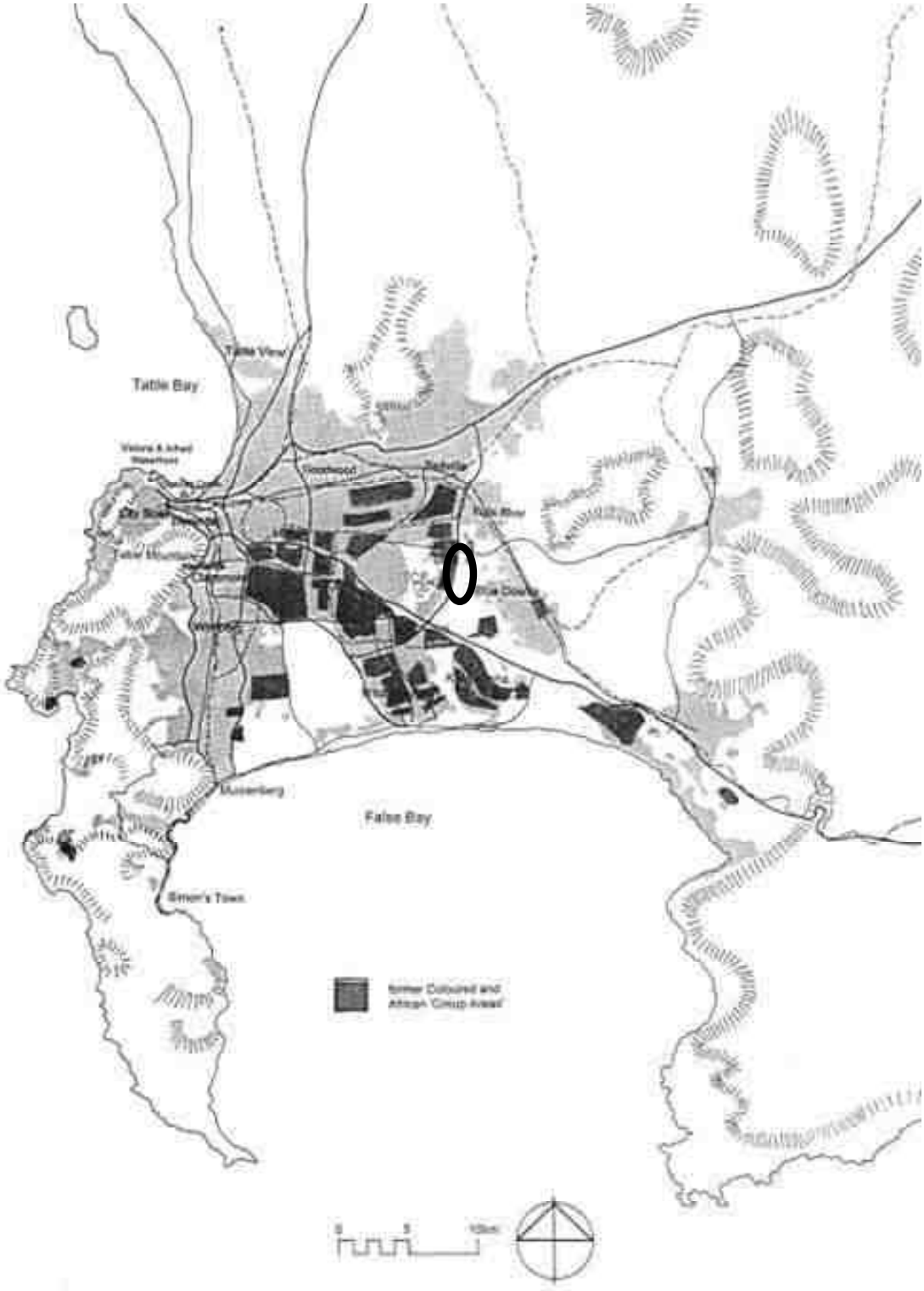

Figure 15: Current urban structures (grey area's are built land). Source: Wilkinson 2000

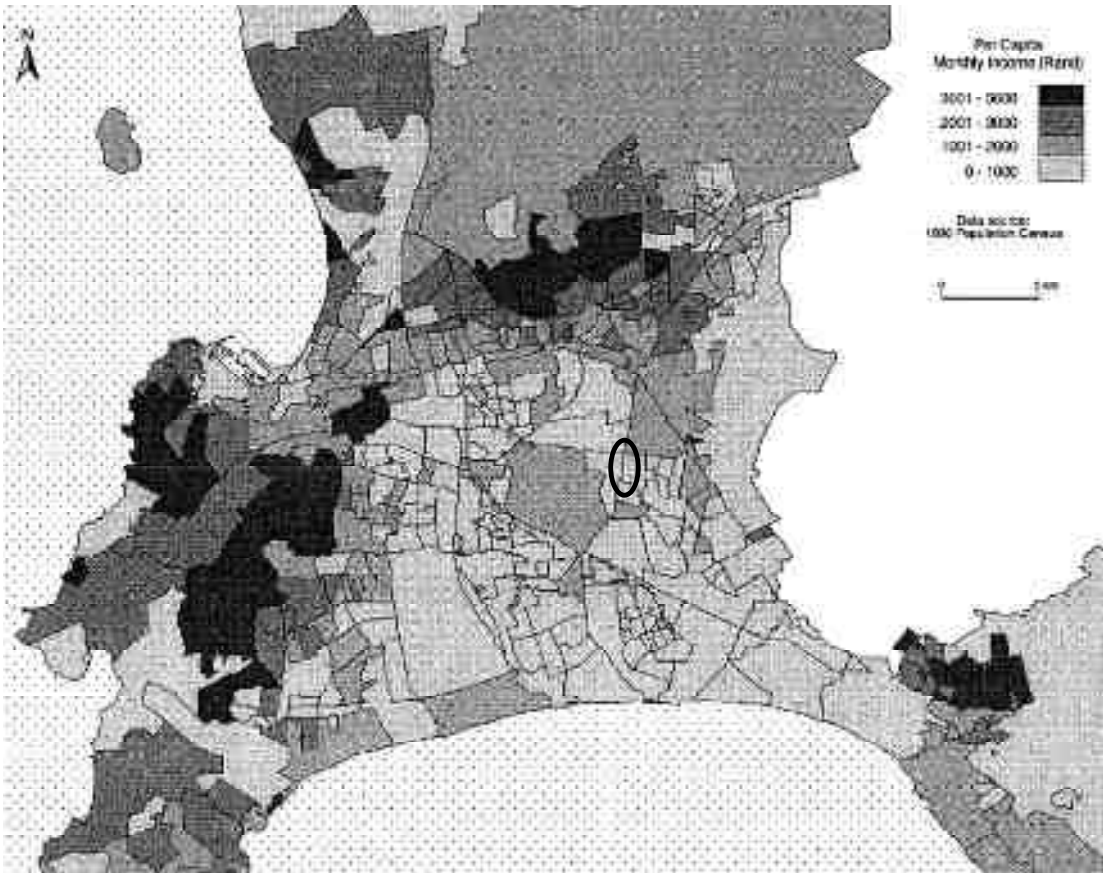

Figure 16: Median per Capita Monthly Income. Source: Turok 2001, based on 1996 Population Census

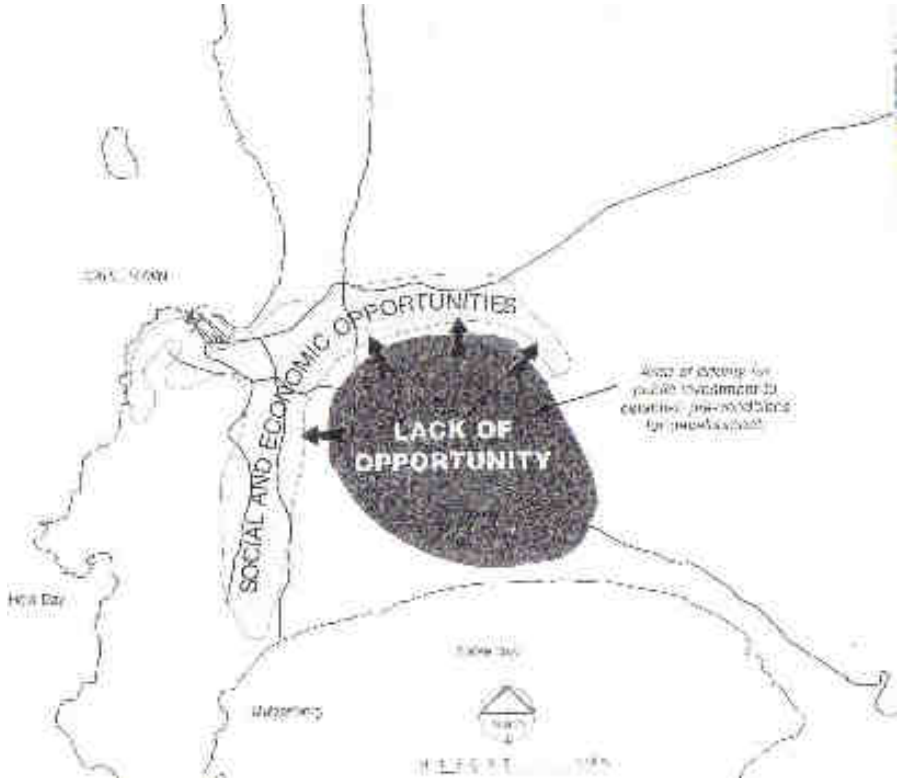

Figure 17: Area of development priority, schematic illustration. Source: CMC 1996

16. South Africa's apartheid history and post-apartheid challenges

South Africa's democratic transition, with the first democratic elections the 27th of April 1994, has received unquestionable international applaud. However, although its macro-economic policy, known as **Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)[27],** adopted in 1996, aims to bring South Africa into the global economy and has stabilized the macro-economic environment[28], its neo-liberal answers have failed to reduce the high incidence of **poverty** and levels of **unemployment** in the domestic economy and deliver the growth that was projected (Moola 2002). The gap between the rich and poor is increasing, with a growing underclass and declining middleclass. The latter has led to argue that the main lines of divide in South Africa are not so much race as class (Prinsloo et. al. 1999). The neo-liberal character of post-apartheid urban policies and the state's globalisation agenda are creating maybe equally oppressive class apartheid.

16.1 Inert housing policies

Within the housing sector, post-apartheid policy formulations appear to be reinforcing the inherited patterns of development and increasing class segregation and fragmentation. A big obstacle in the way of the **Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)[29]** is the exorbitant costs involved (Prinsloo et. al. 1999). So, most of the sites of post-1994 low-income housing initiatives are on land that was purchased by the apartheid government for township development in accordance with its segregationist ideology. Reinforcing the same urban pattern, the cheapest tracts of developable land recently purchased for low-income development have been those adjacent to or beyond existing townships (Jonckers & Newton 2004). This effectively **perpetuates housing segregation** and ignores the social, environmental and longer term economic consequences of inadequate access. South African cities now are almost as divided, spatially and economically as they were in the days of apartheid (Moola 2002).

[27] GEAR was the neo-liberal economic strategy of South Africa to cover 1996-2000. It was directed towards black empowerment through market driven economic policies for the private sector. An important component of this strategy pertains to the privatisation of former state organisations, a factor that would provide a powerful stimulus for the South African economy (Prinsloo et. al. 1999). The strategy had mixed success.

[28] South Africa occupies a very favourable position (economically) compared with the other countries in the Souther African region.

[29] The RDP is the South African socio-economic policy framework implemented by the African National Congress (ANC) government of Nelson Mandela in 1994. It is an ambitious (utopian?) programme to eliminate the social injustices of apartheid (Maharaj 2005). It includes projects in a diversity of fields, such as land reform, small-farmer development, urban renewal, education, health care, water and sanitation, etc. Local government received a special role in the RDP and in (re)building local communities and environments (Prinsloo et. al. 1999), but we will come back to this point later.

From 1994 on, issues of social and economic inequality have been attempted and the overall motivation was to **uplift the economic and social conditions of the most disadvantaged** communities of the country. The same is true for the local government, as its structures have an important role to fulfil in the transformation of the country as they have now a greater constitutional mandate for providing basic services to the population that they service. For instance, the Housing Amendment Act (1996) aimed at accrediting municipalities to carry out national housing programmes (Prinsloo et. al. 1999). Under apartheid, housing was the sole prerogative of the central government and, in keeping with its policies of separate development, this had come to reflect the grotesque ideology of racial stratification. By contrast, under the new Housing Act, a **municipality is required to develop housing plans** and is permitted to take on the role of developer and to receive funds directly from the national government by obtaining accreditation to implement housing (Moola 2002). Unfortunately, the municipalities are said to have a quite **poor institutional framework** and the policy documents fail to place the housing of poor communities in the much larger context of economic development.

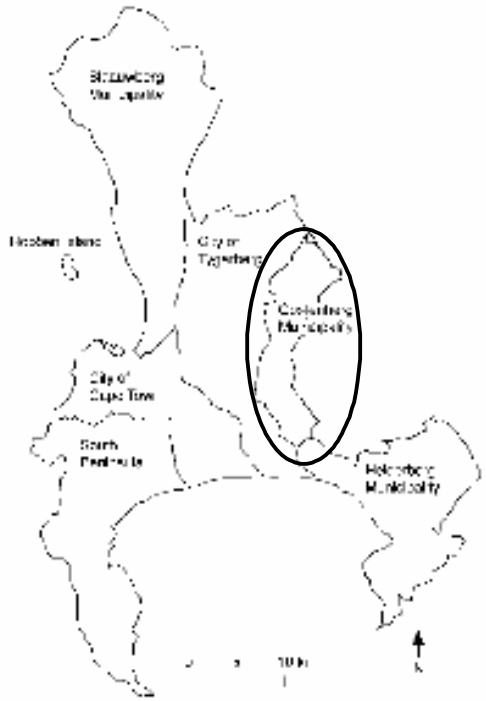

Figure 18: Municipalities (subregional zones) in the CMA. (notice the bordering in order to link the townships in the S-E with more affluent areas, compare to figure 19)
Source: Smith & Hanson 2003

Since 1994, the **Oostenberg Municipality** (figure 18) – responsible for our case area Wesbank, their flagship project – (and from 2000, the Cape Metropolitan Unicity) has developed policies to implement the framework that both constitutions (1993 and 1996) have provided. In particular, the Oostenberg Municipality says it has been committed to providing basic services and assisting in the socio-economic transformation of its dwellers (Nina & Lomofsky 2001). According to the Project HOPE (economic development strategy for the Wesbank Area) (Nina & Lomofsky 2001), the vision of the Oostenberg Municipality for Wesbank was “to eradicate poverty in a sustainable manner through the implementation of various projects”. The four principles that would “run across all the objectives and action programmes were:

-Equal access to education, jobs, health regardless of race, disability, gender and religion;
-financial and environmentally sustainable development;
-linkages with the Integrated Development Programme;
-a participatory approach" (Nina & Lomofsky 2001).

At that time, the aims for Wesbank were to achieve a **long-term social transformation** with "a great deal of external assistance both from the state, the private sector and the non-profit sector" with an anti-poverty / social inclusion strategy. Though, the municipality also wanted to let the people of Wesbank participate in any development process. In particular, the project HOPE considers the development of **small, medium and micro enterprises (SMME)** cure-all to positively affect the macro development of the community. Training and financial resources would guarantee a fresh start in any small businesses, and maybe even more important: a safe and secure environment, from natural hazards to **criminal activities**[30] was an aspect pointed at for the successful implementation of SMME's. Important to say is that the core of the businesses in Wesbank is generating less than R1000 (€125) per month (Nina & Lomofsky 2001), so there is a need of having a second job as a way of generating more income. Besides, the financial purchasing capacity of the residents is very limited, "blacks" being in general less well off than "coloureds" (Nina & Lomofsky 2001). Human security, equity, culture and knowledge had to be taken in consideration and **sustainable development** was the central keyword. In the same time, the whole project "had to work within the constraints of limited time frames and a limited budget." An important recommendation they made, was the establishing of **basic services** as a **Multi-Purpose Community and Information Centre / civic centre** with a government satellite office, some NGO offices and a community radio station. Other ideas in improving the economy of Wesbank were infrastructure, crèches, and even tourism! We will come back to the characteristics of Wesbank after illustrating some of the psychological challenges of desegregation.

16.2 Psychological challenges of desegregation

A crucial issue facing any post-apartheid government is the "desegregation of social space, particularly the residential milieu" (Spinks 2001). It is widely recognized that apartheid was a system of exclusion in which communities became separated from one another and found themselves identified with particular places. Since the coming of democracy, however, the

[30] This might have been the point where the trouble started, but we will come back to this in our analysis.

divided landscapes of the old South Africa are gradually breaking down, forcing its citizens to **re-evaluate their place in the socio-spatial order** (Dixon & Durrheim 2004).

'Who belongs where' was a question that lay at the very hearth of the doctrines of the old regime and according to research of Dixon & Durrheim (2004), displaced people may struggle to construct a sense of 'home' elsewhere, living with a perpetual sense of being 'out of place' or excluded. Displacement may also lead to a powerful sense of place nostalgia and a **loss of 'place-referent continuity'**; the loss of group distinctiveness producing anxiety, tension and a reassertion of intergroup boundaries. We could say, people fear a loss of place(-identity), but it is worth reiterating that dislocation is only one of several constructions of the social psychological implications of desegregation.

In the absence of apartheid controls and coherent urban planning, the indication is that such sudden **proximity of difference is increasing fear** and private retreat, rather than promoting integration. This is confirmed by Christopher's 2001 geographical analysis (cited in Spinks 2001), in which he identifies escalating fear of crime in (increasingly 'grey', 'mixed race') city-centres as responsible for business relocation to (racially segregated) suburbs. In a similar manner, extreme fear within former white suburbs (particularly fuelled by squatting) has encouraged residential enclaves and gated roads with private security guards.

In a 1994 public opinion survey in Cape Town, only 6% of respondents viewed crime as a major concern, yet by 1997, this figure had swelled to 58%. This increase is significantly above the relative rise in crime rates, representing the growth of post-apartheid fear of crime. Striking is, that 95% of 'whites' feel safe in their day-time residential area, while only 52% of 'blacks' and 56% of 'coloureds' agree (Spinks 2001). This is aggravated by **apartheid's skewed socio-spatial distribution of personal and institutional resources**. For example, despite lower crime rates in former 'white' areas, the majority of police stations are located here, inhabitants are more protected by infrastructure (e.g. private cars, street-lighting), and able to afford private security. In contrast, poorer 'blacks' inhabit areas with weak 'defensible space' (e.g. no street-lighting or telephones, abandoned open spaces), are poorly policed, and cannot afford private security. This spatial distribution of victimisation and resources strongly impacts fear of crime (Spinks 2001).

However, as mentioned before, fear is not solely linked to crime, but masks **fear of 'other'**. This can be traced to perceptions regarding the causes of crime; for whilst 'whites' see rising crime as representative of the new ('black') government's inability to rule (i.e. protect citizens), 'blacks' attribute increased crime to unfinished democracy and African immigrants

(Spinks 2001). 'Whites' have long used fear of crime as a euphemism for fear of 'blacks'; Apartheid's 'swart gevaar' (black danger) and 'skolly menace' (scoundrel coloureds) justified segregation, and post-apartheid uncertainty extends this to fear of 'their' rule. For 'blacks', crime is not new but upsurges are linked to the influx of 'ama-kwiri-kwiri' (Xhosa term for African immigrants - based on the sound of their speech) following 1990 border openings (Spinks 2001). Reversed, high criminality and / or fear can become a breeding ground for intolerance (Meert et. al. 2004).

Spinks (2001) traced fear to **ignorance** (e.g. of spatial origin) **and inability to understand** (e.g. language) **the 'other'** blamed for crime. As Cape Town's privileged perceive declining political control and rising fears, 'NIMBYism' prevails, believing that removing problems from visibility (e.g. squatters, poverty), effectively removes the problem. Wealthy South African's are increasingly seeking to avoid crime and mitigate fears by fortifying entire neighbourhoods, closing street access, and employing private security guards to patrol their citadels. We could say that the compact-city policies of the CMA have fuelled maximum-security cities rather than integrated utopias.

In post-apartheid housing projects, the state has generally played a direct role in racial desegregation. Here also, the relationship between physical desegregation and racial integration in these cases remains an empirical question. Oldfield (2004) studied the implications for racial integration in everyday practice, linkages to economic and social networks, and participation in community organisations in Delft South, a post-apartheid neighbourhood on the other side of the R300 compared to Wesbank, our study area. She found out that social categories, such as race, are embedded in and made material through everyday practice and that context and situation shape whether and to what degree race matters.

17 Wesbank

Wesbank -our case area- is a **relatively new community**, located on the Eastern side of the R300 freeway between Cape Town and Eerste River, situated between the Stellenbosch Arterial in the North and Hindle Road in the South. The eastern border is formed by the heavily polluted Kuils River (figure 19 and 20). The neighbourhood is approximately 30km from Cape Town Centre and falls under the jurisdiction of the Oostenberg Local Authority (figure 18).

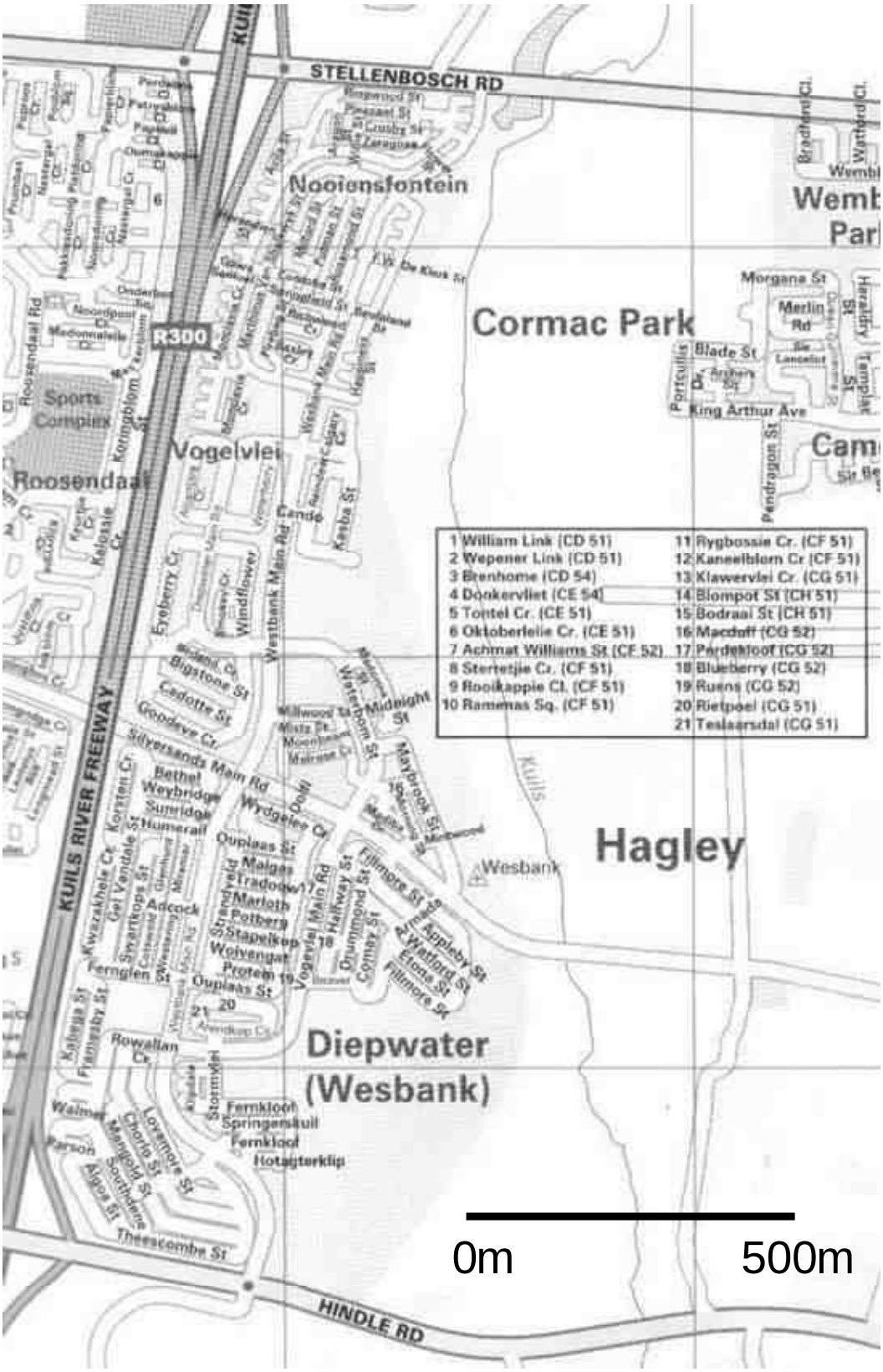

Figure 19: Wesbank.

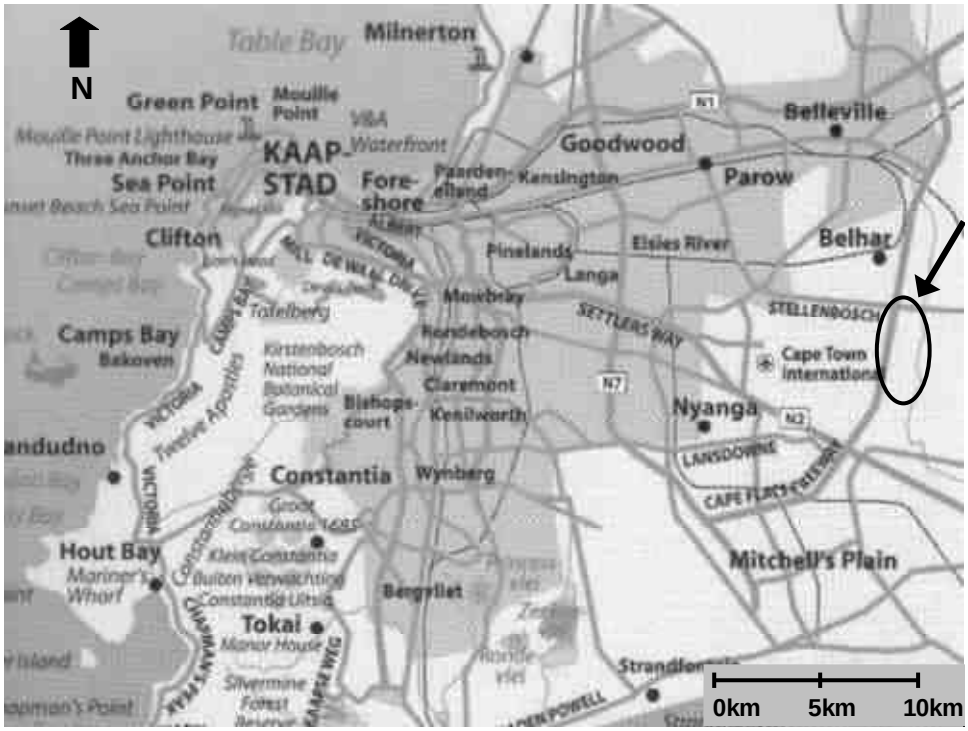

Figure 20: Wesbank Location.

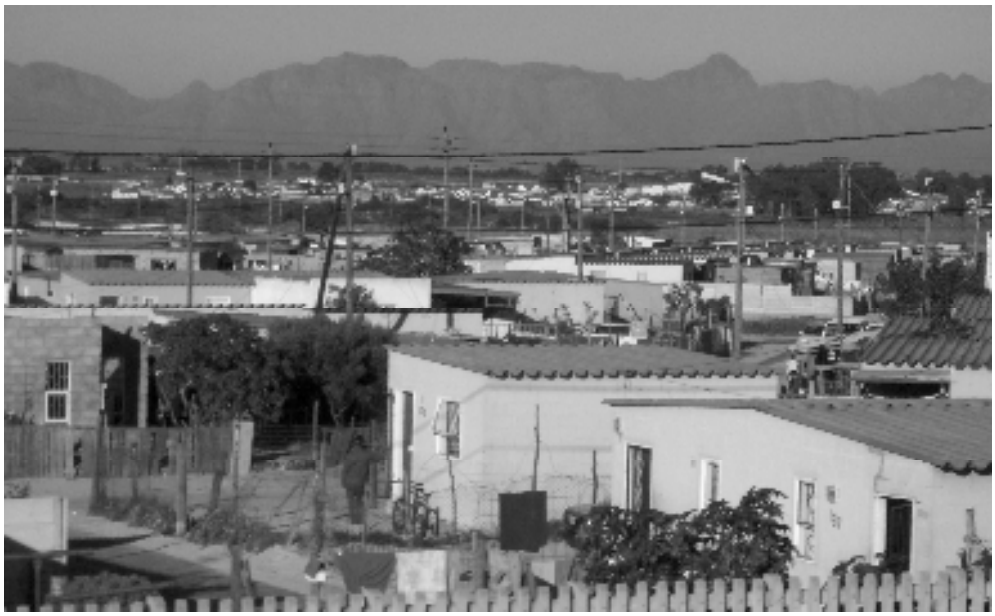

Figure 21: Wesbank (own picture)

Consisting of 5147 houses, the Wesbank community represents an estimated population of 25 thousand people (Nina & Lomofsky 2001, Moola 2002). The houses were built on the basis of the **subsidy scheme** introduced by the government after the democratic elections in 1994, part of the **Reconstruction and Development Programme** (RDP). Wesbank is largely typical for similar 'RDP communities' that emerged in the past in most other urban areas of South Africa: dubious 'social housing' area's implemented by private companies, subsidized by the government.

The **construction of the houses** began in 1999. Their sizes vary from 23 to 28m² (!) and the average cost of a house was R17 250 (± €2150). An urban development with a density of not less than 40 units per gross ha was to be created, using averaged plot sizes of 135m² (Moola 2002). Using the planned family sizes of 4.6, this gives a density of about 184 inhabitants per ha or 18400 per km², without storeys! (Moola 2002). As we will talk about further on, quality had noticeably been sacrificed for quantity. One of the major concerns of the Cape Metropolitan Council now is that certain state subsidized houses are sold for hard cash, well below their investment value. Or backyard shacks (without running water or electricity, figure 21) are being built and the houses or the shacks are sublet to other families. Conversely, a small number of residents has made good quality extensions to their dwellings.

Figure 22: Backyard shack (own picture)

As can be seen at figure 22, each original dwelling comprises two habitable rooms, with the larger room functioning a communal area and doubling up as an open plan kitchen, lounge and dining room area. This room is equipped with a sink and one wall plug. A doorway without door leads into a small bedroom and a bathroom. Every house has one toilet and one washbasin as sanitary facilities. Outdoor space has the form of a rectangular sandpit, although some residents have transformed it into a garden with flowers or vegetable patches. Wire or wooden fencing defines many plots in an attempt to create a ‘defensible space’ and to provide some form of regulated privacy.

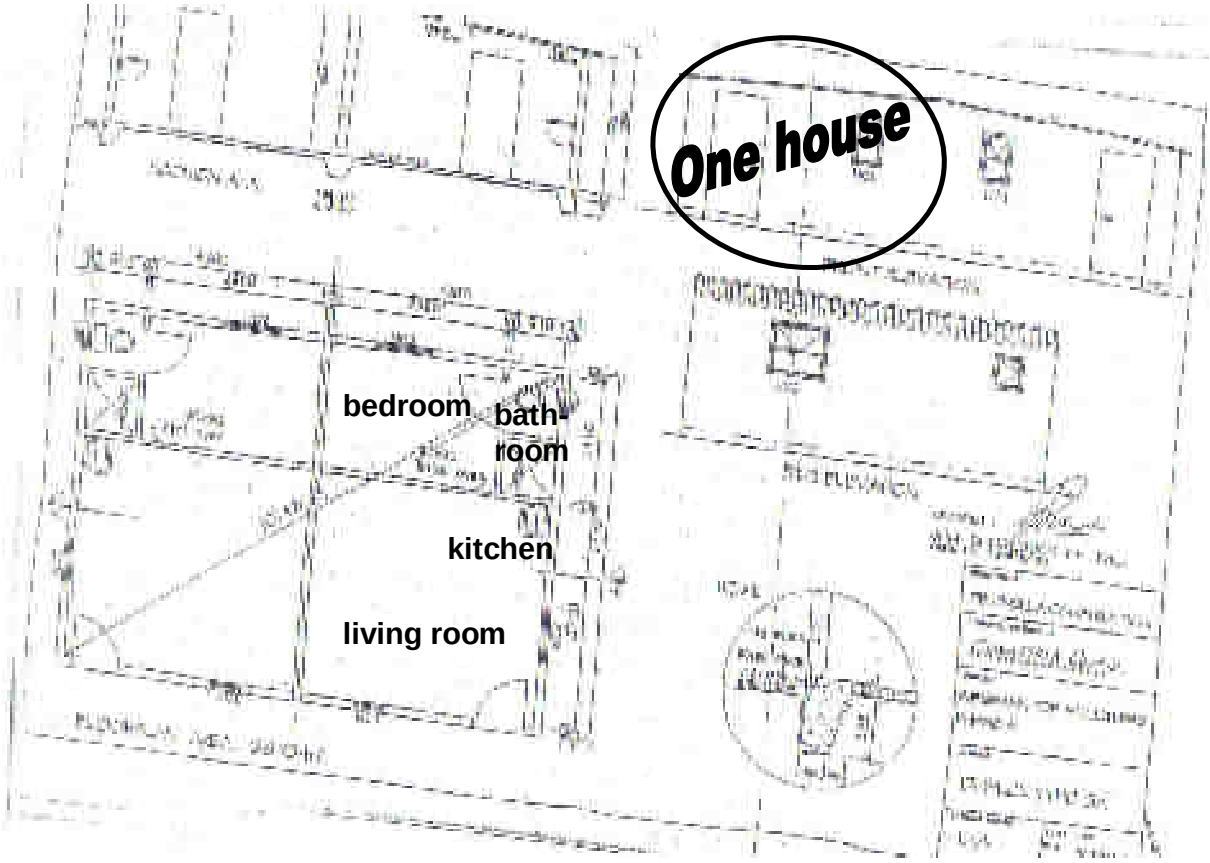

Figure 23: Plan of a duplex house in Wesbank. Source: Oostenberg municipality.

Figure 24: A Wesbank house (own picture)

The **quality of the houses** is very poor. According to a study of Burger et. al. (in Moola 2002), 57% of Wesbank residents gave a negative response to a question on how they would rate the quality of their house. The building company started thinking from the minimum necessaries they could deliver for the prize per unit they had got from the government. This means that houses consist of walls in bare concrete bricks and a roof

made of a sheet of corrugated iron, without any thermal isolation. The cement floor has no covering material. **Poor construction and low quality building materials** lead to cracked walls. The **absence of ventilation** leads to condensation and the growth of mould, as well as poor air quality. Recent studies already show an increase in the number of diseases related to the physical conditions of the houses, mostly TB (Tuberculosis) and other lung diseases (Kühne 2003, Gottschalk 2003 and Penderis 2003 as mentioned in Jonckers & Newton 2004). Next to this, there are high percentages of HIV infection in the community as well. But according to its residents, Wesbank's heaviest 'diseases' are mental stress and anxiety, alcoholism, drug abuse and depression.

The **target group** for the Wesbank housing project consisted of 'families' with a monthly income not higher than R3500 (± 430 euro), who have right of maximum housing subsidy of the national government. If one had this right, one could register for a house and get a place on a waiting list. Whoever was first on the list got his of her house first. Current place of living, language or culture were not taken into account. This has resulted in an **enormous mix** of 'colours', languages and descents in Wesbank, what has sometimes led to neighbours who do not even understand each other because the one speaks Xhosa and the other Afrikaans (for example) (Jonckers & Newton 2004). Attempts of the local government to start a partnership with representatives of the community seem to fail, because who are the righteous representatives of this community? (Newton 2004).

The Wesbank project can be considered as one of the first post-apartheid housing projects, that was not segregated along racial lines, and so representing "a new South African community". However, the **segregation by income** might be higher than ever, concentrating the poorest people of the Oostenberg region. According to numbers of the Oostenberg Housing Department, the core of the Wesbank population earns less than R500 (€62) per month (Moola 2002) and "provides cheap labour force to Bellville and surrounding areas" (Nina & Lomofsky 2001).

Income	% of pop.
<R500	44,1
R501-1000	16,4
R1001-1500	28,8
R1501-2000	5,6
R2001-2500	4,0
R2501-3000	0,9
R3001-3500	0,2
>3500	0,0

Table 7: Monthly income of the Wesbank residents.
Source: Moola 2002.

Wesbank has a very **young population**, 62% of the inhabitants being under the age of 21. Another 7% is over the age of 51. The burden of meeting household expenses falls to those in the 21-50 age group who make up approximately 31% of the population (Moola 2002). Some people do get old age pensions (R740 or €92,5/month), disability benefits (R780 or €97,5) and/or family allowance (R180 or €22,5/child). According to local authority representatives, a large percentage of the current resident population was drawn from the Kuils River region and other **overcrowded areas on the Cape Flats**. A number of inhabitants were also drawn from the greater Cape Town municipal area and even from rural districts in the Eastern Cape Province or from other African countries. But in 2001, the United Democratic Movement has levelled irregularities and **claims of corruption** in the allocation of houses in Wesbank. A number of the people who were given houses are said to own houses elsewhere and certain residents who were allocated houses did not fall within the required income level[31]. Most of the Wesbank inhabitants belong to the 'coloured' group.

Many households in Wesbank live in a **poverty cycle**, including unemployment, poor housing, poor health conditions, lack of skills and lack of basic facilities and service delivery to sustain a minimum standard of living. Wesbank is a low income, socially and economically deprived area. An informal study conducted by Southern Hemisphere (Nina & Lomofsky 2001) revealed an unemployment level of 54%. This figure, however, rises to 74% for women and 76% for 'black' people (Moola 2002). Not all of those people want to have a job, however, according to the Project Hope Report (of Nina & Lomofsky 2001), the level of skills and basic education constituted the basic foundation for launching a sustainable and successful developmental project for socio-economic transformation. Most people were not structurally unemployed (most of them had not been out of the labour market for more than five years) and according to the Hope Report, there was a very positive attitude to self-employment.

It is true that one finds quite a lot of (informal) **businesses in Wesbank**, all operating out of the homes. In this way, people save time and transport costs. The predominant business is a home store, followed by artisans and shebeens[32]. Most of the businesses do not employ anyone and typically function on a very small scale, due to lack of capital to purchase stock, meagre training as well as poor management skills. But the most dramatic problem that needs to be overcome in Wesbank, might be the question of **security**, **crime** and **more visible policing**.

[31] We will come back to this point in our analytical part (part IV)
[32] A shebeen is a(n) (informal) place for drinking and meeting.

On plan, lots of **community facilities** would be located in such a way as to "ensure and support a harmonious and stable living environment". And even though the housing plan made provision for public buildings (a multi-purpose centre, a clinic, ...) and business premises, few of these public services have been realized. There are few or no facilities currently, neither for recreation, nor for economic activity. Until now, 3 primary and one secondary school have been built. There is one formal supermarket. The spatial plan did not take any social or cultural characteristic of the people that would live in Wesbank into account. The importance of a market place, or the street as a social meeting place is totally ignored (Jonckers & Newton 2004). The gridiron network of tarred streets, with as only function a car-based mobility is completely ridiculous knowing that the absolute majority of the residents does not have a car and most people use the minibus taxi in the Main Road or go on foot. Other forms of public transport can not be accessed by residents. The open space is not suitable for sports or recreation and the play gardens for children are unsafe and scarce[33].

18. The importance of integrated planning

It is clear that **good housing needs to be more than just a shelter**. According to Jonckers & Newton (2004), new townships need at least

-diversity in landuse, in combination with chances for local employment initiatives;

-higher densities of public spaces and public transport nodes;

-an open space network.

When **structures that lead to social meetings** are lacking (in a monofunctional planning like that of Wesbank), soon a neighbourhood is in danger to result in an area with a lack of social capital. According to Jacobs (1961 cited in Jonckers & Newton 2004), the limitation of the number of different functions in a place, increases the visual esthetical order, but decreases the livebility substantially. "The work of architects, planners, builders, landscape architects, etc. not only creates physical structures, it **directs action on the ground**. For example, the presence or absence of sidewalks, density and mix of land uses, and scale and style of buildings influence how locals will experience and use a place. The uses made of design features further construct, communicate, and reproduce what that place is" (Paulsen 2004). Meert (2002) comes to the same conclusion, that **spatial design has an important effect on the social relations that can develop in a neighbourhood**. 5 dimensions are of great importance: visibility, accessibility, flexibility, closeness and image. According to

[33] See part IV for further information.

Bourdieu, the chances one gets in his or her life – the social, cultural and economical capital one can collect – are to a large extend stipulated by the neighbourhood one grows up in, for instance through certain facilities in the nearness and through the other residents of the neighbourhood (Peleman 2000).

The overall result of 'placelessness' in a plan like that of Wesbank is often seen as the undermining of the importance of place for both individuals and cultures. It is perhaps not possible to design rootedness nor to guarantee that things will be right in places, but it is perhaps possible to **provide conditions** that will allow roots and care for places to develop (Relph 1976: 146). Another critique often heard in Wesbank is that different housing needs were not taken into account in the planning of the project. Residents were given no option in terms of site and residents did not have any participative role in the planning process.

19. Conclusion about the research area

It is clear that South Africa is still carrying the **physical and psychological burdens** of her apartheid past. If not troublesome for those involved in policy; not to mention, that for those living "inside" the legacies of apartheid, have to pay, still today, a tall price for achieving equality. Notwithstanding the efforts in the realm of the RDP, significant discrepancies in terms of socio-economic status, housing patterns, education, access to recreation facilities, schools and health services, still exist between **the different racial groups – or should we say socio-economic groups**? Because, in this period of globalisation and neo-liberal policies, the gap between the 'rich' and the 'poor' might be creating a new kind of apartheid. South African macro-economy might be doing better, but "poverty continues to blight the South African landscape as ever before" (Moola 2002).

One might wonder which effect the policies of housing, procurement, economic development and poverty alleviation really had (or not) on the lives of people who live -for instance- in a neighbourhood like Wesbank. Once more, it is shown how **economic and political pressure of globalisation** has profound impacts at the micro-level, on the nature of **people's everyday lives** and experiences. RDP 'social houses' were built by private companies, sacrificing quality for quantity, with a kind of disposable housing as a result.

The story of Wesbank reveals much about the Oostenberg Administration's approach to the economic development of this newly created community. What is immediately apparent about the project, is that the policies that inform such projects and the institutions that execute them, have not been fully developed, with the result that there has been **little**

integration of housing provision with the social and economic spheres of life. Scant attention has been paid to the creation of income-generating opportunities at the local level and to the provision of services that are vital to social and cultural life and ultimately, to the neighbourhood's long-term sustainability.

Wesbank was built 'from above', on government initiative, and it displays a 'military' architectural structure which no doubt has effects on social networks, identities and well-being in the settlement. There was certainly a **lack of integrated planning**: health care did not appear in the original plans, the burden of the high transport costs is unbearable for low-income earners, there are no recreational centres or community halls and the shopping facilities are substandard. All studies that were made in Wesbank highlight the same problems: **lack of safety, criminality, violence, shebeens and poor transport**. A housing 'flagship' project of this nature ought to have stimulated sufficient economic activity to have a substantial impact on poverty reduction. Instead it falls short of meeting several developmental objectives.

Part IV:
Analysis

After a broad sketch of the (macro- and meso-)situation of our research area in part III, in this fourth part of the thesis, we present the results of our analysis on the scale of the Wesbank neighbourhood. This part will be primarily focused on the micro-level of people's personal experiences with places. But we will see how macro-economic situations (for instance the general presence of poverty in this 'unprivileged area') and the meso-level of the city government and her planning and approach towards this neighbourhood have considerable impacts on activities and meanings of places on the micro scale level.

This analysis is based on transcribed conversations with the Wesbank residents and privileged witnesses and on the focus group discussions, as well as on the drama plays some children from Wesbank did, on a modest newspaper analysis and on (participant) observation. The numbers, names or symbols behind each quote refer to the numbers and symbols given to the respondents in the table below and in table 2, 4, 5 and 6 in the methodological part (part II). Apart from that, gender (f or m) and 'ethnicity' (c or x) can be given.

First, we will consider people's feelings towards 'home' and towards 'neighbourhood'. In the third chapter, we raise the subject of 'otherness' and see how social categories are formed. Then, we draw on neighbourhood contacts and meeting places and in the 5th chapter we bring up the importance of safety and security. In the 6th chapter, a mental map of Wesbank is drawn and after that we conclude our analytical findings.

Table 8 gives an overview of the interviewees' former places of living (this is also shown spatially on the map in figure 23) and their time of living in Wesbank (at the time of the interviews). All of them, except for n3, moved to Wesbank from another neighbourhood in the Cape Metropolitan Region (CMR), but five of those were born out of the CMR and came from more rural area's. N8, 11 and 13 used to live in a shack in a squatter camp before they moved to Wesbank. It's striking that all three of them are absolutely unsatisfied with the living in the neighbourhood and man n11 even wants to go back to the squatter camp. We will come back to this in a following chapter in this part. The table also provides an overview of what the residents think of their houses and how they feel about Wesbank. This will be discussed more thoroughly in the two first chapters of this part.

Interview	Block	Gender	Age	"Ethnicity"	Former place of living	Living here since	house	Feeling about Wesbank
1	D	f	30+	c	Lotusriver, Mitchells Plain & Delft, same kind of house as this one	6 years, was on the waiting list for 10 years	Own house, nice, with extensions, near river	"+", I'm quite satisfied with Wesbank, I've got a house of my own, I can do everything I want for myself and for my children
2	D	f	±30	c	Kleinvlei, near Eersterivier, mother lives in the Northern Cape	30th of June 1999, applied in 1997	Musty, rains inside, but I didn't have to pay for it (own house)	"-", It's a sick neighbourhood
3	D	different m	20 to 35	refugees from Kivu, Congo	Tanzania, in a refugee camp, then Durban	from 2003	rent the house from someone who stays in Kayelitsha, only to survive	"-", Don't like it here, stay here because of the barber-business
4	D	f	45	c	Eersteriver, Kleinvlei	6 years	own house, got it for free. Want to extend, but no money. Very musty and wet	"+/-", If it's possible, and I can move... I will move. But, I must stay here and make a better life for myself. It's what you make of it.
5	D	f	50+	c	Stellenbosch, then Kraaifontein, in a flat of my sister and her husband and two children	25th of May 1999, on a waiting list for two years	Nice, has a little shop with sweets.	"+/-" I'm pleased with my house. I have no other options. The quality is not the best, but I've got it for free
6	C	f	50+	c	born in Constantia, then to Heideveld, then Blue Downs with daughter	Waited a year. Staying here since 2005	I had to pay R7500 because I was working that time. The quality is very poor. But it's ok, I've got a roof over my head.	"+/-", I've got no complaints, it also depends of the way you behave. I've got no problem in my street. I'm quite content with where I am here. I feel safe, 'cause I'm sleeping alone.
7	C	f	25 to 30	c	mother's house in Kraaifontein	2002, three years	sister's house (she stays in Pretoria), not very sociable, bad quality	"+", doesn't have complains about it

8	C	f	42	c	born in a little village in the Northern Cape, 20 years ago to railway house in Eersteriver, then 5 years in a **shack ('hokkie')** in Belhar	2000, 5 years, was on a waiting list for 9 months	extended, very bad quality, wet walls, but heater	"-", I don't like to raise my children here, I'd rather do that somewhere else, in Eersteriver, but I didn't have any other option than to move here.
9	E	f	37	c	Kleinvlei, Eersterivier, in a big flat together with her sister	2001, was on a waiting list for 2 years	bad quality, very cold in winter, wind and sand inside	"-", most of the time I'm - I'm not happy here, because of the people, sometimes there is jealousy
10	C	m	40?	Xhosa	Guguletu is his home town, then Eersterivier. Big houses, but didn't manage to pay.	5 years, from 2000	very bad quality, wet walls. Extended one part of the house for his shebeen	"+/-", Well, so far, I will say yes, it's lekker, it's very nice here. Yea, but the house is not properly built, that's the thing.
11	E	m	±40	c	**Squatter camp** in Happy Valley (Blackheath)	5 years, on a waiting list for about 3 years	poor quality, musty, wet walls, very cheerless, quite dirty	"-", I don't want to stay here, but I have no other choice. I'd rather go back to the squatter camp, the living was better there.
12	E	f	50+	c	big farmhouse in Stellenbosch (husband worked there), before that in Kuilsriver	6 years	wet and cement simply falls down from between the stones	"+/-", I don't have any problems with it! …but I would rather live somewhere else, Eersteriver, where the houses are bigger
13	E	f	±60	Xhosa	A **shack** in Blackheath, came from Transkei (Eastern Cape) to Stellenbosch	5 years, on a waiting list for about 1 year	It's very small, but can't afford to extend the house	"-", I have no other choice than to stay here.

14	A	f	50	c	a farm in Stellenbosch, where her parents worked	6 years	small! Cold, no ceilings, bad quality	"+/-", It's not a nice place to stay, but I have to adjust to the people who live here, I have no other choice
15	A	f	±40	c	my husband is from Kraaifontein, he lived in a four bedroom house	6 years, was on a waiting list for 8 years	We paid R7500 for the house. We didn't expect this! We are saving money to extend the house.	"+/-", Sometimes I feel like to move, but then I think about God and the work I am doing here. But I'm not really happy here, I'm not used to the lifestyle here.
16	E	f	21	Xhosa	?	5 years	looks nice and clean, but to small for 7 people	"-", Don't like it much here. If I've got a job I want to buy a house somewhere else
17	A	f	52	c	Scotsdeam, Kraaifontein, in a flat with my mother (comes from the area of Worchester)	6 years	very small, unhealthy	"-", In the beginning it was fantastic, it was safe here, but now I want to move.
18	E	2 m	±30	w	Saro, close to Kuilwach (grew up in “Hannewijlpark”, in Vaaldriehoek, Transvaal, came to Cape Town in 1978)	?	It's cold, but it's no problem to live. We are renting (R250/month = ±€31). It doesn’t have warm water and the roof is leaking	"+", we don’t have any problems here.

Table 8: Overview of descent, house- and neighbourhood feeling of the interviewees.

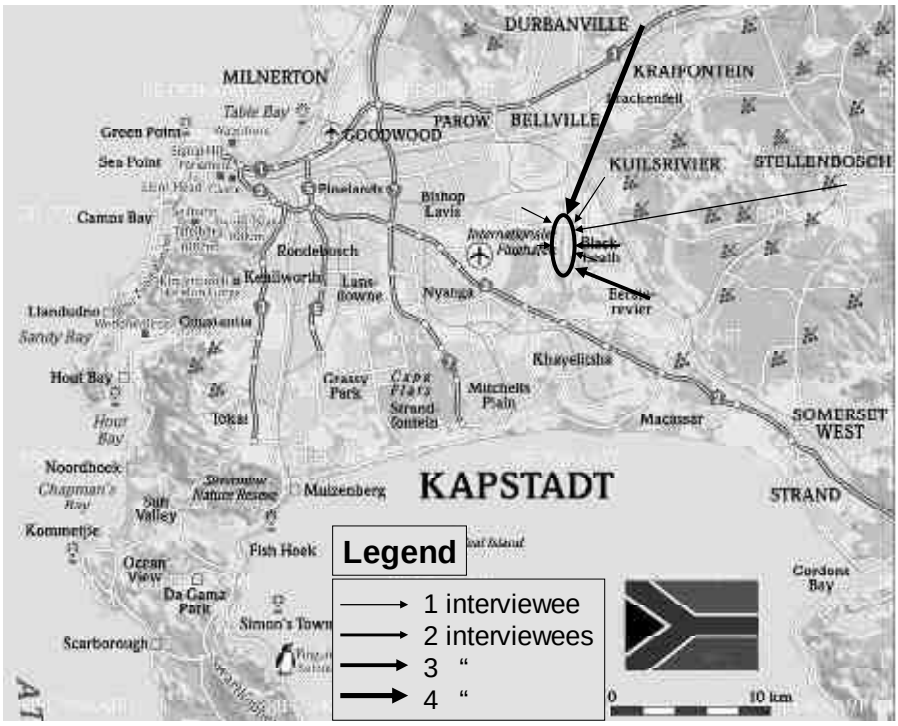

Figure 25: Former place of living of the interviewed residents that came from the CMR (own design)

20. House and home-place[34]

"All of us talk about the houses during the winter" (9, c, f)

As talked about in the literature review, the house has often been seen as a "nurturing shelter" and has been related to positive aspects of feeling 'home'. In Wesbank, due to unemployment and fear of burglary, the dwelling really is the centre of everyday life to most of the residents. As we have mentioned before, this 'being bound by routine' has been referred to as the 'miseries of everyday life'.

Aunty M D has got four children, but also a lot of other family. She says they are actually about twenty people (!) staying in that one house. Grandmother lives there as well. In one glance, you can see the house is much too small.
It is in a very bad condition as well. Although it is not raining at the moment, the roof is leaking and drops are falling on the ground in front of me, in the middle of what is called the "living room". One can see the mould on the inside of the walls and an unpleasant scent floats in the house.
A little TV, a DVD player and a modest stereo are standing on the cupboard, together with a few cd's.

Own description of a house in Wesbank (C-block)
10/08/2005

[34] Table 8 provides an overview of the state of the houses of the interviewees or what they tell about their houses.

In the previous part, we have already addressed the general disrepair and the small size of the houses in Wesbank. Also during the fieldwork, the narratives about the houses were very strong and clear. For the Congolese people, the house is just a place to survive.

> *When I came here, I was impressed - it was very small - because that house is so small. Not even a double bed can go into that room there [in the bedroom].* (5)
>
> *It's much too small for a big family like ours.* (13, f, x, live with 10 people in one house)
>
> *It's not good quality, it's only to survive. (...) Oh it's leaking, in wintertime, aiai. Now it's not raining in the house, but it is still leaking.* (3)
>
> *If it rains, the rain comes through the walls, your curtains and bed are wet.* (6)
>
> *The quality of the house is very bad. The wind is coming through, it's very cold. And like for instance the mean problem is the wall system, the wetness comes through from outside here. It gets very cold inside in wintertime, in summertime it burns inside* (7)
>
> *The ceiling. And the walls – they didn't … the cement… they didn't finish it off. And the floors, I don't know if you have seen the floors?* (9)

Some of the residents link health problems to the quality of the houses. As we said in part III, this link has been proved by researchers in the area.

> *Yes, there's a lot, a lot of health problems here in Wesbank.*
> -And why is that?
> *I would say it's because of these houses. It's so wet. When we must move in here, in 1999, the double bank was standing here. And one day, I see the carpet was lifted. I thought what is going on? Maybe someone moved the bed and so the carpet was moved. But that day I had to clean my house and I was buying new curtains. And when I was changing the curtains, I fell down, and when I fell down, the bed was moved and the carpet was lifted up. Then we put the carpet off, oh, you won't believe me what was growing there: a bunch of this high! Mushrooms! It was growing there, under the carpet. Really, really, really!* (4, f, c)
>
> *All of us talk about the houses during the winter. For the children especially – getting sick… That one (the daughter) has asthma. And it's… I don't think I'm gonna stay here long.* (9, coloured mother of two children)

I was a very healthy person when I came to Wesbank, I was very healthy when I came here, but now, no, in those 6 years I've become very ill. (17, f, c, 52 years old, translated from Afrikaans)

In spite of the –sometimes terrible- state of the houses, at least some people realise they have got the house for free[35], and believe that actually they can't really complain. Their conviction is that they have to make the best of it. We must also keep in mind that some of the residents used to live in shacks without running water or toilet before they got a house in Wesbank.

(...) It rains inside and it's very musty. The walls and the roof absorb the moisture. I have problems, yes, but I didn't have to pay for the house. (... after a description of a much too small bath and the lack of warm water:) *But what can we do, we've got this house for free, we've got to be proud of it.* (2, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

It's not good and it's not so bad. You must do the best of it, that's all I can say. (...)
-If you meet someone, do you like telling that you live in Wesbank?
Yes, and then they all ask me about the small houses and then I tell them you must make the best of that small house. If you can't live in a small house , you can't live in a big house. It is!
(1, f, c, comes from the same kind of house as this one)

To 'make the best of it' often means: to try to ameliorate the house, to finish it and to extend it if you have the money.

There is some people that can really work with their money and make their homes bigger, they got ceilings in the house… you see. They are really doing something with their money. Their houses are bigger, and you can see they want to do something with their lives. (5)

If someone would give me some money, I will make my house bigger, make maybe two rooms at the back. I play the lottery, you know. (4, f, c, live with 7 in one house)

But as one of the residents warns, there is also a safety problem, for instance because of people working on their electricity network. Another problem is that some people's yards are smaller than others, so they can not extend there house very much.

I'm so worried about this, because, you see this (electricity box) – we live five years here now he – they were supposed to come and see if there were not any problems with the electricity.

[35] At least, most of them have got the house for free. Some had to pay a part of it, depending on their income.

(...) I don't think it's safe. And you see this (lamp on the ceiling)? We had to do this ourselves, and in the bedroom also. There were no lights. (9, f, c)

Well the yard is too small. You can't do nothing here in Wesbank. You can't build anything, you must build upstairs. The yard is too small. You can't extend much. Some of the yards are big, some of the yards are too small, like mine. It's the smallest yard, it is too small, I can't do nothing. (10, m, x, shebeen owner)

Most people do the best they can – with the little money they have – to make their house a bit more of a home-place. In this way, a sense of place is being born in this recent neighbourhood.

(...) But I got a house, you see, I'm pleased with my house. I'm trying to do anything to make it easier for me. (...) And euh, but euh, at the moment I'm pleased with what I have for myself. It's small, but it's me, that's me. (...) I bought everything that I need in this house, and this is all second hand things. The tv and the stove, and the fridge and the cupboards. (5, f, c, lives alone with husband and adult son)

I did change some things here, not really big changes, but like the curtains here and the fence outside and stuff like that. (7, f, c, 25-30 years old)

In Wesbank, a much used way of making ones house a bit more ones "home", is by naming the dwelling (see Tuan). Those names express both culture and identity. They reflect paradise-like places (Miami Sands, Sunshine), emotions (Happiness, Thank You, Don't forget), religious expressions (Our Lord's Gift, House of Prayer, Blessings, Faith), hopes or desires (Journey's End), favourite soccer teams (Liverpool, Manchester), humour (Klein begin, West Side), whilst others reflect power struggles (Gadaffi's Place) or just the name of the house wife (Bianca, Jane).

Figure 26: Painting and naming the houses: creating a sense of identity (own pictures)

As we have already mentioned in part 3 of this thesis, having some control over the place seems to be an important aspect. Most people try to create a feeling of protection, or try to defend themselves and mark their 'territory' by putting a fence and by screening their house from outsiders. Also in chapter 6 of this thesis, we have mentioned that a home has boundaries that need to be defended. and that it should provide the residents with privacy.

Figure 27: Fencing the house (own pictures)

Some are lucky to stay in a house that stands on its own. Because there isn't any kind of isolation in the houses, another lady is complaining about a lack of privacy. She lives in a multiplex house.

> *When I close my doors, it's closed. But when you stay like that (in houses built next to each other), you have to listen to everything they do in the other side, and there are smokers and all that thing – and loud music and all that thing. But me, when my door is closed, I don't – I don't think of them, you see? I just stay here and listen to my music, because when the doors are closed, you don't hear what's outside* (5, f, c, lives alone with husband and adult son)

> *And yes, I'm definitely going to move. Away from Wesbank, 'cause <u>you don't have any privacy in your house here</u>. If your next door neighbour says something, you can hear everything*. (17, translated from Afrikaans)

> -Did you have any other option where you could go to when you moved?
> *Yes, in Kraaifontein.*
> -Why didn't you move there then?
> *Because, at that time, I just got married, and that place we were supposed to go then, was like living with other people and <u>this house was on our own</u>.* (7, c, young woman)

Listening to the many complaints about the houses, this last thing is a positive aspect that came back several times: "the most important thing is that you have your own place". This definitely seems to ease the pain of living in such bad quality dwellings. One can be sure one can stay there, and "you can do with the house whatever you want".

> *I'm proud to stay in Wesbank! Irrespective of all the things that happen here and so. I'm happy, I've got my own place, that's the most important thing.* (2, translated from Afrikaans)

> -So you really wanted to come here?
> *Yeah, but I haven't got a choice, because it's a house of my own. I didn't mind where I would stay, as long as it's a house of my own. (...) I'm quite satisfied with Wesbank. (...) I would like to stay here for the rest of my life. Because I made it for the rest of my life.* (1)

On the other hand, the (illegal) renters do not have this kind of certainty that they will be able to stay.

> -The person that you rent the house from, does he also live in Wesbank?
> *Euhm, ... I don't know, I don't know. [He asks the other.] Oh, there in Kraaifontein. But now he told us he will come back to his house at the twelfth of October. He has put us out.* (18, 'white' brothers, translated from Afrikaans)

21. Feelings about the neighbourhood[36]

"When they build this place they don't know what they did." (9, f, c)
"Wesbank, c'est la plaie." (3, Congolese man)

In this part, we take a look at the general feelings about Wesbank, from the Wesbank residents, as well as what is said about Wesbank by 'outsiders'[37]. The outsiders' view -Wesbank's mass-identity- is clear: they don't think much about Wesbank, "it is very dangerous there and you should never go to that place". On the other hand, concerning the insiders, the opinions about their neighbourhood are more nuanced and divers. About 3 of our interviewees are completely satisfied with living in Wesbank (1, 7 and 18). In the case of the first woman, the 'house of my own'-discourse is very important. The two others say 'they don't have any problems' living in Wesbank. Then there is a group of people who are quite satisfied with the neighbourhood, but who have serious problems with the quality of their

[36] Table 8 also provides an overview of the respondent's feelings about Wesbank.
[37] See the diagram in chapter 3.2

houses. Most of them have just adapted and resigned themselves to the situation (4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 14 and 15):

> *This is not a good place for the children, with the gangsterism, drugs, tik... But we can't go back to where we came from. (...) As long as you don't mix with the wrong people, Wesbank is all right. It's what you make of it.* (6, c, f)

> *I call it sometimes euh euh, I say this is a place for "left-behind-people" [translated from Afrikaans]. But if you want to make it a community... It all depends on you.* (4, c, f)

There is also a focus group member that thought in the same way:

> *It's rough here, but you've got nowhere else to stay, so you can't complain.* (F2, c, f)

8 people are completely unsatisfied (2, 3, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16 and 17, no common characteristics could be derived). They are really disappointed in the houses ánd (the people in) the neighbourhood and just stay in Wesbank, either because they have a business there (3), or because they really lack in any other options. Their wish is to move out of the area as soon as possible. One of them would even rather go back to the squatter camp where he came from:

> *Before, I lived in Happy Valley, that's a place where there is a squatter camp. I stayed in a squatter camp that time, in another hovel. A better place in that squatter camp! I don't talk about the people here or there, but I had a better life in the squatter camp than the life I live here now! The human relationships were much better there. At least you had a job, you could do some job and than you could at least buy something to eat. (...) This is the life we live now. This is the problem, we don't help each other here. (...) That's the reason why people have got houses here in Wesbank, because we come from squatter camps. We were happy when we got the house, but now that we're staying here... no.* (11, m, c, translated from Afrikaans)

One mother is very concerned about her children growing up in a place like Wesbank:

> *I don't like to raise my children here, I'd prefer doing that somewhere else, in Eersterivier. There are bigger and better houses. But we will have to pay for a house there. (...) I don't like living in Wesbank: the violence, the people that drink and shout and swear so badly. For these reasons I would prefer living in a bit better area, because of my children.* (8, f, c, mother of 6 children, grandmother of 1, translated from Afrikaans)

But in the same time, she defends the "good people" that are living in Wesbank:

(...) Yes, I would call myself a Wesbanker. And yes, I like telling people that I live here. I'm not proud to be here, but I happen to be here. I am a Wesbanker. There are also good things here, there are also people living in a good way, it's not only bad people. I wouldn't lie about the place I live in. (8, translated from Afrikaans)

About the outsiders' view and the stigma that sticks on Wesbank, it were always the same aspects that came to the surface. The young woman (7) that said not to have a problem living in a place like Wesbank, told us some minutes later that she doesn't like telling people she lives in Wesbank. She is quite ashamed about the fact she is living in that area:

If I meet someone, I don't like telling them that I live in Wesbank. I just say them I am staying somewhere in Kuilsriver, but not exactly Wesbank. Why? People don't think much of Wesbank. Wesbank is <u>just another RDP-houses</u> and stuff like that. (7)

The 'white' man that lives in a rented house with his brothers family doesn't care about that. There is said to be a lot of criminality in Wesbank, but according to him, the whole world is like that:

(...) if you go to Eersteriver and ask them will they stay in Wesbank, they will say "no! Don't go there, 'cause <u>Wesbank is not safe</u>", and stuff like that. We don't find any problems here in Wesbank. It's only around us people killing each other, doing this and that. (...) everywhere in Wesbank you'll get people killing each other, you see, and <u>the whole world is like that actually</u> now. If you listen the news: people killing each other, you see, like that? So... (18)

The mother of above here, annoys her on the way outsiders generalise the life style of the people in Wesbank.

People invent all kind of names for Wesbank, but I accept it as it is. They give ugly names to Wesbank, they say that people break into each others houses and that women and men don't stay together here and that kind of things. They forget that there are also married couples staying here, like we, we are already married for 20 years. (8, translated from Afrikaans)

22. Feelings about each other and "otherness"

"They don't want to move up, it's not right.
If you don't want to be involved, they can stay, they can stay in the squatter camp." (4, f, c)

"Wesbank, it's a place for coloured people." (3, Congolese man)

We now know how Wesbankers say outsiders look at them, but how do the people of Wesbank see each other? In this chapter we will take a look at which social categories are being made and which groups are considered in- or out-of-place.

22.1 Respected people

Figure 27: Micro business in Wesbank: selling sweets through the school gate (own picture)

The people that are generally respected, are the ones who don't hang their heads down and who try to make something from their lives.

> *(about this picture:) You can see how people make a business. It's small, but they are trying to make something from themselves.* (Th., f, c, community worker)

Although sometimes, seeing people that are better off can cause reactions of jealousy. This is one of the ways we get a classification in different groups, and a polarisation of people. People hear gossips, see things happening and experience things related to "others". In this way they construct an image of these others and divide them into different categories. Financial capacity, former place of living, gender, age, etc. are some of the variables used for mental classification and can be sources of misunderstandings, tensions and even hostility in the neighbourhood.

22.2 Groups based on financial capacity

Some people get like big (!) houses on the corner, (...) but they (Oostenberg housing department) said we can only extend our houses in 8 years… But as you can see most of the people build their houses, and I think it's unfair. (9, f, c)

Differences in financial capacity not only cause jealousy, there is also an issue of justice versus corruption related to the social houses in Wesbank. We found this article in the Cape Argus:

'Houses for pals' scandal hits Cape Town
August 07 2001

A new scandal, with allegations of corruption and nepotism in the allocation of houses in Cape Town, is set to rock the already embattled Democratic Alliance-led unicity council. The United Democratic Movement alleges the unicity councillor responsible for housing, Gawa Samuels, is at the centre of a housing scam which has seen her relatives and friends given homes ahead of residents who have been on waiting lists for more than 20 years. (...)

Samuels has admitted family members were housed in the former Oostenberg's Wesbank community but denies having had a hand in any form of nepotism. She said: "As a concerned community worker I encouraged everyone to put their names on waiting lists. Some of my family members were among these people." (...)

In a statement the UDM said it had a list of five names and addresses in the Wesbank community which they claim belong to people given homes illegally. The party said some of the people had been identified as Samuels's relatives. The families, who all live in Wesbank's Main and Fern Glen roads, have been on the city's waiting list only since 1997, with the latest being registered in 1999. This was highly irregular as other people had been on housing waiting lists from as far back as 1976, the UDM said. (...)

This is not the first time the UDM has pointed fingers at the unicity housing department. Samuels was, however, adamant she was the target of political muck-raking, denying the UDM claims. "I'm completely innocent. In fact all the people of Wesbank should be thankful to me and Wilma Brady for having houses."

Source:
Cape Argus
http://www.int.iol.co.za

Not only the UDM and the newspaper, but also the Wesbank residents had noticed some irregularities. Their reactions on this corruption are strong.

I said to my friend: "Why does people come to stay in Wesbank if we have all needs and now they want to, like you are the euh outcasts, treat you like that, and I don't like that." Cause I said to a person: "If you don't want to be treated like anyone else here in Wesbank, then why did you come and stay here in Wesbank. A policewoman and a policeman, they have married hé, they stay in Wesbank! And they were not supposed to get houses here in Wesbank. Because they can afford a bigger house, in Highbury (near Kuilsriver) or somewhere else. So

they don't need the houses here in Wesbank. There's a lot of people who doesn't deserve those houses. (9, 'coloured' woman)

There are also richer people in Wesbank, but I don't know what's the reason for that. I don't talk about someone else's money. If I had the money, I'd also like to extend my house. There are people who had big houses, but now they are staying here, where we should stay. Because I have been living in a shack for 6 years, in a hovel in Belhar. (8, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

Some people have got a house in Wesbank, but they let out their house to someone else. The 'white' brothers (18) and the Congolese men (3) are staying in such a let-out house. This is a problem the housing department now wants to tackle.

It's wrong, he can't have a house in Kayelitsha and rent out this house in Wesbank, he must take this house for him. If he doesn't live in the house, he don't need the house. (3, 'coloured' man joining the conversation)

22.3 Non-workers, lazy people

Another category of people that some Wesbank residents disrespect, are the non-workers, especially the "lazy people", those who don't want to work. It's true that there are few job opportunities, most of the opportunities are far away and transport is relatively expensive. Plus, there is little information available on how and where people should look for a job.

He works at winelands porc, Stikland, between the pigs. He has to pay a 16 rand a day for his transport, to and from his work. (2, f, c, about her husband)

Some people are really struggling. There is no job creation, you see. (6, f, c, has a car)

But it became also clear from the interviews that not everyone is looking for a job or even wants to have a job. They rather make ends meet. Especially the people that do try to make some money, or that do volunteer work for the community (Th., 15) are vexed by this group of people.

Some people think we get money for this work, but that's not true. We must pay our own taxi if we have to go somewhere. They don't even want to walk to you, you have to come there with their TB tablets. (15, f, c, volunteer TB-worker)

Most of the people live on that here (asking food to the neighbours), they don't want to go to work and earn a salary so they can bring food on the table themselves. If they know that she is

always going to give, than they start counting on that. They do not take pains anymore to go working, 'cause they know people around them will probably give them something again. (Th., f, c, community worker, translated from Afrikaans)

-It seems to be hard to get a job in Wesbank, what do you think is the reason for this?
I don't know, but sometimes the people are just lazy: they don't want to go to work, because I think most people in Wesbank are bit lazy. Say for instance I am looking for a job, but some are just not looking for work, especially the men. Here in Wesbank they are veeeeery lazy, they are lazy, because you can't expect that jobs will just come to you. Most of the time it are the ladies that go looking for something to bring food on the table. They go to work every morning and then the husband is lying in bed. (9, coloured woman)

It seems this laziness is also a gender issue. Marilyn (c, f, 21 years old) has pointed to the same fact.

When we come back with the taxi from Bellville, it is full of women that come from their job. "It's like that in Wesbank", Marilyn tells me, "The women work and the husbands stay at home, that's not good!".

Participant observation with Marilyn
7/09/2005

It is also interesting to see how the system and the mentality of the people create a deprived area, segregated from people who are better off, shut out for people who are better off.

The first time I went there (to the Oostenberg Housing Department), they told us our salary was too high to get a house for free. We had to pay 7500 rand to get the house. So we went to People's Bank, but there, they told us our salary was to little to get a loan. Then I decided to drop my job. Then we went back (to the Housing Department), then they said my husband's salary was too high. And then he dropped his job by Enterprise. So then we were both out of work. And then we got the house. (2, f, c, about 30 years old, translated from Afrikaans)

22.4 Alcoholics

Related to the topic of the laziness, alcoholism is another item that people are vexed by.

Some people do have money, but it goes all into the shebeens. Like she, Thursday she gets paid, by this time she is drunk. (6, f, c)

-What is the most important problem here in Wesbank?
The drinking problem, especially of the jobless. (8, f, c))

Especially when children are involved, people really take offence.

Some people drink the money they get for their child, and a beer is only 1,80 rand, but at least you can buy food with that 1,80! The money doesn't belong to them, it's for their children! I applied yesterday for that 1,80. I have bank accounts for my three children. I am also saving for their education, rather than drinking the money. But most of the people are different. (1, c, mother of three children)

(...) I used to have a little shop here (...) but people didn't pay. (...) How come that man can't pay me for instance, but he can go for alcohol to that woman and so on. And that causes trouble, it all causes trouble. (...) Do you understand? I don't want to see him buying that and watch a child saying "mama, I am hungry, mama, I am hungry". That happens here really often. (11, m, c)

22.5 Former squatters[38]

Another thing that annoys many of the Wesbank residents is the waste lying around on the grass fields, on the streets and near the river. Next to this picture, one of the Wesbank children wrote:

Well what I see is part of Wesbank. Wesbank high under the influence of pollution. Well the people in our community caused that because of their carelessness and untidiness.

Daisy

Figure 28: Garbage problem in Wesbank (own picture)

Garbage is dumped on open fields or left to accumulate on sidewalks. Especially in summer, the piles of rotting garbage attract flies, rats, cockroaches, mosquitoes and straying dogs and cats, what creates an unhealthy environment.

By different residents, this phenomenon was automatically linked to people from squatter camps.

(About picture 28:) The people here come from different places, from squatter camps, different places like this. So, they are used to rubbish. (Th., f, c)

[38] By squatters, we mean people that live in a squatter camp, a South African slum.

There's only two Africans staying in this road. But the problem with them is, they don't come from a place like Kleinvlei, like me, they all come from a squatter camp. They were staying in a squatter camp here over the river: Camelot. And still now, we live here six years, they have the same manner like the people in the squatter camp. They don't want to socialize with each other, with the neighbours. They didn't want to change. They make a fire in the yards. And most of them – I may be wrong – take drugs. They don't want to move up, it's not right. If you don't want to be involved, they can stay, they can stay in the squatter camp. (...) They broke down the squatter camp, so the people moved to Wesbank then. But you can still see were the camp was. (4, f, c)

In A-block, all people come from that same place, and they live like pigs. They come from Camelot, on the other side of the river. (Father R., c, translated from Afrikaans)

22.6 Language groups

Fortunately, most Capetonians are at least bilingual, what makes neighbourhood contact between people with different mother tongues easier.

If a person speaks English, I speak English; if a person speaks Afrikaans, I speak Afrikaans. (1, f, c)

But still, it is always easier to discuss with someone in your own mother tongue.

-Do you know any Xhosa-speaking people?
Yes, I do know some of them, but not so many. I do want to talk to them, but it's a group, they don't understand what I jabber. (2, 'coloured' woman, translated from Afrikaans)

Most people I know here are coloured people. I do have some contact with Africans, but my English is not so good and I don't understand their language, so that's why I just greet them if they pass here. Here behind me there are staying Africans, but we have a good relationship. (…)
-If you could freely choose where to live, where would you like to live then?
I don't want to sound racist now, but I would rather live in Eersterivier, where I can stay more between people that speak my language. But on the other hand, I would really like to learn their language and I'd like to teach it to my children. I don't know where I can learn this. I've bought me a book, and I've been asking myself whether the African women couldn't help me. I've bought that book, but it is so difficult, those words, very difficult. If they would give lessons, just to understand your neighbours, that would be very good. (8, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

22.7 Groups based on differences in religion

Language is one thing, but religion is another difference between most Xhosa ('African'[39]) and most 'coloured' people.

> *They ('the Africans') do have another life style. The most important difference is their belief.* (8, f, c)

But also among 'coloured' people there are differences in religion. In Wesbank only, there are more than 20 different kinds of religions. Pentecostal/charismatic churches, Apostolic churches, Dutch reformed churches and other Christian churches are the most popular (SuperCROSS 2005).

> *Sometimes there is an argue between the Apostolic and the AGS church. People in AGS, they praise the lord, Apostolic they just sit there and sing out of books.* (Marilyn)

22.8 'Ethnic' groups

Another important -but very tricky- point in South Africa are the 'ethnic' -or should we say "racial"- differences. As been mentioned in chapter 16.2, the end of the apartheid era suddenly confronted people with the proximity of difference. As can be derived from one of the previous quotes, the last thing most South Africans want, is to be accused of racism. People are more assessed on the basis of behaviour than on **'ethnic' characteristics**, but behaviour often seems to go together with culture and 'race'. Social categories as 'race', are embedded in everyday practice, but context and situation play an important role in confirming or rejecting 'labels'.

22.8.1 'Black' immigrants

As mentioned in chapter 16.2, South Africans make a difference in 'South African blacks' (mostly Xhosa in Cape Town) and 'black' immigrants from other African Countries. They are seen as one group and they are usually called "Nigerians" or "Somalians", no matter where they come from. The refugees from Congo (3) that we interviewed in Wesbank told us this:

> -Do you know many people in Wesbank?
> *Many! All Wesbank knows us. They all say: "Hi Nigerian, Nigerian…"* (3)

[39] This is how most 'coloured' and 'white' people in Wesbank call the indigenous 'black' people. In Cape Town, most of them are Xhosa.

Those African immigrants often have the stigma on them of being dangerous, more dangerous than 'South African blacks'[40] and the general discourse when talking about them is the worldwide known discourse of "they are taking our jobs".

> *I can walk with you two [two 'white' people] if we go to Eersteriver or to Cape Town, they are gonna suspect me: "What he is doing with those white people?" They are gonna think maybe there is something going on*. (3, Congolese man)

> *Yes, there is other groups of people, but I don't know from which culture they are, because they are black. I think it's Nigerians because the Nigerians take over from the shops and things. There is so many house shops, every shop mostly is a Nigerian. I don't know where they come from, but they are here, there are groups of them. But they don't bother us, and for that, I accept it.* (5, f, c)

> -Do you know many African people here in Wesbank?
> *Yes, those Nigerians.*
> -Ok, and do you think they have a different lifestyle?
> *Of course, it's like that.*
> -But, does it cause problems, or not?
> *I will say it like this: they come, they are standing everywhere in Cape Town with their stalls, they are taking other peoples jobs and things like that. But they happen to be here now, those foreigners, and we will just have to get on with them.* (12, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

22.8.2 Xhosa

Most 'black South Africans' in Cape Town are Xhosa, originally coming from the Eastern Cape Province. There are big differences in the culture of the coloured people –the dominant group in Wesbank- and the traditional Xhosa culture. There is for instance a strong belief of witchcraft in Xhosa culture, therefore Iggirha's (traditional healers) hold a strong position in their society, even in the urban area's. Xhosa people are also said to be more on their own.

> *I've got no problems with the African people in my road, but I've got to say they have different traditions. We've got to live with that*. (6, f, c)

> *It's very very very, the black people, they don't worry about the coloureds. It's not not really – if you talk to them, yeah, they would say good mornings and good nights and everything. But they don't they don't worry about the coloureds, that's why I don't… I leave them alone. But if I*

[40] See also chapter 16.2 about fear of difference.

want to be friendly with them, I'm just friendly with them. Yes. They are very on themselves yeah. (5, f, c)

-Do you notice differences in lifestyles and cultures between them?
Yes. I won't say there is problems, but… mostly the coloured people don't usually… come together with the blacks and stuff like that – but no major problems. For instance: coloured people are more together than African people. They don't usually mix with – they are more on there own. (7, young coloured woman)

Mno, yes, coloured people sometimes ask. Sometimes she gives, sometimes she doesn't give. Hahaha.
-African people never come to ask for food?
No.
-Why do you think that is, are there differences, do they have like different lifestyles?
Well, the coloured people, I think they are struggling more than us. But we are all struggling, you see. Some of them, they don't mind and they come ask some sugar, some cheese... If she has got, she gives, if she hasn't got, she doesn't give.
I'm more on my own. I don't know from the next person what he's doing, you see. (10, m, 'black' shebeen owner)

'Blacks' are also linked to shebeens and some 'coloured people' feel threatened by the increase of 'black' people in Wesbank.

The coloureds, they are used to be more than the blacks, but now... like I see it here, the one just comes here to stay with the other. What I see as well, is that more young people come in here, young blacks, when a house is empty, they just go in there, then they are with about 2 or 3 who come and live in that house. (17, f, c)

A general mass-identity that 'coloured' people give to 'black' people since the end of apartheid, is one of "they think everything should come to them". But on the other hand, desegregated area's, that allow more inter-cultural contacts, can lead to a weakening or refuting of stigmas.

-Do you feel in Wesbank there is a difference between black people and coloured people?
Oh yes, yes! (...) Here next to me (...) there is a black man and he thinks everything should come to him. If there are jobs available from a project, the blacks can have the jobs, but the coloureds, no. (17, f, c)

-Do you notice differences between coloured people and African people?
Not since I moved in here in Wesbank.

-So before that, you had another idea of it?
Yeah. And now it's different.
-What did you think of them before you lived here?
I think some of them are very poor, they are very poor. Especially because, they like – they think like when someone is handing out something, they want to get first, they think they should be served first, and I don't like that. Because we're equal. And if I come first, I must get mine first.
-Now you live here. Do you still think it is like that?
Not at all!
-And do you think it's easy to make contact with African people?
Much better. If they (my children) are making friends I can go to visit their parents. (9, f, c)

22.8.3 'Coloureds'

It is remarkable how apartheid still lives on in the everyday life of the people in Wesbank. Following quotes support this:

This is a place for coloured people. (3, Congolese man)

We used to live in Saro, it's close to Kuilwach, it's also a coloured area, we were the only white people in that place, but it was nice. (18, 'white' man)

Many coloureds go for black men, because they have smart cars and money. Or sometimes you see a white girl walking hand in hand with a black man... then you know it is because of his money. (Marilyn)

The African immigrants feel more related to the Xhosa people than to the 'coloureds'. But as has been said before, differences certainly not always cause problems.

For me they (the coloureds) have a different culture.
-How would you describe your culture?
There is a way we have, like to respect yourself and to respect each other. And for them it's not the same. They all sleep in the same room with a family. We can't say: I sleep with my mother, I sleep with my father. I can't sleep with my sister. As a man I'm supposed to sleep alone. Boys with boys and girls with girls. Mother and father, they must stay in their room, and we can 't go in their room, we must know. That's how it is in our culture, but the coloured people they jump up and down, that's why I say: differences.
-Other differences?

What they eat is different: we, we like to eat pappa, African food. Coloured people they like chicken pies, coffee. Me, I eat my pappa in the morning, and in the afternoon I eat my pappa too. Anytime.

-Do those differences sometimes cause problems, or is it not a problem that they have a different culture?

No, not a problem. No problems, we communicate nice. (3, Congolese men)

There are no differences between coloured people and African people, because the most of the neighbours are coloured and we do things together, it's no problem. We do help each other when there is a problem. (13, f, x)

22.8.4 'White' people

The one interview with 'white' people in Wesbank learned us how indeed apartheid has still a big effect on how people think about them.

I was there (in that shebeen on picture 8) once, you see, that time when I was staying at home, to buy one beer, to just watch out the place, you see. So, they thought it came to the point that police came in. "Put the drugs away" and stuff like that. You see, that kind of place. But when they see I buy a beer, they saw "oh, he is staying in Wesbank, it's not the police or something."

-They thought you where police because you are white?

Yea. You see, some of those people, they got a problem with the people being white here in Wesbank, because back in the days, it was like 'white has got a lot of money' and things like that, and that is not true, totally a lie, you see. So, they think about those times.

-Are there other misunderstandings like that, about white people?

No, no, it's only the young school boys, you see, who's got actually a problem, but the grown ups, no. I won't say they 've got a problem with me. (18)

22.9 Conclusion and expectancies towards dealing with "otherness"

In Wesbank, 'racial' desegregation and everyday contact with other cultures does not seem to cause a lot of problems. According to the social worker in Wesbank, there used to be some trouble with 'coloured' and 'black' youngsters in high school, but all this is solved now. Especially younger children appear to be typically unaware of cultural and racial differences. Public spaces on pavements and playgrounds draw children to congregate and interact socially across language, race and cultural boundaries. In this way, the parents of these children are also brought together.

-Do you notice a difference between black and coloured children?

No! The boy (her son) has a black friend, they play with each other every day. And this one (the daughter) has also got black friends. I prefer to let them play with the black children. They can learn from each other. (9, f, c)

Although some of the apartheid structures keep on living in the heads of individuals, what we see is that in Wesbank's everyday life, new social categories are being developed to consider people in- or out-of-place. Not 'race', but 'behaviour that goes together with it' or even totally different stigma's flourish.

23. Contacts, networks and meeting places

"Well, he must see himself where he can find help." (10, m, x)

"Like this road, is different than the other people. We can count on each other." (18, m, w)

In this chapter we dwell on the strength of the neighbourhood contacts in Wesbank. During times of (financial) crisis, people draw on wider horizontal networks created by family, friends and neighbours. In part I, we already considered interpersonal relationships in the neighbourhood a key element of residential satisfaction (Moser et. al. 2002). Concrete meeting places and their accessibility, as well in private as in public spaces, play an important role in consolidating or steering initial attitudes towards groups of people or places. They are also indispensable in the building of social capital. However, in Wesbank, a lack of meeting places results in less contacts, what results in people being more on their own and in an increase of fear of "others".

23.1 Neighbourhood contacts, feeling of togetherness, trust and friendship

Some people in Wesbank are very much on their own. They don't need or miss any form of neighbourhood contacts. Those people are mostly people who have got a job and who find support from their neighbours not necessary.

I don't worry about the people in the street, I don't go out. (Marilyn)

For some people, Wesbank residents don't stand together at all. It's everyone for itself.

The feeling of togetherness is not so strong here, no, it's not strong. Because, if, it is strong, I think Wesbank would be a much much better place. If we could just stand together with our

problems. It's about the community. One or two people they won't get anything right. It's the community that has to stand together. (6, f, c)

However, for most people, there is a kind of feeling of togetherness, maybe not for the whole of Wesbank, but in their block or street or direct environment. As shown in chapter 7, the larger neighbourhood stretches beyond an individual's direct experience, the people who live in the area identify much smaller parts as a focus of meaning, a place, for instance, a single street or an intersection

Euhm, we all know each other here in this block, but not in the other side and so. Normally you know each other in the block you stay in, because our block is not so a big block. We meet each other at the street and we greet and we talk, but nothing else. We all speak Afrikaans. In our street there are only three Xhosa-speaking. (1, f, c, from B block, Southern part)

In our street it's very good! I look just to our street, the other streets also have to look for themselves. I can't mix in their business in their street and they can't in ours. I know everyone here in this street, so I don't worry if I see one of them, 'cause I know them. (...) In this street, we trust each other very much. (2, f, c)

To trust each other is a tricky point in Wesbank. On the question whether people trust each other in the neighbourhood, most people were very clear:

Not not much. Because there is always someone that is steeling from someone, you see? Euh, everybody is just – how shall I say – they don't leave their things like you can see them. And they might be standing there, and everything is open and everybody can see … and they next time it's gone… You see? Everybody is just very very very careful for their things, yea. (5, f, c)

You can only trust your family in this community. (Th.)

Actually you can't trust anyone. You don't have any friends here. I don't think there are people in Wesbank that really trust each other. You can talk to someone and the next day that person is angry with you, you don't actually know if you've got a friend or an enemy. (17, f, c)

Although, some people do trust some people in their direct environment. The same pattern as that of the neighbourhood contacts is coming back here.

Trust? Ooh, with all this violence... You can't trust anyone anymore. My neighbours... yes, my neighbours I trust on to watch my house if I am not there. (9, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

Like this road I was talking about, down here next door till there by the pastor, this is different than the other people. We can count on each other. We will know, nothing will go out here, you see. Because what we talk, it will stay here. (18, m, w)

Friendship is a different story in Wesbank. People may greet each other, and maybe they may even trust their neighbours to watch their houses, but real friendship is very limited. Mostly neighbours say hello, but are not real friends in Wesbank. (15, f, c)

-And how many of those people in Wesbank would you call your true friends?
'Coloured' man: "Oh, none of them, none of them!" (3)

People here are very different. They will say they are your friend, but then they will go out and tell everyone what goes on in this family. (6, f, c)

That lady over there, 55, and one of my church members, his number in the street is 38… that's only true friends. But I call them true friends, but I don't go and visit them eventually, you see. I don't go and sit there and talk to them. They come to me. (5, f, c)

We can't call each other here friends, because in this place, you must be for yourself. There are only three people that I go and visit yea, the one lives around the corner, two at the back and there is another one – four. We meet each other at the houses, sometimes there, sometimes there. (1, f, c)

23.2 Helping each other

Do the Wesbank residents don't help each other then? Oh yes, they do. We heard this in our interviews, but also the social worker of Wesbank had a positive feeling about this. Many people in Wesbank are religious and from that point of view they want to help people that are worse off than them. Other people just want the best for their neighbourhood, but still other people don't really care.

23.2.1 Watch each others houses

As we will read in the next chapter (24) about criminality in Wesbank, one can see why watching each others houses is so important. Burglary is a common phenomenon in the neighbourhood, so most people like it when their neighbours keep an eye on their houses when they are not there. On the other hand, they will do the same thing if their neighbours are not there.

She watches my house and if she's not here, I watch hers. It's like in a circle here, we all know each other here. But it also depends on your personality you know. (6, f, c)

Yes, in this area, we like to help each other, we are looking after each other. When I go, I tell my neighbours: "Look, I'm out of my house, watch…". Like this lady (neighbour), she always goes to work and then I'm here, seeing that people don't go in the houses, breaking in like that. Yes, here we are always helping each other. (9, f, c)

23.2.2 Stand up for each other

Also for other problems of criminality or nuisance, neighbours can often count on each other.

-So if something happens, the street stands together?
Yes! This happened to my husband when he was attacked here. Then we were helping him all together. (2, f, c)

Once we heard a screaming here, one o'clock in the night. So we went there and stayed with that woman and called the police. We stayed with her until the police was there. I was in bed only at 3 o'clock in the morning and I had to get up at 5. (6, f, c)

I think in my street the people stand together. And there is also a shebeen, there in my street and the people here in the street is busy to go there, but she has put a jukebox in and now all the young people go there dancing and things. So in the night there is a lot of noise of all the youngsters hanging around here. Then we must go there. Yesterday we spoke to the people who live next doors. They are busy to move up in the street. She must do something, close that thing or something like that. (14, f, c)

23.2.3 Provide lacking services

It seems also for other services, people can count on each other. Sometimes people provide services that would otherwise not be available in the neighbourhood, then they often ask a little fee for that, as an informal source of income.

Yes, if someone asks me "Can you keep an eye on my house", than I do that, whether I have to sit in front of the house a whole day. Or if they ask me to wash the clothes, I'll do it for her. Or sometimes we cook for each other. (2, f, c)

Yeah, here is ladies that help each other. Euhm, you can just ask and give them that fee that you want to if you must go to hairdresser. So if you want to blow your hair and it's 15 rand at the hairdresser, give them the 15 rand: it's easier for you and they do the same job. (5, f, c)

-Where do you wash your clothes?
Here, I've got my own machine. I'm washing peoples clothes.
-Do you wash clothes for other people?
Yea, I ask them 20 rand (€2,5).
-People from the neighbourhood?
Yes. (9, f, c)

Not everyone has a phone available in Wesbank, and although there are some public phones in the neighbourhood, for urgent cases people can count on their neighbours with a cell phone to make a call.

When the baby is sick, they come here, ask me for medicines, ask me to call the ambulance. Or if they got trouble in their houses: can you call the police…Because at this moment we got only two people in our street that got telephone. I always call them. (1, f, c)

23.2.4 Dedicate oneself to the community

Soup kitchens are a popular way to do something for the poorer people in the community, especially for the hungry children. Although the mothers often don't have much money themselves, with some sponsoring, they make soup on a fixed day every week. Children from the surroundings know that, and bring their cups to be filled that day.

I help now every Wednesday by making a plate full of soup for the children of the neighbourhood, to fill their tummies. I do that at my house. Then 30 children from the neighbourhood come over. We already have to make two pots, 'cause one is already too little. (8, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

-Do you think you can help in making the neighbourhood a better place to live?
I think I do, because I give soup every week to the children. And every Wednesday there come a lot of children to come and get. It's always a pleasure to give it to the children. (9, f, c)

Every Thursday I make soup for the children in the street that come with their cups. I don't get any funds for that, it's just together with some women that I do that. This big pot I make full of soup and I don't like to say this, but there are so many children in need here, for food and clothes. You can see it. It's very often that they come and ask for some money or a piece of bread. Or something like that. (14, f, c)

Besides these mothers that make soup for the children, there are also other “community workers”. They work as a volunteer with the children, with TB or AIDS patients or with the elderly. The most frustrating thing for them is that they often don’t get support from the government and that there are not enough places where they can hold their activities.

> *I worked door to door after that and I see here, there’s a big problem in our places. These people (people that are ill), they cannot move around and they can not come to the hospital and so on. And then I go and I help the people there. All the needs, the needs is a problem in our place here. And now for a year ago, I’m busy in the community to. To wash people and do something, go to the hospital and bring them here and so on and so on. But anyhow, that is my place, what I work. I can tell you the truth, that is my place and all the TB-patients and so on.* (14, f, c)

So, many people do want to help each other whenever they can. The problem is that they often lack of resources and support from the government as well.

23.2.5 Lend out food

Borrowing some food is usually not really a problem -if people don’t exaggerate-. We asked almost every interviewee if they would be able to ask their neighbours some sugar when they run out of it. Most of them answered that they would give, but many were not so sure whether people would do the same thing for them.

> *If I really had to struggle with money, I would rather buy food, but most of us are not the same, they would go for the beer. Later on they will come and knock at your door: “Can you borrow me some eggs, can you borrow me two slices of bread”. But it doesn’t work like that, because everybody struggles with the same thing. Or even if you buy a pocket of potatoes, this one comes “can you borrow me two potatoes”, the other one comes “can you borrow me four carrots” and so they are making the pot full -haha- by borrowed things. The beer doesn’t appease your hunger. And it’s wrong. (...) If you don’t have sugar in the house, nobody will have it for you. You can’t go to the neighbours asking. Even if they have, they will tell you they haven’t got. That’s why you must always prepare to have things in the house.* (1, f, c)

23.2.6 Support financially

When someone dies or something terrible happens to a family, people will mostly also want to collect money for them. But not when someone loses his or her job, “that’s on their own”, “Would people support me?”.

-If someone's father would die, do you think they could turn to someone in the neighbourhood for help?
I'll say it like this: they won't give 100 or 200 rand, but if I would arrange something now to collect money for them, I know they will contribute. (12, f, c)

The most of this people here in this Wesbank haven't got jobs. There's so much we haven't got a job, but they do, they do manage to do something, to do something to help each other. (5, f, c)

Some people are more pessimistic about the situation in Wesbank.

The people in Wesbank ... on themselves, they don't care about other people. They only know you when you've got something, they know you. When you have got nothing, they can't help you (18, 'coloured' neighbour)

-How is the feeling of togetherness or closeness in Wesbank?
It's very weak. (7, young 'coloured' woman)

-If a father or a mother of a big family would loose his or her job, do you think they could turn to someone in the neighbourhood for help?
The community can't help him. They are also struggling, they are also getting heavy. Haha.
-Where can he find help then?
Well, he must see himself where he can find help, which people are going to help him. (10, the Xhosa shebeen owner)

Some people also stress the lack of social facilities in the surroundings. But if there are, people are generally not well informed about them. Remarkable is that only one interviewee mentioned the social worker as someone they can turn to.

If someone dies, no one will help. You have to help yourself. If you house burns down, there is nothing like the Red Cross or something here. (4, f, c)

23.3 Meeting places

Now that we know which neighbourhood contacts take place in the neighbourhood, we can ask ourselves how these contacts are expressed spatially. Which places are used as meeting places and are there any places where group activities can be done? Most people just meet each other in the street, near the taxi rank or in a little shop. Those contacts are often brief and not thorough. But if people have got some real friends in Wesbank, they meet in each other's houses... if those are not too cheerless.

(...) because of my shop here I think I meet the most people every day through the children (5, f, c, has a little shop with sweets)

Sometimes we see each other in the spaza[41], so there's a lot of people who knows each other. (1, f, c)

Figure 29: Spaza- or house shop in Wesbank (own picture)

You meet a lot of persons here. (...) Oh, yes, we make a lot of friends. We like to be together, talk together, discuss our problems together.
-Do you talk about the whole Wesbank?
The whole Wesbank, because why: the whole community here must go to the clinic. And they go, ask a little bit of water, "can I use the toilet", a lot of them. They all pass by. And they need water, or the TB people, they need food, and then I give a plastic bag. And sometimes when it's very warm they ask me if they can sit there on the grass. Then I say yes, you can sit there. (4, f, c, she lives in the street to go to the clinic)

-How did they (the children and their friends) meet each other?
Playing with each other in the street, and normally I meet the parents also. (9, f, c)

The first time I met them (my friends) in the street. (5, f, c)

I don't have friends or family in Wesbank. I did make one – two friends, but I don't like to visit them. They have badly houses. (7, young coloured woman)

There aren't many activities organised in Wesbank, but some people do try to set up something, like the drama group of Th., some people that want to start organisations for the elderly or sports groups for the children. Unfortunately, people often don't know when and where these group activities are taking place.

[41] A spaza is a little home shop.

My son was involved in a sports group on the Wesbank sport fields, but I don't know what became from that group. (8, f, c , translated from Afrikaans)

There is no club or trainer. (F7, teenager, m, c)

-Have you ever heard of activities that they do in the neighbourhood?
Only sports. I went to the netball, but they don't do it here anymore, now that the sport fields are there.
-Where did you use to play netball?
There where the park is, there by the crèche.
-Would you like your children to be in a youth group or a sports group?
Yes.
-Are there groups like that in Wesbank?
I don't know here, I don't think there are. (9, f, c)

At the clinic there are sport fields, but only sometimes they are playing sports there with the children. I would say, euhm, it's not right for a field like this, you see. I would say, there's nothing wrong with it. Only, they must put more sports on it and stuff like that. And the schools here in Wesbank don't have any sports, they just have a couple of rugby games going on here. But it's only like in three finals, so it's unused. I would say they must make use of it. (18, m, w)

Figure 30: Wesbank's "sports fields" (own picture)

I wanted to start an old people club, but there is no place for that. I wanted to keep the people busy, they are just sitting there at home. I wanted to learn what they can do with their hands.

Most group activities are done by the churches, these are the environments where most people meet each other. But often, people stay on going to the churches in their former neighbourhoods, so that they don't get to know new people from the neighbourhood in this way.

They people I meet most here are the religious people. We meet each other in church, but we also have a prayers group and we come together every Tuesday, with different mothers. Here, another house is in the A-block. An old lady of 70 years old has brought us together and now we are more and more people. (8, c, f)

Evening times I'm always out to church, you see, every night 6 am I'm always at home. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, that's the nights I'm always going to church, you see. And I'm, I'm very very busy there with all the church work and so I come home, say ten o'clock. (5, f, c)

On Sunday and on Wednesday, but I didn't go with the baby now. It was very cold outside, you know. I go to church here in the main road. It's an AGS church. (14, f, c)

Next to a lack of activities, there is certainly a lack of places that can be used for those activities and of other meeting places. Table 9 gives an overview of the public, semi-public and private places that can be considered meeting places in Wesbank.

	Place	**Mobility**
Public	**Agora**: economic and cultural exchanges between residents VERY FEW	**Passage**: guidance of mobility STREET, TAXI RANK
Semi-public	**Living environment**: space around the house OWN STREET, DRIVEWAY, SPAZA SHOP, SCHOOL, CLINIC	**Parochial space**: meeting place for like-minded, place for leisure SPORTS GROUNDS (few activities)
Private	**House/home**: HOUSES (often not cosy)	**Mobile or temporary living spaces**: temporary comfort and protection CAR (very few people have this)

Table 9: Possible meeting places in Wesbank
(design partially based on van der Wouden 2002)

The table distinguishes three types of places: public places, semi-public places and private places. There are standstill places and spaces of mobility (the original author also distinguishes virtual places, but this is not relevant in our context). An **agora** is a public place where economic and cultural exchanges take place between people. Examples of such

places are squares, parks and market places. In Wesbank places like this lack or are not accessible or too dangerous. **Passages** are places like ports, airports, stations and (high)ways. They mainly serve as guiders of mobility, but can also be meaningful meeting places, like the taxi rank in Wesbank. What the **living environment** is, is quite clear. In our research area, the direct environment of the house might be the most important place in the building of social capital. People seem to trust each other here and can often count on each other for help. Parents can also meet other parents in their children's school, or people can meet each other in a shop in the vincinity or while waiting for their turn in the clinic. **Parochial spaces** then do not have to refer to church. It are meeting places for like-minded, places where one can go for his or her hobby or leisure. Shebeens could be such places, but because they are often thought of as too dangerous to go -as we will point to later-, they are not suited. The sports grounds could do as a parochial space, but as there are no (or only few) activities organised, they usually don't serve as meeting places now. We have talked in detail about **house and home** in previous chapters. Houses could be used as meeting places for friends, but sometimes they are so chearless that people don't like to visit the 'home-places' of their friends. Lastly, **mobile or temporary living spaces** are also lacking. Most people don't have a car, and certainly they can't afford a caravan or a second house. Semi-public places seem to be most suited as meeting places. They offer the possibilities of meeting (new) people, but also guaranty a certain privacy.

24. Safety and security

"Oh, a person doesn't know where he can come anymore, you don't know where it's safe anymore! These days you're only safe in your own house." (8, f, c)

"Sometimes you're not even safe in your own house." (F2, f, c)

Safety and security are fundamental to a good quality of life. Places have several layers of meaning to the people who inhabit them: certain places evoke happiness, solitude and warmth, others elicit feelings of fear, trepidation and terror. Safety and criminal activity are clearly very important themes when discussing the everyday life in Wesbank. High levels of unemployment, little social support and few facilities are some of the reasons for high rates of informal economy, but also for criminality and flourishing gang activity. Criminality has an important effect on the meanings, values, opinions, beliefs, feelings, images and attitudes people develop towards different places in their neighbourhood.

24.1 Crime pattern analysis

According to a crime pattern analysis of the Kuilsriver Police for July, August and September 2004[42], the most common crimes in the Wesbank area are residential burglary, common and aggravating robbery, rape and theft out of a motor vehicle. In table 10 we give an overview of one month (July 2004) as an example of the registrated cases. "/" means there was no case in that block, "x" means there was at least one case reported in that block.

		Blocks				
	Total	A	B	C	D	E
Burglary: residential	18	/	x	x	x	x
Common robbery	11	2	1	6	/	2
Robbery aggravating	4	x	x	x	/	/
Theft out of motor vehicle	3	x	/	x	/	/
Rape	5	2	1	2	/	/
Attempted murder	1	/	/	/	/	1
Murder	1	/	1	/	/	/

Table 10: Overview of crime cases in July 2004.
Source: Crime pattern analysis, CIAC, Kuils River. Own processing.

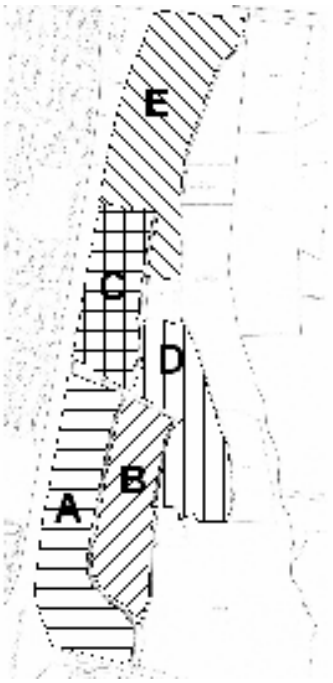

Figure 31: Blocks in Wesbank

Crime rates seem to be quite high in Wesbank, but certainly not every crime is reported to the police and in case of rape, charges are often withdrawn. Relying on this table, it seems block D is quite safe compared to the other blocks and block C seems to be the worst. This is of course a once-only bearing and we don't know if July 2004 was a 'good' or a 'bad' month.

Many of the criminals consist of a lost generation of youth who have been born into broken or single parent homes and a large section of today's South African youths have grown up in a climate of violence'[43]. According to the social worker there is a lot of household violence. South Africa's crime rate can also be attributed to socio-economic causes such as high unemployment (people are sitting around, have no money and have got nothing to do), extreme poverty and low disposable incomes, few job opportunities particularly for the youth, unequal resource distribution, disintegration of

[42] The police officers were not allowed to give us more recent data, but assured us the situation had not changed significantly.
[43] This became very clear looking at the drama plays of Wesbank children. In every little story, violence was an important element: robbery, fightings in a shebeen, domestic fights, gangsterism, police coming in between, etc.

the nuclear family, one-headed households and the sense that certain sectors of society are more advantaged. There is also a frequent use of alcohol and drugs among teenagers and a problem of parents who lost control over their children.

> *If we all work, if all people would have a job here, then the one wouldn't break into the house of the other. Here behind me they have a whole bunch of TV's, we don't even have money to place a window. How can we ever understand each other. How can this place become allright?* (11, m, c, translated from Afrikaans)

"The children, they think they own themselves. In the weekend, they are fighting with their mothers. That's what I tried to show. There are many unprivileged families living in Wesbank, and they suffer. Many are broken families. The father doesn't want to give clothes and the mother can't give her children. So the children, they have to look for themselves. Those things happen here."

Daisy, talking about the 5th drama play

According to the analytical reports of the Kuilsriver police, inhibiting factors for the police to handle the many crimes are:

-unemployment;
-growth of the population;
-high density;
-easy access to firearms;
-large number of illegal liquor outlets;
-gangsterism;
-size of policing areas[44].

Robbery is usually committed in high density areas, because there are many people and many escape routes. Identification of suspects is thus difficult. There is also a big market for small items that are robbed and this crime generates easy and quick money. Cash, cell phones, clothing, jewellery, handbags and firearms are the main targets in (aggravating) robbery, and with more people having cell phones, more cases are reported. The most used weapons are firearms and knifes. The easy access to firearms leads to an increase of aggravating crimes and murders.

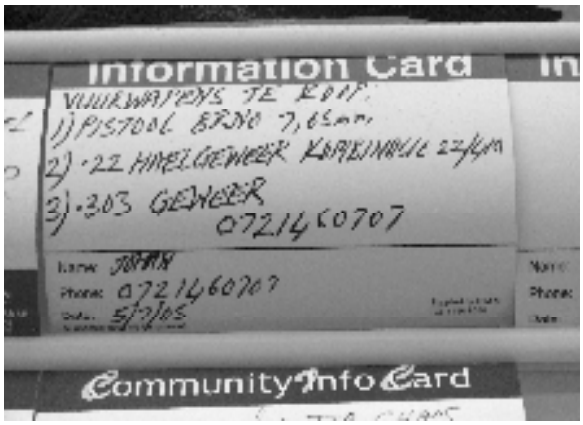

Figure 32: Easy access to fire weapons: an information card in the supermarket (own photo)

[44] This will be discussed further on.

One of the prevention methods the police is using, is the activation of neighbourhood watches. There are different groups in different sides of Wesbank and they have a government body of their own. “They don’t work officially on the day, but most of them are not working during the day, so they also keep an eye on the area during the day.” (Police woman)

24.2 Gangsterism

Gang related activities contribute to a large number of criminal cases. Gangsterism in South Africa is extremely rife and problematic, particularly in the Western Cape. Competition amongst gang leaders and members is very strong, which leads to an increase in violent incidents, such as rapes, robberies and murders.

In essence, there are two types of gangs – street gangs and organised gangs. Street gangs are usually smaller, of lesser significance and less problematic. These are usually youngsters, who congregate on street corners, smoke dagga, drink and intimidate passers-by. They resort to robbing and stealing to support their drug and alcohol habits. Larger gangs normally keep these youngsters in check, offering them “jobs” – like selling drugs in their neighbourhoods. It is these larger gangs, on the other hand, that are more problematic. This group includes the infamous numbers gangs: the 26’s, 27’s and 28’s. Gangsters usually fall into one of these categories and the number of their gang is usually tattooed on their body (Herrendorfer 2004).

The numbers gangs operate like well-organised institutions. They consist of lower and upper structures governed by strict codes of conduct and gang rules. Breaking any of the rules, or the code of conduct, could mean death. Many who have tried have paid with their lives (Herrendorfer 2004).

The gangs control large areas, usually communities or parts of cities and towns. These areas are known as “turfs.” Each gang normally has its own turf, which they guard with their lives from other gangs. Here they manipulate their illicit activities, which include prostitution, drug dealing and shebeens. Gangs often rule some shebeens. Underground, drugs are being sold there. Often, the drugs are hided in the houses of for instance single living women (police Kuils River). Shebeen owners and some store owners must often pay protection fees to the local gang. If not, the gang would make it very difficult for them, using intimidation tactics and threats (Herrendorfer 2004).

Gangsters are like a role model for children (Police Kuils River). Most people are roped into gangsterism at an early age, from the ages of ten to sixteen years. Their leaders would be between thirty and fifty years of age. Because of the poverty-stricken environments they come from, many males are drawn into the gang arena by the attraction of money, power and glamour with which they associate gangsterism. They dream of the flashy cars, massive gold jewellery, immense amounts of money, and the power to control a whole town – as their ultimate goal (Herrendorfer 2004).

> *It's terrible what goes on here. I think it starts there, at the shebeens. My son for instance could go there, because that shebeen owner can buy nice shoes for him and brand shoes and brand clothes. That's how they get involved with the violence in those shebeens. Most of the time it's children that come from descent families, but where the parents can't afford these things for instance.* (8, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

Sub-economic areas, where gangsterism is the most prevalent and problematic, are good training grounds for would-be gangsters. In most instances, both parents are either unemployed or both are working, leaving their children unattended or with strangers. Gangs quickly exploit such situations. In fact, they thrive on it, offering youngsters a "surrogate family" setup which gives the youngsters a sense of belonging (Herrendorfer 2004).

> *My second daughter was involved with the 26-gangs for a few months. We went to that man then, but he said he could do nothing. It's the children that come to him, they don't call them. He said that we should just pray and ask the Lord to bring her back, en that we did and she came back.* (8, translated from Afrikaans)

In Wesbank two main gangs are active: the 26's and the 28's. "There might be other gangs as well, but they are not as active, they are wannabees." (police woman Kuils River). These other gangs are the 'Americans', the 'Jokkies' and a number of youngster street gangs, like the D12's, the Java Kids, ... (F7). These gangs are usually connected to the bigger gangs, as described above.

> *(...) But now you hear about the Java Kids, that's still children, that aren't even real gangsters, but just because they have that name 'Java Kids', they think that they are already real gangsters. Now these children are so confused. You can't sleep well anymore, 'cause every night you hear them running and then there are again other gangsters that come hunt on them. Yesterday these children went after the Nigerians with a gun.* (14, f, a, translated from Afrikaans)

The 26's are said to be the robbers, the 'money-guys' and the 28s are known as killers and rapers and are labelled with the stigma of being homosexual. According to the police, in Wesbank the 26's are the dominant gang, but in prison, the 28's rule. There is a very strong hierarchy, and each gang member is marked by tattoos which show his status (on the basis of stars).

> -The gangs, are that most black people or coloured people?
> *It's coloured. Here in Wesbank. They show you the number, all their bodies is full of numbers. Sometimes they can be 120 people. Sometimes it is more. 300. Even an old man who has kids and a family, they have a number. There is euh two: the 26's and the 28's. And the 27! And the Americans also. But isn't the 26's and the 27's and the Americans together? Like one?* (3, Congolese man)

Both gangs have there own territory. According to the police inspectors it's more or less like is shown of figure 28. But according to the interview with the police woman and with the Wesbank residents, the borders are more complex.

> *It's not like in other areas on that side of the line and on that side of the line, it's more... euhm, they might have a little shebeen in here or another thing and they might have a little no-man's-land.* (Police woman)

> *This side in the main road is the 28, that side is in between 28 and 26. And there is Score, so there is the 26 and here. And there is also 26 and 28s. And in Diep Water as well: 26-28. But this here, this is A-block, the most of the 28s are around here. That is the head house.* (Th.)

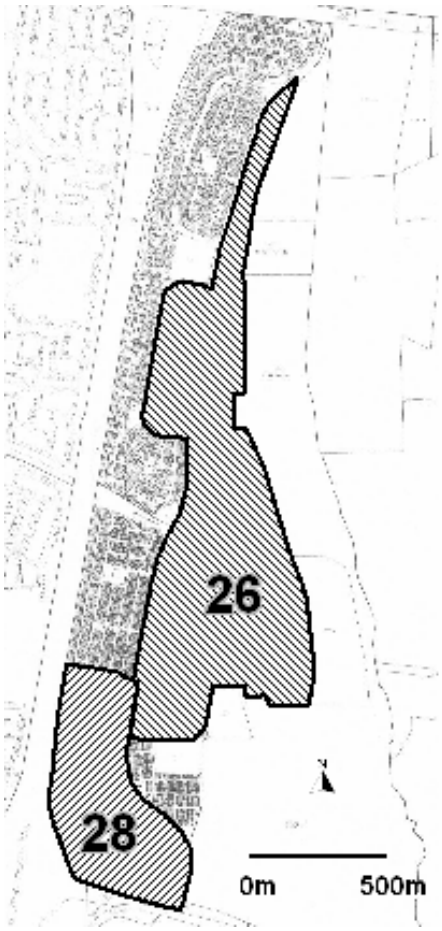

Figure 33: Gang turfs according to two Kuils River police inspectors

Striking is that the Wesbank residents often know much about the gangs, their head quarters, their members and their turfs. The leader of the 26's is a very known man all over Wesbank. His name is Vaughan Vester.

> *You must be careful not to go into details when you are talking. Especially when you are alone, like me. But we know who the gangsters are. They are spread all over Wesbank.* (6, f, c)

Ok, this place is like… I was staying here in D-block, so it's a lot of gunshots in the night and stuff like that. One drug dealer just stays next to this house here. His name is Vaughan, it's one of the big murderers here in Wesbank. (18, m, w)

We found this article in the Cape Argus, one of the important newspapers of the CMA:

'Gangsters will fall – and they'll fall hard'
Joseph Aranes & Yunus Kemp
October 22 2003

The untouchable "high flyers" of the criminal underworld are finally having their wings clipped. The police have labelled at least 50 gang leaders across the Western Cape as "high flyers" and since the beginning of the year have arrested at least a dozen, breaking the back of their crime networks. (...)

The strategy included a plan to deal with the entire crime network. Community Safety MEC Leonard Ramatlakane said the arrests were the result of an anti-gang strategy adopted by all the crime-fighting chiefs, who were on a ministerial monitoring committee. Other items high on the committee's agenda were the high murder rate and violence against women and children.

"But it will take time to resolve. It will also mean changing the socio-economic situation on the ground. "We are dealing with gangsterism as an alternative economy. The power that these high-flyers wield is almost Mafia-style and is quite frightening," said Ramatlakane. He praised individuals in communities for their part in the current successes of this anti-gang strategy. "We are getting a lot of co-operation and information from... communities." (...)

THE TOP CATCHES

[among other:]

Vaughan Stephen Vester, 33
Residence: Wesbank
Gang: Americans/26s.
Arrested: Out on bail.
Charges: Attempted murder, defeating ends of justice, arson.
Next court date: October 23.

Source:
Cape Argus
http://www.int.iol.co.za/

One of the major things the police officers we interviewed wanted to tell us, was that they had finally (again) arrested this big man from Wesbank. According to the newspaper the recent arrestation of the gang leader and 5 "runners" of the 26's in Wesbank happened in May 2005. They were arrested for murder on someone who wanted to leave the gang. More details -again- we found in the Cape Argus:

'My son was killed for leaving his gang'
Norman Joseph
May 12 2005

He was a gangster who sought to take control of his life by becoming an upright citizen and entrepreneur. So young Lucian Scheepers walked away from his Americans gang members in his Wesbank neighbourhood to start his own business, selling chains and other jewellery he bought at a Cape Town shop. But his former Americans gang members would not let him go. Led by a well-known "high-flyer", they allegedly hunted him for a year before stabbing him to death with screwdrivers and knives in his suburb. Scheepers was only 20 when he was stabbed several times in the chest and head on April 16. His distraught parents, Sharon and Henry Scheepers, said on Wednesday their eldest son died in hospital two days later.

Six men appeared briefly in the Kuils River magistrate's court in connection with the murder on Wednesday. Vaughan Fester, whom police labelled a "high-flyer", drug lord and Americans gang leader in Wesbank, appeared with Carl Kelly, Saiyuk Stevens, Jason Malgas, Riaan Fredericks and Shane Topley before magistrate Estelle Ellis and state prosecutor Mandla Dube, on charges of murder. (...)

Outside the court, Lucian's father, Henry Scheepers, described how his son, the eldest of three children, had left the Americans gang more than a year ago. "Because he refused to walk with them, they viewed him as opposing them." (...)

A large crowd of placard-wielding Wesbank residents shouted: "No bail for Vaughan Fester!" outside court.

Source:
Cape Argus
http://www.int.iol.co.za/

The fact that gangsters can be free again soon bothers people a lot.

> *Last week on Friday evening my father's brother ended up in hospital. Someone had hit him on his head with a beam. Wednesday he died, Saturday was his funeral. This was a big case, he was only 23 years old. The police found the man who did this, but he was in jail for only a couple of days. Now he is already running around freely.* (Marilyn)

24.3 Feelings of unsafety

Personal involvement in negative situations is a strong predictor of feeling of unsafety, whereas sense of community (example watching each others houses) plays a limited role in reducing it. The picture concerning the effect of social support is mixed (Zani, Cicognani, Albanesi 2001). According to Moser's (1992) conceptualisation, feeling of unsafety is multifaceted and includes affective, cognitive and behavioural components. The affective component is characterized by a subjective feeling of uneasiness felt by the individual in a particular environment or situation. This feeling is nurtured by 'knowledge' of criminal episodes (aggression) occurred in that particular place and by imagination of what could happen (cognitive aspect). Moreover, such information or impressions lead to the adoption of

a specific behaviour, like running away or avoiding the situation of place that is perceived as dangerous (behavioural aspect) (Zani et. al. 2001).

For a long time feeling of unsafety has been conceived as an individual 'emotional' response to environmental crime. However, such conception has been called into question by the evidence showing that feeling of unsafety is more widespread than actual criminal phenomena. Feeling of unsafety is higher among individuals that are less integrated into their community and among women (Zani et. al. 2001).

24.3.1 A curtailing of time-space prisms

It might not be a surprise that there is a huge feeling of unsafety in Wesbank. As evening approaches, spatial behaviour for many Wesbank residents – especially children, young women and the elderly – is confined to the home environment. Important is that these feelings of unsafety have a great impact on the everyday time-space paths of the Wesbank residents and drastically curtail their individual time-space prisms[45]. Following quotes demonstrate well how human spatial activity is often governed by limitations -authority constraints-, and not by independent decisions by spatially or temporally autonomous individuals.

The first thing people keep in mind is the time of going out on the streets.

> *I walk everywhere. And because that so much people know me, I'm not afraid. I'm only very careful in the evenings. When it's dark I never walk in the streets here.* (5, f, c)

> *(...) around here I feel safe, but I wouldn't walk here like ten in the evening, 'cause they rob you when you walk with your phone. They take it and stuff like that.* (7, f, c)

Another point is the displacement of activities to safer areas.

> -Where do you wash you clothes?
> *Most of the time I do it there in Kraaifontein, cause you can't like hang stuff on the line here, cause when you are back, it's gone*. (7, f, c)

> *No, I don't take my children to the parks, it's too dangerous because of the gangsters and the children missing. My children play in the house or next to it.* (15, f, c)

[45] See chapter 2.2.1 about Hägerstrand.

By using more efficient means of transport one reduces capability constraints, and in this way one attempts to bypass authority constraints.

> -So would you allow your children to go everywhere in the neighbourhood?
> *No, not everywhere. They only go from here to the shop and come back. The one has a bicycle* (1, f, c)

> -Do you sometimes go to the clinic?
> *Ooh, take taxi! The clinic is a nice walk from here, it's not far. But you're frightened, you can't go. Skollies are waiting for you on the street.*
> -So you are afraid to walk on the street?
> *Yea, take a taxi.* (10, m, x)

We've already mentioned that many neighbours watch each others houses when someone is gone. Burglary is such an important problem that many people consider it necessary that there is always someone in the house. This resuirement certainly limits the free movement of residents.

> *They break in, they stole the things, they stole the stove. All this, all the kitchen things, they steal it. You must have somebody to stay at home. If one is going out, one must stay home. When I'm going out, she has to stay home. We can't go both, you know.* (10, f, c)

> *I have to go there, today he's [her son] 21, I must go for the party there and I must look now for someone to put in the house to look after it. Or I come back and there is nothing, they took all the pots and so and they sell it for drugs.* (14, f, c)

It is remarkable that people adapt the time and place of their activities to reduce the risk of being robbed or attacked. They have to offer their freedom of movement for their safety(-feeling). Table 11 gives a short overview of the moving-patterns of the interviewees in the neighbourhood. We have clustered them on gender and age. What we can read from this table, is that especially younger women and the oldest woman are afraid to walk around in the neighbourhood. Middle-aged woman just avoid the most dangerous places.

16	E	f	21	Only to the shop, the clinic and to the church, only the main roads (safer), we stay at home a lot. Doesn't know the nearest playground
7	C	f	25 to 30	I don't walk around here
2	D	f	±30	to Score
1	B	f	30+	to the shop or taxi and back

9	E	f	37	I don't like to go from Score on to the South, it's a bit dangerous. A-block I won't go at night. But during the day, yes
15	A	f	±40	Not on the footbridge, not by D-block and not to the shebeens and around. Clinic, Score sometimes. I most walk in the Main Road because it's safe there
8	C	f	42	To A-block and E-block to family, to school and to the taxi to Kuilsriver, sometimes to the clinic
4	D	f	45	clinic, taxi, supermarket, school, all nearby
14	A	f	50	Knows the neighbourhood quite well, but takes the Main Road, which is the safest, to go to places.
17	A	f	52	to visit the elderly, not on the foot bridge!
6	C	f	50+	To Score, not on the bridge! I've never been to the sport fields, my children are grown up now.
5	D	f	50+	I walk everywhere. And because so much people know me, I'm not afraid.
12	E	f	50+	Not too much, certainly not in A section, with all the shebeens, that is too dangerous
13	E	f	±60	To the clinic, but it's not safe.
3	D	different m	20 to 35	It's only safe where they know you. Not in A-block. The barber knows people everywhere
18	E	2 m	±30	I'll go everywhere, anytime, but sometimes you have to be afraid (bridge)
10	C	m	40?	we don't walk, we're always busy here. If we want to walk we take a taxi, to Cape Town, where we like to walk
11	E	m	±40	

Table 11: Moving paths of the interviewees

24.3.2 Danger zones

Gang activity and certain danger zones restrict movement or impose alternate activity paths. Danger zones are found particularly on the sandy hills in the south-eastern border, on and around the overhead pedestrian bridge crossing the R300, around the Score supermarket and around shebeens and headquarters of gang leaders. Residents identify certain blocks of the settlement area as no-go areas, depending on where they live themselves. This fear of the less known places is mostly fed by gossip, which feeds the mentioned cognitive aspect of "what could happen". For non-users, preconceptions and established attitudes about places always outweigh direct experience. Once it has been developed, a mass-identity of a place will be maintained so long as it can be legitimated within the society[46].

On the next four maps, we show the danger zones or dangerous places that were mentioned by the Wesbank residents.

[46] See Part I, chapter 3.

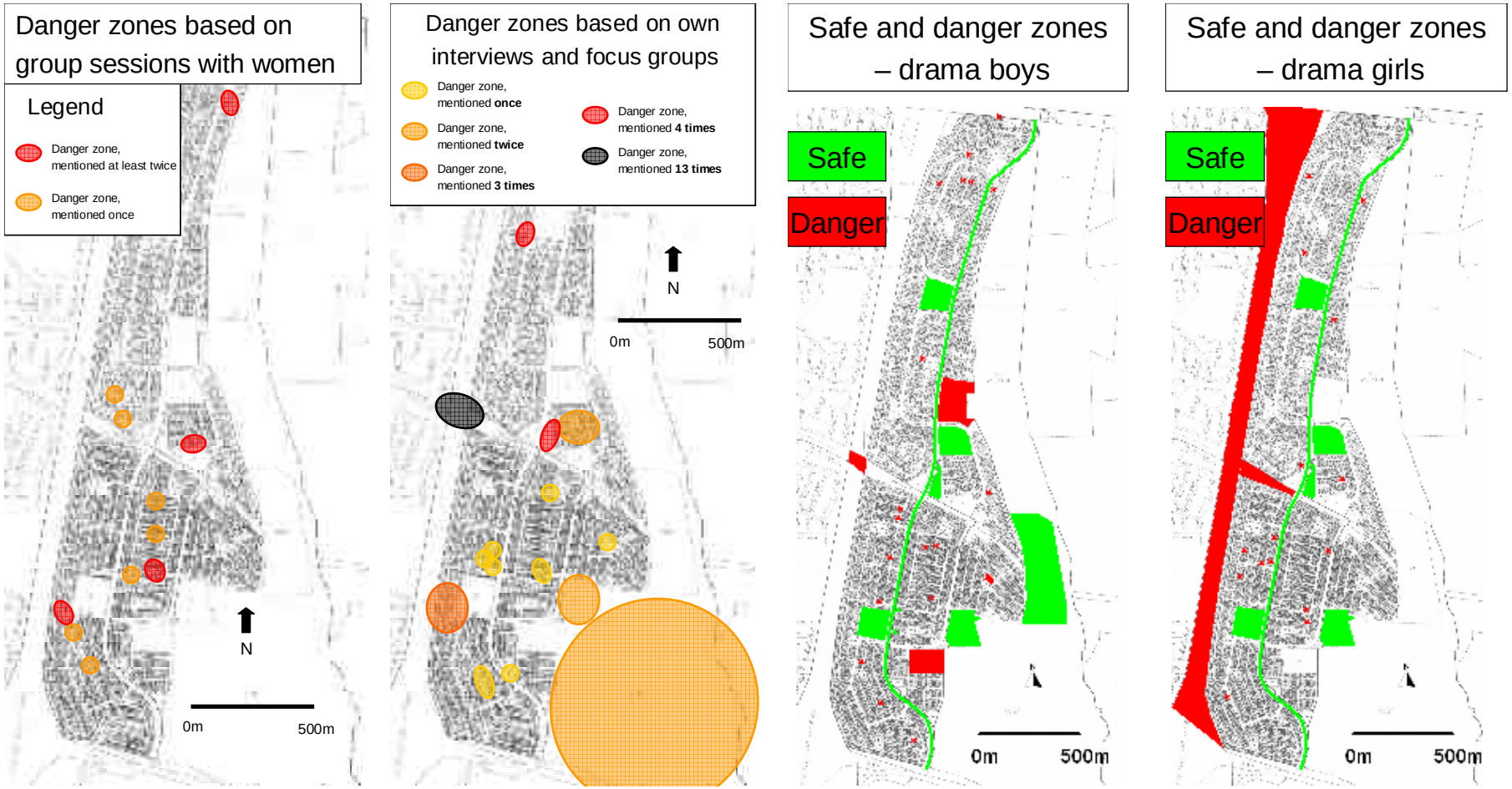

Figure 34: These maps show the danger zones that were pointed at by respectively Caroline Newton's group session members, by our own interviewees and focus group members, by the boys of our PAR (Max, Tom and Bart) and by the girls of our PAR (Tina, Daisy and Caroline). For the last two maps, we have just reproduces what they have coloured in red and green on a map – red standing for dangerous place, green for safe place. We will provide a synthetic map at the end of this part.

-Blocks

As can be seen in the previous table, many of the respondents think in block-terms if they think of safety. Interesting is that 1, 3, 9 and 12 feel unsafe in A-block, while 15 -who lives in A-block- would feel unsafe in D-block. Remark that A block lodges the head quarter of the 28's, while D-block houses the 26's.

> *Yes, there is places that I don't like to come. At the A-block, I don't like to walk there, because it's small, crowded, there's always trouble in that block. I don't like to walk around there.* (1, f, c, lives in B-block)

> *They say it's very rough there in E-block. I didn't go there.*
> -Why is it rough?
> *The gangsters.* (4, f, c, lives in D-block)
>
> -And are there places in Wesbank where you don't like to go?
> *In A-block, to walk across the shebeens at night.* (12, f, c, lives in E-block)

-Shebeens

Liquor and drug abuse are among the main generators of crime in settlements like Wesbank. It is contributing in the increase of robbery and a large number of rapes, robberies and (attempted) murders are committed in or near illegal liquor outlets (Kuils River Police 2004). The abuse of liquor makes victims soft targets. Police holds actions against illegal liquor outlets and there is an aggressive policing of liquor outlets in general.

One of our interviewers is a shebeen owner (n°0). Before he opened his shebeen, he used to have a fish shop. He openly admits that he does not have a licence for its liquor shop:

> *Oh, the fish was going very well! But now I can't do it, I can't sell it anymore.*
> -What was the reason for that?
> *Because I haven't got licence for it. Equally the same as the things I am selling here. I haven't got licence for it.* (10, m, x)

Shebeens are generally considered "the most dangerous places" (F2, f, c) in Wesbank.

> *Here in Wesbank I can go to the shebeen, but the police comes there, and you have a fine. But the police they have got the right because the places are not safe.* (3, Congolese man)

I don't like shebeens, 'cause there's where the problem starts: in the shebeens. (7, f, c)

Figure 35: Shebeen in Wesbank, C-block (own picture)

By a picture of this specific shebeen in C-block, the people in the focus group reacted like this:

F1: *A lot of things happen there, there's a lot of shooting there.*
F4: *It's very dangerous.*
F1: *If you are wanted, they are coming for you. There are a lot of gangsters.*

Another shebeen that was very known, was the shebeen that is the head quarter of the 26's:

In the back yard of Score there is a dangerous shebeen. It's very dangerous there, because why, there is a man, he's cold blooded, he don't think twice to kill you. (F1)

A common reaction of the residents towards shebeens is avoidance.

I don't go to shebeens, only to that were is also a shop. (4, f, c)

But I never go to such places as shebeens or anything else. (5, f, c)

Some of them can't sleep at night, because of a shebeen in the vicinity.

I live near a shebeen. It's people drinking and loud music, on Friday night I can't sleep, because of the loud music. (F7)

The thing that sets people against shebeens the most, is the bad influence the places have on the children.

In the weekend that kind of people in the shebeens they start swearing and screaming. And the problem, when you've got children... They all hear what they are talking about and they catch it up so quickly. (F4)

Under-aged children go to the shebeens. They are drinking, smoking dagga... Some of the mothers don't even know their children are in the shebeen. (F1)

There is a bad influence of the shebeens. From Friday until Sunday, girls meet there with their boyfriends. My little sister [who is 16] does the same thing. Some of them use 'tik'. (Marilyn)

We found this article in CONTACT, a municipal newsletter for Cape Town:

The 'Tik' time bomb

Tik. Tik. Tik. That's the sound of the time bomb that is fast becoming the biggest drug crisis of this generation. The number of people taking methamphetamine [a colourless crystal or powder that can be made of readily available materials, such as hydrochloric acid, sulphur acid, thinners, caustic soda, iodine and some brands of cough suppressant, some say of rat poison and sugar], better known as 'tik' or 'tuk', has soared, and in our city it is now more popular than any other drug.

Most of those addicted to tik are young – the average user is 19 years old, and more and more learners become addicted because tik is cheap and easy to get hold of. Dealers sell it in drinking straws for about R30 [€3,75] per straw, or divided into little pieces for as little as R2 [€0,25]. Learners can buy it with tuck shop money and smoke it before school or during breaks. Tik is put in a light bulb, heated and smoked through a pipe or straw.

Taken in even small amounts, it leads to increased wakefulness and physical activity and a sense of euphoria or well-being. No wonder it is becoming an epidemic. But it is dangerous – even deadly. Side effects include irritability, insomnia, confusion, tremors, anxiety, paranoia, and aggressiveness (gangsters call tik the 'war drug' because it makes them aggressive and fearless). Tik use lowers resistance to disease, increases heart rate and blood pressure and can damage blood vessels in the brain, causing convulsions. Some users become sexually compulsive, others trade sex for tik. There is a strong link between tik use and sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis and HIV.

Tik is extremely dangerous, extremely addictive and a huge problem in our city.

Source:
CONTACT
The newsletter for the staff of the City of Cape Town
no 20, August/September 2005

Tik use of children is a very big problem in Wesbank. One of our respondents (14, f, c) was organising information evenings for parents and children about the dangers of tik. But also other people -mostly mothers- had pointed on the tik problems.

One Saturday morning I was sitting in front of the door and I saw there – I swear – an eight years old, ten years and fourteen years old on the sport fields, "tikking". (...) I went to them and asked the one of eight what he was doing. He said "tik tik". I asked "Why do you do that?". He said: "I have to do it from them". (2, f, c)

Especially children, I don't worry about they big children, the big people. But the children: 9, 10, 11, 12, that's the age they are smoking. Smoking tik, smoking dagga, they're smoking just what they like to smoke: smoke cigarettes. You see. (4, f, c)

If we come back to the shebeens now, we have to nuance the point that all shebeens are hated and dangerous. As the police woman said, "one will find troubles where the shebeens are, but not all the things happen in the shebeens. Things don't always happen in the establishment. Maybe the violence or other kinds of incidences takes place on the way home, or people start fighting when they are home. Or maybe the people are going to buy alcohol in the shebeens and than drink together with the neighbours and then start fighting." Usually during the week the shebeens are not too active. If they are, police will close them down.

Some shebeens there is no violence like in 7e laan. (F1)

Opposite me there is an African woman selling beers, but I haven't got a problem, because they are not sitting there and drinking in the yard. They just buy the beers and go. It's very nice from her. Because otherwise they come fighting, arguing. (F4)

On the other hand, some people also understand that the shebeen owners just run their business to generate an income, because they do not have a job.

They use the wendy house as a shebeen now, to have a job, because otherwise they can't survive in Wesbank. (17, f, c)

-Pedestrian bridge

Figure 36: Pedestrian bridge (own picture)

F2: *You need it to go to Delft, to the day hospital. Some people need it to go to their work, but it's very dangerous.*

F4: *It's very dangerous for the people. Day and night there is always standing gangsters, waiting for you.*

F2: *They take your jewellery, everything.*

F4: *They always got a weapon with them, a knife*

F7: *or a gun.*

F2: *Nobody can see what's going on on top of that bridge.*

Conversation drawn from the first focus group discussion

As can be seen on figure 36, another very clear danger zone is the pedestrian bridge[47]. This is a bridge over the R300 highway. Important here is the difference in attitude between users of the bridge and non-users. Non-users usually base there attitudes about the bridge on stories they have been told, while users constantly accomplish the general images of the bridge with things they know out of their own experience. They invent strategies to cope with the risks of using the bridge. The attitudes and also the behaviour of the users are dynamic, more complex and ever changing.

> -Do you sometimes use the footbridge to Delft?
> *No, we don't use that. We take a taxi. We don't use the footbridge, it's too dangerous there. They kill you, they kill you straight away, they 've got no mercy, they want money.* (10, m, x)
>
> *No, that is a big problem. The bridge is a big problem, you know. There was people who run here, scared for the place, the bridge. They took his money, they robbed him and... all the things happen on that bridge, it's a big problem.* (14, f, c)
>
> -Do you sometimes use the footbridge to Delft?
> *No, I don't use that. It's too dangerous. Because my friend – they robbed my friend there on the bridge. If I have to go to Delft, I wouldn't use the footbridge.*
>
> *I used it (the bridge) once. But I don't like it there, because they say it's very dangerous. People get robbed there and stuff like that. So I don't usually use that bridge.* (7, f, c)

Some people can see things happening on the bridge out of their houses.

[47] That members of Caroline Newton's group sessions did not mention it, might be because they didn't count the footbridge as a part of Wesbank, or just because the footbridge was not drawn on the maps.

No, no! I don't go there. Because there they will rob you on that bridge. Lot's of robbing go on there. If I stand in my back door, I can see them. (6, f, c)

I am scared for that bridge, yes, 'cause from out of my house I can often see how they steal from the people there. (8, f, c, translated from Afrikaans)

People that have to use the bridge do it as few as possible or develop strategies to cross the place more safely.

(...) that bridge is not safe, not at all!
-Do you go there?
Euh sometimes. I've got friends staying in Delft. But if they come to me, I won't go to them. You see, because, I'm not scared of anything, but sometimes you have to be scared. You see, but that thing is not safe at all! That bridge. (18, c, f)

If you see men standing there, you don't know what will happen. My mom told me, she ran down to cross the R300. (F1)

One month ago, I know a lady. She was going for her pension. And she took the bridge, but it was a mistake. When she came down here, they were waiting for her. They tried to take everything from her, but she hit them and she ran away. You can't go alone here on that bridge, 'cause it's very dangerous. They take a lot of chances with the woman, but not with the men. (F4)

We had to put our golden necklaces in our mouth so that we could run. (F1)

But for my shop, I'm going to Delft, to Cash and carry, or Kuilsriver to Cash and carry. If I haven't got that much, not enough money and I need to go to the shop, I'm going to Delft. I just walk over the bridge and take someone with me for an escort. What I do, I never walk alone over the bridge. I always see that there are people behind me or in front of me or with me. You see. Although they don't go with me, I just see that I walk with them. You see? (5, f, c)

Interesting to know is that the bridge has been built quite recently by the government, because of the many accidents that happened with people that ran over the highway to go to Delft. Several children were killed in accidents like that on their way to school. The reaction of the police woman on the bridge problem is: "Look, we can't stay there 24 hours. Not on a

regular basis, it's more spread. If there are more complaints, we do have a neighbourhood watch. On Delft side there are also neighbourhood watches."

-Score supermarket

Figure 37: Score supermarket (own picture)

Score is the only supermarket in Wesbank. It is the only option people have to go buy something (except for the generally more expensive house shops) in their own neighbourhood. Many children are send alone to the supermarket, sometimes "with big money in their hands". The fact that people carry cash money with them, makes its surroundings an attractive territory for criminals.

F6: *Yes, Score is also very dangerous. There are gangsters, if you come out of Score, they rob you.*
F1: *In Score, many things happen. Once there was a man with a gun in Score. The people couldn't go out. I asked the security people of Score why they weren't doing anything. They are many people, with many guns and inside was only one man with one gun. But they say they couldn't do anything because they are not police.*
F7: *I don't go there because I'm wanted there by Score.*
F4: *Score they make a lot of money by people in Wesbank.*

Because especially when it's busy down by Score. I don't like to go to Score!
-Have you ever experienced some bad things there?
No, not yet. But if you come to Score, you can feel the vibe isn't … especially with the gangs here in Wesbank. (9, f, c)

Yea, there are a lot of skollies around there, but you must take your purse and hold it. (14, f, c)

-Schools

In Wesbank, there are 3 primary schools and 1 high school for the moment. According to the maps of the children of the drama group, the schools are havens of safety. However, some people don't feel right about the schools or their pupils, especially about the high school.

> *The high school, it's like a jail there, they raped two girls, on the school. One day they even had a fight with the teacher.* (F2)
> *There's too many gangsters on the school, there's more gangsters than children.* (F5)

> *The schools are alright, but if I had children I wouldn't put them in one of those schools. The education might be alright, I don't know, but when this children come out of school it's like gangsters and stuff like that. Shouting at each other, fighting and swearing and stuff like that.* (7, f, c)

> -Don't you like the schools in Wesbank?
> *It's not the school, it's the the children. I consider it safer if Jonathan goes to school in Eersterivier.* (12, f, c)

Some people find there is nothing wrong with the schools.

> *No, it's nice schools man! The schools are very nice, we was that time, five years ago, there were no schools here, but I go, the students come and look and tell us, but the high school, it's nice.* (14, f, c)

-Playgrounds

Figure 38: Playground (picture Caroline Newton)

There are not so many places for the children in Wesbank, although there are some poor playgrounds. But those playgrounds are not maintained and unclean. Moreover, often gangsters or youngsters from street gangs are hanging around there.

> -Do you sometimes use the playgrounds?
> *Yes, on a Monday I take them to the playgrounds, but not without me, because that's too dangerous for them.*
> -What kind of things happen on the playgrounds?
> *The children are fighting and the people, they are too… rude. And they want to ride on the stuff and the children don't get the chance.* (f, c)

> *The park in Diepwater. It's not so safe for the children in this park because the house over the park is a shebeen. The gangsters like to sit in the park.* (Th.)

> *Euh, it's good for the children. But you see, there is also a bad place for the children to play. Just around the corner there is a drug lord that stays there and just in the following road it's a smuggle house, shebeen. So I won't say it's a good place for the children to play, because it's all drugs going on there and so on, you see, that's basic all.* (18, m, w)

Some children did tell us they do go to the playgrounds alone, but not when it's dark and only if there are many other children.

-Open squares

Figure 39: Open square in Wesbank (own picture)

There are relatively many open squares left, spread all over Wesbank. They are usually very dirty and full of garbage and just lay there waiting for a function. On some of the squares the grass is standing very high. Together with a bad lightning, this causes a severe reduction of the visibility of what is going on on the field.

Many things happen there, you can't see. They rape the children there. There by D block, there is a Muslim school, there is an open field. It's very dark there, there is no light. A girl of 9 years old, she was raped there. (...) I don't trust the open fields, because many things happen there at night. You can't see, you only hear it. (F1)

Now the people break into the house and put the stuff all over the road, you can't see it, you see. Lying there, in between the grass, you can't see them. Because the children who where playing here now, a few days ago, they where playing in the grass and stuff like that. You don't know what's in there, there can maybe be snakes and stuff like that. (18, m, w)

-South-Eastern dune area

Figure 40: Dune area (own picture)

F4: *That's a killers place.*
F7: *There are weed smokers there.*
F1: *People go smoke there, but it's also rapers and killers there. 5 year old children, they are raped and dumped in the river.*
F6&F7: *I would go there, for wood.*
F1: *As I said, they don't take chances with men. It's only the women. Men are stronger, they can defend themselves better. Some of the children get drowned by the people. Two children of our church got drowned, the same day.*

For the same reasons, the dune area is a no-go place. Nevertheless, it used to be different there, as this woman tells:

If they could clean that and put a wire around the place, it would be very nice. It was a nice place when I moved here, because on Sunday afternoons people walk to the other side of the bushes and then they sit there and braai there, but now we can't do it anymore because we don't know what is happening there. In the night time it's very nice there, but now we can't do it anymore. (1, f, c)

This proves that places are not frozen scenes. Attitudes and feelings towards them can change a lot over time.

-Minibus taxi's and the new taxi rank

Figure 41: Wesbank's taxi rank (own picture)

The time we were doing our fieldwork in Wesbank, they were busy building a new taxi rank there. Actually there was nothing wrong with the old rank, but the purpose was to create space for SMME's[48]. One direct concern of a taxi driver was that the place would probably occupied by gangsters.

Because of a lack of public transport in Wesbank, many residents are dependent on the taxi's. This creates a certain position of power for the taxi drivers.

The first drama play that Max, Tom and Bart brought, was about a man in a minibus taxi. When the assistent of the taxi driver wanted to collect the money, it turned out that one of the passengers didn't have any money with him. The assistent called the driver to stop immediately and kicked the passenger out of the vehicle. He stole some things out of the pockets of the man, kicked him again, stepped back into the taxi and told the driver to drive away.



The taxi's are generally not a very safe mean of transport. They are often overcrowded and the drivers don't take the speed limits very particular. Especially in the South-Eastern corridor

[48] See chapter 16.1

of Cape Town, the vehicles are in a bad condition and owners often fight for their territory and passengers.

In Bellville (where we have to change taxi), Marilyn tells me about what happened to her some time ago in a taxi in Brackenfell station. She had stepped into a taxi that apparently didn't have a government licence. The driver of another taxi, which was legal, couldn't stand he was losing costumers because of that illegal taxi. A fight started between the two drivers, what caused a shooting. Marilyn was in the taxi and the driver wouldn't let her out. She screamed to let her out and that she was mother of two children, but they didn't let her go. Finally, she did get to the place she had to go, in that taxi. Next morning, the shooting was in the newspaper.

Participant observation with Marilyn
7/09/2005

25. Places and missing places – mental map of Wesbank

It became clear that in Wesbank, there are not many places for diversion, for youth as well as for the elderly. And if there are places, entrance is almost always restricted because of gang activity and safety reasons.

Related to these high crime levels and gang-related problems, according to its residents there is certainly one important place missing in Wesbank: **a police station**. According to the Kuils River police, policing areas at the moment are very large and difficult to police. Due to the growth of the population and expansion in low cost housing, fewer members are available for crime prevention. Until recently Kuils River police was responsible for the Wesbank area, but since July 2005 Mfeleni police has taken over the responsibility over the area. According to the two police inspectors we interviewed in Kuils River, the two major problems with this new police station for Wesbank are a lack of resources and a "race issue"[49].

> *A police station would be perfect for us, because now we have to wait for about 4 hours for a van to come here. One morning I saw a car standing here and I called them at 20 to 8. They came here at 20 to 4. I had phoned three-four times to come. It took them the whole day to come and see what's the problem with the car, cause the car wasn't from this town. (…)* (1, f, c)

> *Where is here a police station? One could have made one of these houses a police station. The gun pointing, the robbery...* (11, m, c), translated from Afrikaans)

[49] Mfuleni is a (former) 'black' area.

This is what Wesbank needs: a police station of its own. If there are problems then, we can just go to the station here. Now we have to go to Kuils River, and there they say we have to go to Mfuleni... This is a problem. (18, m, w)

F1: *Now the police of Mfuleni is taking over here. But I'm scared, they are very rude people.*

F4: *African. If there is a fight and you call them. In no time they are there and they take you at the back and hit you like this. It's not like coloured police.*

F1: *Our police [the coloured] goes to the people, tells them to buy their beer and then go home. But Mfuleni's police, no, they take the people and put them in Jail. Then the next day if they don't have money they must walk from jail to here. I prefer Kuilsriver Police.*

F6: *But it's not a problem who is nicer and who is not. What are you doing at ten o'clock on the street? What are you doing there?*

F5: *That's right. [translated from Afrikaans]*

F4: *But my daughter, she went to a friend, and they were talking on the corner of the street. Then the police came and they said: "Hey, what's wrong with you, you must go home!". They were just talking! And he said: "If you can't go home, I must put you in the van". And she started running home.*
They are very strict.

Conversation drawn from the first focus group discussion

But criminality is not the only reason for a lack of relaxation possibilities in Wesbank. A lack of integrated planning has reduced possibilities for the youth and in that way it has itself stirred up criminality.

The **community centre** that was spoken about in chapter 16.1 never came there. On an open field, next to the Score supermarket, there were put two containers as a first step, but now they are abandoned and nothing has been realised.

When they built Wesbank, there were containers for letters, it was their post office. That's what they have used that container for. (18, m, w)

Figure 42: "Temporary community centre" (own picture)

The **clinic** that Wesbank has is actually also an emergency solution and is housed in the changing rooms of what should have become a nice sport ground.

> *(...) the clinic that we have, is not good. We have to wait far too long there. In winter it's terribly cold, sometimes we have to stand and wait outside.* (2, f, c)

> F4: *I go there with my grandchildren*
> F5: *I don't. Sometimes they haven't got a medicine for your children.*
> F1: *They just tell you to mix some water with sugar, salt, ... They are rude with you. You can die there, you must sit and wait if there were people before you.*

> *Old people that have to come to the day hospital, they have to wait 2-3 hours to get in there, sometimes it's already too late then.* (11, m, c)

As already mentioned, the neighbourhood could still do with a few more schools. Other facilities that seem to be lacking are affordable **crèches**.

> *That crèche, in the back is a shebeen. The crèche is 220 rand a month, it's too expensive for us. I send my child to Elsies River. It's only 50 rand there.* (F5)

As we have also mentioned before, the **playgrounds** are undersized and below par. Most of the parents don't want their children to go there and sometimes there is more youth gangs hanging out than children.

Some of the houses (mostly in C-block) have **driveways**. Those are nice areas for the children to play. Parents consider it safe, because it is close to the house so that they can keep an eye on their children.

Figure 43: a driveway in Wesbank (own picture)

Another place that we didn't mention yet thoroughly is the **river**.

> *The view over the river is so nice here. I don't complain about that, but the only thing I complain about is the sewerage [just in front of her house is a building where all the effluent of Wesbank comes together]. In summer it smells terribly! You see those big flies all over, then they are flying here in the street. There are also snakes coming out of the river, where the children play. It's dangerous. Cobra's, the yellow ones.* (2, f, c)

A last important place in Wesbank is the **Main Road**. As can be seen on the maps drawn by the children, the Main Road is considered the safest route to take if you have to go somewhere.

> *We always take the Main Road if we need to go somewhere. There is always people going up and down. There is the cars, the taxi, the police, it's more safe in the Main Rd. Between the houses are gangsters, they take money from the children.* (F4)

On the next map we give an overview of the 'facilities' in Wesbank. Spaza shops are not mentioned on the map, but shebeens are. This map is based on maps drawn in Caroline Newton's group sessions with 'coloured' as well as Xhosa women from Wesbank. Remark that not all the shebeens are mentioned (this can be seen in comparing with the maps drawn by our drama group and by the danger zones indicated by our interviewees). On the second map, we have drawn a synthetic 'mental map' of Wesbank, including danger-zones, watch-out-zones and meeting places (the size of the symbols simply corresponds to the size of the

area to which the symbol corresponds), as well as opportunities and needs. These needs are not strictly place-bound, but their placing can be seen as an example.

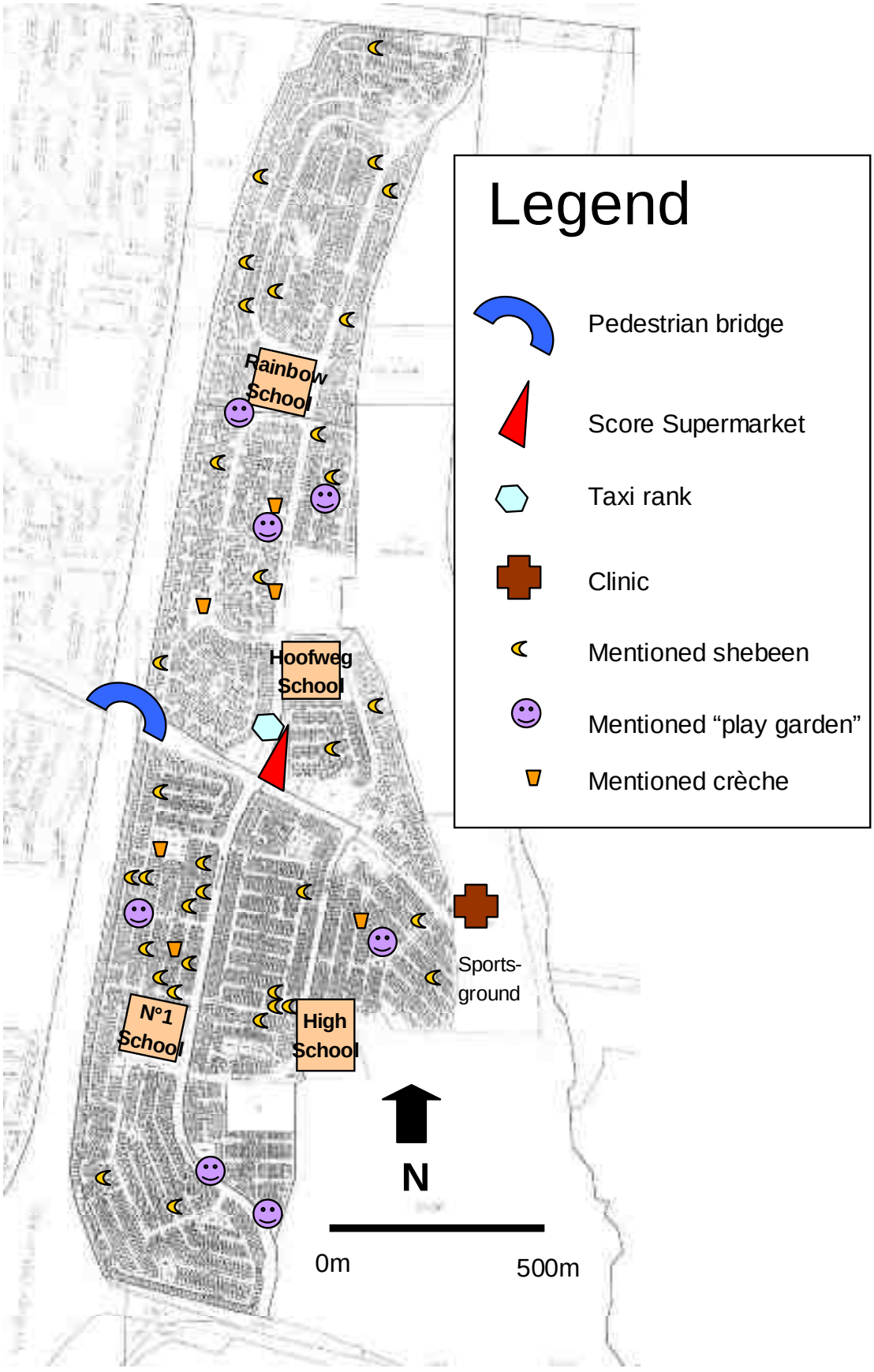

Figure 44: Facilities in Wesbank, based on Caroline Newton's group sessions (own design)

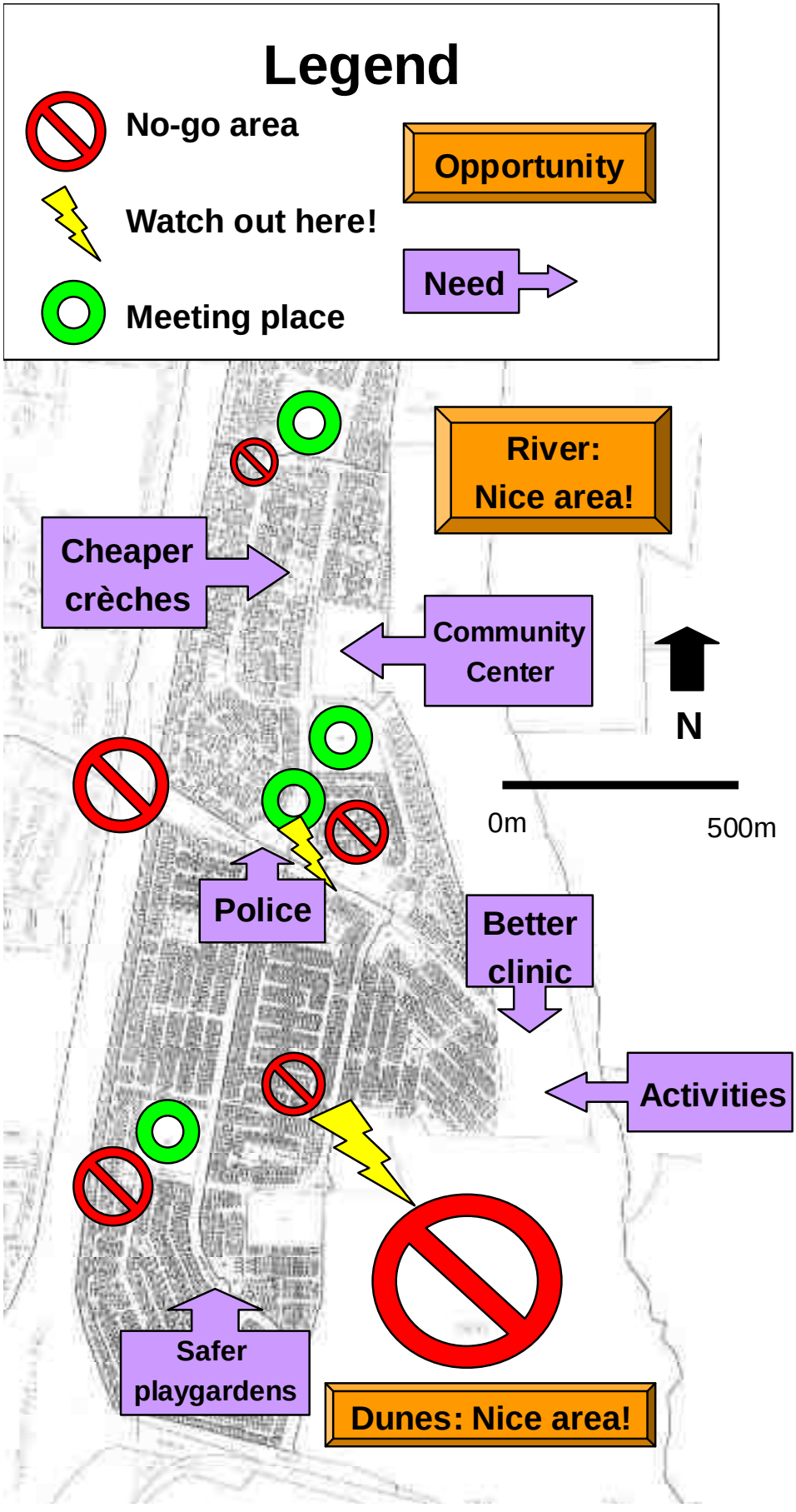

Figure 45: Synthesis of respondents' mental maps of Wesbank (own design)

26. Conclusion of the analysis

	Place	Mobility
Public	**Agora**: **LACKING OR DANGEROUS** (dunes, open squares, playgrounds, around Score)	**Passage**: **QUITE TO VERY DANGEROUS - WATCH OUT-** (taxi rank, streets) **OR NO-GO AREA'S** (pedestrian bridge) *SOMETIMES SUPERFICIAL CONTACTS POSSIBLE*
Semi-public	**Living environment**: **+/- SAFE** *POSSIBILITIES FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTACTS* (schools, crèches, driveways, own street)	**Parochial space**: **LACKING, NO ACTIVITIES** (sports grounds) **OR TOO DANGEROUS** (shebeens)
Private	**House/home**: **SAFEST, BUT NOT COMPLETELY SAFE** *BAD QUALITY, TOO SMALL AND NOT COSY*	**Mobile or temporary living spaces**: **LACKING**

Table 12: Synthesis of the places in Wesbank
(design partially based on van der Wouden 2002)

In this table, we have made a synthesis of the places in Wesbank and the meanings people give to them. A detailed explanation of the table can be found in chapter 23.3 .

The first thing we have drawn on in this analysis are the housing conditions of the residents. We have proven here that a **house** doesn't always mean a **home-place**. In Wesbank many of the dwellings are more 'a place to survive' than a 'home', although the houses are often the centre of the resident's everyday life. By extending their houses, tidying them up and by marking their territory (it's their own place!), people try to make the miserable houses more of a home... but the lack of privacy and security does not make this easy. Contacts in each others houses only occur among true friends and only when the house is not too cheerless.

We can't say people in Wesbank have a very strong feeling of togetherness, but on the scale of the **living environment** (a few houses or one's own street), they often do have quite strong neighbourhood contacts. On this scale, there is a positive attitude towards helping each other to tackle problems of poverty, lack of services and criminality.

On other scale levels, **meeting places are very scarce and there are few activities** (figure 46, right side) organised to build up social capital. In addition, the high crime levels and flourishing gangsterism have important impacts on feelings of unsafety in these places. These feelings are concentrated around a number of 'danger zones', stipulated by the measure and content of information available about these places. People develop certain attitudes towards the danger zones on their mental map and develop strategies to cope with the places, mostly this contains "avoiding when possible". Most important danger zones in Wesbank are the pedestrian bridge and in and around shebeens.

We could describe many of the residents as "**no-other-choice-people**": they are resigning by the situation of the house and the neighbourhood they live in. Many of them do not like to stay in Wesbank, and the **economical situation of the neighbourhood is very bad** (figure 44, left side). There is a big lack of opportunities. Together with the lack of affordable transport, this has led to huge unemployment.

The biggest lack for the people in Wesbank is a police station that could deal with the gangsterism. **Criminality** (figure 44) is the most important problem in the neighbourhood and it sharply limits the daily prisms of the residents (Hägerstrand, chapter 2.2.1). On the other hand, flourishing gangsterism origines in bored and poor youth.

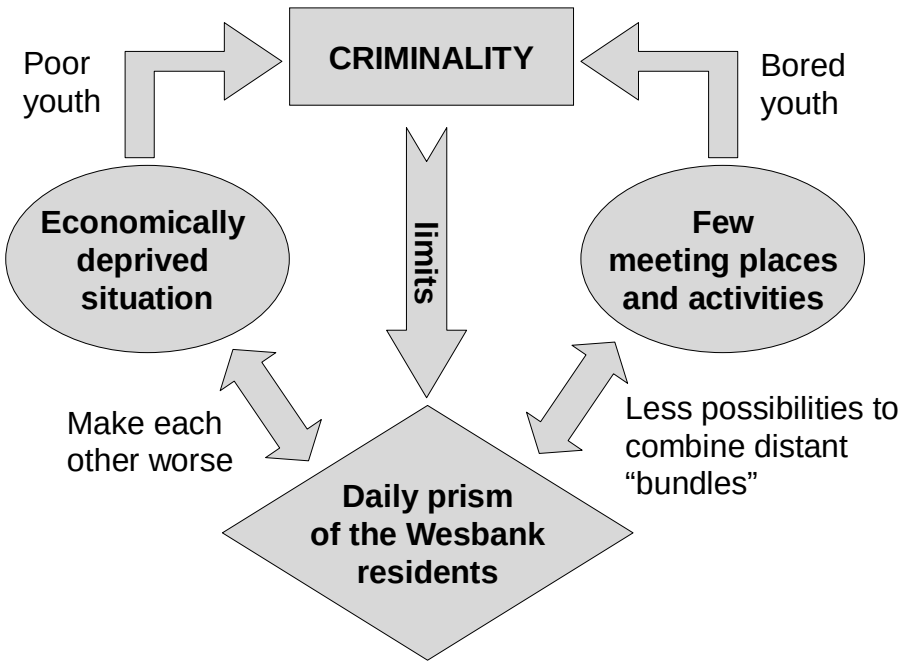

Figure 46: Synthetical scheme of the reasons and impacts of flourishing criminality (own design)

This analyses shows how macro-economic situations (for instance the general presence of poverty in this ‘unprivileged area’) and the meso-level of the city government and her planning and approach towards this neighbourhood have considerable impacts on activities in and meanings of places on the micro-scale level.

Part V
Conclusion

Places have always been central in the discipline of geography. Behaviouralists as Hägerstrand started to stress research about the space of everyday life, but in a very neutral way. Later, in humanistic geography, place became a centre of meaning and a basis for human interaction. Marxist, feminist and new cultural geographers have shown us how places are socially constructed and structuration theory has pointed at the dialectic relationship between these social structures and the acting individual. Places are thus both medium and outcome of these micro-macro interactions.

Our research has revealed the importance of seemingly mundane, but meaningful places in everyday life. In this thesis we have been looking at the place-concept with the perspective of different disciplines. Concepts such as sense of place and place identity have profound relevance in understanding the construction (and reconstruction) of social reality and the people-place relationships that exist within it. Places can be seen as dynamic landscapes of meaning within which individuals and groups establish rich social and psychological connections. Individual experiences and mass identity (preconceptions and established attitudes) complement each other in creating place-identities.

An important lack in people-place literature (especially of humanistic geographers) is the situation of relationships with place within a larger socio-cultural, political and economic context. As we have mentioned, place is a social as well as it is a mental construct and place-identity should therefore not just be seen as the outcome of voluntary acts of self-creation. Its political and collectively determined dimensions should be emphasized as well.

An ethnographic and discursive approach was chosen to highlight these individual ánd collective practices that form, reproduce and modify people-place relationships, and to make these relationships operational in our empirical research. Their methodologies disclose the links between individual constructions of place-identity and relations of power. The qualitative methods that were used during our field work and in our analysis are embedded in a hermeneutical philosophy of science, searching for interpretation and understanding of social reality. A multi-method approach made triangulation possible in order to enhance the credibility of our results.

In part III of this thesis, we examined the specific macro- and micro-situation of our research area - the South African post-apartheid township, Wesbank. South Africa is clearly still carrying the various burdens of her apartheid past. Notwithstanding the efforts in the realm of the RDP, significant discrepancies in terms of socio-economic status, housing patterns, education, access to recreation facilities, schools and health services, still exist between the different racial groups – or should we say socio-economic groups? GEAR, South Africa's contemporary neo-liberal macro-economic policy, has failed in reducing the high incidence of poverty and levels of unemployment in the country. The gap between the rich and poor is increasing, which has -indeed- led to argue that the main lines of divide in South Africa are not so much race as class

Desegregation invariably produces a re-organisation of space and place, but also of the self and the other. On a psychological level, desegregation processes have forced people to re-evaluate their place in the socio-spatial order. The loss of group distinctiveness and the proximity of difference produce anxiety, tension and a reassertion of inter group boundaries. What we see is that -also in people's minds- new group classifications arise, which replace or complete the 'racial' classifications of apartheid.

Apartheid's skewed socio-spatial distribution of personal and institutional resources (for instance basic services like police stations), together with flourishing gang activity, strongly impacts on fear of crime. This clearly is the case in Wesbank, where post-apartheid housing policy and her lack of integrated planning, have even worsened the situation. Even though the housing plan made provision for public buildings (a multi-purpose centre, a clinic, ...) and business premises, few of these public services have been realized. The importance of a market place, or the street as a social meeting place has been totally ignored. Social and economic consequences of inadequate planning - for instance a lack of job opportunities and meeting places, which keep on turning the poverty cycle - have been completely ignored, so that criminal activities are rampant.

With criminality as the most dramatic problem in Wesbank, feelings of unsafety are the main generator of place-identity. Wesbank's monofunctionally planned space has become a collection of meaningful places - mainly danger zones -, towards which different attitudes and behaviours are being developed. Constraints imposed by gangsterism, reduce the sizes of individual daily prisms in such a way, that the social and economic situation of the place still worsens, so that crime levels shoot up even more.

This thesis has clearly shown how macro-economic forces of neo-liberalism and the forces of an apartheid heritage, together with a monofunctional and thoughtless planning with little integration in the social and economic spheres of life, have profound impacts on the micro-level, and so, on the nature of people's everyday lives and experiences.

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Appendices

1. **Ethical statement**

2. **Consent form**

3. **Questionnaire**

RESEARCH ETHICS STATEMENT

As some of the gathered information may be strictly personal and delicate, ethical considerations are of cardinal importance. Confidentiality, informed consent and avoiding exploitation, hurt or harm to the participants are the relevant aspects.

To be sure that every participant who will be interviewed knows what the research is about and understands that the collected material will be kept anonymous and strictly confidential, a consent form will be signed before every interview. There will be assured that no names will be used in the report. Recorded data will be kept in secure storage, will only be used by myself and will be destroyed after the final report has been finished (May 2006). If participants would want to quit the interview, they know they can do this at any time and without any negative consequence.

Participants will be allowed to take a look at the final report in 2006. They can feel free to give (written) comments on the final results of the thesis.

I also undertake to ensure that my research does not lead to the exploitation, hurt or harm of the participants involved.

Sarah Meys

Consent form for research project about "urban structuration and the influence on community"
- undertaken by Sarah Meys in 2005

I hereby voluntary agree to participate in the **research project**, which has been explained to me properly so that I feel that I understand it. I understand that I may stop my participation at any time without any negative consequence. I understand that my **name will be kept strictly confidential** and that all information and opinions I give will be kept **anonymous**. If a tape recorder is used, all tapes will be destroyed after the research has been finished and before that, tapes will only be used by Sarah Meys and will be kept strictly confidential.
If I want to see the **final report**, I can take a look at it next year from July on, at the faculty of Arts in UWC.

Date:

Signature participant:

QUESTIONNAIRE: Wesbank
Date:
Time:
Place (map):

The Italic questions are not asked, but just observed.

In general

How would you present yourself to someone you don't know yet?
What would you tell them about yourself?
(what do they start with, do they mention place of birth, place of living,...?)

Position in the household*	*Gender*	Age
Me		

Place of living? MAP
How do you call this place?
Where exactly is your house? MAP

What is your mother tongue?
Do you speak any other languages?

State of health:

Education: no schooling
Some primary
Completed primary
Some secondary
Grade 12 / Std 10
Higher

Where did you go to school? MAP

“Evaluation of the house”

Since when do you live here?

Do you rent or own your house or do you use it from someone else?

-Who is the owner? Private (where does he live?) - public? Do you have a contract with the owner?

-Did you build it yourself? Is it on your own ground?

How did you get this house?

What do you think about the quality of your house? What is positive, what negative?

What do you think of the placing of your house (near river, near main road, …) ?

Do you see this house as a temporary stay or would you like to stay living in this house?

What would you like to change about your house?

(description of the house: sociable, safety, comfort,…

if possible: pictures)

“Evaluation of the neighbourhood”

What is the reason you came to this neighbourhood or this house in particular?

Did you have friends or family living here before you?

Do you have friends or family who came here because you came to live here?

How many people in Wesbank do meet regularly?

How many of them would you call true friends?

Where did you meet them?

Do you have more friends living in another neighbourhood?

Where did you live before you came here? In what kind of house was that?

Did you have any other options to move house to? If yes, where? MAP. Why didn’t you move to that place?

Do you like living in Wesbank?

Why (not)?

How do you call this place?

Would you call yourself a Wesbanker/…? A Capetownian? An immigrant? Why?

If you meet someone, do you like telling that you live in Wesbank?

If they ask you where you live, what do you tell them?

Do you see this neighbourhood as a temporary stay or would you like to stay living here?

Which places in the neighbourhood do you use? MAP
Do you like going there?
Which places don't you like? MAP
Do you have to go there or do you avoid those places?
If you could change anything about this neighbourhood, what would you change?
What do you think is the most important problem that should be solved to make this neighbourhood a better place to live?
Do you think you can help in making this neighbourhood a better place to live? Why? Why not?

Do you feel safe in this neighbourhood? Where not and why? MAP

Observation: What is the function of the street? The park? The school? …

Later on:

Knowledge of places

Do you know these places? (photographs!)
How many times did you visit them? Why?
How do you feel about those places?
Which people come to those places? Why?

If you could really chose freely where to live… where would you like to live (in this neighbourhood and in general)? Why?

Neighbourhood contacts

How many people of the same 'ethnic group' do you know in this neighbourhood? Where would you draw the frontiers of that neighbourhood?
Where do you meet them? MAP
During which activities do you meet them? How often? Why do you meet them there?
Did you know them before you moved here?
Do you meet them more often than your other neighbours?
When you moved house to this neighbourhood, did you want to meet your neighbours, did you think it was important to know them? Why / why not?
How long did it stay that way? What has changed when time went by?
Did you have the feeling being accepted by your new neighbours? Did you feel welcome here? What was the reason for this? Where did you meet them for the first time?
(How long did it stay that way? What has changed when time went by? Do you now feel welcome everywhere?)

Do you have a lot of contact with the ‘other’ people of the neighbourhood?
Do you think that is necessary?
Where do you meet them and during which activities do you meet them? How often? Why do you meet them there?
Did you know them before you moved here?
Do you feel it is different to meet them? Do you think they differ?
Do they have certain habits you are not used to? What kind of habits? Where?
Does that annoy you? Why/why not?
Which of those differences most often cause problems?

(differences in education / in landholding / in wealth / in social status / between men and women / between younger and older generations / between long-term and recent residents / in political party affiliations / in religious beliefs / in ethnic or racial background / ...)

What kind of problems? Have those problems ever led to violence? Where? MAP
Does the neighbourhood have arrangements about that?

Which households do you meet most? Where do they live, where are they from? What is the same and what is the biggest difference between you and them? What do you do together?

Do you think there are places where certain people / groups better not come? Where and why?
Are there places in the neighbourhood, which you think of that you don’t belong there? Where? Why / why not?
Are there places, which you think of that other people don’t belong? Where? Why shouldn’t they come there?
Where do you feel home? Where would you meet your friends? Why there?

Would you link criminality to a certain group? Which one? Why do you think that? What should be done about it? Do you fear them? Do you link it with a certain place or route? MAP
Do you notice differences in financial capacity of (a) certain group(s)? What do you think is the reason for this?

Is there a kind of community organisation in this neighbourhood? Is it linked to a certain place?
Are there common activities organised with the neighbourhood? Which? Where?
Does everyone come there? Who doesn’t? Why not?

How strong is the feeling of togetherness or closeness in this neighbourhood, on a scale from very distant to very close?

Where are the boundaries of that neighbourhood?

Suppose someone in the neighbourhood had something unfortunate happen to them, such as a father's sudden death. Who do you think they could turn to for help in this situation?

(no one / family / neighbours / friends / religious leader or group / community leader / business leader / police / family court judge / employer / political leader / mutual support group / ...)

Did you ever end up in such a situation?

And if they suffered an economic loss (job loss). In that situation, who do you think would assist him/her financially?

no one / family / neighbours / friends / religious leader or group / community leader / business leader / police / family court judge / employer / political leader / mutual support group...

Did you ever end up in such a situation?

If your house would burn down, where would you go? Who will support you?

How much do people trust each other in this neighbourhood, on a scale from very much to very little?

If you sudden had to go away for 1 or 2 days, who would take care of your children? Where would they go?

Who would keep an eye on your house?

If you are cooking and you run out of sugar, would you ask one of your neighbours to lend some?

Do you think people in this neighbourhood are always interested in their own welfare?

Activities and functions of space (work – services – recreation – living)

Do you have a job? Does your partner have a job? Does someone else of the household have a job?
What kind of job is it and where do you do it?
How did you get the job and since when do you have it?
What was your previous job and where was it?

Can you easily get work in this neighbourhood? Where? Do you find working in your own neighbourhood important? Why?

If you don't have a job, what do you do all day? Where do you spend your time?

Can you describe me a normal weekday?
Do you do different things during the weekends?

Where do you get your -vegetables?
-meat?
-shoes?
-a T-shirt?
-furniture?

Why do you go there?
Do all the neighbours get it in that way? If not, where do they get it and why?

Where can you use a phone? Why do you need it? Do you need it often?

Where do you wash your clothes?

Where will you let take care of your hair? Who helps you with that?

Where do your children go to school?
Do they only meet their classmates at school? Where else?
Do you notice a difference in social contacts of your children and your generation (and perhaps an older generation)?
Do you know the parents of your children's school friends?
Do your children have hobbies? Where do they do it?
Where do they go to play?

Are they member of an organisation or are they part of a certain group that gets together regularly (religious, sports, music, ...)? What kind of group, where do they meet each other and how often?

Do you go to church or another religious meeting sometimes? Where? How often?
Are you member of such or another group?

neighbourhood committee / religious group / professional group / political group / cultural group / financial or saving group / education group / health group / sports group / youth group / ethnic-based community group / ...

Where do you come together?
Who are the other members of this group?

neighbours / family / ethnic or linguistic group / ...

What are the most important groups to your household? Why is that?
How does one become a member of such a group?

born into the group / required to join / invited / voluntary choice / ...

Who are the leaders of this group? How did they become leaders?

Where would you go to relax? Why would you go there?

House moving history and origin

How many times have you moved house yet?

Could you describe your 3 last removals?

Where did you live before you came here?

When and for **how long** have you been living there?

How did you **end up there**?

Did you have **friends or family** living here before you?

Did you have friends or family who came to live there because you lived there?

Did you like to live there? Why/why not?

Did you feel **home** there?

In **what kind of house** did you live and with how many? What was the quality of your previous house?

House or brick structure on a separate stand or yard

Traditional dwelling/hut/structure made of traditional materials

Flat in block of flats

Town/cluster/semi-detached house (simplex, duplex)

House/flat/room in backyard

Informal dwelling/shack in backyard

Informal dwelling/shack NOT in backyard

Room not in backyard but on a shared property

Caravan or tent

Private ship/boat

What kind of environment did you live in (village, near a city, in a city, ...)?

Did you like to live in that environment? Why/why not?

What was the **reason you moved away**?

Where did you **grow up**? What is your **place of birth**?

Where are your **parents and grandparents** from? (and your partner / the parents and grandparents of your partner?)

Contacts with former neighbourhoods

Do you still visit your former neighbourhood?

How often?

Which people do you visit?

Which places do you visit?

What is the reason for your visits?

Do you keep contact in another way?

Do your former neighbours visit you? How often?