KAGISO HISTORICAL RESEARCH REPORT

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Abstract

This paper presents the formation of a new community after the act of apartheid, a configuration of a new township being zoned in a particular area with a group of people whose choice of living area remained more or less voluntary. It is a truism that the policy of segregation and apartheid involved the manipulation of space – where the old working class was constantly removed from the urban centres to the faraway periphery of towns and cities. In such a context, it has often been the breaking up of old communities like the Munsieville which gave birth to Kagiso.

The creation of Kagiso by the government decree was characterized by a complex set of processes of internal structuring development, which was combined to give the township its own character. This research report will advance our historical understanding of social variables that include the nature of work force that occupied the location, the cycles of boom and slump, the rate of unemployment, local administration, ethnic housing policy, the historical legacy of resistance, the size and geographical location of the township and its internal composition. All these variables define the township of Kagiso as a living area in which social interaction developed into a sense of community.
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Framework of the study

This historical research report is an important contribution to our understanding of the socio-cultural and political history of Kagiso. It is a most unusual exercise - a unique combination of research that examines the political, social, cultural and economic history of Kagiso. Except for the political unrest in the 1980s and 1990s, which was analysed by Dutch scholar, Ineke van Kessel in her book entitled *Beyond Wildest Dreams*, there has been no literature dealing with these historical aspects of Kagiso. Van Kessel’s notable work examined Kagiso’s political upheaval in relation to the broader context of the nationwide liberation struggle. Although she contributed to our understanding of political unrest in the 1980s, her work lacks historical orientation; because all uprisings have origins in events both remote and recent.

The book does not tell us about the historical patterns of development in Kagiso, which served as the basis for the unrest in the 1980s. To date, Kagiso has not received much scholarly attention. As a result, we do not know experiences of urban life and the evolution of urban segregation and apartheid that took place in the location.

We remain uninformed about how African urbanisation and settlement varied regionally according to the patterns of economic development and exploitation. We are unaware of how local authorities administered and controlled Kagiso’s inhabitants. Despite the fact that laws which governed African townships were the same, these were determined by highly specific local conditions. It has not been easy for the author to draft this report, because of the lack of secondary, and the volume of primary, sources.

The difficulty and constraints which the author is raising about the method of compiling this report is valid. The report is based on interviews, newspaper cuttings, the Urban Foundation Reports, some archival documents from the South African National Archives, and the 1983 Bergstraesser Social Survey, that examined the views of various sectors of the South African population. It was not easy to access the West Rand Board administration documents because most of them were burned during 1970s and 1980s township riots. However, fruitful discussions were held with selected Kagiso residents, several acquaintances and postgraduate students at the University of the Witwatersrand on the topic.
Introduction

Kagiso Township is located between Randfontein and Johannesburg along the historic Main Reef Road, that links the east and west rand sections of the Gold Reef. It is situated on a portion of the Luipaardsvlei farm, 246-I-Q. During October 1957, the executive committee of the Bantu Housing Board was given a grant of £231,150 by central government treasury for the erection of 1300 dwellings and one school for the residents of Kagiso. In the planning document, it was stated that ‘the approval financial detail are as follow…250 one room dwellings…500 two roomed dwelling…550 three roomed dwelling…school [with] six classrooms’ The development work included street works, water reticulation and street lighting. The approved rent ranged from two pounds to two pounds ten per month, depending on the size of the house. By the end of 1960, almost all housing stock in Kagiso had been built. In 1984, the township was granted municipal status under the administration of the black local authority. The authorities were elected in 1983 elections under the government reforms that introduced the so-called tricameral government, which was deemed to be inclusive in terms of all South African racial groups. During the period of nationwide conflict in the 1980s, Kagiso experienced school, consumer and bus boycott. By June 1987, political activity in the township had been stifled by the state of emergency first imposed in 1985 and again in 1986. In July 1987, official documents recorded that 73 060 people were residents of Kagiso, of whom 9 730 were accommodated in hostels and not in conventional housing. The official waiting list for housing stood at 1 946 families. On 15 June 1987, an application was made, in terms of the provision of Regulation 7 of the Township Establishment and Land Use Regulation, for the establishment of the Kagiso extension 7. The aim of this application was to alleviate the housing shortage that Kagiso was experiencing.

Africans decentralised: Kagiso

The vast majority of the South African working class, particularly the African population, was compelled to live in so-called locations delineated and regulated by the South African state. During the 1950s, a new phase of African settlement in Krugersdorp began. The impending closure of some gold mines in the Krugersdorp area prompted the council to actively encourage other industries to locate to the newly created industrial area known as Chamdor. Factories were sited on disused mining ground away from the white town. The increased control of African urban settlements had been a major component of the expansion of the government control over the everyday life of Africans. This directive has been important in shaping the life of African people in urban Krugersdorp and Kagiso. The growth in the control exercise by the Krugersdorp Town Council over the local African populace is an example of the management of the working class.

During the consolidation of apartheid in 1960, new laws were drafted which granted the Minister of Bantu Affairs the power to appoint officers with the power to inspect places where African people were accommodated. The Prime Minister announced in May 1960 that the Department of Bantu Administration was to be equipped so that it could be able to 'exercise proper supervision over the administration of the Bantu through the local authority.' The Chief Urban Area Commissioner reported that he would make use of the agencies of municipalities of which Krugersdorp Town Council was one, of the potential municipalities to be used. Part of these new laws made provision for a local labour bureau to be set up in respect of every prescribed urban or peri-urban area.

The aim of this provision was to create townships as labour pools. It was to control the movement of labour in accordance with such quotas or labour pools. In addition, it was to prohibit employment otherwise from any other source other than from such a pool. In other words, some factories and industries were decentralised from white urban centres for the purpose of shoring up Bantustans and township development. The aim of decentralising these industries was to slow down the movement of Africans to cities through policies designed to improve living conditions in what were known as ‘reserves.’ The decentralisation process gathered momentum with the Tomlinson Commission of 1952. This body came out strongly in favour of the creation of decentralised points in the ‘Bantu’ areas, as the spearhead of a massive integrated thrust to create jobs in these areas.

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Creating locations was given priority in those areas which were regarded as having the greatest probability of attracting growth; the definition of such areas were those close to existing metropolitan areas such as Chamdor in Krugersdorp, Rosslyn in Soshanguve and Alrode in the townships of East Rand. This initiative responded to population increase and unrestrained concentration of people in certain cities. As we shall see, the population increase in the Krugersdorp ‘black spot’ of Munsieville township that gave birth to Kagiso location, resulted in numerous social and physical problems. These problems were constantly aggravated by the influx of people into already crowded Munsieville.

The development of Chamdor industrial area falls under this development framework. Chamdor industries were to be serviced by the people of Kagiso. In the case of Krugerdorp, the central government claimed that this new development would create jobs and alleviate overcongestion in the town of Krugersdorp. This was the first measure directed towards controlling the growth of the metropolitan areas in Transvaal province.

The location of Chamdor industries next to Kagiso had multifaceted intention. Firstly, it aimed at restricting the metropolitan growth of Krugersdorp, so as to keep African people away from the ‘white’ town. Secondly, it benefitted industrialists who spontaneously desired to move to cheap labour areas in order to maintain their profit. Though we lack written records to corroborate this, oral evidence indicates that wage differentials based on location were utilised by companies such as South African Breweries. Those who worked in Johannesburg were paid more than Kugersdorp employees. Finally, the aim of relocation of industries from metropolitan areas was to control the movement of African people.

Comparatively speaking, this is what made Kagiso urban planning different to that in Soweto. However, this does not make Kagiso unique because the same apartheid urban planning is visible in Boipatong where ISCOR and other heavy and light industry plants were built close to the township. Furthermore, in the East Rand region of Johannesburg, the Alrode industrial complex is adjacent to the townships of Katlehong and Thokoza.

The official figure indicates that projects approved by the Decentralisation Board between 1982 and 1984 generated 188 000 jobs. Since this policy of decentralisation benefitted industrialists, a 1984 survey shows that more than 20 companies relocated to Chamdor. However, there was fairly wide agreement among scholars and government officials that the decentralisation policy failed to provide sufficient employment in areas like Kagiso.

Some commentators were also quick to point out that a considerable number of jobs were lost as a result of the coercive aspects of the policy that is the restriction of African workers on developing industrial land in the Pretoria, Witwatersrand and Vaal area. For example, in a study conducted by Rogerson in the 1970s, it is recorded that “the refusal under Section 3 of the Environmental Planning Act affected 100 000 jobs between 1968 and 1978, and the rejection of application for proclamation of new industrial townships prevented the employment of 220 000 Black workers in that period.”

It was noted in various studies that this programme was essential to the broader interest of capital because it tend to lower wages in the economy as a whole. It also undermined trade unionism while attracting foreign investors. This form of spatial reorganisation served as mechanism to minimise trade union militancy common in large plants in traditional industrial areas of the Witwatersrand. As a result, some larger plants like South African Breweries were reduced to smaller, controllable plants and decentralised to Chamdor.

It is clear that the design of Chamdor as an industrial area of Kagiso was in line with apartheid ideology of separate development. Its establishment restricted freedom of movement of African people of Kagiso. Africans were channelled to work in the Krugersdorp district which comprised of Chamdor and Krugersdorp. This was enforced through employment contracts that made sure that workers were confined to the Krugersdorp region. Pass laws and permits that were enforced through Section 10 of the 1955 Influx Control Act This clause stated that only Africans who worked continuously for one employer in the area for a minimum of ten years, were given automatic right to remain in the area. This meant that those residents who worked in Krugersdorp for more than ten years became the permanent residents of Kagiso.
The origins of Kagiso

As white suburbia was expanding in Krugersdorp, the authorities decided that white people could not share the hillside with African residents of Munsieville. It was then decided that the population of Munsieville location should be moved to Kagiso. In Krugersdorp, Munsieville is the oldest township, founded in 1903 under Ordinance 58. During World War I the location was flooded by a large number of displaced BaTswana from the western Transvaal and other dispossessed people from different parts of the country. These newcomers were attracted by industrial and mining development that had taken off during wartime.

As the population increased, Munsieville became a financial burden for the Krugersdorp Town Council, and council members tried to solve this problem without debiting its own account. The Council ran Munsieville with limited funds that were received from African rents and fines under municipality regulations. In the 1930 for example, an appeal for a clinic to alleviate the infant mortality rate of 180 per 1000 live births was refused, as the Native Revenue Account showed a deficit. The conditions in the location led the Johannesburg public health department to note in 1934 that the Council had 'not hitherto taken a very active interest in the welfare of the residents of the location'.

In the 1930 and 1940s the township experienced a population explosion, as a direct result of white farming becoming largely commercialised and mechanised, Africans lost their land rights on white farms and many farm workers and sharecroppers became redundant to the needs of the farmers. As a result, Africans were expelled from the farms. As it was not easy for them to enter urban areas, they flocked to 'black spots.' The Surplus People Project which made the thorough study of the removals estimated that 3,548,900 people were removed from farms. The removals resulted in a great intensification of the overpopulation problem in urban 'black sports' like Munsieville, Krugersdorp.

Apart from displacement of African farm workers, the mines had been the important conduit for African workers into the urban areas. During the 1940s, steeply rising prices brought about by World War II were not cushioned by any increase in the wages paid to African workers in the mines. Wages in the industrial sector kept up with inflation through a cost-of-living allowance. As a result, miners began to move from the surrounding mines of Randfontein, Roodeport and Krugersdorp to town, where they found Munsieville to be a warm and welcoming space where they could settle.

Most Munsieville residents depended on commercial and distributive trade jobs in Krugersdorp central and in domestic services in the suburbs, as well as on the railway junction of Krugersdorp which provided unskilled employment. The presence of Munsieville was opposed by the neighbouring white ratepayers, as well as, estate companies anxious about the impact of high density poor community on neighbouring, white, suburbs.

Such opposition was expressed at the municipality level. By the 1940s, the Krugersdorp Town Council which was a relatively small municipality on the edge of the Witwatersrand rarely opposed the ratepayers' concern. At the same time, the National Party won national elections in 1948, and the control of the African population in Krugersdorp was implemented by November of the following year. This control became firm - it facilitated labour allocation and tightened influx control. As a result, people that were employed within the municipality boundaries were moved to the new municipal location of Kagiso. Hence, the elements of control, such as permits and other location regulations, pass laws, and the lack of security of tenure for urban Africans have provided a powerful framework for the development of Kagiso.
A new phase of Kagiso

Pictures of urban life under apartheid are familiar even to non-South Africans. When one approached African townships in 1970s and 1980s, he or she was welcomed by the monotonous image of endless rows of 'matchbox houses'. In 1956, having granted the Krugersdorp local authority an advance for the erection of dwellings an additional advance of £4,500 was made available for the reticulation of street lighting.

In 1960, the first scheme of 1300 houses was completed, except fencing. The provision was to be made for fencing. At the same year application loan for 1000 houses was approved by the Minister of Bantu Administration. The granting of advance, selling prices and monthly rentals was also approved by the Minister. The advance of any portion was to be repayable by African residents in a form of rent within the period of 30 years; there was also a rate of interest. The houses that were built were L-shaped, three-roomed houses or two-roomed rectangular houses; all of them were virtually identical. Three-roomed houses comprised a kitchen, bedroom and living room, while the smaller ones a kitchen and bedroom. These houses were not provided with electricity or piped water.

Viewed from outside, these houses presented a balanced façade; a central door flanked by two small windows. The walls were made of unplastered stock-bricks and the roof made from unpainted asbestos sheeting. At the early stages of township development, the similar architectural form of these houses confused their owners, who would at times get lost. One of the residents recalled, 'Early on we got lost, and ended up knocking on the wrong door because these houses all looked the same.' Within each of these orderly rows of identical houses, dwelt four to five nuclear families.

Low cost houses, as well as hostels, were all constructed according to a standardised architectural design and in the same range of materials. The construction of housing stock was accompanied by the building of single-sex hostels that were designed to house single-sex migrant workers; this was typical apartheid design that emerged from the government policy which regarded Africans as temporary residents in urban areas.

Regardless of income, occupation or status, the people of Kagiso were provided with the same level of service. These generally included running water, sewage and refuse removal, postal services, educational and limited recreational facilities that included communal hall, a couple of playing fields as well as clinic. Other facilities comprised non-residential buildings such as churches, a few retail stores and official beer hall.

In terms of house tenure, there were three types of households, namely owner, municipal tenant and room tenant. By owner-household we mean one whose house is registered under his name. These owners were not entitled to sublet without the municipality's consent. Municipal and room tenants were given a special permit which was popularly known as 'lodgers permit', issued by municipal officials. It was usually given to newly arrived relatives of the household owner who came to search for employment. As the families grew over time, this kind of planning became problematic. For example, many families slept in the living room and kitchen at night.

In terms of administration, local authorities consisted of the superintendent, clerks popularly known as omabhalane and police, known locally as 'black jacks' because of their black uniform, who had the power to control access to the township. They were also given powers to remove those Africans deemed ‘surplus to requirement’ or who were habitually unemployed. They would raid households at night or in the early hours of the morning to check whether all the people in the house were permitted to reside at that particular residence.
Any unauthorised person was arrested and jailed. All Africans living permanently in Kagiso had to have a Section 10 rights endorsement in their reference books, which were locally known as *ipasi*. Section 10(1) of the Urban Areas Act stipulated that people entitled to have permanent qualification must either have been born in 'white areas,' or have lived there for fifteen years. In this way African workers were reduced to the status of permanent migrants.

Access to Kagiso was not easy; it was made difficult by the influx control laws. There were vast network of influx control laws that were designed to prevent Africans from entering Kagiso and settling there. In terms of these laws there were frequent 'pass raids' and thousand of African people who entered white areas without permission were sent to homelands. On the other hand, the poverty in the homelands forced people to seek work illegally in urban areas.

Africans who wanted to settle in the township had to first obtain a 'work seekers' permit. What is interesting about the apartheid view of townships is that locations like Kagiso were used as an instrument of control. The physical and administrative order of Kagiso and other townships promoted the concept of 'physical order' 'social stability' and 'visibility' where visibility meant that the inhabitants could be kept under surveillance.

Thus, Kagiso was planned according to the principles of apartheid social engineering; where inhabitants were subject to ethnic grouping. There was a Nguni section and the Sotho-Tswana section. Although at the initial stage this system worked, and terms like *matebele* which was used by the Tswana people when referring to the Nguni, and *izilwane* which was used by the Nguni when referring to BaTswana emerged.

However, as a more cosmopolitan, urban way of thinking developed, after some years promoting ethnicity in this way did not work. According to a study conducted by the Urban Foundation in 1983, as many as 64 percent of urban Africans felt no tribal or ethnic ties at all. Only 15 percent claimed to have strong tribal bonds. The overwhelming majority (95%) in Kagiso stated that it made no difference to them whether their neighbours belonged to their own, or to another ethnic group.

**Hostels**

The life in hostels was unpleasant; up to forty people in hostels shared two lavatories and single tap. There was no privacy either; dormitories were partitioned with room dividers, but the residents also used curtains and blankets. Typical hostel buildings comprise grounds and buildings drawn together in unimaginative and utilitarian styling. In Kagiso, the unenticing hostel blends into the bleak surroundings. The hostel complex was tightly sealed off from the surrounding area, the entrance and exit confined to a solitary, patrollable gate. Cooking took place in dormitories and furniture was rudimentary, usually a metal bedstead, a table, bench and a small locker.

Hostels were a place of tenancy. In Kagiso and elsewhere in South Africa, a white superintendent was responsible for managing and maintaining the hostel. He was also accountable for supervising the ground staff, the administration clerk and the police. This group was responsible for collecting rent, maintaining the hostel and dealing with complaints. They had the authority to expel residents for transgressions such as stealing, smuggling women into the hostel, brewing alcohol, disregard of visitor's rules and defaulting on fines and rent.

They were also responsible for allocating rooms and beds, as well as, for managing waiting lists. As part of apartheid policy ethnicity was central to room allocation.
Zulu or Sotho speakers were grouped together in the same rooms. Social ties and networks were generally formed first of all. Secondly, to avoid new ties especially with strangers. Finally, to show solidarity with the rest of the people back home. It is among these people that a migrant will choose his roommates, his regular drinking companion, and his leisure time associates generally. It is they then, who are expected to help in an emergency or incident, to arbitrate in his quarrels and to guide him along a path of conduct.

**Conflict was common among Kagiso hostel inhabitants.**

Conflict erupted from issues ranging from theft to debt. Social conflict in the hostel was also rooted in the ethnic associations which were the source of bonding which stimulated the formation of gangs, which in turn led to faction fights. Hostel dwellers were confined within the institutional limits of their home rural culture, mostly doing the same kind of things as each other, and similar things to their friends at home in the country. Culturally speaking, they appear more homogeneous than either educated migrants or residents who were born in Kagiso. Apart from tension inside the hostel, there were stresses between hostel residents and the people of Kagiso. The people of the township treated people their hostel neighbours as outsiders, as individuals whose temporary presence was alien and unwelcome. In fact, the government policy of migration stigmatised especially hostel dwellers as temporary sojourners in the cities. This stigmatisation was internalised and promoted among township residents who were themselves regarded as temporal residents, despite of their Section 10 status. The whole way of thinking divided both hostel and township residents and promoted mistrustful relationship. In reality, all Africans were legally classified as ‘homeland’ citizens. They did not have automatic rights to live in white areas of towns or cities.

Although there was an element of distrust, harmonious relationships were also recorded between these neighbours. For example, when hostel dwellers’ wives visited from the rural area, they were freely accommodated in the neighbourhood, because hostels were single-sex dwellings which did not allow female visitors.

Moreover, since Kagiso houses did not have showers, local men would go to hostel to use showers. Also, they would buy traditional medicine known as *imbiza* (a laxative medicine) from the hostel and drink in the local shebeens. Since most hostel residents, during the weekdays it was quiet, but at weekends, the picture changed. Residents would sing traditional songs that reminded them of home; others would spend time in the beer hall or drink in dormitory shebeens. They will also play the fertile seeding ground of *isicathamiya* or *imbube* as it was often called. This music genre survived wherever Zulu migrants were thrown together, this music is inseparable from the history and struggle of the Zulu-speaking working class. During weekend nights *isicathamiya* music competitions were held in Kagiso hostel hall.
Commercial opportunities

Kagiso provided limited commercial development and independent economic survival for Africans. The only means of survival in the area was for African people to sell their labour to the neighbouring town of Krugersdorp and the industrial area of Chamdor. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was still a big gap between the pay of Africans and whites. Wages were often determined on the basis of race. In the private sector there was no equal pay for equal work; this benefitted whites at the expense of African workers. In 1977, African teachers earned only 58 percent of the salaries paid to whites with the same qualifications. Employment provided for economic security, for social status and self reliance in the township of Kagiso.

Due to low wages and unemployment in the mid-1970s, many households were living below subsistence level and were trapped in a cycle of poverty. In the late 1970s, unemployment was reaching critical proportion among Africans in the region, due to the economic recession as a result of disinvestment and sanctions, as well as poor planning and training of manpower. Another factor that accelerated unemployment was the decline in gold mining. The proportion of Africans employed in the private sector decreased from 41 percent in 1950 to 15 percent in 1970.

Kagiso township had an extremely poorly developed tax-base and minimum capacity to generate income. Opportunities for developing economic activities within the area were severely hampered. In 1960s and 1970s, Kagiso residents were subjected of many financial burdens which the white residents of Krugersdorp did not endure.

Firstly, a fairly large proportion of African residents did not have cars and they were generally forced to pay transport cost to their place of work. Secondly, the township of Kagiso lacked supermarkets where goods could be bought cheaply, and inhabitants had to pay higher prices for their basic foodstuff and other commodities than whites. Moreover many restrictions on traders in African areas further inhibited development. This meant that all the shops were small, and catered only for daily convenience foods. Thus, while whites were increasingly being attracted to suburban shopping centres, African shopping took place in Krugersdorp. Over 50 percent of Krugersdorp rates’ income was generated by central Krugersdorp. African spending contributed significantly to the high value of rates in Krugersdorp. In addition, Africans had to pay the same government sales tax.

Thirdly, whites received virtually free education at state schools, while African parents had to pay levies to cover the running costs of their children’s’ schools, as well as often having to buy most of stationery and textbooks, all things which were provided free in white schools. Private enterprises in the form of restaurants, arts and cultural venues, such as clubs, bars and shebeens were illegal.

Operations of African traders or business persons in Kagiso were severely constrained. The notion that Africans were only temporary in the white areas meant to encourage Africans to channel their economic initiatives enterprise and capital to their respective homelands. Trading in any goods other than daily convenience goods was prohibited.

Permission for a trading site had to be obtained from the minister and the site size was limited to 150 or 350 square metres. The Administration Board had the power to terminate a trader’s license if he sold or delivered merchandised or produce to other population groups outside the township. If he or she was in 30 days arrears with his or her rent or the trader failed to repair his or her shop, the trader’s license could also be terminated.

Health enforcement by-laws also made life difficult or Africans traders. These by-laws were enforced by white divisional inspectors who inspected food handling at butchers and offal dealers as well as among hawkers. These controls were inappropriate for Kagiso, since they were formulated for highly urbanised society which enjoyed a high standard of living. The aforementioned restrictions on economic activity in Kagiso and other factors such as the lack of business experience inhibited the development of private enterprise in Kagiso.
In addition all consumption took place within the white Krugersdorp system, which means that there was a net outflow of income and a minimal generation of income internally.

After the implementation of the community council in the late 1970s, recommendations were made by the Riekert Commission, adding light industries and the service industry. The introduction of the community council made life more difficult. There were clashes between local traders and the administration councils that owned certain shops and liquor stores.

Moreover, Africans could not obtain loans or credits to start businesses. A survey conducted on problem facing African business persons in the mid-1970s revealed that 94 percent of traders interviewed stated that capital was not available for the purpose of starting a business. The lack of proper infrastructure in Kagiso also restrained economic success. For example, most businesses lacked electricity and telephones. Burglaries were also problematic due to poor lighting, the lack of an alarm system and poor police protection.

The state sought to control every aspects of African life. For example, transport was controlled by the state and beer brewing was also under the state monopoly. However, in the late 1970s, a pirate taxi industry emerged. The municipal control of the township beer-brewing industry was used to raise revenue for the physical maintenance of the township. Apart from registered businesses, there were petty unregistered businesses or informal economic activities that took place in Kagiso.

Most of theses businesses sold food such as cooked pig and cattle trotters locally known as amanqina, tripe (umugodu) and fat cakes (amagwinya), achaar and bread, mashed potatoes, snoek, chicken, mealies and sweetened ice blocks. Most of those who were involved in this activity were older women who bought these commodities from Chamdor. Their points of sale included bus stops, Leratong Hospital and school, as well as next to the community and sport centres. There were also child-minders, although the emphasis was on the provision of a livelihood, rather than on providing educational benefits to the child. However, it was illegal to look after more than five children without being registered and complying with certain health and other regulations.

This economic monopoly was stipulated by the Native Urban Areas Act of 1923 and it was taken up by the Krugersdorp Town Council. Since then, the Town Council and the West Rand Administration Board retained this right. In other parts of the country there was opposition to this, particularly by women who were beer brewers.

Nevertheless, in spite of economic suppression, shebeens have existed from the outset. Rates and taxes raised by the Krugersdorp Town Council from the white residents were not spent for Kagiso, but for the internal affairs of the white area. The aforementioned frustrations and degradation that African people were subject to in Kagiso might well have caused depression and physical health problems, but an assessment of this situation is a complex task and beyond the scope of this research. However, the extreme shortage capital and other economic and political and social restrictions that Africans traders experienced resulted in the high incidence of hypertensive diseases.
Social stratification

Initially, there was large section of middle-aged and aging residents who were born in outlying rural areas and who settled on the outskirts of Krugersdorp, during or after World War II. Most have adapted in one way or another to the new environment, reflecting varying degrees of transition from a purely rural way of life. Many clung assiduously to the African traditions and customs of the village and continued to pay periodic visit to relatives and friends in the rural areas.

Others had lost contact with their places of origin and exhibited no urgent desire to return. The second strata comprise Kagiso residents born in areas like Munsieville. These are urban folks who have no connection with the rural and are generally out of touch with rural culture. Many are offspring of the members of the first stratum and were still influenced therefore to a greater or lesser extent by tribal traditions. So depending o factors such as literacy and training members of the second stratum, in contrast to the first, they tend to fill the ranks of white collar workers.

Although Kagiso consisted of large number of working class families, it was a relatively socially heterogeneous community, with members of different classes forced to live in close proximity to one another. As a result, in the first two decades of Kagiso's existence, there was an explicit lack of class distinction in Kagiso. This homogeneity was propelled by the fact that the economic boom of the 1960s had not only raised economy but had also increased the demand for skilled labour.

Advancement of African workers became a necessity and as a result, in the late 1970s, a change in the built environment reflected social inequalities that began to emerge. Those who could afford extended their houses. Those who occupied 'big houses' were regarded as better off and were afforded more respect than those residents who occupied original-sized township houses. There were regulations that controlled extension to houses. Before residents could extend their houses, the administration board required the owner to buy the property under the 99 years leasehold system. Second, the plans for the proposed extension had to be approved by the board. The system of leasehold was a strategy to give back urban property rights to African residents who could afford to pay for them. This favoured the African middle-class minority and contributed to a change in the township's landscape. Professionals including emerging self-employed business people could afford to develop theirs into 'big houses.' Social stratification was also reflected by the type and variety of furnishings in houses.

The majority of homes were simply furnished; usually there was a table and chairs, a separate table for a single primus stove (single-plate paraffin stove) and some cooking utensils, some form of cupboard and one or more beds - but hardly ever a separate one for every member of the household. Some homes made more of a sophisticated impression with dining or sitting room suites. Some houses had with refrigerators. The well-furnished houses usually belonged to white-collar workers. Some interior walls were plastered with cement, others not. Plastered walls were also painted.
In terms of social stratification, the working class was the largest group and it was poorly paid. Of all those in regular employment, 90 percent were in working class occupations; over half in unskilled and domestic capacities, and the rest were semi-skilled factory operatives, service workers, drivers and delivery staff. The remainder of the population consisted of educated elites such as nurses, teachers, clergy, lawyers and other professionals. There were also newcomers who were educated and joined this class of professionals. This cohort came in the 1970s, and though they were educated migrants they did not desire to join their tribesman and women as their associates. In the cultural frame of reference, the question was seen as choosing between alternative institutions, habits or standards, which were all in evidence in Kagiso.

The increase in rent exceeding and food prices in the 1960s and 70s, as well as Kagiso’s geographical location made life expensive for Kagiso residents. As a result, there were expensive areas like Mona-halwali, which means the husband must not be sick. This area was labeled Mona halwali because the rent was expensive. According to Mrs Mojapelo, ‘this area was expensive and so if your husband got sick you would not afford the rent, then families avoided this area because they were afraid that if their husbands got sick and unable to work they will be kicked out of the house, hence the area was called mona halwali’ made life expensive for Kagiso residents. As a result, there were expensive areas like Mona-halwali, which means the husband must not be sick. This area was labeled Mona halwali because the rent was expensive. According to Mrs Mojapelo, ‘this area was expensive and so if your husband got sick you would not afford the rent, then families avoided this area because they were afraid that if their husbands got sick and unable to work they will be kicked out of the house, hence the area was called mona halwali’

Other expenditure included coal, paraffin, school fees, and food, as well as, other household operational costs. All this made families struggle against the odds to raise their families in Kagiso. According to an economic report of 1961-63, Krugersdorp African males earned a median weekly income of R6 to R10 depending on occupation and company. Women who worked as domestic workers earned R3 to R4. The majority of men in white collar and skilled jobs had achieved at least secondary school education. In the 1970s, black workers in all sectors experienced static or even declining living standards.

In analysing the material conditions that pertained in Kagiso, it is clear that different classes existed, with white-collar workers and professionals making up the higher income level. In view of the fact that life changes, many families who were relatively poor in the 1960s enjoyed an improved in their circumstances in the 1980s. Some of these families moved into the upper social and income level as children started to join the labour market.

**Education**

Educationally, the great majority of adults had standard two to five (grade 4 to grade 6) and others had enjoyed little education. A very small proportion of the township inhabitants had tertiary education in 1960s and 1970s. These were teachers, nurses, local administration clerks, lawyers and doctors. Attending school is universally accepted as a normal part of a child's life in town. However, in Kagiso the majority of inhabitants came from the western Transvaal, where farming was practiced and education was less important. In western Transvaal the majority of Africans had been dispossessed of land by the 1913 Land Act. As a result they did not own land, those who did farmed land that was barren and arid and unsuitable for agriculture or grazing. million of people were removed from white rural areas in terms of the land laws.
This forced African people to seek employment in neighbouring farms or migrate to urban areas. Africans who lived on white-owned land were able to maintain a subsistence mode of production in exchange for rental payments.

During the inter-war period there were three different types of relationship in the farmlands of Transvaal and Orange Free State. The first type of arrangement came to be known as ‘labour tenancy’, the second one squatting or renting and the third, ‘farming on-the-half.’ However, farming-on-the-half or sharecropping suffered serious constraints in Transvaal because of the presence of poor whites who were in competition with African sharecroppers. As a result, African farmers were forced to become labour tenants which implied that their children had to work on farms - boys had to look after cattle and girls to work on the fields, and not attend school. Thus older citizens in Kagiso were less educated than the younger ones.

In fact, Kagiso is made out of the people who migrated from Transvaal, Natal and the Eastern Cape, but the majority came from western Transvaal. These 'Transvaalers' were the victims of land laws that were consolidated in 1936 that forced them to sell their labour in urban Transvaal. The Krugersdorp area became their first stop on their way to Johannesburg. As a result of dispossession, it is estimated that between 1963 and 1973, over a million of people were removed from white rural areas in terms of the land laws.

Religion

Kagiso had and still has, different churches, ranging from those established by white missionaries to the independent churches. What disconnects the Zionist from the traditional missionary churches is the practice. In traditional white churches, the congregation sits and listens to the priest’s teachings. In African churches, the congregants sing and clap their hands, pray to themselves, some loudly, some softly, pacing up and down, walking one behind the other in little circles, kneeling, sitting or even lying down.

These churches are quite a sight for unaccustomed eyes. The ceaseless and impassioned singing and clapping in these churches stir up the spirits, known locally as umoya, calling to the unseen world. Wondrous work of healing were and are performed and ‘as soon as the spirit are stirred up enough visions of the dear one now deceased came floating into the mind like clouds.’ These churches fulfilled Africans spiritually and morally because they were no longer regarded as sinning by making contact with the souls of the departed.

Some of the largest church congregations are those denominations established among Africans missionaries, such as the Methodists, Anglicans, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics. Further there were number of small congregations of mission churches and still more of the African independent churches or separatists movements. Many males did not attend church but encouraged their wives and children to attend. According to some informants, there was in fact a large surplus of women over men in the active membership of nearly all churches. Church provided an outlet – for creative and organisational talents, provided entertainment as well as emotional release. But even Christians, including full church members, remained partly committed to ancestor worship. In the interviews that I conducted, some openly admitted this, others tried to conceal their affiliations.

Apart from Christians, there are also residents who still practice African traditional beliefs, however, economic changes and Africa urbanisation played a crucial part in altering traditional beliefs. Traditional beliefs about the spirits of the dead played a role in the life of some people of Kagiso. Churches also played a certain role in education, training and alleviating unemployment.
 Churches assisted school dropouts and unemployed women by engaging them in various projects such as knitting, crocheting and other handwork projects.

Kagiso represents one of the townships where church was consumed by issues of concern to Africans and by debates that renewed the struggle for liberation. The church addressed key social issues such as the shortage of housing. As a result, the number of political organisations such as the United Democratic Front and the Azanian People's Organisation used the church in order to address fundamental and pressing needs in Kagiso.

Rituals in Kagiso

In the 1960s and 1970s, the population of Kagiso was in a state of cultural transition. The culture based on tribal custom was being changed by the impact of Westernisation and urbanisation. However, certain conflicts were inevitable. These included patriarchal traditions versus the emancipation of women, monogamy versus polygamy and Christianity versus ancestral practices. Though the majority of people are Christians, but a large proportion of the population in Kagiso also believe in the spirit of the ancestors. The role of spirits as personal guidance is important among this community. The spirits are believed to protect people in all sorts of danger and misfortune. Thus there are sacrificial rituals in a form of brewing and drinking beer and sacrificing goat or sheep that were carried out in this community. In the late 1960s, under the regulations in force those days slaughtering was only permissible in an abattoir or under special license.

Authorities’ suspicion that slaughtering was a cloak for illegal commercial butchery caused officials to be wary of issuing permits. In those days, the sacrifice was performed under the suspicious and cruel stare of the ‘clack jacks’ who had been told of to ensure that there should be no illegal sale of meat ensuing from the slaughter. The regulations that governed beer brewing were even worse.

Occultism

Generally, the people of Kagiso were far more prone to insecurity than their rural fellows. The whole process of urbanization, the metamorphosis from a clannish to Western culture, is fraught with difficulty, uncertainty and often heartache. People believed they could be bewitched by neighbours or even a relative.

Add to the high frequency of township crime, violence and poverty and we come to realise why superstitious beliefs and the practice of magic and witchcraft have tenaciously remained a feature of urban life. In an interview, an elder stated that ‘witchcraft is widespread, it is intensively practiced. It does not help in the development of our people. It is in fact retarding progress particularly among lower income groups.’ This has been substantiated by many news headlines in the old African newspaper The World.
Leisure

In Kagiso, the majority of people spent much of their leisure time at home, it was and is still common for women in employment to be engaged in domestic work at home after working hours and over weekends. Men typically spent their free time at home doing repair work, working in the garden or assisting with domestic work. Some residents attended burial society meetings, weddings, funerals or traditional ceremonies.

As means of raising extra income, Kagiso residents established stokvels or societies in which each member receives an amount of money on a rotational basis. Stokvel is regarded by those who participate in it as a business. Its origin is obscure, but could be associated with a need to supplement of incomes and self-help associations. In order to form a stokvel there must be a club of not less than four members. There is also a treasurer who must be honest, skilled and forthright.

During these social events, sales of alcohol and food will be carried out. However, this illegal economic activity was suppressed by local authorities who would send police to arrest people who attended these gatherings. In an attempt to circumvent police interference, residents would pretend these were traditional ceremonies. Though there was no cinema in Kagiso, Kagiso Community Hall was at times converted into a cinema and residents would come and watch movies. At other times the hall played host to concerts, dancing and ‘get togethers; these social activities were patronised by youngsters.

It was traditional in Kagiso for people to dress up in expensive clothes on Saturdays and Sundays. Some would dress in pantsula clothes which represented the ‘cleva’ sub-culture or streetwise dress, consisting of brentwood trousers, viyella shirts, and saxon shoes. Lady pantsulas would wear Scottish plaid skirts and berets, mondi jerseys, saxon or opanka shoes. In the township, pantsulas were perceived as aggressive ruffians who often stabbed people and were members of rough stokvels.

Among this sub-cultural group , violent physical assaults upon each other, sexual harassment and rape of women were common. As a result, the community resented pantsula stokvels and the police would raid these gatherings. The term two-two emerged because when stokvel attendees were arrested they were handcuffed in pairs. At times police will be succumb to bribery and turn a blind eye.

There was also the sub-culture of the ivies and the cats, who were regarded as the petty bourgeoisie of the time, although it was implicitly understood that some members were homosexual. The ivy style was clean cut and dandyish even prissy; it would emphasise, for instance, a particular make of aftershave or deodorant. Ivies were heavily influenced by elite American fashion and saw themselves as classier than pantsulas. For Ivies, luxury and ‘high class’ places were important, so they would go as far as Pelican Night Club in Orlando, Soweto, to enjoy themselves. It was the place to mingle with fashion models, musicians and other celebrities of the 1970s and 80s. This group would wear Charles shoes, Bang Bang jeans and Jordache jeans.

These sub-groupings acted and dressed the same and listened to the same music, and these choices reflected the distinct identity of these groups. Wearing labels from shops like Riggs, Dexter, and City Outfitters in Johannesburg was a status symbol. Overdressing was regarded as ‘coming up’, a person who does not fit in. This social stratification was a way of people trying to overcome the limitations and frustrations of apartheid.

During 1970s and 1980s new identity was forged in Kagiso and other African townships, and they form part of struggle against marginalisation. Interest in sports was also a key issue among the people of Kagiso. Soccer was a male domain; women did not participate in sports in large numbers, except at school level. Masculinity in sports resulted in violence and hostility. Football grounds in Kagiso had no fences, walls or moats to keep fans off the pitch and there were no police to monitor safety. There was always rivalry between hardcore fans. Although women were excluded from sports, in the 1970s there was an increasing number of women supporters. Female supporters began to exercise informal power in a deeply patriarchal community.
Shebeens

Beer drinking in shebeens was an important leisure time activity, shebeens being one of the common facets of contemporary informal economic fabric of South Africa. The impetus to the growth of sheebens in Kagiso was derived from the need to create income in the face of enduring unemployment and poverty. Unlike the situation in Soweto, where one would find 'classy' shebeens such as Heartbreakers, Pelican, Mbokies and others, in Kagiso there were very few 'classy' shebeen like kwa-(ha) Moss.

There were also many small shebeens that catered for the need of the elderly and migrant workers living in the hostels. Some were shebeens that traded traditional beer and concoctions rather than western liquor. It should be noted that though today shebeens have been legalised and renamed taverns – but at the time these establishments were illegal. For example, the Rand Daily Mail, 16 October 1979), reported that over nine months in 1979, over 43 000 litres of liquor and 19 vehicles were seized by police. Shebeen owners staged a boycott of bottle stores operated by the West Rand Board in retaliation.

The history of shebeens is woven inextricably into the complex fabric of liquor control. In the late nineteen century, drunkenness was regarded as lowering productivity. As a result, there were laws that were implemented which controlled the sale of alcohol.

During the development of segregated locations under the Urban Areas Act, the municipalities began to control beer trade, and the African beer trade. The municipal system represented a sophisticated urban social control mechanism, through which African workers would subsidise the cost of their labour at no expense to white property owners. Beer halls were developed by the municipality to sell beer while at the same time there were regular and relentless raids on beer brewers and shebeens in the townships. Running a shebeen was not easy as a result of this monopoly.
Gambling
Gambling was an illicit means of raising money in Kagiso. Young people and some elders played dice. This form of gambling took place at weekends. Another game popular among elders was fah-fee which is locally known as umshayina because it is run by the Chinese. Fah-fee is a form of gambling based on drawing numbers. Fah-fee draws a large number of Kagiso residents including white collar workers and church members.

Township lingo: Ischamtho
Ischamtho came to life as a result of language differences among the new arrivals in Kagiso, just as it was natural for a lingua franca to develop in multilingual Mediterranean trading ports. In the Reef area of which Kagiso forms part, township dwellers shared a basic knowledge of Afrikaans as well as Sotho and Zulu dialects. Right from the start these languages fill whatever gaps speakers encountered in each vernacular language. Ischamtho differs from township to township.

Linguists have analysed Ischamtho as the language that is used through another language – a type of basilect, yet it retains its own defining features, that is, it has no structure of its own but relies heavily on that of the languages from which it emanates. Ischamtho emerged from the Western Native Townships and the freehold areas of Johannesburg. It emerged from the argot called isishalambombo and draws its speech community from the old locations of the Reef. This language not only reflects social transformation but also marks permanence in African urban settlements.

Environmental problems
Kagiso has had a serious environmental problem since its inception. The environmental fallout was caused by 240 hectares of a slime dump perched on the edge of the township. The two most affected areas are known as Father Martin section and Extension 8, which are situated right beside the dump site. Between 1970s and 1980s, a time when the gold was being actively mined, the extracted waste products (or tailing) in the form of sludge, was pumped into the slime dam located some distance from the residential area.

After a long battle with the mining company and the ministries of the environment and energy Affairs, the residents decided to take both the mining company and the ministry to court. The community stated that both parties failed to adhere to environment regulations and as a result, they wanted the mine to be closed. A resident, Mr Mokhene said: ‘The dust poses a health hazard… especially during the months when dust levels are high. I cough and suffer from an irritated throat and my eyes water.’ Other residents complained that their properties are being devaluated by the mine dumps. In 1991, the mining operation closed but the dried sludge continues to be problematic in the form of dust. Scientists have proved that slime dams and mine dumps contain very fine poisonous particles which are easily inhalable, leading to a high risk of increased incidents of cancer and birth defects.
Township politics

In order to understand the political unrest of the 1980s in Kagiso, it is important to locate the history of the township in the nationwide context of local government reform programme that took place after 1976. Township protest was a general response to this programme, this structural change triggered the development of social movements that emerged aimed at mobilising community power against the state's refusal to deal with grievances.

When this met with a coercive response from the security forces, local movements united into organizations that defined the future as lying in the total dismantling of apartheid. As we shall see, in the end, however, the security forces systematically removed the township leadership organization and leaders that had entered into a negotiation process at local level.

In terms of the Bantu Affairs Administration Act of 1971, 22 Bantu Affairs Administration Board (BAAB) were established by the state in 1972 and 1973 to control and manage African dominated classes in townships. From 1973, the BAAB became operative. By mid 1970 there was effectively an urban crisis in the townships – a crisis of the management of the reproduction of labour. The urban revolt of 1976-7 was both a manifestation and a further cause of crisis.

The urban administration facilities were destroyed and the ability of the BAAB to rule effectively was nullified. Now the challenge that faced the state was to rethink and re-plan the new urban management. The resolution of this predicament was to introduce the post-1976 urban reforms which had two ambitious policy objectives. The first was the installation of the Regional Service Council that were designed to 'broaden democracy' at the local level and create new fiscal resource for urban development. The second was the incorporation of all groups at local level; this new structure was regarded by the government as the building blocks for a future South African democracy.

This policy direction raised crucial questions among scholars of administration studies: does reform strengthen apartheid in practice or does it, regardless of its intentions, weaken it by creating space for a process of change outside the control of the reformers?

The view that reforms bolster white supremacy, either by replacing overt controls with more effective ones, or by co-opting previously hostile groups and transforming them into state allies, was almost conventional wisdom among anti-apartheid analysts in the mid-1970s and is still argued for by some commentators today.

The approach that the state used was to co-opt people and deflect popular opposition away from the centres of power in the township. In order to legally implement its strategy, the Community Council Act was passed in June 1977, the promulgation of the Act was accompanied by the appointment of the Rietert Commission that was commissioned to investigate the affairs of urban Africans. Ironically, these reforms created space for popular organisation against apartheid and that the degree to which reform weakened the system determined the extent to which these opportunities were used by organised groups to seek change.

For example, after the promulgation of the new legislation, the Committee of Ten emerged in Soweto, and was followed by Krugersdorp Residents Organisations (KRO). These committees acted on the mandate of this new Act but opposed community councils and any dealing with the West Rand Administration Board (WRAB) that governed Soweto, Kagiso and the township of Randfontein. The WRAB was an independent body with meaningful executive powers to rule townships. It should be noted that at this stage the aforementioned collective organisations had not taken place. Only a sense of dissatisfaction with existing conditions could be detected, not a rejection of power relations.
According to the Act, the new councils could control and manage a community guard, make recommendations to the Minister about transport services, educational matters and township regulations, such as,

- The allocation and administration of letting of accommodation to single persons as if they were single;
- The allocation and administration of the letting of the dwellings buildings and other structures;
- The prevention and combating of the unlawful occupation of land and buildings;
- The allocation and administration of sites for churches, schools and trading purposes;
- The approval of building plans – the removals and demolitions of unauthorised and abandoned structures;
- The prohibition, regulation and restriction of the keeping of animals;
- The promotion of the moral and social welfare;
- The promotion of sound community development;
- Beautifying and tidiness of the place;
- The administration of sports and recreational facilities;
- The award of bursaries and;
- The maintenance of services determined by the Minister.

Community Councils emerged as the latest in a long line of state-created vehicles for co-option and incorporation of diversion and fragmentation, with the ultimate aim of dividing and controlling the African-dominated classes in the urban townships.

The creation of the community council can be seen on a number of interrelated levels. Firstly, the councils were designed to takeover some areas of the provision and management in the housing sphere. They were given municipal status and told to collect rent. Secondly, the councils replaced the board system which was unworkable and the state thought that the council would be a popular form of representation.

As we shall see, this system did not work because costs were high and opposition to the state from different spheres was intense. For example, foreign pressure had been one such constraint and its importance was repeatedly stressed by some prominent anti-apartheid leaders and groups. On the other hand, business pressure also played a role.

Like the state, business has rarely been a proactive agent of change. Even where it has perceived a conflict between apartheid policies and economic growth, it has shown a consistent willingness to accept these policies and to request only minor adjustments to them. From the opposition point of view, community councils were seen as puppet bodies because they were created by the government. Community councils were seen to be elected by the community.

However, elections were not representative of the communities because only a very small proportion of community members voted. The election process was disturbed in Soweto by a massive stayaway. Despite the commotion, David Tebehali was elected in Soweto and immediately dubbed a ‘poisonous and abnoxious weed’. In Kagiso, Mayor Edward Moeketsi was elected. It should be noted that the handing down of the powers of the boards to the council was limited. This was noticeable in the statement of Morrison one of the government officials at the induction of the Kagiso council;

‘But we don't want to give you powers you can't handle. We are not afraid – but you don't have experience or the know-how.’

Similar sentiments were evident in Piet Koornhof’s statement at the jamboree inaugurating the Diepmeadow council:

“The Act is a vehicle for a purpose. If the purpose cannot be achieved by the vehicle. I will change the vehicle to suit the purpose.”

After the councilors were elected into the office, many became corrupt. For example they spent a great deal of time trying to increase their allowances, buying themselves mayoral cars, chains, liquor cabinets and robes. The councilors enjoyed control over its own budget, salaried officials and control over tenders; they also pocketed the revenue from liquor licenses, petrol service stations, they also owned supermarkets and other shops. On the other hand, they had severely limited income with which to improve township infrastructure. As a result they increased rents by substantial amounts.

To suggest that township of Kagiso and other townships were havens of peace contentment would be misleading. Not all township houses had water-borne sewage; not all the street electric lights and not all the parks had litter-free walks.
Although the overt cause of 1976 riot was the implementation of Afrikaans, overcrowding in schools also triggered riots. In African townships there was an imbalance between schools and quality of schooling on the one hand, and soaring population growth on the other.

In the 1980s people complained that schools were overcrowded, roads were un-tarred. People also complained about the size of their houses, particularly, those with large families of varying ages and generations. Rents were increasing while wages remained low. ‘Where does big sister do her homework when the bedroom is shared with the talkative little-ones, the living room choked with the beer and smoke fumes of men playing cards?’ Since population was increasing there was a serious shortage of housing in the townships, people had to build backyards shacks which were opposed by the council.

**Expressing grievances**

There were many problems that townships experienced in the 1980s, as a result of the living conditions. However, these troubles were not addressed by the councillors - in all regions there are examples of similar responses from local councillors. Throughout the turbulent 1984-1986 period, the clergy, teachers, shop stewards, social workers and parents all sensed the growing consciousness of injustice in their communities. Their aim was not to use township grievances to whip up mass resistance. On the contrary, their first concern was to use negotiation in order to avoid conflict.

However, official response varied in accordance with who the officials were and what they stood to gain. Community leaders who met councilors were invariably given one of two responses. Either councillors would respond by saying that they could do nothing because the decision was taken by the executive officials. Alternatively, they would make false promises. In fact, this situation demonstrated the limits of co-option at the political level. The tricameral parliament did not give its African participants sufficient formal power to enable them to initiate change - they were thus unable to achieve even their limited objectives and this has ensured that their constituents have not been co-opted.

The reforms did however afford them limited power to veto legislation and they used this on occasion to block bills and extract concessions. At the local level, the evidence suggests that this particular reform of introducing community councils failed as an exercise in co-option - and that at the same time it placed some constraints on white legislators and African participants in the townships. Some analysts have perceived this as the first signs of an attempt to wield community power that emerged with a shift towards more solid organisation, strengthened by ‘gradualist’ tactics such as negotiating limited improvements with local business or township administrators. As in Kagiso where consumer, bus and school boycotts were observed in the mid 1980s.

**Counter power: Kagiso**

As rents were increasing house owners refused to pay water in 1980. Initially, the council threatened to cut water supply, but the local action group formed an alliance with the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). COSAS pledged solidarity with the local residents and promised to assist by bringing water to the township in water drums. After this, the council decided to reduce monthly bills. To begin with, as early 1970s the Matsobane brothers Dan and Michael of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) organised the youth in Kagiso under the banner of the Young African Christian Movement (YACM).

Other activists included John Nyathi, who consulted with various church ministers about setting up the church youth organisation from early 1975. Reverent Pitso of the Methodist Church gave the youth a permission to form a church choir. According to Matsobane;

> “One of the aims was to try and persuade youth to come to church…it was to get youth to respect older people…another aim was get them away from liquor…and getting them to be interested in sports.

Most of the churches in Kagiso supported this initiative. In 1975, the YACM had 300 members. Implicitly, this structure was part of PAC that aimed at forging African solidarity. The aim was to use the church as a platform for debating African problems. These Pan Africanist leaders had a good grasp of the modern African nationalism’s core psychological premise; the belief that oppression represented an individual as well as political phenomenon, which needed to be addressed internally and externally.

Young recruits were told by Matsobane and others that the PAC had an army abroad and the youth were told that if they wanted to continue with their studies they could get bursaries abroad. The meeting of this youth organisation was also addressed by Zeph Mothoeng, the then president of the PAC.
In August 1976, the Kagiso African Parents Association was formed. At the same time, the student representative council was also formed. Some of the youths were arrested for violent activities and some 'skip the country' to join the PAC military wing. Thus, the formation of the new civic organisation in Kagiso can be traced back to the revival of the PAC in the 1970s.

In many ways 1976 may be considered to have been a watershed year in the history of South Africa. It marks a time when African communities once again renewed their struggle for liberation in a forceful and effective manner. It was the period when white conservatives began to take heed of African grievances more serious than they had ever before. One of the key issues that emerged in this period was that of housing. As mentioned earlier, communities' anger was directed not only at rent increases, but also at the arrogance of the community councils.

In 1980, the community councils announced rent increases in Kagiso in the press, without bothering to inform the community beforehand. In response, a group of young activists was formed as they felt that there should be an independent body that would express the aspirations, wishes and opinions of Kagiso's residents. They were the 'descendants' of YACM, who belonged to the newly formed Young Christian Workers (YCW), the interdenominational Youth Christian Club (IYCC) and COSAS.

In their activities, this alliance was following in the footsteps of organizations such as the Soweto civic association and the Port Elizabeth civic organisation. At the same time, these youths were inspired by the strategising session that was held with Bafana Seripe who had returned from the Western Cape where he worked with the Young Christian Movement. During discussions in Kagiso, Seripe told the youths how the people in the Cape mobilised residents by conducting a door-to-door campaign.

This influenced the youth to conduct a similar campaign while addressing rent increase as a pressing issue. A resident organization was formed, to led by mature and experienced leaders from Kagiso. Among the people approached were a local trade unionist, Joe Makgathlo who was locally known as 'Bra Joe' and Lettie Nzima, who was active in church based social issues, as well as Reverend Frank Chikane, a pastor of the Apostolic Mission.

In 1981, the Krugersdorp Resident Organisation (KRO) was formed. Makgathlo was elected as a chair, Ike Genu, from the youth organisation was elected vice-chair and George Moila became secretary. After the launch of KRO, the rent increase was suspended by the council. The community lost interest because the pressing issue was solved. The executive committee was then detained and there was no second layer of the leadership to take over. However, during this period mass action increased with the politicisation and mobilisation of township residents. Many local leaders developed links with national political organisation such as the United Democratic Front (UDF). For example, Sister Bernard Ncube, who was closely involved with youth groups in Kagiso, became the president of the Federal of Transvaal Women (FEDTRAW). Frank Chikane became vice-president of the UDF Transvaal region.

Then the council decided to reintroduce rent increases in August 1981, and the Greyhound Bus Company decided to raise bus fares from 30 to 32 cents. At the same time, the council decided to go ahead with the construction of a large hostel. By this time, hostels had become problematic, especially after the incident of Mzimhlophe hostel in Soweto, when hostel dwellers sided with the state and viciously attacked youth in 1976. A similar incident happened in Cape Town at the end of 1976 when youngsters raided a shebeen in one of the hostels in the Nyanga township. Hostel residents retaliated, storming into street, burning houses, and attacking people with spears, knives and knobkerries.

Increasingly, the state was using hostels as reactionary cells against progressive movements that emerged in townships. During this crisis, the KRO was revived. It demanded that instead of building hostel, the council should build houses. Under the leadership of KRO, Kagiso residents marched to the Administration Board offices to see the mayor. Their march was violently suppressed by the police. After the march KRO leaders were detained for holding illegal meetings.
During this period the KRO struggled to organise residents because of police interference. It was really difficult because the leaders were scared. In 1983, rent was also increased but the KRO managed to get rents reduced. At the same year, the KRO leaders were in and out of jail for different political activities and KRO went into serious decline. Leaders were removed from civil action by long trials and banning orders. For example Ntlokoa one of the local leaders suffered severe terms of banning order which forbade him from receiving visitors without permission.

At the same time, violence in the Vaal Triangle erupted and the KRO supported the Vaal by launching consumer boycotts and boycotting Greyhound buses. In October 1984, a UDF West Rand Area Committee was established, including Genu as a chairman, with two other KRO committee members as treasurer and secretary. These regional links were strengthened during early 1985, with some KRO leaders who were well-connected to Soweto-based activists involved in planning the celebration of International Youth Year.

Though KRO was not successful in broadening itself from single-issue organisation to other spheres of township life, but it continued with civic activities. It also neglected the role of women in the struggle as a result women were unable to participate in civic activities. KRO however, did play an important role in mobilising the youth and in 1985, the Kagiso Youth Congress (KAYCO) was formed. KAYCO dedicated itself to public safety, it responded to the high death rates that resulted from crime related issues in Kagiso. In June 1985, Kayco and KRO’s mobilisation erupted in violence during June 16 commemorations. Council properties were burned, police vehicle were stoned.

By 1986, KRO leaders perceived the civic movement as part and parcel of the national liberation struggle. The political activity of KRO was intensified by Congress of South African Trade Unions. In March 1990, the Kagiso Civic Association (KCA) was formed. It included all KRO activists, though there were ideological differences. Since the revival was ‘workerist,’ the new civic movement promoted a working class perspective. KCA operated in a more organised way than KRO. For the purpose of decision making and consultation, Kagiso was divided into seventeen blocks with delegates who represented these in central committee. KCA had paid and registered membership. The formation of KCA was accompanied by the outbreak of ANC and Inkatha violence. In May 1991, a new wave of violence engulfed Kagiso. Thousands of armed men from the hostel attacked Swanieville informal settlement; more than twenty people were killed and thirty injured.

**Church and Politics in Kagiso**

As highlighted previously, the church has been very instrumental in promoting community organisations and political mobilisation. Sister Bernard Ncube provided meeting facilities and a network of contacts outside Kagiso. She was arrested in 1983 and sentenced to twelve months’ imprisonment for the possession of banned literature. She had in her possession a letter from Nelson Mandela in Pollsmoor Prison. Another church based activist was Frank Chikane who was appreciated by the youth activists as a ‘very powerful person.’ Chikane started his religious work in Kagiso a week before 16 June 1976. In the months of the uprising, he helped to trace members of the community who suddenly disappeared. He was detained in 1977, badly assaulted for six weeks and released in 1978. While working in Kagiso, he worked very closely with the youth, combining evangelical work with social projects. He groomed many youth leaders; his church was the training ground for various organisational and leadership skills.

Lettie Nzima also worked with Chikane in various socio-political related projects. Since church played a pivotal role in politics church was regularly visited by police force. Through YCW, Kagiso churches produced highly remarkable talented leaders and activists who led trade unions and civic movements. Among the young leaders was Lawrence Ntlokoa the former civic leader and many others.
COSAS and the trade unions in Kagiso

COSAS was active between 1979 and 1981 in Kagiso. One Cosas activist was Vusi Gqobi, who served on the COSAS national executive. He was in touch with Chikane and through him, met Ntlokoa. After Gqobi skipped the country, Cosas became inactive in Kagiso. This explains why Kagiso became inactive in 1984-85, while riots spread through the Vaal and East Rand. The YCW of Kagiso also produced women activists like Nomvula Mkhize who became a trade unionist and a member of South African Communist Party in 1991. Trade Unions were rather weak in Kagiso. Civic leaders included trade unionists such as Joe Makgathloa, who acquired organisational experience working with the Food and Beverage Workers’ Union. Another trade unionist was Serge Mokonyane who lived in Munsieville. He was a volunteer with the General and Allied Workers’ Union.

Recommendations

Much remain to be done to reveal Kagiso’s remarkable history. It is hoped that this research report has made some contribution to that enormous task. The recommendations of this report may be broken down into three parts. Firstly, to open up and direct the future in-depth study that would examine urban behavioral pattern in relation to the community institutions, the character and complexities of the historical development of Kagiso. This should include looking at land use, apartheid and post-apartheid town planning, recent development, distinctive features of districts or zones and their past.

Secondly, to develop themes in which future historical exhibitions could be based. Also to build up themes that would guide oral history collections which will enable the inhabitants to record their history by telling first-hand information and their daily experience in Kagiso since its inception. Thirdly, this report should help to detail vision for the proposed memorial park in Kagiso.
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