

BLACK URBANIZATION IN NATAL/KWAZULU: 1980–2000

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Black Urbanisation in South Africa

The impact of apartheid inspired policies on Black urbanisation can be clearly detected in demographic data revealed from an analysis of the census. In the first place, this has had consequences on the level of urbanisation enjoyed by various population groups. Whereas the national level of urbanisation for Whites, Coloureds and Indians was 88, 76 and 91 percent in 1980, this was 33 percent for Blacks.

Secondly, Simkins (1982:115), has demonstrated that South Africa's overall level of urbanisation was lower than that in other countries, which had reached comparable levels of economic growth. The average in the countries examined was 59 percent, compared with the 47 percent level in South Africa. Simkins (1982:177) goes on to show that "influx control regulations are keeping between 1,5 and 3 million Blacks out of 'White' urban areas, in the sense that the Black population would increase by this number in the short to medium term, if these controls were abolished."

Thirdly, as Table 1 below indicates, South Africa's overall level of urbanisation has been virtually stagnant since 1960, in marked contrast to other Third World countries which are also experiencing rapid population growth.

TABLE 1 : Urbanisation Levels in Twelve Third World Countries, 1960 – 1980

Country	Urban Population		annual growth %	
	% of total population 1960	1980	1960	1980
Kenya	7	14	6.6	6.8
Nigeria	13	20	6.6	6.8
Tanzania	5	12	6.3	8.3
South Africa	47	47	0.03	0.03
India	18	22	3.3	3.3
Indonesia	15	20	3.8	3.6
Nepal	3	5	4.3	4.7
Philippines	30	36	3.9	3.6
Bolivia	24	33	4.1	4.3
Brazil	46	65	4.8	4.3
Columbia	48	70	5.2	3.9
Mexico	51	67	4.8	4.5

Source : World Bank (1979); Hardoy and Satterthwaite (1981 : 199); Horrel (1981).

Do these factors indicate the effectiveness of the Government's urbanisation policy of preventing Black urbanisation? Does it mean that South Africa's Black urbanisation has been stopped? One difficulty in accepting this reality, is how the expansion of the economy and of urban employment during the past 20 years, is to be accounted for. Another difficulty, is explaining the conspicuous and rapid growth of informal or squatter settlement around many towns and cities in this region. In Durban, for example, our research at the University of Natal estimates that there are well over 1 million people who inhabit informal settlement there alone.

A partial answer to these questions can be gleaned by separating urban Black population growth rates for 'white' South Africa and the Homelands. Between 1951 and 1980, this population grew from 2,3 million to 4,9 million in 'white' South Africa, an annual growth of 2,6 percent, compared to a growth of 24,3 percent during the same period in the Homelands. This very high growth rate is derived from the fact that the number of urban Black people in urban areas of the Homelands, was numerically small in 1960. However, the same general trend can be found in the 1970–1980 period. In this case, the growth in 'white' areas is actually slightly smaller at 2.1 percent, but the growth in the Homelands remains comparatively high at 6.4 percent. What is happening is that urban Black populations in 'white' South Africa are growing at no more than expected natural increases, whilst the same population in the Homelands is increasing through the combined process of natural growth **and** migration. The presence of a large migration component clearly indicates that Black urbanisation has not been stalled, but that it is being contained within the boundaries of the Homelands.

Black Urbanisation in Natal-KwaZulu

The 1980 census estimates the total Black population of Natal-KwaZulu to be 4,7 million, of which just over 1 million are urban. This gives an urbanisation level for the region of 23 percent. This level of Black urbanisation, however, was thought to be unrealistically low. This is because it reflects on the method of urban population classification which regards 'urban' populations as being those resident in areas which have some form of local authority. This results in a significantly large number of people who have clear urban linkages, being classified in the census as 'rural' people. Secondly, the census of urban Black populations in large towns and cities like Durban and Pietermaritzburg, do not correspond to figures obtained

from detailed aerial surveys, which includes informal settlement populations living on urban peripheries. For these reasons, adjustments are necessary to urban/rural population classifications, and this has the effect of increasing the level of Black urbanisation in this region to around 35 percent. This raises the estimated urban Black population given in the 1980 census, to about 1,5 million (Haarhoff, 1984).

Of this revised urban Black population, 85 percent are concentrated within the vicinity of the four major urban areas of this region, namely : Durban, Pietermaritzburg, the towns of Northern Natal and Richards Bay. Of this urban population, 65 percent is claimed by Durban, emphasising the domination of this city in the region.

The role of the Homeland in the process of Black urbanisation can be shown to an extent, by examining the spatial distribution of this Black urban population. Overall, about three quarters of the total Black population is concentrated in KwaZulu, on 40 percent of the land area. Roughly 70 percent of the Black urban population is similarly concentrated in the Homeland, the majority located in close proximity to established towns in Natal. What this indicates is the greater concentration of both the total Black population, and the Black urban population in KwaZulu, the role that the Homeland is playing in the Black urbanisation process in this region, and the spatial consequences of apartheid policies.

These figures roughly sketch out the situation pertaining in 1980, but what of the future? How large will the Black population of this region be by the turn of this century, what numbers will be urbanised, and where will they be located? Population projections have provided an indication.

Increases in the size of urban populations have two sources : natural increase and migration. Table 2 provides the results of a series of Black population projections for the year 2000. The following summary points need be noted:

1. Assuming the unlikely event of no further migration between rural and urban areas of the region, natural population alone will increase the total Black population from 4,7 million in 1980, to about 8 million in the year 2 000. Although this gives an indication of the magnitude of the Black population increase which can be anticipated, the migration assumption, is of course, totally unrealistic. (No migration assumption in Table 2).

2. Assuming then that migration continues through to the year 2 000, at the same rate as that which pertained during the period 1970–1980, the impact on urban areas becomes more dramatic. The Black urban population would increase from 1,5 million to 3,4 million. However, questions arise about the extent to which even these assumptions can be accepted. Two factors create some doubt. First, the resulting level of urbanisation at 42 percent, is much lower than that being predicted by urban scholars and demographers.

Second, the rural population would be required to increase from the 1980 figure of 3 million, to around 5 million by the year 2 000 (see migration assumption no. 3 in Table 2). Can Black rural areas in this region, which are already overcrowded, absorb an additional 2 million people? This is thought to be unlikely, unless the level of rural poverty is to decline to even lower levels than it is at present. This scenario was thus rejected.

3. A more probable scenario is that given in Table 2 as migration assumption number 8, which accepts that rural-urban migration must be at a higher rate than that experienced in past years. The major consequence of this assumption will be the increase of the Black urban population from 1,5 to 5,1 million by the year 2 000 : an increase of 3,6 million. This will result in an urbanisation level of 62 percent, but what is significant in this projection, is that the rural Black population will remain more or less static at about 3 million. In many ways, achieving this level of urbanisation is a necessary goal if Black rural populations are not to be allowed to increase. However, the impact on urban areas will be very dramatic indeed : 3,6 million new urban Blacks. The question which must then be raised, is where this new Black urban population is to be located, or indeed, where will it locate itself.

Spatial Distribution of the Future Black Population in Natal-KwaZulu

It is reasonable to assume that future Black urbanisation will focus on existing urban centres in the absence of any alternatives. Although the minor urban areas of the region may provide a degree of attraction, it is more likely that this focus will remain on the four major urban areas previously identified. This may, however, be modified by two factors : the establishment of new urban centres in the region, and changes in the distribution of the Black urban

Table 2. Population Projections: Africans in Natal/KwaZulu, 1980–2000

Migration Assumption No.	1980 Population (urbanisation level 35%)			Projected Population: 2000								Net Population increase 1980–2000		Levels Urban (14)
	Urban Sub-regions (1)	Minor Areas (2)	Rural Areas (3)	Urban Sub-regions (4)	% (5)	Minor Areas (6)	% (7)	Rural Areas (8)	% (9)	Total Ntl./KZulu (10)	% (11)	Urban Sub-regions (12)	Rural Areas (13)	
No migr.	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	2 541 479	2,7	212 520	2,0	5 406 437	2,9	7 947 916	2,8	+1 037 613	+2 331 003	34%
1	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	2 861 630	3,3	212 520	2,0	5 217 301	2,7	8 078 931	2,9	+1 357 764	+2 141 867	37%
2	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	3 005 280	3,5	212 520	2,0	5 139 110	2,6	8 144 390	2,9	+1 501 414	+2 063 676	39%
3	1 503 866	154 020	3 075 434	3 364 401	4,1	212 520	2,0	4 943 637	2,4	8 308 038	3,0	+1 860 535	+1 868 203	42%
4	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	3 723 523	4,6	212 520	2,0	4 614 499	2,0	8 338 022	3,0	+2 219 657	+1 539 065	46%
5	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	4 082 645	5,1	212 520	2,0	4 285 362	1,7	8 368 007	3,0	+2 578 779	+1 209 928	50%
6	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	4 441 766	5,6	212 520	2,0	3 923 262	1,2	8 365 028	3,0	+2 937 900	+ 847 828	54%
7	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	4 800 888	6,0	212 520	2,0	3 587 533	0,8	8 388 421	2,0	+3 297 022	+ 512 099	58%
8	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	5 160 010	6,3	212 520	2,0	3 251 803	0,3	8 411 813	3,0	+3 656 144	+ 176 369	62%
9	1 503 866	143 020	3 075 434	5 519 320	6,7	212 520	2,0	2 916 074	-0,3	8 435 206	3,1	+4 015 454	- 159 360	66%

population between existing urban centres. In order to examine the first factor, the current Government's decentralisation plan – the so-called Good Hope Plan – was examined. The intention of this plan is to divert new development away from existing centres of concentration. However, all but three of the 17 decentralisation and deconcentration points are located in close proximity to existing urban centres. For this reason, it was concluded that the Good Hope Plan will not bring about any major changes to the future spatial distribution of population in this region.

On the second factor, it was thought unlikely that the present distribution of the Black population, between the four major urban centres, will be altered in any significant way. The 3,6 million Black urban people will thus have to be accommodated within the vicinity of existing urban areas, with more or less the same proportional distribution as that which exists at present. However, given the perpetuation of present Government policy regarding the location of Blacks **within** the Homeland of KwaZulu, the bulk of this increase will be located within the **urban areas of KwaZulu** that are in close proximity to the towns and cities of Natal.

The impact on the Durban Metropolitan Region will be substantial. The total population of 1,8 million in 1980 will increase to around 4,7 million by the year 2 000. The Black population of this city will increase from 1 to 3,4 million, increasing their proportion of the total population from 40 percent in 1980, to 71 percent in the year 2 000.

Policy Implications

Black urbanisation is necessary in South Africa for several reasons: to release pressure and overcrowding in the rural areas of Homelands; to raise the country's level of urbanisation more in line with its stage of economic development; and to provide the necessary opportunities for the Black population to receive a greater share of the benefits that can flow from urbanisation. Moreover, an increase in the level of Black urbanisation in Natal/KwaZulu has been argued in any case to be an inevitable consequence of Homeland development in this region. However, at the present time, whilst recognition has been given to the existence of a permanent Black population in so-called 'White' South Africa, influx control over new settlers to these parts of the country, remains the cornerstone to the Government's policy on African urbanisation.

What is argued to be an urgent necessity at the present time, is for the Government to recognise the reality of the urbanisation process which is in progress in this region, and to set appropriate urbanisation policies to ensure orderly urban development. It must immediately be pointed out, that to some degree, the Government's decentralisation plan for this region (Region 'E'), together with Homeland development policy, implies the adoption of an urbanisation policy of this kind. However, from a development perspective, the emphasis in this policy is placed on industrial development and economic growth, based on labour advantages that accrue from locations in close proximity to KwaZulu. What is lacking is any purposeful social development goal.

Such policy for Natal-KwaZulu would need to include explicit social development policies, urban settlement and development strategies, and the elimination of influx control between KwaZulu and Natal which at present limits Black access to employment in the wider urban areas of

Natal. This last point is particularly important in the context of Natal-KwaZulu because of the close integration between urban development in these two areas. Present policy allows for Black urbanisation to ensue within the boundaries of KwaZulu, for settlement of all types to be formed in so-called 'frontier' zones of the Homeland, but access to employment within the 'white' urban areas to which they are related, is restricted. To this extent, present Government policy reflects a predilection for neglecting urbanisation as a factor in development. Commenting on this situation elsewhere in the Third World, Drakakis-Smith (1981) notes:

This does not mean that governments concerned are unaware of urbanisation occurring . . . indeed, in many instances sectorial policies have been deliberately adopted in order to permit the continuation of the unfettered urban economic development on which national prosperity is thought to be based.

It has already been pointed out that according to Simkins, influx controls keep between 1,5 and 3 million Black people out of 'white' urban areas. In the longer term, however, rapid Black urbanisation would ensue. The consequences of the resulting rapid urban growth would be, in many ways, simply a response to the fact that Black urbanisation has been held at bay for so long. The longer this is delayed, the greater the consequences will be for the cities at some point in the future.

However, relaxation of Government policy on influx controls does not appear to be on the current agendas for reform. What is offered as an alternative to full urbanisation, is Black urbanisation in the Homelands. This solution is imperfect to the extent that it prevents a more rational distribution of urbanisation in the national space, and does not benefit those Homelands which are in remote rural locations. Consequences are, however not entirely without contradictions. Without relaxation on influx control, this serves the Government's interest with respect to the maintenance of spatial and racial segregation. It also locates Black labour, in the case of regions like Natal-KwaZulu, in close proximity to urban centres. On the other hand, it offers the Black population resident in this region an opportunity for urbanisation presently denied in the national space. However, unless influx controls on employment in Natal-KwaZulu are abolished, urbanisation policy in this form will fall short of fuller development criteria.

Urban Planning: Conspicuous consequences of rapid urban growth, such as informal settlement, are often regarded as a housing problem, and seldom are they seen as problems in urban development. Informal settlement has now reached a scale in this region where it is an important element in the urbanisation process. Urban areas in Natal-KwaZulu will double their population by the year 2000, and this will demand coordinated planning, which incorporates 'frontier' zones of KwaZulu into overall urban and metropolitan plans. To some extent, the Government has now recognised this need, and the commissioning of two planning projects for peripheral areas in the Durban Metropolitan Region, serves as examples.

Commenting on the basic needs approach to urban development and planning, Sandbrook (1982) draws attention to the nature of reform, which he defines in relation to any change which shifts resources or power from the privileged in order to enhance the economic and social position of the underprivileged. However, as he notes, there are two types of reform:



In principle, **non-structural reform** refers to changes that are consistent with the rationality of a given system; that is, they challenge neither the relative power of the various classes nor the logic that underpins the productive system. **Structural reform** then entails changes that do constitute such a challenge. (Sandbrook, 1982:237)

He goes on to cite two of the most popular non-structural reforms current in the Third World : site-and-service housing projects in urban areas, and preventative health care schemes in rural areas; both of which he regards as non-structural (although laudable) policies from a development perspective. To this degree, current urban development projects in this region represent reform of a non-structural nature. Extending these policies to include political reform, the removal of influx control, and greater participation in wider urban government, would involve structural reform, and this may not be on the current agendas for change.

Rural Development : Black urbanisation is a necessary component of rural development in KwaZulu. The 62 percent level of urbanisation projected in this paper will, however, simply maintain the present Black rural population at its present size through to the turn of the century. In order to mount agricultural reforms of the type envisaged by the KwaZulu Government (Buthelezi Commission, 1982) implies achieving an 82 percent level of urbanisation. It is doubtful whether this can be achieved by the year 2000, and if it were, the impact on the urban areas would be very dramatic indeed. Discussing rural development is beyond the scope of this paper, except to stress that Black urbanisation is a necessary component of rural development.

Decentralisation : In principle, decentralising development away from centres of concentration is inherently sensible.

At present, Durban dominates the entire region in almost all respects. Unlimited expansion of this urban area would create enormous difficulties in providing transport and servicing as a consequence of uncontrolled outward expansion. At the other extreme, creating new growth points is costly, slow in generating new employment, does not have the benefit of agglomeration economics and linkages, and often requires expensive incentive packages to create the necessary investment. Between these two extremes, decentralisation to the smaller urban centres appears to offer the best alternative.

To a large extent, this alternative is contained in the Government's decentralisation plan for this region. Advantages accrue from existing infrastructure, skills, expertise and linkages offered in the existing towns. There are however two major drawbacks to this plan in development terms. First, if KwaZulu is to be regarded merely as a source of cheap labour, and location near the Homeland as a mechanism for exploitation and the maintenance of spatial and political segregation, all the problems raised in this paper will not be solved. Second, the emphasis in this plan is on economic growth and industrial development. To create the opportunity for the benefits of this economic growth to be more equitably distributed, stress will have to be placed on investment in social development, as a complementary measure.

Informal Settlement: Informal settlement of increasing size is predicted to be the outcome of increasing levels of Black urbanisation in this region. At the levels predicted, new accommodation will have to be created for 3,6 million people by the turn of this century. If informal settlement is to be the result, then this reality will have to be addressed more directly in policy. At the present time, housing policy is based on the provision of serviced sites, but if the

reality of informal settlement is to be properly addressed, consideration will have to be given to the option of large-scale **upgrading** as a means of distributing necessary services.

Conclusion

The main argument in this paper has been that KwaZulu will provide the locale for a substantial increase in the level of Black urbanisation in Natal-KwaZulu. The source of this urbanisation process lies in two factors: that Black urbanisation has been severely restrained by Government policy in the past, and that KwaZulu provides the only significant alternative for Black urbanisation in this region. To this extent it is deficient. However, irrespective of Government policy on Black urbanisation – both at the national and regional level – circumstances in this region make Black urbanisation both necessary and inevitable.

In development terms, however, spatial concentration in urban areas should not be confused with development. Unless necessary conditions are created and fulfilled to ensure the greater integration of urban Blacks into the wider functions of the cities, the consequences will be deficient in development terms as well. At one extreme, the consequences could be what Simkins (1982) calls “deruralisation”; at a lesser extreme, divisions may be created between those who have greater or lesser access to the benefits of urbanisation. In both cases, however, although to different degrees, Black urbanisation will remain deficient until the Government relaxes the restrictions imposed on the pressure for full Black urbanisation in the country as a whole. This returns the issue to what has dominated the relationship between the Government and Black South Africans for so long: intransigence over the necessity for a political accommodation of the Black population. This will continue to define the struggle over Black urbanisation and development in South Africa. □

by Joy Brain

CLOISTERED PERSPECTIVES

Patricia Kay: *Notre Dame under the Southern Cross*. Johannesburg, Ravan Press, 1984. 375p. illus.

This is a detailed history of the sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from the time of their arrival in Southern Africa in 1899 to the present, written by one of the sisters and based on the *Annals of the community, their journal, “Les cloches de Notre Dame”* and on letters passing between the sisters and the mother house in Belgium and later the English Provincial house, Ashdown. The Notre Dame sisters are renowned for the high standard of education they offer in their convent schools for girls in various parts of the world and this book is largely the story of the problems encountered in providing education of this standard in the changing political and economic circumstances encountered in Southern Africa in the twentieth century. The book deals with Northern and Southern Rhodesia as well as South Africa and the sisters are still running mission schools in Zimbabwe. The story follows the activities of the sisters to and fro across the Limpopo and from the Transvaal to the Orange Free State and finally to the Cape. Their work in Swaziland and Botswana concludes the account.

Their first assignment in Southern Africa was at the Jesuit mission at Empandeni in the Plumtree district of Southern Rhodesia where they were to be extremely successful as educators of both children and adults in the primary, secondary and evening schools. From Empandeni a number of out-stations were established, one of which, at Embakwe, was still being run by Notre Dame sisters at the time of publication of this book.

Before the sisters arrived the Jesuit fathers had already translated parts of the Bible into Sindebele as well as pre-

paring readers, catechisms and prayer books in that language and all the sisters managed to learn Sindebele and to teach in the vernacular.

In South Africa the Notre Dame sisters opened day and boarding schools for White and African children, all of which finally succeeded in providing primary and secondary education of a high standard as well as sporting and extra-curricula activities. They also ran schools for coloured children at Somerset West and at Grassy Park. As strangers to the country the sisters had to accept the judgment of bishops about the need for Catholic schools in the areas of their jurisdiction as well as the ability of the parents to pay for the facilities created for them. The advice they received was quite wrong on more than one occasion and they were to abandon the project and move on. In each case the financial problems had to be overcome usually with assistance from the Provincial house in England and a reasonable explanation had to be forthcoming. Although the sisters were sometimes badly advised nevertheless one cannot help thinking, from the information given here, that they sometimes rushed in without sufficient enquiry and gave up, perhaps, rather too quickly. The absence of any historical background to the Catholic Church in the Transvaal and Orange Free State in the account makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the reader to assess the overall situation relative to the sisters’ work. This is especially true in the case of Bishop Miller O.M.I. whose behaviour towards the sisters and their proposed convent school at Belgravia was the cause of the abandonment of the venture. Because she has concentrated only on Notre