# URBANIZATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE CHANGING CHARACTER OF MIGRANT LABOUR[1]

by

Kevin R. Cox
Department of Geography
The Ohio State University
Columbus OH 43210
cox.13@osu.edu


David Hemson
Human Sciences Research Council
Durban
dhemson@hsrc.ac.za

and

Alison Todes
Planning Program
School of Architecture, Planning and Housing
University of Natal
Durban
Todes@nu.ac.za

**Introduction**

Migrant labor has a very long history in South Africa, and a substantial literature has developed around it and its socio-political significance (For example: Wolpe 1980, Mabin 1990, Bozzoli 1991 and Posel 1991). For at least the past century it has been a major feature of the country's social landscape. Although it has always been primarily an African experience, it has certainly undergone change over that period of time. At the beginning of the century it was often undertaken for relatively brief periods of a person's – usually male – life span and was linked to investment in peasant agriculture (Bonner 1995). But as those opportunities diminished, as Africans were more and more confined to the native reserves, so it started becoming a chronic feature of existence, indeed to the extent that many Africans began to settle permanently in the urban areas.[2] Among other things this promoted something of a moral panic among white South Africans, a moral panic which features centrally in Alan Paton's novel, *Cry the Beloved Country*, written just prior to the coming to power of the National Party, the party of apartheid, in 1948. Indeed the moral panic was one of the reasons for the appeal of apartheid since the National Party promised to rein in tendencies to permanent urbanization on the part of Africans, though it should be pointed out that there were other powerful lobbies, particularly the gold mines and white agriculture that were pressing in the same direction.

The limits to permanent urbanization subsequently instituted by the National Party came to be known as influx control. One of the aims, in effect, was to perpetuate migrant labor. This is because it was as migrant workers, with the appropriate stamps in their passbooks, that Africans could work in the 'white' cities without being permanent residents. Increasingly, moreover, migrant workers came from the old native reserves, the areas that were to become known under apartheid as the homelands. Previously there had been large numbers from the so-called 'white' rural areas (Mabin 1989), but particularly during the 'sixties and 'seventies, in the context of the mechanization of white farms, the clearance of so-called 'black spots'[3], there were massive forced relocations into the homelands.

As a result of this confluence of events a widespread interpretation of migrant labor was that its perpetuation was state-enforced. Without influx control legislation, migrant labor would be at an end and cities would swell with new African residents. In fact influx control ended in 1986 but clearly migrant labor persists, which might place the 'political' interpretation of it in some doubt (Mabin 1990) all other things being equal, which as we will suggest later, is not the case since the economic context, particularly with reference to employment chances, has changed quite drastically. There was indeed an increase in the movement of Africans from the former homeland areas, now often known as 'the deep rural areas', but as we will show, it has been quite modest.

So one of the questions we are concerned with is arriving at some understanding of the current conditions for migrant labor in South Africa: what it is that presupposes it. It continues on a very substantial scale indeed but quite why that is, how it is interwoven with other aspects of African life, is something about which our knowledge is very limited. There have, for example, been other changes in South Africa that could have implications for the centers of gravity of African lives, whether or not Africans living in the squatter areas around the major cities send for their families to come and live with them in the city, for example. One thinks in particular here of the huge increase in unemployment rates that has occurred since the mid-'eighties and which has sharply attenuated the prospects of those coming from the deep rural areas looking for jobs in the city (Cross, 1999; Todes, 2001). There are also gender issues. Society in the deep rural areas continues to be intensely patriarchal and there is anecdotal evidence that this might be important. [4] The fact of urban crime might also be an impediment.

In trying to address these questions we have undertaken two sets of research, the initial findings of which are presented here: a quantitative analysis of statistical materials, which sheds light on the extent and direction of overall trends; and a qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews, which explores contemporary processes and experiences underlying macro trends. .

The first part of the paper presents data drawn from the annual Household Surveys undertaken over the 1996-8 period by the Statistics South Africa. The surveys include information on almost 65,000 South African households selected so as to be representative both in terms of race groups and geographically.[5] These data include a wide range of questions pertaining to demography, household circumstances, economic conditions, occupations, migration and migrant labor. Some of these questions pertain to households and some to individuals in those households. As such they provide some insight into the contemporary character of migrant labor, the sorts of work migrant workers do, the continuing importance of the migrant labor experience for so many Africans, as well as into the question of migration since 1986 from the deep rural areas to other destinations in South Africa. The first section of the paper provides a quantitative analysis of contemporary patterns, examining the extent of migrant labour, the origins and destinations of migrant labourers, their main occupations. It also provides an analysis of households moving out of deep rural areas, and some of the ways in which these overlap or differ from migrant labourers.

The second part of the paper draws on some sixteen qualitative interviews conducted with migrant workers in the Durban area in 2001 and 2002. Interviews are relatively unstructured and open-ended, covering a wide variety of issues including mobility histories, job histories, gender attitudes, the networks through which migrant workers find jobs and places to live, remittances and visiting practices, and attitudes towards other traditional institutions including land allocation practices and the chiefs. Although the intention is to interview some twenty-six migrant workers, and the material presented here needs to be seen as exploratory, the interviews highlight what appear to be important themes in the contemporary processes and experience of migrant labour that cannot be derived from available quantitative data: the changing spatial form of migrant labour; the shifting nature of the labour market for migrants; the role of social networks in migration; and the way household economic strategies and perceptions of culture and gender relations underpin migration patterns and the rural-urban imaginary. The interviews highlight the diversity of the experience of migrant labourers and their varying

urbanisation paths and rural-urban relationships, going beyond the stylised patterns captured by the quantitative data

**The Household Survey Materials**

To reiterate, migrant labor continues as a major feature of African life in South Africa. Of all black households identified by the 1996, 1997 and 1998 Household Surveys, 24% included migrant workers. When one focuses on the almost 27% of the households located in the deep rural areas that figure increases substantially: 43% percent had at least one migrant worker and 11% had at least two.

A problem in organizing the data for migrant workers is some sort of geographic template. Ideally it would have been helpful if data had been available for the former homelands. But all that the census provides now in terms of a geographic breakdown are magisterial districts which are hard to assign to homelands. In any case the latter were frequently far from compact in their form so that inevitably there would be some incongruities between them and any system of magisterial districts that one might devise. So how to identify the deep rural areas? The approach we opted for was to run a principal components analysis on what are three defensible diagnostic indicators drawn from the South African census: percent of the population; African, the unemployment rate; and the sex ratio. The latter was included on the assumption that the deep rural areas would, in fact be areas where a large proportion of households had migrant workers. Using the scores on the first component, magisterial districts in the first quartile were defined as 'the deep rural areas'. These are listed in the Appendix. A perusal suggests that they are a reasonable approximation. Most of the migrant workers do in fact have their homes in the deep rural areas. But by no means all of them. About one-third (33% to be precise) come from other parts of South Africa.

Consider first the destinations of migrant workers. It is a truism of labor market theory that labor on balance tends to move from areas of relatively high unemployment – like the deep rural areas – to those where unemployment levels are lower and job prospects higher. Tables 1 and 2 examine this relationship. Destination districts have been

classified into quartiles based on unemployment levels. Table 1 looks at migrant workers originating in the deep rural areas while Table 2 examines the remainder.

TABLE 1:DESTINATIONS OF MIGRANT WORKERS FROM THE DEEP RURAL
AREAS BY UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL OF DESTINATION, 1996-98

| Unemployment Level | % of Migrant Workers | % of SA Total Population Resident | Index of Concentration |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lowest | 59.0% | 20.1% | +1.93 |
| Low | 16.0 % | 17.1% | -0.06% |
| High | 13.5% | 33.3% | -0.59% |
| Highest | 11.6% | 29.5% | -0.61% |

N = 10116

TABLE 2: DESTINATIONS OF MIGRANT WORKERS FROM THE REST OF
SOUTH AFRICA BY UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL OF DESTINATION, 1996-98

| Unemployment Level | % of Migrant Workers | % of SA Total Population Resident | Index of Concentration |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lowest | 48.1% | 20.1% | +1.39 |
| Low | 27.7% | 17.1% | +0.62% |
| High | 18.9% | 33.3% | -0.43% |
| Highest | 5.3% | 29.5% | -0.82% |

N = 4815

There are no major surprises here though there are some differences. After correction is made for the populations of the districts assigned to the four destination categories, it would seem that migrant workers from the deep rural areas are much more likely to head for areas where unemployment rates are at their lowest than those from the rest of South Africa. This is apparent from the indices of concentration. These provide a sense of the degree to which a migrant worker stream exceeds or falls short of what would be expected simply on the basis of the relative populations assigned to the four quartiles. In Table 1 a concentration index of +1.93 means that the flow of migrant workers exceeds the expected by 193%. A negative index of –0.59 means that it is 59% less than what might otherwise have been expected. Obviously from a comparison of the two tables migrant workers from the rest of South Africa are less concentrated on areas with the lowest unemployment rates than those from the deep rural areas. One can speculate on why that might be. One possibility is that there are differences in educational attainment

between the two groups. This might result in occupational differences and hence, given the fact that unemployment is disproportionately concentrated among the least skilled, different sensitivities to the geography of unemployment. But educational and occupational differences, both, are very muted and hardly of a magnitude to account for this difference. Of those from the deep rural areas, just over 44% have an educational level of Standard 9 or above, compared with 49% for those from the rest of South Africa. Respective percentages with no education at all are 16% and 13.6%. And as far as education is concerned one might reasonably have expected to find differences in the proportions in the higher occupational grades [6] but in fact, and again, they are quite minor: 8.6% as opposed to 10.2% for those from the rest of South Africa.

TABLE 3: TOP TWENTY DESTINATIONS FOR MIGRANT WORKERS 1996-98

| DESTINATION (MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT) | % ALL MIGRANT WORKERS | CONCENTRATION INDEX | % FEMALE |
|---|---|---|---|
| JOHANNESBURG | 22.6% | 11.08 | 46.5% |
| PRETORIA | 9.5% | 4.54 | 44.0% |
| DURBAN | 6.1% | 3.37 | 33.4% |
| CAPE | 4.3% | 8.49 | 40.7% |
| RUSTENBURG | 4.1% | 3.43 | 27.4% |
| WELKOM | 1.9% | 2.06 | 32.3% |
| GERMISTON | 1.5% | 2.71 | 33.2% |
| KEMPTON PARK | 1.5% | 0.37 | 40.5% |
| WITBANK | 1.4% | 1.65 | 31.2% |
| KLERKSDORP | 1.2% | 0.36 | 32.2% |
| EAST LONDON | 1.1% | 0.51 | 50.7% |
| PIETERSBURG | 1.1% | 6.02 | 45.4% |
| UMTATA | 1.0% | 0.55 | 45.5% |
| BENONI | 1.0% | 0.11 | 40.9% |
| PIETERMARITZBURG | 0.9% | 0.05 | 47.2% |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| BLOEMFONTEIN | 0.9% | -0.36 | 46.9% |
| RANDBURG | 0.9% | 0.01 | 40.2% |
| MOKERONG | 0.8% | 1.23 | 50.9% |
| MIDDLEBURG | 0.8% | -0.21 | 30.6% |
| NELSPRUIT | 0.7% | 3.90 | 36.4% |

Table Three applies to *all* migrant workers in South Africa and identifies the twenty quantitatively most significant of the destinations. The importance of Johannesburg, accounting for over one-fifth of all migrant worker destinations is striking and merits some discussion. It should be pointed out that Table 3 identifies migrant workers by the magisterial districts in which they *work* and not necessarily where they live while working. Given the size of the Johannesburg metropolitan area it seems highly likely that many, if not most of those working in the magisterial district, are living in other adjacent districts rather than in that of Johannesburg itself. In that regard the comparison with shares of the total South African population needs to be done with some caution. Ideally the data should be presented for metropolitan areas rather than the magisterial districts into which they are divided. Interestingly, however, in the case of Johannesburg a number of those adjacent districts (Pretoria, Germiston, Kempton Park, Benoni and Randburg) do in fact figure in the Table. When these are added to the Johannesburg figure one reaches the conclusion that almost 37% of all migrant workers recorded in these three Household Surveys were working in what can defensibly be regarded as the Johannesburg-Pretoria urban region. The concentration indices for Johannesburg and Pretoria – a comparison of respective shares of migrant workers with respective shares of South Africa's total population – lend added force to this.[7] Given the fact that the gross geographical product of Gauteng, the province which Johannesburg and Pretoria dominate, accounts for about 38% of the country's gross domestic product this might not seem so remarkable, however. On the other hand, the difficulty with defining metropolitan areas may also shed some light on the rather low figure for the Cape district which, while including Cape Town, is only part of the wider metropolitan region.

A second point to note here is the presence of major mining centers in Table 3 -- Rustenburg, Welkom, Germiston, Witbank and Klerksdorp -- which reinforces the image of mining as an industry dominated by migrant workers. This is also reflected in the relatively masculine character of the respective sex ratios for migrant workers. The relatively high female proportion for Pretoria is also of interest.

We spoke earlier of the dangers of generalizing about migrant workers. The information provided by the Household Survey on occupations is also relevant in this regard. Tables 4 and 5 indicate, for women and men respectively, those occupations employing more than two percent of all migrant workers. True, for females, domestic service and related work in hotels and offices accounts for almost 45% of all migrant workers. For males, however, there is no single preponderant occupation. Drivers – of trucks, taxis, and of other vehicles with a remarkable 9.4% of all migrant workers – now challenge mineworkers for pre-eminence. Employment of mineworkers, once the dominant occupation for migrant laborers, has dropped dramatically since 1989 (Davies and Head 1995). Aggregating 'laborers' and 'workers' in Table 5 miners amount to 10.1 percent of all male migrant workers. And significantly a growth industry in South Africa, private security, is now exceeds half the number of migrant workers employed in mining. When we add this to those in the police force we get over 8% of migrant workers in public and private security work. The importance of construction work is also noteworthy.

The concentration indices in Tables 4 and 5, similar to those used in Tables 1 and 2 above, are intended to provide a sense of the degree to which an occupational category is disproportionately dominated by migrant workers. It was computed by subtracting the percentage of all migrant workers in a particular category from the percentage of all *non-migrant* workers in a particular category and dividing by the latter. A concentration index of zero means that there is no over- or under-representation of migrant workers in a particular category. A concentration index of (e.g.) +.20 means that a migrant worker is 20% more likely to be found in that category than a non-migrant worker; an index of +1.0 means that the likelihood of a migrant worker being in that category is twice as likely as for a non-migrant worker. Some of the indices are negative. That means that migrant

workers are *under*-represented in the categories in question. An index of –0.20 means that the chance of a migrant worker being in that category is 20% less than that of a non-migrant worker. These indices shed a somewhat different light on migrant worker occupations. While mining is little more than a tenth of all migrant workers, it is apparent nevertheless that they dominate the mining industry. Likewise, female migrant workers dominate domestic work but not nearly to the degree that male counterparts dominate mining.

TABLE 4: OCCUPATIONAL CONCENTRATION INDICES FOR FEMALE MIGRANT WORKERS, 1996-98 HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

| Occupational Category | % of All Migrant Workers | Concentration Index |
|---|---|---|
| Domestic helpers and cleaners | 42.4% | +0.25 |
| Shop salespersons and demonstrators | 4.0% | +0.10 |
| Mining and quarry workers | 3.1% | +30.0 |
| Farmhands and laborers | 3.0% | -0.27 |
| Cashiers and ticket clerks | 2.5% | -0.27 |
| Hand packers and other manufacturing laborers | 2.5% | -0.29 |
| Helpers and cleaners in offices, hotels and other establishments | 2.4% | -0.50 |
| Laborers in mining, construction, manufacturing, and transportation not elsewhere classified | 2.0% | -0.18 |

TABLE 5: OCCUPATIONAL CONCENTRATION INDICES FOR MALE MIGRANT WORKERS, 1996-99 HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS

| Occupational Category | % of All Migrant Workers | Concentration Index |
|---|---|---|
| Miners and quarry workers | 6.9% | +2.28 |
| Protective service workers not elsewhere classified | 5.8% | +0.53 |
| Heavy truck and lorry drivers | 5.4% | +0.23 |
| Car, taxi and van drivers | 4.0% | +0.03 |
| Domestic helpers and cleaners | 4.0% | +0.48 |
| Mining and quarry laborers | 3.2% | +1.67 |
| Laborers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport not elsewhere classified | 3.2% | -0.06 |
| Bricklayers and stonemasons | 3.2% | +0.52 |
| Farm hands and laborers | 3.0% | -0.44 |
| Police officers | 2.8% | +0.40 |
| Shop salespersons and demonstrators | 2.8% | +0.08 |
| Gardeners, horticultural and nursery growers | 2.3 % | -0.38 |
| Vehicle mechanics and fitters | 2.2% | -0.08 |
| Construction and maintenance laborers | 2.1% | -0.09 |

A good deal of the recent interest in migrant labor in South Africa has been in the context of expectations about urbanization trends. As we remarked above, it was widely believed that the abolition of influx control in 1986 would, if not exactly sounding the knell for migrant labor, make a serious dent in its prevalence. People, it was believed, would leave the deep rural areas to which they had been confined by influx control and move closer to jobs in the rest of South Africa. The 1997 and 1998 Household Surveys[8] through their questions on migration allow some insight into what has happened. The first thing to note is that over that eleven to twelve year period from 1986 to 1997-8 the total loss through out-migration from the deep rural areas into the rest of South Africa was a rather modest

3.72%; and the gain in the rest of South Africa from those immigrants an equally modest 2.59% and only 1.78% if one confines attention to the African population.[9] The destinations of these migrants are also of interest, however.

Table 7 identifies the magisterial districts with the top twenty shares of destinations in all those leaving the deep rural areas as migrants rather than as migrant workers; i.e., people who shifted their residential location. The major urban areas figure very prominently with the interesting absence of Johannesburg from the list, though Kempton Park and Soweto obviously make up for some of this. In that sense, however, the share of the Cape is also inflated with the addition of Mitchells Plain; the same applies to Durban in the case of Inanda and Pinetown and underlines once again the weaknesses of the current magisterial district framework for analyzing these issues. The importance of the Cape should elicit little surprise given that the Western Cape has been the most vibrant of all the provincial economies since at least 1994. Mining centers are represented in the form of Welkom and Witbank but the absence of Rustenburg, center of the booming platinum mining industry is notable. The presence of Umtata, former capital of the Transkei homeland, is also of note.

Table 8, however, provides a rather different, even intriguing, picture. In this Table we have related respective shares of migrants from the deep rural areas to the shares that the magisterial districts in question have in the total population of South Africa.[10] Migration is being disproportionately directed away from the major metropolitan centers – they are there but apart from the Cape, less predominant – towards  a rather different class of place. Although it is very hard to generalize from magisterial districts to the precise destinations of the migration streams, there does seem to be a preponderance of the medium to lower level urban centers of the 'white' rural areas: places like Vryheid, Phalaborwa, Queenstown, Witrivier, Pilgrims Rest and Hoveldrif. It has been suggested elsewhere (McCarthy 1996: 11) that the old service centers for the white rural areas are attracting large numbers of blacks from surrounding white farms on account of their superior municipal services and this may be further evidence of their attraction for Africans. It may also reflect displacement by mechanization on surrounding white farms

and also eviction by farmers concerned about the possibility of land claims: something that has been common in the 'nineties**.**

Given these particular destinations we had thought that migrant labor might have continued to figure importantly in their life strategies. But in fact of all the sampled households moving out of the deep rural areas only 12% included migrant workers among their members. There were, however, as might be expected, clear differences between the movers and the stayers. Movers tend to be more educated and younger (see Tables 9 and 10).

TABLE 7: PERCENT OF ALL INMIGRANTS FROM THE DRAs (TOP 20): 1986-1997 AND 1986-1998

| MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT | PERCENT OF ALL INMIGRANTS |
| --- | --- |
| CAPE | 7.65 |
| DURBAN | 7.58 |
| PRETORIA | 5.45 |
| UMTATA | 4.93 |
| PORT ELIZABETH | 3.10 |
| MITCHELLS PLAIN | 2.91 |
| PIETERMARITZBURG | 2.50 |
| KEMPTON PARK | 2.43 |
| WITBANK | 2.05 |
| EAST LONDON | 1.90 |
| KWAMHLANGA | 1.90 |
| LOWER UMFOLOZI | 1.68 |
| SOWETO | 1.64 |
| PINETOWN | 1.61 |
| QUEENSTOWN | 1.57 |
| WELKOM | 1.42 |
| VRYHEID | 1.34 |

| | |
|---|---|
| WITRIVIER | 1.28 |
| INANDA | 1.34 |
| PHALABORWA | 1.31 |

TABLE 8: DEGREE OF LOCALIZATION OF INMIGRANTS FROM THE DRAs WITH RESPECT TO TOTAL SHARES OF SA POPULATION (TOP 20 OF SHARES OF INMIGRANTS): 1986-1997 AND 1986-98

| MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT | INDEX OF LOCALIZATION |
|---|---|
| WITRIVIER | 26.25 |
| PHALABORWA | 15.94 |
| CAPE | 15.89 |
| PELGRIMSRUST | 11.89 |
| QUEENSTOWN | 8.35 |
| CERES | 8.05 |
| UMTATA | 6.65 |
| VRYHEID | 5.36 |
| DURBAN | 4.43 |
| KWAMHLANGA | 4.12 |
| WITBANK | 2.89 |
| PRETORIA | 2.18 |
| LOWER UMFOLOZI | 1.82 |
| EAST LONDON | 1.62 |
| HOEVELDRIF | 1.49 |
| WELKOM | 1.29 |
| KEMPTON PARK | 1.22 |
| KRUGERSDORP | 0.91 |
| PIETERMARITZBURG | 0.78 |
| NEWCASTLE | 0.65 |

TABLE 9: EDUCATIONAL LEVELS ACHIEVED: MOVERS AND STAYERS (AGED 20 AND ABOVE)

| EDUCATIONAL LEVEL | MOVERS | STAYERS |
|---|---|---|
| NO SCHOOLING | 12.6% | 28.1% |
| GRADES 0 – 3 | 3.6% | 4.9% |
| GRADES 4 – 7 | 26.4% | 24.4% |
| GRADES 8 – 11 | 37.8% | 29.9% |
| GRADE 12 | 19.5% | 12.7% |
| N | 1511 | 78761 |

TABLE 10: AGE DISTRIBUTIONS: MOVERS AND STAYERS (AGED 20 AND ABOVE)

| AGE GROUP | MOVERS | STAYERS |
|---|---|---|
| 20 – 34 | 55.9% | 44.6% |
| 35 – 49 | 29.6% | 24.4% |
| 50 – 64 | 10.1% | 16.7% |
| 65 AND ABOVE | 3.9% | 13.0% |
| N | 1514 | 33947 |

In summary, the Household Survey material highlights the persistence of migrant labour post-apartheid, particularly among households in deep rural areas (see also Posel, 2003). As in the past, Gauteng, the cities and major mining towns are the most important destinations for migrant workers. Nevertheless, although mining is still the largest employer of migrants, its importance is waning, with male migrants increasingly occupied as drivers and security guards, among other occupations. As might be expected, domestic work dominates the occupations of women migrant workers, who account for a rising proportion of migrant workers (Posel, 2003). Evidence from the Household Survey does not suggest a strong overlap between households which are moving out of the deep rural areas, and those with migrant workers, although there are some similarities – but also differences - in their destinations. The following section uses findings from

qualitative interviews with migrant workers to begin to explore some of the broader questions raised by these patterns.

**The Durban Interview Data**

There are clearly many questions about migrant labor in South Africa that need to be resolved. As indicated above, contra those who thought it would die with the ending of influx control, it continues to be a major feature of South African life. If anything this has been an intellectually liberating experience since it broadens the questions that can be asked about migrant labor. What, for example, is its relation to the patriarchy that, it is now being realized, is pervasive in the deep rural areas? To what extent should it be viewed in conjunctural terms, as something that persists in virtue of the huge increase in unemployment experienced among Africans, and particularly among those from the deep rural areas? To what degree, in other words, is resistance to permanent urbanization predicated on a risk spreading strategy? And what of permanent urbanization? Exactly what is meant by 'permanent' and who counts as a migrant worker? Do we include those who move to urban areas, retaining links through visits, remittances but seemingly sink roots in the city only to retire to the places they came from?

These questions are highly varied in nature, some substantive, some conceptual. In an attempt to shed light on them we have been engaged in conducting a series of extended, interviews with both male and female migrant workers in the Durban area. Since none of us speak Zulu, the predominant language among migrant workers in the area, interviews have been carried out by Africans.[11] This might seem problematic in the context of a relatively unstructured interview in which the goal is to a considerable degree to let the interviewee lead the interviewer so as to reveal what might otherwise not be at all anticipated. We have tried to overcome this drawback through follow-up interviews based on responses to the questions in the initial interview, many of which are as open-ended as it is possible to be in such circumstances.

Locating our target population *is* a problem, and this is compounded when striving for a gender mix that shows no bias either way. This is particularly so when viewed against the

background of some of the relationships coming out of the Household Survey data. The profile of those interviewed does not match completely with the broader trends identified by the Household Survey. While most of the sixteen interviewees have their origins in deep rural areas, the employment profile is somewhat different. Of course, mining does not feature as a significant occupation in Durban (although the prevalence of migrant workers in construction, domestic work, and security are reflected in the occupation of interviewees), but more importantly, the Household Surveys do not pick up on informal work, which emerges as a critical theme in the lives of many of the Durban migrant workers we interviewed. Our approach has been to concentrate on *areas* where we know there are relatively large numbers of migrant workers, in particular Cato Crest and the street traders in Warwick Triangle. Just to indicate some of the problems one encounters, however, we had thought that the relatively elusive female migrant workers might more easily be found in the two hostels for women. But the two interviewed, however interesting their stories and while still retaining some links to the rural areas turned out to be retirees who had no intention whatsoever of returning there. So anything that has come out of the interviews so far has to be viewed as extremely interim. Nevertheless, there is a good deal of interest.

One final qualification. Our approach to identifying migrant workers has been different from that of the Household Survey. In brief, the Household Surveys identify them through a question asked of the household of origin while we have sought them out directly. The relevant question in the Household Survey reads:

> "Are there any persons who are usually regarded as members of this household, but who are away for a month or more because they are migrant workers? (A migrant worker is someone who is absent from home for more than a month each year to work or to seek work)."

In contrast, our filter question reads:

> "We're interested in talking with people who are living and / or working in the Durban area but who also have a home somewhere else. Would this apply to you?"

Some of the drawbacks, but also advantages, of our approach will become clearer later.

The profile of those interviewed does not match completely with the broader trends identified by the Household Survey. While most of the sixteen interviewees have their origins in deep rural areas, the employment profile is somewhat different. Of course, mining does not feature as a significant occupation in Durban (although the prevalence of migrant workers in construction, domestic work, and security are reflected in the occupation of interviewees), but more importantly, the Household Surveys do not pick up on informal work, which emerges as a critical theme in the lives of many of the Durban migrant workers we interviewed

*The Changing Spatial Form of Migrant Labor*

Under the influx control measures enforced by successive apartheid governments, migrant workers would have been in contravention of the law if they had brought family members to live with them. Children, other dependents were supposed to stay behind in the homelands or, if they had relatives employed on white farms or in the small service centers there, in the 'white' rural areas. Large numbers of males lived in hostels or compounds operated by employers or by the municipality and the residents were strictly monitored. Many women worked as live-in maids and there were police raids in the white residential areas to ensure that no black children were being sheltered in the maid's quarters in the backyard.

A major change since the abolition of influx control seems to have been that many migrant workers are now bringing their families with them. Thus, of those migrant workers or migrant worker households with dependents, of the six women[12], five were living with children or with a husband and children. Another one lived with her boyfriend. Of the eight men with dependents, three were living with their wives and children in Durban and another two had 'town wives' The remaining three men were classic migrant workers convinced of the rightness of keeping their wives and children out of the city and reflecting the patriarchy which, as far as we can see so far, remains an important condition in understanding migrant labor.

Some data from a separate project also shed some light on this issue. A survey of one hundred and eighty three male migrant workers living in hostels and employed on the Durban docks, which was carried out in 1996, asked questions about family reunification in the city. Correlating these responses with the presence or otherwise of rural resources suggests that these may be important, at least as far as the ownership of cattle is concerned. In contrast to Spiegel and Sharp's (1986) study, access to land seemed to have very little effect. Tables 11 and 12 indicate that higher levels of cattle ownership were associated with a desire to keep wives and children in rural areas, suggesting that views may be determined as much by the desire to maintain patriarchal rule as by the need for homestead management.

By the late apartheid period, the contribution of agricultural production to the incomes of rural households had declined sharply, and households relied to a much greater extent on migrant labour (see Simkins, 1984), As was the case then,the economic contribution of rural areas to households in our study appeared to be rather limited. The extent to which respondents had any rural productive base varied, but even in the best cases, it could at most support the household for part of the year. Nevertheless, spanning urban and rural does provide a safety net for households, allowing various members to move between them according to changing economic and social circumstances (see also Spiegel et al, 1996). One respondent argued that since crime and outbreaks of violence were prevalent in both the cities and in his rural home, having a base in both allows him to 'hedge his bets', and move between the two as circumstances change. The rural areas are also places that unemployed household members return to, and one respondent clearly saw his rural home in this light (see below). Similar patterns have been noted in relation to a declining urban area (see Todes, 1997). Links are to broader extended households (including adult siblings and their families, adult children etc), substantial parts of which remain in rural areas. As Mabin (1990) and Spiegel et al (1996) suggest, migrant labour in its classic form is being displaced by forms of household fluidity over space, consistent with patterns in several developing countries.

Easier access to housing in cities, both through access to informal settlements, and through housing projects based on government subsidies, seems to be making it possible for migrants to bring parts of their families in over time. In Cato Crest, most migrants have brought family members to live with them, in contrast to migrants living in single quarter or hostel accommodation.

The effect of apartheid on household geographies, however, is clear from worker histories. The two retired women that have been interviewed had both been single mothers who had taken jobs as domestic workers and left their children with mothers to look after. Another had come as a domestic worker prior to 1986 and left her child with her brother in Hammarsdale in Durban's peri-urban zone but in the KwaZulu homeland. It was only subsequent to leaving that employment and moving to Inanda, also in the homeland, that she was able to re-unite with her child.

TABLE 11: Cattle Ownership and Where Children Should Grow Up

|  | No cattle | 1-5 cattle | 6-10 cattle | Over 10 cattle |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| In the countryside | 22% | 43% | 57% | 65% |
| Unsure | 2% | 25% | 22% | 19% |
| In the city | 78% | 31% | 20% | 16% |
| N | 51 | 51 | 49 | 31 |

TABLE 12: Cattle Ownership and Where Wife Should Live

|  | No cattle | 1-5 cattle | 5-10 cattle | Over 10 cattle |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Do not want wife to live in the city | 15% | 29% | 47% | 53% |
| Want wife to live in the city | 85% | 71% | 53% | 47% |
| N | 47 | 51 | 49 | 30 |

*Labor Market Issues*

In contrast to the apartheid period, when migrant labour was orchestrated through recruitment agencies supplying employers in parts of the formal economy, the informal sector is a dominating presence in the lives of our interviewees. Of the eight men interviewed five were in informal types of employment or activity. Of the five women

employed, four were in the informal sector. But the sense were are getting is that this concentration in the informal sector is a fairly recent development. Recent migrants have been unable to get formal jobs (e.g. Respondent J), and the story of losing a formal sector job and having to move into some sort of informal work – street trading, odd job person, shoe mender, metal beating, driving instruction – is very common. One example from many: Respondent E used to work at a hospital sterilizing instruments. He was fired for organizing a strike. He now survives on the basis of a spaza shop operated from his shack but also has to do odd jobs to make ends meet. Consider likewise Respondent G: Prior to working in Durban he worked in Johannesburg. He obtained a job there in 1976 through his cousin, with a panel beating firm. This lasted till 1986 when an Indian friend referred him to his cousin's panel beating shop in Durban which led to him going there. As he admits, he knew nobody there but was looking for a better opportunity and that seemed to be it. But he left 6 months later as a result of 'promises that were not fulfilled'. He then took up employment with an Afrikaner with a refrigerator repair business. However, in the early '90s the business was not doing so well. The owner emigrated and it was sold to another firm which closed it in 1993. He now operates on his own as a panel beater, supplementing his income to make ends meet with a variety of activities including drawing and painting, shoe repair, music (he describes himself as a jack of all trades). Finally there is Respondent P, a thirty-four year old Zulu woman, who came to Durban upon retrenchment from a factory job in Pinetown that she had held for ten years. She is a street trader who used her savings from her job in Pinetown (she had been earning over $300 / week and not sending remittances) as her startup capital. She would not, however, be doing that if she could have found another formal job.

To the extent that enduring positions in the formal labor market are encountered they tend to be in the case of older people and the more educated. However, it may be that certain sectors of formal employment are selecting in the classic migrant worker: to what extent does the private security industry prefer them on the grounds of a heightened trustworthiness and the image of the more detribalized male as crime-prone? As the Household Survey data revealed, this is a sector heavily populated by migrant workers.

Wittenburg (1999) and Cross (1999) argue that rural households are losing access to urban labour markets, and that the two are separating. Our evidence does not corroborate Cross's (1999) argument that migrant labour is declining, but it does seem to provide support for suggestions that migrants may be in an increasingly marginal position economically, reliant on informal activities, or on poorly paid and insecure work in the formal sector (eg. Security and domestic work). This warrants further investigation.

*Social Networks*

This is perhaps an obvious point, but friends and relatives are hugely important in mediating the move to the Durban area, in helping with jobs and housing, providing an initial base. Some of this is extremely well documented. Thus Respondent F in talking about the homeboy he moved in with when he first came to Durban:

> "He lived in Inanda and we had arranged while he was on a visit to his home in the rural area that he should offer me accommodation while I searched for the job".

Respondent I had a similar trajectory: She had explained her predicament of being on the verge of expulsion from her home by her elder brother to her friend who was working in Durban while she was back visiting her home in the area. The friend knew of a white family who wanted to employ a domestic worker who could also be accommodated on the premises and acted as the intermediary. The job as a live-in domestic worker was in La Lucia. This solved her problem of both work and accommodation. This sort of thing is clearly taken for granted. Not being able to offer such a base because of space constraints is felt badly:

> "In my culture it is important to accommodate the extended family when there is a need to but I am unable to do that even for my immediate family" (#4).

*The Rural-Urban Imaginary*

The assumption that permanent urbanisation would replace migrant labour after influx control was in part based on a view that urban life would be seen as more desirable (as well as economically more rewarding) than remaining in rural areas. The continued demand for temporary urban accommodation, and the strength of anti-urban perceptions

in post-apartheid policy discussions has therefore come as something of a surprise, and warrants explanation. Although our comments are confined to migrant workers, they do suggest the prevalence of perceptions of rural and urban that go beyond a purely economic calculus.

Common to all the respondents in our study, though varying in the emphasis they place on different elements of it, varying for them in terms of its normative significance, is a spatial imaginary which contrasts the rural with the urban. Some of this is economic and fairly straightforward. The rural areas are typically seen as deprived. Going back to work there is not regarded as a realistic option. On the other hand, for retirement one of the attractions, again, often volunteered, is the low cost of living there.

For most, the city is seen as desirable compared with the rural areas because of the educational opportunities it offers children. For Respondent O owning a home in Durban would be important since it would mean that he had enough space for his daughter to come and live with him. He also likes the idea (for her) of the so-called 'better schools' where she can mix with other races. This attitude isn't true of all our respondents. Those closest to the image of the classic migrant worker did not share it. Part of this was the idea that children should stay in the rural areas to work on the homestead. Part of it was cultural. In one instance the father of the child (who did not even live with its mother) insisted that the child be left with his parents in the Eastern Cape rather than be brought up in Durban, and the wife concurred.

The view of a sharp cultural divide was widely held. While the city was seen as providing educational opportunities for the children that had to be traded off against the loss of 'culture', for those deeply embedded in traditional perspectives. 'Culture' broke down in the city and children lost respect for parents and the aged. Patriarchy and patriarchal feelings were clearly central to this culture complex. These men saw urban women as different; as lacking decency, as only interested in money, as emancipated! These views were especially clear among the classic migrant workers. Thus:

"City women wear trousers and involve themselves in male affairs, speaking out in the presence of men.  They are also more likely to argue with their husbands, and this does not happen in the rural areas.  He does not like the way young people in urban areas behave: they rob and murder people and have no respect for the elderly …" (#2).

Similarly consider Respondent E: In the city, he claims, wives are subject to temptations. They see things in the city that they want and start making demands that the husband cannot fulfill. There are also the temptations of drink and this leads to drunkenness, divorce and 'selling her body to survive'. He also feels that the city is a bad influence on children:

> 'They would go to discos and start drinking. Also they would start demanding those expensive items of clothing that others wear and if the parents cannot afford them, they would get them somehow."

Furthermore (Respondent E again), he has very sharp perceptions of the differences between rural and city women and clearly prefers the former. He says that one can expect rural women to have 'a proper upbringing'. They are more likely to have respect for their husbands and make better wives. They are taught to be more self-reliant and not to depend on men for their survival. They can be independent if need be and don't make a big fuss if the husband stays away for a protracted period of time. City women, on the other hand, are seen as 'loose'. He sees them as, for the most part, interested only in money. They demand a lot from men and if they don't get it they'll threaten to leave. This, he believes, drives men into crime to satisfy their demands. Less obviously patriarchal, however, was a concern at the loss of 'ubuntu' in the city (D). Likewise, a rather different interpretation of urban / rural differences came from a classic migrant worker:

> "... city women are not strong enough to carry rural related domestic work, e.g. collecting firewood, fetching water from the river, cannot look after chicken, cattle, pigs etc., cannot cook with three-legged pot and cannot fit well in rural areas" (#1)

Our women respondents were much less likely to buy into the entirety of the patriarchal view. They might share the concern that children in the city lacked respect for parents and elders but did not volunteer criticisms of the relative emancipation of urban women. In some cases they saw little difference between the urban and the rural anymore: AIt=s all the same now. The rural area is also bad these days for children@(Respondent A). In fact, for the most part they endorsed emancipated views. Women in the rural areas *should* be allowed to hold land; and they *should* be allowed to participate in decision making – views that were much less frequently held by the men.

> AWomen are oppressed by the culture. To let them participate in decision- making would also improve the lot of women" (A).

A rather different slant on patriarchy and the advantages of life in the rural areas was provided by Respondent J to the effect that the countryside is where husbands know how to treat their wives with respect; rural men don't beat their wives (J).

With respect to relative degrees of emancipation from patriarchy several other comments can be made. Single women, particularly mothers, are more likely to hold emancipated views:

> "There are single women who have kids so they need their own place to stay because its no good to stay at your parents' home when you have your own kids" (#4).

Those with some sort of township background are especially likely to be towards the more emancipated end of the spectrum (A, H, I). On the other hand, most of the women (the pensioners aside) come from fairly close to Durban; if not from township backgrounds then from the peri-urban. The only women with truly rural backgrounds tended to be less emancipated in their views, though still more so than the modal response for men.

Finally, the countryside is where traditional ceremonies are performed. In the city there is not sufficient room to dance, slaughter a cow. In addition, performing traditional ceremonies in the urban area is difficult since they are not accorded the dignity they deserve:

"Here in the city people want to drink beers, brandy and whiskey and have a loud music in the background ...". (Respondent F)

There is, in other words, a view among some that in the city tradition gets debased:

> "People who have culture, to me, are those who strive to keep their traditions alive, even if they have appreciation for the cultures of others. Most people in the city disregard the culture of African people. Even those who claim to practice it mostly talk about their own modified cultures, not The Culture. Many no longer practice the fundamental rituals of African culture. I mean, they no longer consult with their ancestors. And as soon as you have forsaken your ancestors, you have lost culture." (Respondent F)

*What's 'Migrant' About Being a Migrant Worker?*

The filter question we have been using in order to identify migrant workers – "We're interested in talking with people who are living and / or working in the Durban area but who also have a home somewhere else. Would this apply to you?" – has elicited positive responses from people who vary very, very considerably in their connections with that 'home somewhere else' and, accordingly, in the degree of their embeddedness in the Durban area. There are obviously the classic migrant workers (mainly older men) who have land holdings, whose wives have remained in the deep rural areas to manage the homestead, who visit frequently, who shun relations with city people who might distract them from their single mindedness, and who are in no way about to have their families come and live with them in Durban. Thus an extract from the transcript for Respondent M, starting with a direct quotation from him:

> "For married migrant workers it is a bad idea to have a relationship with city women because he will spend a lot of money with the city woman and forget about his wife and children at home. He will build a home in the city while the home in rural areas is destroyed because the money is spent in building city home with the city woman". He does not want either his wife or his children living in Durban. As far as the children are concerned they have to look after the cattle and they have to attend to their schooling. They could go to school in the city but

there they would 'learn to be criminals'. His wife has to stay at home in order to look after the children and the house."

There are others, however, who have their families with them in Durban and whose sole remaining link, apart from the occasional visit, is to retire to the rural areas and be buried there. This particular link is partly a matter of a sober assessment of life chances and partly a matter of perceptions that the aged are accorded more dignity in rural areas. The rural areas are seen as much cheaper places to live, but in addition, as Respondent D claimed, >The city is not a proper place for old people=. She clarifies this in terms of how older people deserve a respect that is withheld from them in the city. In the rural areas old people are recognized as such. People make way for them in the taxis and shops and help them carry their goods. Similarly, Respondent F, said that he did not want "to live in town as a hobo" on retirement, and argued that urban areas are for young people. In the absence of a developed welfare system, rural areas continue to act as a form of social security.

But for still others even retirement to 'that home somewhere else' is unlikely. For some this is a matter of personal security. At least two of the respondents had, in effect, been driven out of the rural areas by the violence of the late 'eighties / early 'nineties. Still others, however, are further along the road to an almost complete urban transition. Respondent G's links with his 'home somewhere else' in a Kimberley township have almost entirely disappeared. His parents are no longer alive but he has a sister and three nieces there. He has sent no remittances for two years and hasn't visited in eight years. His sole remaining link is that he wants to be buried there.[13]

Nevertheless, what these very varied relationships with 'homes somewhere else' allow us is some insight into the (not inevitable) transition to more permanent forms of urbanization. This is clearly a very gradual and uncertain affair and is in sharp contrast to the sort of 'either / or' implicit in the categories of the Household Survey. The divide between households leaving deep rural areas and migrant workers also seems to be more blurred than suggested by the Household Survey, which provides only a static snapshot of

processes in motion. Patterns are certainly closer to the fragmented and circular migration patterns described by Roberts (1989) and Ferguson (1990) in parts of Latin America and Africa. As elsewhere, this can be linked to declining and uncertain economic opportunities in cities, and an increasing reliance on marginal informal economic activities for survival. Among those showing tendencies towards a shift in the center of gravity of their lives from the other home to the city there is a very obvious tentativeness, in some cases a clear recognition that things might not work out and that even though the family has come to join them in Durban, they might, under conditions, say, of unemployment, pull up their embryonic roots and go back. Respondent F, for example, will almost certainly stay in the city, at least until retirement. For a start he owns the site on which he has built a shack. He received the R17,500 grant for this and admits that it reduces the likelihood of going back to the rural areas. There is also the fact that he believes the urban areas are better for the children on the grounds of access to schools and jobs. Yet he wants to be buried in the rural area. He also holds land there and owns livestock and his (elder) brother and his children look after them. This may shed light on his statement to the effect that he has talked with his wife what they would do if he lost his job, and moving back to the rural area "and maybe sell the house that I own here".

On the other hand, there are also cases of an inter-generational kind, or where the respondent is quite aged, or quite secure economically, where the process of urbanization is very clear and resolved. Respondent H, for example, originally came to Durban via her father who was a migrant worker but a white collar one from St Faith's near Port Shepstone, some one hundred kilometers to the south. He lived in a formal house in Umlazi, one of the Durban townships, found for him by his employer. She came to live with him along with other siblings when they were ready for high school. This relatively privileged background led to acquiring various formal qualifications as a teacher. On his retirement her father moved back to St Faith's to join her mother while they remained in the house in Umlazi. But since her father's death her mother has moved back to Umlazi to stay with the respondent's siblings. While her father worked in Durban the only time her mother came to live with them in Umlazi was to escape from faction fighting. There is no longer any land at St Faith's and her mother now lives in Umlazi. The house in St

Faith's is maintained and the respondent visits there for traditional ceremonies. This seems to be the one remaining link with that particular home.

Quite by accident we also alighted on a couple of retirees who seem to have made the transition. These were residents of the Thokoza hostel for women. They were at one time migrant workers but clearly no longer. One had a history of a number of jobs in the formal sector; the other was a domestic worker. Both are unmarried and with children. Both left home to support themselves and their children while leaving the latter with their parents. In both cases the link with 'the other home somewhere else' are quite weak. They have strong local social ties with other residents of the hostel and are in Durban to stay. The relative urban-leaningness of the single women with children is almost universal among those we have interviewed thus far.

## Concluding Comments

Migrant labor has a long history in South Africa but the conditions which shed light on it have shifted over time quite considerably. There are also historiographical issues. Given the crucial role that race played in interpretations during and of the apartheid years, as well as the only more recent growth of feminism, the explanatory significance of patriarchy tended to be marginalized. Part of the thrust of the present research is to rectify that imbalance, which is why we have been concerned in our sampling to select equal numbers of women and men. The actual conditions rather than the perceived conditions also seem to have changed, however. Apartheid and migrant labor during that period benefited, at least until the mid-'seventies from fairly buoyant labor markets. But from then on, formal work in the city and more recently in the mines has been decreasingly, even dramatically, less available. As we pointed out, a common theme in our interviews has been one of formal work lost and subsequent entry into the informal sector, and an increasing reliance on informal economic activity. The seriously weak condition of urban labor markets, especially for the relatively poorly educated from the deep rural areas may also help shed light on the surprisingly low rates of permanent movement out of them.. There are other, major, changes from apartheid days. A common feature of the interviews is the way in which our respondents who claim a home somewhere else continue to live

not alone, as they typically would have done under the influx control regulations, but with immediate family members consisting of spouse and children.

Migrant labor, moreover, continues on a considerable scale. Of all the black households identified by the 1997 Household Survey, 21% included migrant workers. It is, however, clearly more heterogeneous than might be indicated by some of the images it has conjured up. Approximately one third of all migrant workers originate from outside those deep rural areas commonly seen as the classical source regions. These conclusions from the examination of the Household Survey data also resonate in the transcripts of the interviews. Those originating in formal townships or in squatter areas on the urban periphery are far from uncommon. Domestic labor continues to employ over half of all female migrant workers but the image of the migrant mine worker not withstanding, the employment of male migrant workers is much more diverse. Mining is indeed dominated by migrant workers but and the mines are still the largest employers, but they employ barely eleven and one half percent of the total. Drivers, private security work and construction are other major forms of employment.

Finally we should note that our expectations regarding the role of gender in understanding changing migrant labor practices have not been disappointed. In terms of different centers of gravity for family life patriarchy looms large as a condition. At one extreme are the classic migrant workers who express strongly patriarchal views and who are not about to create another household location for their family in the city; and at the other are the single mothers whose attitude towards 'tradition' is deeply skeptical and whose links with 'a home elsewhere' have become quite tenuous. But in between are all manner of ambivalences, compromises, testifying to the complexity of the forces to which our respondents have been subjected.

## References

Bonner P, Delius P, and Posel D (1993) "The Shaping of Apartheid: Contradiction, Continuity and Popular Struggle". In Bonner, Delius and Posel (eds.), *Apartheid's Genesis: 1935-1962*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Bozzoli B (1991) *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy, and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900-1983*. London: James Currey Ltd.

Cross C (1999) Spatial implications of population migration for South Africa's development and infrastructure programmes. Report for the Spatial Guidelines for Infrastructure, Investment and Development, for the Coordination and Information Unit, Office of the Deputy President.

Davies R and Head J (1995) "The Future of Mine Migrancy in the Context Of Broader Trends in Migration in South Africa", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21 (3).

Ferguson J (1990) "Mobile Workers, Modernist Narratives: a Critique of the Historiography of Transition on the Zambian Copperbelt", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 16 (3), 387-412, and 16 (4), 604-621.

Jooma A (1991) *Migrancy After Influx Control*. Johannesburg: South African Institute for Race Relations.

Mabin A (1989) "Struggle for the City: Urbanization and Political Strategies of the South African State". *Social Dynamics* 15:1, 1-28.

Mabin A (1990). "Limits of Urban Transition Models in Understanding South African Urbanization". *Development Southern Africa* 7:3, 311-322.

McCarthy J J (1996). *South Africa's Small Towns: New Strategies for Growth and Development*. Johannesburg: Center for Development and Enterprise.

Posel D (2003) Have Migration Patterns in Post-Apartheid South Africa Changed?, Draft Paper for the Conference on African Migration and Urbanisation in Comparative Perspective.

Posel D (1991) *The Making of Apartheid 1948-1961*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Roberts B (1989) "Urbanisation, Migration, and Development", *Sociological Forum*, 4 (4), 665-691.

Simkins, C. 1984. What has Happened to Income Distribution and Poverty in the Homelands, Paper presented to the Second Carnegie Inquiry into Poverty and Devekionebt in Southern Africa, University of Cape Town.

Spiegel and Sharp 1986

Spiegel A, Watson, V, and Wilkinson, P (1996) "Domestic Diversity and Fluidity among some African Households in Greater Cape Town", *Social Dynamics*, 21 (2).

Todes A (2001) "South African Urbanisation Dynamics and the Normalisation Thesis", *Urban Forum*

Todes A (1997) Restructuring, Migration and Regional Policy in South Africa: The Case of Newcastle, PHD Thesis, University of Natal, Durban.

Wittenberg M (1999) A Spatial Analysis of the Labour Market, Report for the Spatial Guidelines for Infrastructure, Investment and Development, for the Coordination and Information Unit, Office of the Deputy President.

Wolpe H (1980) "Capitalism and Cheap Labor-Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid." Chapter 8 in H Wolpe (ed.), *The Articulation of Modes of Production.* London: Routledge Kegan Paul.

**References**

[1] A version of this paper was originally presented at the meeting of the International Geographical Union in Durban in August of 2002.

[2] Bonner, Delius and Posel (1993) have emphasized the importance of gender to this process arguing that it was the presence of women migrants in the city that led males to put down roots. Lacking land rights and also status in rural society, it was women who were more likely to cut the links to the land and so mediate the permanent settlement of males.

[3] These were areas settled by Africans, typically as freeholders, prior to the 1913 Land Act, but which, according to the terms of that Act, lay inside those parts of the country which were designated as for exclusively white ownership.

[4] "Another Anglo spokesman … said that some migrants enjoy the male exclusivity on the mines, and perceive their role in the family as the breadwinner from afar. Urbanized wives would be regarded as an intrusion within this male domain … Migrants' fears of a breakdown of traditional values in an urban environment also probably help to sustain the migrant system …" (Jooma 1991: 59)

[5] The breakdown by year: 1996: 15,917; 1997: 29,811; 1998: 18,981.

[6] The first three occupational classes in the classification used by the Household Surveys; i.e.: 1=Occupation codes 1000-1999 (Managers); 2=Occupation codes 2000-2999 (Professionals); 3=Occupation codes 3000-3999 (Semi-professionals Technicians)

[7] The concentration indices are patterned to some degree. Their correlation with unemployment rates across the different magisterial districts is –0.637.

[8] In contrast to the tabulations examining migrant workers, lack of consistency between the questions in the 1996 Survey and those for 1997 and 1998 precluded including the former in our calculations.

[9] These figures should be treated with some caution. People migrated from the deep rural areas at various times over the 1986-97/98 period adding and losing household members at various times. Benchmarking with any accuracy the populations of origins in the deep rural areas and of the destination in the rest of South Africa is likewise extremely elusive.

[10] (% share of all immigrants - % share of South Africa's population) / % share of South Africa's population.

[11] There are other reasons why this approach has merit, not the least being the distraction of a white interviewer who might be seen, among other things, as the bringer of jobs.

[12] The remaining two were retired and without dependents. An explanation is provided later in the paper.

[13] Quite what this means for someone from formal housing is unclear. Another respondent whose 'home somewhere else' is formal housing in Hammarsdale says that given its formal nature there is no common burial site for family members so burial there is out of the question (Respondent I).

**APPENDIX: The Magisterial Districts Defining the 'Deep Rural Areas'**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Msinga | Mt Frere | Bolobedu | Mpofu |
| Nkandla | Malamulela | Peddie | Witsieshoek |
| Elliotdale | Mahlabathini | Moutse | Dzanani |
| Flagstaff | Port St Johns | Vuwani | Thabamoopo |
| Kentani | Ntabethemba | Ingwavuma | Thohoyandou |
| Polela | Alfred | Hlanganani | Victoria East |
| Tabankulu | Umzimkulu | Eerstehoek | Mdutjana |
| Mt Ayliff | Bochum | Kudumane | Butterworth |
| Nongoma | Mutali | Naphuno | Paulpietersburg |
| Mqanduli | Kranskop | Hewu | Umbumbulu |
| Lusikisiki | Nqutu | Cala | Madikwe |
| Weenen | Nqamakwe | Ixopo | Wakkerstroom |
| Bizana | Idutywa | Middeldrift | Eshowe |
| Willowvale | Ngqueleni | Phokwani | Huhudi |
| Nebo | Mapumulo | Mthonjaneni | Mkobola |
| Babanango | Cofimvaba | Ubombo | Seshego |
| Sekhukhuneland | Libode | Ndwendwe | Impendle |
| Mt Fletcher | Tsolo | Keiskammahoek | Moretele |
| Maluti | Bergville | Mokerong | Simdlangentsha |
| Sekgosese | Sterkspruit | Giyani | Hlabisa |
| Qumbu | Tsomo | Mapulaneng | Nkomazi |
| Engcobo | Lady Frere | Mhala | Mbibana |

**Endnotes**

[1] A version of this paper was originally presented at the meeting of the International Geographical Union in Durban in August of 2002.

[2] Bonner, Delius and Posel (1993) have emphasized the importance of gender to this process arguing that it was the presence of women migrants in the city that led males to put down roots. Lacking land rights and also status in rural society, it was women who were more likely to cut the links to the land and so mediate the permanent settlement of males.

[3] These were areas settled by Africans, typically as freeholders, prior to the 1913 Land Act, but which, according to the terms of that Act, lay inside those parts of the country which were designated as for exclusively white ownership.

[4] "Another Anglo spokesman … said that some migrants enjoy the male exclusivity on the mines, and perceive their role in the family as the breadwinner from afar. Urbanized wives would be regarded as an intrusion within this male domain … Migrants' fears of a breakdown of traditional values in an urban environment also probably help to sustain the migrant system …" (Jooma 1991: 59)

[5] The breakdown by year: 1996: 15,917; 1997: 29,811; 1998: 18,981.

[6] The first three occupational classes in the classification used by the Household Surveys; i.e.: 1=Occupation codes 1000-1999 (Managers); 2=Occupation codes 2000-2999 (Professionals); 3=Occupation codes 3000-3999 (Semi-professionals Technicians)

[7] The concentration indices are patterned to some degree. Their correlation with unemployment rates across the different magisterial districts is –0.637.

[8] In contrast to the tabulations examining migrant workers, lack of consistency between the questions in the 1996 Survey and those for 1997 and 1998 precluded including the former in our calculations.

[9] These figures should be treated with some caution. People migrated from the deep rural areas at various times over the 1986-97/98 period adding and losing household members at various times. Benchmarking with any accuracy the populations of origins in the deep rural areas and of the destination in the rest of South Africa is likewise extremely elusive.

[10] (% share of all immigrants - % share of South Africa's population) / % share of South Africa's population.

[11] There are other reasons why this approach has merit, not the least being the distraction of a white interviewer who might be seen, among other things, as the bringer of jobs.

[12] The remaining two were retired and without dependents. An explanation is provided later in the paper.

[13] Quite what this means for someone from formal housing is unclear. Another respondent whose 'home somewhere else' is formal housing in Hammarsdale says that given its formal nature there is no common burial site for family members so burial there is out of the question (Respondent I).