

CONTESTED INNER-CITY GENTRIFICATION: EVIDENCE FROM THE BO-KAAP, CAPE TOWN

Sirhan JESSA 

School of Tourism & Hospitality, College of Business and Economics, Bunting Road Campus,
University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa, e-mail: jessasirhan@gmail.com

Jayne M. ROGERSON 

School of Tourism & Hospitality, College of Business and Economics, Bunting Road Campus,
University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa, e-mail: jayner@uj.ac.za

Citation: Jessa, S., & Rogerson, J.M. (2025). Contested Inner-City Gentrification : Evidence from the Bo-Kaap, Cape Town. *Revista Română de Geografie Politică*, 27(2), 111-129. <https://doi.org/10.30892/rrgp.272104-393>

Abstract: Research on gentrification is dominated by scholarship in the urban Global North but of increasing relevance to Southern cities. The novel contribution of this paper is to expand literature and debates around the contested nature of gentrification in the urban Global South through an examination of urban change and restructuring in the environment of South Africa. The neo-liberal policy context of post-apartheid South Africa provides the setting for the progressive advance of gentrification in Cape Town's historic inner-city neighbourhood of Bo-Kaap. The study draws upon primarily the findings from detailed semi-structured interviews which were conducted in 2023-2024 with a cross-section of stakeholders. It is revealed that the city of Cape Town authorities have adopted a growth at all costs mentality which provides the base for much of the area's development trajectory and restructuring. The demand for growth premises the vision and purpose of the local government and supersedes meanings of community. Gentrification processes are purposefully supported by the state in a fashion similar to those documented in cities of the Global North. Powerful property developers determine where and what gets built in inner-city Cape Town, including in the space of Bo-Kaap. It is argued current gentrification trends in the Bo-Kaap are reinforcing socio-economic polarization and confirming it as a defining feature of gentrification processes in the urban Global South.

Key words: gentrification, urban Global South, Cape Town, inner-city change, polarisation

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

* Corresponding Author

Urban transformation is a dynamic process, with gentrification one of its most prominent and contested features. Although processes of urban change and transformation usually are set within the context of cities in the Global North it is evident that they are of increasing relevance to the fast-expanding urban environments of the Global South (Lees, 2012; Horn and Visser, 2023). Arguably, until the early 2000s Visser (2019, p. 197) observes that “in the academic imaginary gentrification was conceptually bound to the Global North”. It is acknowledged now by urban scholars that gentrification “has ceased to be a process that is specific and exclusive to certain command-centre cities and has become generalized, both spatially and sectorally, as an urban strategy that has replaced liberal urban policy” (Sánchez-Aguilera and González-Pérez, 2021, p. 243). In recent decades “there has been a rapid and visceral emergence of state-led gentrification in the Global South” such that gentrification processes have ‘gone global’ and are remaking the urban environments of many Asian, Latin American and African cities (Visser, 2019, p. 297).

Accordingly, the phenomenon of gentrification, initially observed in the urban Global North, has become increasingly visible and researched in cities of the Global South (Visser, 2002; Harris, 2008; Visser and Kotze, 2008; Lees, 2012; Visser, 2016). For example, Lees (2012) addresses cases of gentrification in Southern cities with reference to slum demolition in India, Pakistan and Chile. Similar forced displacement from state lands in China is investigated by Ghertner (2015) while Harris (2008) probes Mumbai’s displacement of informal settlements. The advance of gentrification and its impacts for neighbourhood change and residents of Southern cities has not gone unchallenged. Nhlabathi and Maharaj (2021, p. 291) pinpoint that across the international experience civic mobilization against gentrification via the market induced use of urban space “has been very exuberant if not raucous at times”. Indeed, heightened socio-economic divides have galvanized protest and resistance movements which have coalesced “around the perceived alienation of the market, where, for example, in urban settings, rising property prices displaced low-income people and businesses from prime locations of cities” (Nhlabathi and Maharaj, 2021, p. 291).

The aim in this paper is to expand the literature and debates surrounding gentrification in the urban Global South by interrogating one facet of the contested post-apartheid South African experience of urban change. Arguably, in South Africa, the country’s legacies of apartheid’s spatial and economic policies and current political context add complexity to gentrification processes, by often intensifying socio-economic divides and spatial exclusion (Garside, 1993; Visser, 2016; Massey, 2020; Lehloeny, 2022). Our specific focus falls upon the city of Cape Town and the impacts of gentrification on the historic neighbourhood of Bo-Kaap (literally ‘Upper Cape’), geographically close to the inner-city. In its broadest context the gentrification of this inner-city space must be understood as part of the advance of wider urban renewal and revitalisation strategies. The development of leisure and tourism nodes, such as the iconic Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, positions post-apartheid Cape Town as an attractive ‘world city’ for transnational capital and the enjoyment of lifestyles by global elites (McDonald, 2012; Visser, 2016). Following South Africa’s post-1994 reintegration in the global economy, Cape Town’s neoliberal shift in urban governance prioritized private investment, public-private partnerships, and consumption-driven development (Donaldson et al., 2013; Scheba et al., 2021). Cape Town is observed as in competition with global finance capitals such as London and New

York causing property values to skyrocket, deepening inequality, and exacerbated displacement pressures particularly upon inner-city spaces (McDonald, 2012; Visser, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research interest in urban gentrification has accelerated in recent years (Yee and Dennett, 2022; Knieriem, 2023, 2025; Lees and Rozena, 2025; Mezaros et al., 2025; Mirzakhani et al., 2025; Nieuwland et al., 2025). Historically, the origin of the term 'gentrification' is attributed to the scholarship of the British sociologist, Ruth Glass in 1964 (Brown-Saracino, 2010; Finio, 2022; Lees and Rozena, 2025). A refugee from Nazi Germany, Glass adopted a Marxist approach to scholarship and is widely acknowledged as the founder of urban sociology in Europe (Andersen, 2021). The displacement of working-class residents in central London, by an upwardly mobile middle class, was viewed by Glass (1964) as a sudden invasion. She viewed gentrification as the inevitable consequence of London's political, demographic and economic environment at the time. The concept and process of gentrification has since been scrutinized variously by planners, urban sociologists and geographers for several decades. It is contended that the meaning of gentrification has been altered since its first conception by Glass as the process of the rehabilitation of working-class neighbourhoods by middle-class buyers (Visser, 2019; Knieriem 2023). In modern debates the most recent discussions of the evolution of gentrification concentrate upon "polarized urban policies and pro-gentrification policies that facilitate urban renewal by government into international class systems" (Lehloenya, 2022, p. 14).

In the early 1970s the discourse around gentrification began to enter popular language in the USA (Finio, 2022). Scholarship addressing the rise of the 'back to the city movement' in New York during the 1970s and 1980s focused on (re)defining the concept. Finio (2022) identifies gentrification studies in the fields of sociology, economics, criminology, public health and planning, among other inter-disciplinary fields. These studies determine whether neighbourhoods that experience gentrification have different social outcomes to those neighbourhoods that do not gentrify. Marcuse (1985) is often cited for his understanding of displacement effects and the various ways in which this may occur. These include physical displacement by economic means, such as raising rents, tenant evictions (to close a rent gap), or unaffordable rising costs of municipal taxes. Indirect or 'exclusionary displacement' occurs when there is insufficient housing stock as it has been occupied by more recent migrating middle classes, or financially excluded due to unaffordable rising rents. Displacement pressure relates to space alienation, where former residents no longer feel safe or comfortable and feel severed from the space and social connections.

Notwithstanding these interventions Glass's (1964) description of gentrification as the displacement of poorer residents in a process of middle and upper-income groups buying and improving properties in poor neighbourhoods, remains relevant. Bourne (1993, p.97) re-iterates its relevance in a restrictive definition of gentrification as "the invasion of working-class neighbourhoods in the inner city by people of the middle class with a higher income, resulting in the replacement or displacement of many of the original occupants." Smith (2009) describes gentrification as a class conquest of the city. Likewise, Lees et al.

(2010) track the shift of working-class neighbourhoods into more affluent and commercial precincts. Here, it involves the renovation of dilapidated housing stock to meet the requirements of the new owners (Clark, 2005). For Sager (2011) gentrification is often seen as reclaiming the city for middle classes in a form of class-based colonisation and reinvestment in physical housing stock, and neoliberal urban regeneration. There is widespread consensus that gentrification is defined by an influx of new investment and new residents with higher incomes and educational attainment into a neighbourhood (Finio, 2022). Harding and Blokland (2014) suggest the term gentrification be restricted to those processes of urban change that involve displacement, to bring conceptual clarity and avoid the politicization of the term.

Research expanding on the positive outcomes of gentrification is sparse (Atkinson, 2003). Attempts to mask its negative effects, use alternative definitions which invoke positivity such as urban regeneration or urban revitalization. The negative evidence of gentrification appears overwhelming. Nevertheless, Brown-Saracino (2010) asserts that the positive consequences of gentrification processes cannot be ignored. The revitalization of economically depressed areas, increasing tax revenues, the rehabilitation of cultural and heritage offerings, improved services, employment creation and reducing negative social ills such as crime were identified. Whilst acknowledging its conflicting impacts Finio (2022) confirms that gentrification contributes to the tax base, promotes capital investment, advances city branding and attracts urban tourism. It draws higher income residents to city-centres, thereby making it an attractive proposition for urban planners and officials to improve the lives of its constituents (Brown-Saracino, 2017). Arguments presented by Freeman (2006) suggest expanded levels of diversity and opportunities for interaction across social and economic class groups are encouraged via the gentrification process. Increased property values, stabilization of declining areas, reduction of urban sprawl, promoting further development, greater access and variety of goods, amenities, and services are among other cited benefits (Brown-Saracino, 2017).

Situating gentrification within a political economy discourse of neighbourhood change the work of Smith (2010) highlights that economic shifts are coupled with a political turn towards competition within a global frame which is indicative of deregulation, privatisation and withdrawal of state welfare services. The emergence of the 'global city' or larger social transformations toward an international market culture exacerbate inequality by fostering "islands of renewal in seas of decay" (Zukin, 2010, p. 37). Lees et al. (2010) claim gentrification is a global urban strategy, intertwined with circuits of international capital, concerned with capitalist production rather than social reproduction. Atkinson and Bridge (2010) argue that expansionist neo-liberal policy, indicative of deregulation and privatisation of housing markets, accompanied with an entrepreneurial style of urban governance often exacerbate the social and economic divisions between the displaced and gentrifiers, resulting in a distinct type of 'neo-colonialism'.

Competing demand- and supply-side explanations of gentrification draw on political-economic perspectives which came about due to recognition of the failures of capitalism. Centred in Marxist economic theory, Smith (2002) outlines how rent gaps occur, that is the difference between capitalized ground rent and potential ground rent. The argument, however, that the specific means by which global capital seeks to overcome spatial (and regulatory) barriers to growth and

'capture' rent gaps needs political and analytical attention (Ghertner, 2015). Demand-side explanations view gentrification from the perspective of the gentrifiers, who they are and the broader structural elements that affect decision making. The rise of the service sector was a pivotal moment for the growth of professional employment in city centres, thereby increasing the value of nearby residential neighbourhoods as industrial areas were vacated. Gentrification processes often occur in combination with free-market forces (of supply and demand) and accelerated by government involvement through changes to zoning and land use, investment in infrastructure and encouraging urban regeneration and development via financial and tax incentives (Finio, 2022).

Atkinson and Bridge (2010) assert gentrification has resulted in the entrenchment of colonial patterns of segregation, as elites retreat into enclaves of gated communities or luxury residential developments. This larger managerial class enjoys the added advantage of globally transferable skills which can easily be deployed to new cultural contexts, translating the global to the local neighbourhood scale, thereby creating a global rent-gap. Gentrification is thus interpreted as a structural product of the land and housing markets. Capital flows where the rate of return is highest (Smith, 2010). Linkages occur between neoliberal urbanism and a new wave of corporatised gentrification which constitutes a 'restructuring' of the gentrification process, including deepening alliances with corporate developers, new-build gentrification and neighbourhood reconstruction. Lees (2003) styles this a process of 'super-gentrification' where processes are increasingly formally encouraged by the state, reflected in its national and local urban and economic development policies. The hallmark of new phases of gentrification is the "reach of global capital down to the neighbourhood scale" (Smith, 2002, p.441).

Harris (2008) asserts that the legitimacy and proliferation of standardised global gentrification processes must be questioned. The global expansion of gentrification is an extension of neoliberalism as it operates via institutional frameworks and local economic and social contexts. Sager (2011) emphasises that the link between gentrification and neoliberalism is established through the liberalisation of housing markets, the attraction of creatives, branding for the affluent and tourists, increasingly mobile work, urban regeneration and neighbourhood revitalisation. Weber (2002) outlines the process of neoliberalist financial policy which caused the global financial crises in 2008, following mass rental and mortgage payment defaults caused by the secondary mortgage market, created through quasi-public financial institutions. Understanding investments and land values is an essential part of unpacking gentrification as a capitalist process (Harding and Blokland, 2014). Atkinson and Bridge (2010) also aver that gentrification in the current context cannot be excluded from processes of globalisation.

Framing gentrification within the 'city as a growth machine' Logan and Molotch (2010) posit that place is a market commodity which creates wealth and power for political and capital elites, who wield a degree of power over the pattern of urban development. For these elites, the city is a growth machine which increases potential benefits for those in a position to capitalise on rents and consumptive activities (Harding and Blokland, 2014). Logan and Molotch (2010) contend the issue of growth is paramount for competing elites and is one of the few issues on which they agree. Based on this consensus any counter-vision of the purpose of local government or meanings of community is

eliminated. The growth machine will sustain only certain persons as politicians if they participate in the growth consensus, superseding their motivations for the alleviation of poverty or inequality with varying degrees. Harding and Blokland (2014) further make the important distinction between ‘use value’ and ‘exchange value’ and how these different value systems interact at a personal and community level. Those who defend use values over exchange values tend to resist these interests by forming voluntary or community groups in broader social movements. Arguably, for better or worse, gentrification reconfigures a neighborhood’s racial and social landscapes (Brown-Saracino, 2010). Gentrification as a development model is conflicted, however, and produces contradictory impacts, thereby making it a challenge to find political and planning consensus. Planners and officials therefore have a responsibility to address legitimate concerns of long-term residents who experience alienation, displacement and escalating housing and service costs (Brown-Saracino, 2017). Displacement is inseparable from gentrification and invariably linked to inequality and class struggle. Resistance to urban gentrification therefore is attracting a growing literature (Knieriem, 2025).

Among others Knieriem (2023) points out that gentrification is a changing phenomenon. One influential recent strand in gentrification scholarship concerns the role of tourism and more especially the importance of urban tourism in reshaping urban environments both in cities of the Global North and South (Cocola-Gant, 2018; Rogerson and Rogerson, 2021; Nieuwland et al., 2025). A body of international literature discloses that “in common with other consumer spaces (shopping centres, cultural and leisure complexes and entertainment landscapes) tourism too produces gentrification” (Sánchez-Aguilera and González-Pérez, 2021, p. 243). As pinpointed by Cocola-Gant (2018) the growth of urban tourism and ‘touristification’ modifies the residential and business landscape by changing it to cater for tourist consumption. Tourism development can reinforce gentrification processes in what, based on research in New Orleans USA, Gotham (2005) describes as ‘tourism gentrification’. Overall, therefore, the concept of tourism gentrification “refers to the process by which tourism-related activities result in the displacement of long-term residents in favour of capital investment focused on tourism” (Mermet, 2025, p. 269). This process has been especially impactful on cityscapes in the context of booming urban tourism destinations, including for Cape Town in South Africa.

METHODS

The case study is of Bo-Kaap, a small centrally-situated suburb located on the slopes of Cape Town’s Signal Hill (Figure 1). The suburb records a long and chequered history. Currently it is home to approximately 6000 residents and distinctive not only for its multi-coloured housing and cobbled streets but also for its association with Muslim Cape Malay heritage. From 1652 the Cape was under Dutch control with much of its settler population drawn from Europe. From 1658 onwards, however, the ancestors of the majority of the Muslim population arrived in the form of 63,000 slaves, high-ranking political exiles, convicts from East Africa, India, Arabia, Madagascar, and South-east Asia (Davids, 1980). The term ‘Malay’ came to designate ‘roots in slavery but no ethnic significance’ (Todeschini and Japha, 2024, p. 189). Nevertheless, in the settlement of Bo-Kaap which began from the earliest days there existed links with Islam. As pointed out by Lehloenya (2022, p. 87) Bo-Kaap was the site of

the second and the lasting Muslim congregation and would become “the birthplace of Islamic culture in South Africa”.



Figure 1. The Location of the Bo-Kaap, Cape Town
(Source: Wikipedia, 2024)

According to van Eeden (2022, p. 224) ‘Malay’ became “a self-descriptive term used by many Afrikaans-speaking Muslims with free-black or slave roots”. Post-1948, during the apartheid period the identity of Cape Malays as a distinctive ethnic group was confirmed with the designation of the Bo-Kaap in 1957 as a Malay Group Area, a classification that allowed the neighbourhood to escape apartheid removals that impacted other such ‘non-White’ inner-city spaces in South Africa, most notably of Sophiatown in Johannesburg (Rogerson, 2025). This said, as pointed out by Davids (1980) the terms ‘Cape Malay’, ‘Malay Muslims’ and ‘Malay Quarter’ are derogatory and ‘ahistorical’. The Bo-Kaap and the sounds of the adhan (call to prayer) broadcast from the neighbourhood’s mosques embody the intangible heritage of the history of Islam as a suppressed minority faith in South Africa’s colonial past and of the Muslim struggle for belonging in the city of Cape Town (Jethro and Lehloeny, 2023).

Table 1. List of Interviewed Stakeholders

Respondent	Description	Interview Date
A	Ex resident, Bo-Kaap tour guide	26 March 2024
B	Elderly resident of Chiapinni Street	2 March 2024
C	Resident activist and founder of the Bo-Kaap Tourism Association (BTA), resident site guide	24 Oct 2023
D	Resident activist, BTA founder	22 Oct 2023
E	Lawyer, Activist, resident, Member of Bo-Kaap Residents Association (BOCRA)	12 Feb 2024
F	Ward Councillor	20 Sept 2023
G	Tourism Planning Director City of Cape Town	18 Dec 2023
H	Tourism Planning Official, Western Cape Provincial Government	16 March 2023
I	Heritage Planner, City of Cape Town	31 Jan 2024
J	Heritage Planner, City of Cape Town	31 Jan 2024

K	Heritage Consultant/ Academic	22 Feb 2024
L	Heritage Academic/ Mosque board member/ Salt River Heritage Association Member	12 Feb 2024
M	Elderly resident/ Student Host Chiapinni Street	17 Feb 2024
N	Resident Tour operator/ Site Guide/ member of BOCRA and BTA	05 Feb 2023
O	Resident adjacent to informal settlement, home storyteller host, tour guide	24 Feb 2024
P	Resident, Founder of Bo-Kaap Rise; Business developer; Female Youth Movement member	24 Jan 2023
Q	Lawyer, Radio host, Curator of local Cape Muslim Slave & Heritage Museum	11 July 2023
R	Long term elderly resident, recently relocated to Northern Suburbs of Cape Town	22 Feb 2023
S	Bo-Kaap Museum Employee	08 Nov 2023
T	Long term resident of the informal settlement	21 Feb 2024
U	Resident of Chiapinni Street	22 March 2024
X	Resident of Dorp Street	07 June 2023

The findings of this investigation on neighbourhood change and gentrification in inner-city Cape Town are based on a background of an historical analysis which was supported by documentary and archival research, visits to key heritage sites, museum tours and in-depth interviews (see Jessa, 2025). A review of international urban and tourism development scholarship informed an understanding of neighbourhood change. Academic books and journals, policy documents, civic association and cultural resources were supported by 22 semi-structured interviews which were conducted during 2023-2024 with various role players. Table 1 provides details of the interviewees. The semi-structured interviews were based around broad questions, topics and themes and lasted between 45 minutes and three hours. Purposeful sampling allowed for the targeting of participants whose roles often overlapped. The interviewed stakeholders included long-term residents, tour guides, lawyers, museum employees, members of local civic organisations, heritage practitioners, and representatives of both the Cape Town city authority and Western Cape provincial government. Of note was the refusal of certain stakeholders, most notably the developers of large property projects (BLOK developers), to participate in the study because of the contentious nature of gentrification. The information derived from interviews was collated to determine points of coherence and agreement within community structures. Six months of participant observation included visits to historical sites and newly constructed property developments. Informal conversations with residents, business owners and tour guides provided further rich perspectives. Full details of methods and of the selection of interview respondents is given in Jessa (2025).

FINDINGS

The results are organised in terms of two sub-sections of material and discussion. The first provides an overview of the development of gentrification in the Bo-Kaap. The second turns to present the results from the stakeholder interviews and to highlight the divergent perspectives concerning recent developments around neighbourhood change in this distinctive inner-city suburb of Cape Town.

The Advance of Gentrification in Bo-Kaap, Cape Town

At the outset, the gentrification of the Bo-Kaap must be understood as part of similar processes of change and restructuring which occurred in other South African cities. Research investigating the impacts of gentrification by Visser (2002) provides a South African context for gentrification processes, policies and scholarship. The first signs of inner-city gentrification, argues Visser (2019), appeared in Cape Town during the late 1970s albeit were only recorded by academic scholars in the 1990s beginning with Garside's (1993) important study of Upper Woodstock. Massey (2020) suggests gentrification has gained significant traction in urban South Africa over the past two decades. This period is characterized by the adoption of neoliberal approaches in urban policy, facilitating the investment of private capital (and foreign public funds), privatisation, decentralization of the responsibility of local governments, and strengthening of private-public partnerships (Massey, 2020). Across all South Africa's major metropolitan centres – Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg – evidence exists that inner-city spaces have experienced advancing processes of gentrification and displacement (Visser and Kotze, 2008; Donaldson et al., 2013; Kotze, 2013; Gregory, 2016; Ah Goo, 2018; Gregory, 2019; Visser, 2019, Nhlabathi & Maharaj, 2021).

In the specific setting of Cape Town, the beginnings of gentrification in suburbs close to the CBD were recognizable by the 1980s (Garside, 1993; Kotze and van der Merwe, 2000). For the late 1990s the discriminant analysis performed by Kotze and van der Merwe (2000) discerned few signs of actual gentrification taking place in Bo-Kaap. The following decade witnessed, however, the advance of a range of inner-city development initiatives in Cape Town aligned to foster and retain service-oriented transnational capital as well as catalyse socio-spatial restructuring (McDonald, 2012). Set against the backdrop of pro-growth policy frameworks these shifts “resulted in significant urban change” which attracted new capital and a new urban middle class (Donaldson et al., 2013, p. 173). By the early 2010s Kotze (2013) could write of Bo-Kaap as ‘a community in trouble’. It was observed property prices were escalating and that “the area has seen a large number of housing units renovated and upgraded” (Kotze, 2013, p. 124). Donaldson et al. (2013) argued that one of the outcomes of a neoliberal approach to urban policy in Cape Town therefore was its ramifications for both the living environment and built heritage of Bo-Kaap. This historic space was described as “the last remaining inner-city neighbourhood that has not yet gentrified” albeit it “appears to be succumbing to this process” (Donaldson et al., 2013, p. 173). Many other communities within Cape Town suburbs that had earlier succumbed to the pressures of gentrification styled it as a new and insidious form of forced removal.

It was evident by the early 2010s that community leaders and established Muslim residents of Bo-Kaap were engaged “in a constant battle to preserve the neighbourhood's cultural identity” (Kotze, 2013, p. 124). Tourism emerged as a major additional threat at this time. Because the racially discriminatory practices of apartheid were extended to tourism, until democratic change in 1994 Cape Town's appeal as a destination for foreign visitors was limited (Rogerson and Rogerson, 2025). With post-apartheid change the meteoric rise of Cape Town as an iconic international tourism destination became a further trigger for tourism-driven processes of transformation. This posed a threat to neighbourhoods such as Bo-Kaap, which constitutes Cape Town's major hub for

cultural tourism (Visser, 2016; Jessa and Rogerson, 2025a). Growing numbers of (mainly) international tourists are attracted to the area because of its cobbled streets and multi-coloured houses prompting mounting concerns about 'overtourism' (Jessa and Rogerson, 2025b).

The research findings of Jessa (2025) provide insight upon the tourism-induced impacts of neighbourhood change in the Bo-Kaap. It is evident that gentrification in the area is, to some extent, driven by tourism (Jessa & Rogerson, 2025a). This is apparent also in the response of the host community who have begun increasing the supply of accommodation, restaurants and cultural experiences. For many residents' tourism presents several lucrative economic avenues, while for others, tourism is resented as it reinforces gentrification. Historical centres and cultural representation have become an integral part of the urban experience in what Koens and Milano (2024, p.276) suggest resembles 'experiencescapes' providing further impetus for offers of tourism services. The accelerating touristification of the Bo-Kaap invariably induces impacts on economic growth, social dynamics, and cultural heritage. As tourism has emerged as the dominant activity in the area the unfolding record of Bo-Kaap supports the contention that when tourism quickly becomes the predominant activity, and is embedded in the urban space, the neighbourhood becomes difficult for long-established residents to continue living there (Cocola-Gant et al., 2020).

The advance of extensive gentrification has triggered the wrath of the Bo-Kaap community. As pointed out by Nhlabathi and Maharaj (2021, p. 301) the local residents "have not necessarily viewed gentrification as the rejuvenation, revitalization or renewal of deteriorated urban neighbourhoods"; rather "they have viewed it as leading to the loss of generational heritage, community-family ties, and as spatial violence". Arguably, some residents of the Bo-Kaap have deemed "gentrification of the place as the modern Group Areas Act", a throwback to one of the most hated pieces of apartheid segregationist legislation (Maharaj, 2020). Residents consider that gentrification leads to alienation as parts of its historic neighbourhood are lost. Overall, "the area is being stripped of its original social fabric and the emotions are that the acts were heart-wrenching" (Nhlabathi and Maharaj, 2021, p. 301).

It is acknowledged that much of the new capital investment flowing into the Bo-Kaap derives from Europe. The new inhabitants of the gentrified Bo-Kaap bring with them a culture which is in conflict with the established cultural heritage of the neighbourhood. A classic example of cultural conflict occurred when Bo-Kaap's Muslim community was served with a complaint against the soundscape produced by adhan (Jethro and Lehloenya, 2023). The call to prayer has been rendered by the mosques of Bo-Kaap since 1919 (Davids, 1980). It is an integral part of the area's cultural heritage, a real environment of memory that has suffered in heritage contestation in Cape Town. Adhan expresses an ethnic past with the embodied remembering of its sensory experience. It was argued that adhan be considered as living heritage with religious significance. Nevertheless, it "is prone to attack because it lives outside 'official' heritage protection and receives little support outside the community it lives in"; as consequence this sound is designated as noise (Lehloenya, 2022, p. 14). Attention is drawn by Lehloenya (2022, p. 13) to the concept of 'acoustic gentrification' defined "as an extended form of the gentrification process exercised by those that give themselves 'the right to the city' through class citizenry, access

and consumption to impinge on existing systems/practices”. Seemingly, for new gentrifier residents the sound of adhan is viewed as a public nuisance and the march of gentrification must be associated with the sounds of silence.



Figure 2. 40 on Lion Street
(Source: Image Sirhan Jessa)



Figure 3. Artist impression of the completed Paradigm

Note: The scale of the development compared to the adjacent low level modest houses of Bo-Kaap (Source: Sirhan Jessa, 2025)

The pressures of gentrification experienced by the Bo-Kaap community were made visible through their defiance in support of protecting their own heritage. The approval of two large property developments in the Bo-Kaap were further causes for community resentment against the reshaping of the historic neighbourhood. The first was the construction by BLOK developers of a 65-unit upmarket residential development, “40onL” which was completed in 2019 (Figure 2). The second – and more controversial – was The Paradigm, a 19-storey luxury apartment development which will occupy an entire block (on 100 Buitengracht and Rose) in the heart of the historic space of Bo-Kaap (Figure 3). The approval of these developments was contested fiercely by the community with the final legal approval moving to a decision made by South Africa’s Supreme Court in Bloemfontein. The Paradigm is styled as ‘the monster building’ and like 40 on Lion is out of character with the historic low-rise buildings that dominate Bo-Kaap. Moreover, the costs of new build apartments within these mega-structures are way out of the budget reach for the vast majority of residents. Such large-scale property developments have resulted in considerable damage and disruption to the residential landscape of Bo-Kaap (Figure 4). Todeschini (2017) points out these high-rise developments dominate the skyline and sever the Bo-Kaap functionally and visually from the rest of Cape Town city.



Figure 4. Encroaching High-rise Construction, Chiapinni Street, Bo-Kaap
(Source: Image, Sirhan Jessa, 2024)

Instead of upmarket expensive residential developments that threaten the heritage landscapes the Bo-Kaap community therefore pressed the case for addressing the urgent need for affordable and decent quality housing for

residents. In 2018 the community reached a breaking point. For two weeks in May-June 2018, the community of the Bo-Kaap burned tyres and blocked the entry of tour buses and construction vehicles from the area. Community members picketed against bullying and 'forced removals', blaming big property developers, tourism, and city officials (Jessa, 2025). Residents argued that the city authorities of Cape Town had given property developers consent for the construction of these two complexes at their expense and in the face of their hostile opposition. Although negotiations occurred between city authorities and the community as a result of the anti-gentrification protests of 2018, progress was disrupted in 2020 by the COVID pandemic. The second sub-section turns to the results of the stakeholder interviews conducted post-COVID during 2023-2024.

Stakeholder Perspectives

The findings reveal that large-scale construction developments within the Bo-Kaap precinct and beyond are progressing steadily. Several insights into the approval process of recent large-scale developments were garnered. Residents' concerns remain apparent citing inflationary and displacement pressures along with a reticence of government to implement urgent mitigating measures such as municipal rates rebates, rent controls or maintenance subsidies. Free market forces exert political-economic influences outside of the control of planners. Reflecting on the development of 40onL, community representatives indicate the local community's lack of legal expertise and capacity limited the strength of its opposition to the development. Others suggest that blackmail occurred, along with undelivered promises of community subsidy and social housing.

Respondent D – "The Monster building development went to the Supreme Court in Bloemfontein. I saw the judgement and frankly, from a juristic point of view the appeal against the Monster Building was poorly structured so they lost the case which they could have won".

Respondent E - "I blame the leadership. These people (BLOK) were saying they going to invest in us, they're gonna give money to the soccer club"

Respondent N- "They (BLOK) promised some of the units would be low cost, for social housing for the community but that never materialised."

A resident and community activist lamented the destruction of the fine urban form and highlighted the insensitivity of large developments which sever the community from the City. Another respondent noted the dramatic increase of property costs in the neighbouring suburb of De Waterkant as a driver for increases of values in the Bo-Kaap. It was argued that such rising property prices tempts working class homeowners to capitalize on lucrative offers. Respondents, including some residents, pointed to estate agents, who fearmonger while providing reassurances that they have buyers lined up and willing to offer lucrative prices for properties.

Respondent C- "Estate agents create desperation ... Just waiting for one of the D's. Death, desperation, debt or divorce."

Respondent D- "That's gentrification, you can see property prices in De Waterkant are significantly higher than Bo-Kaap and that's coming their way at high speed as the borders are getting gerrymandered. There's a lot of temptation in temptation alley."

Respondent C- "These high-rise developments create hard borders and blockages to access to a city which we always had the right to enjoy."

Another view indicates that favourable foreign currency exchanges (Euro vs cheap South African Rand) makes the Bo-Kaap have high appeal for circuits of global capital, as a lucrative option for second homes, rental properties and commercial short-term rentals. City officials abdicate imposing any sort of regulation, highlighting that the legal protection of private property rights supersedes any possible regulation.

Respondent I- "And the difficulty in dealing with things like gentrification. Which really in a place that we can't use the planning law to really make a huge difference. And I mean we've had many over the years, examples of gentrification that have gone wild... It's mostly people from Europe, certainly very monied people."

Respondent I - "We can manage form, architecture. We can manage the built component, manage the public areas, we can manage the streets, the streets or in each of the landscape. But we cannot manage ownership. But those are things that no country, no city can those be managed or controlled, it's just not possible, and possibly it's not desirable."

The compelling argument from a community development activist suggests that the current poor economic conditions, coupled with significant debt levels experienced make it difficult for residents to cope with rising inner-city rents, rates and property costs, leading ultimately to their exclusion from the housing market.

Respondent D- "People need housing and poverty eradication is the fundamental issue. So, if people sell their homes or flats, at least they are out of debt."

Respondent P - "...and then apart from the Bo-Kaap issues, young people are fighting just fighting like general economic issues, nationwide issues such as unemployment, no electricity. And now you still need to worry about keeping the community together but actually all you can really think about is trying to protect your family, so their rent and rates are too expensive and all of these issues".

Respondent A- "The City of Cape Town is forcing people out with high rates. Some don't have pensions and that would be money to live off if they sold their properties"

For some respondents, gentrification in the Bo-Kaap is experienced as economic displacement. Without inclusive economic policies such as rate rebates and rental restrictions, the interviews suggest several residents find the area increasingly unaffordable.

Respondent C- I have been a potential renter looking for accommodation in Bo-Kaap for probably about 20 years, and I still am currently right now looking to rent. I have been a potential buyer for about 10 years. I've never found easy options like every single other person that needs to be retained in Bo-Kaap. There are no options."

Several other displacement pressures emerged from the findings such as the fragmentation of social connections. The punitive nature of tourism, especially for those who wish to go about their ordinary lives and want little involvement, is experienced most severely by the elderly.

Respondent J- "It really came down to continuation of social practices and people feel because of the displacement, they didn't have the social connection or cohesion that they used to"

Respondent H- "Tourism can be punitive especially for the elderly who just want to go about living their lives. It seems like these properties will eventually be sold off to the highest bidder".

Several respondents revealed that they have moved on from the Bo-Kaap with their parents' home being placed on sale to expedite shares of inheritance. While one respondent invokes their right to private property another was reluctant to move despite being liable to pay his siblings' share because of concerns about safety and access to services in other parts of Cape Town.

Respondent L- "My wife is from Bo-Kaap. A few years ago, they sold their house because none of them were going to live there. They had a beautiful house up on the hill, the five sisters... two passed on so we couldn't reconcile keeping the house at the time. Nobody wanted to live there so we put it up on the market and got the best possible price."

Respondent Q - "From the resident's perspective that have six or seven children that stand to inherit one house. So, if it's worth R3million or more the only option would be to sell, given its unlikely one of them would be able to raise a bond of that value on their own nor would they be able to pay out a sibling. So that's where the gentrification comes in because the only person that could afford it is a white person from Switzerland."

Respondent X- "My brothers want me out so they can have their share of the inheritance".

Another respondent justified the advance of gentrification by arguing it was a return to the area's original mixed racial constituency.

Respondent S- "In my discussion with the community who had a different view about gentrification and to some extent preservation is important but at one stage the area was very mixed and in a sense gentrification in a sense is returning to that."

The interviews disclose long-standing requests to city authorities to apply rebates on municipal rates and financial assistance in order to maintain heritage homes. Residents contend that the area contributes to the Cape Town tourism economy and preservation is partially the responsibility of government. All officials interviewed agreed that rates rebates should be applied but could not provide an action plan.

Respondent E- "But you see we don't have a legislative framework like a rates rebate or something despite the value we bring into the city."

Respondent I- "We're also very aware of issues around what tax does rates and taxes do. But again, that's outside our ambit as heritage, to be able to influence that over the years, we have tried to meet with the Treasury when I was in a different position and try and look at relief on historical and historical areas, but at that stage there was absolutely no appetite for it, and I can imagine there's no appetite still."

Respondent G- "People's rates and taxes should be subsidised, especially primary owners, even its their children who inherit and perhaps earn below a certain pay scale. The City should assist these community members to stay. Once the property changes hands then it is justified that the rates go up so it is a slower transitional period."

Respondent B- "Tourists are always leaning against the walls when they take pictures, with their shoes, so we have to regularly repaint."

Respondent D- "...provide a tax incentive. Give them 10 or 20 years off levies, You're on the tourist route, we wish for you to benefit from your property so that you can maintain it..."

Respondent C -"Of course, there's some responsibility on government to contribute to the upkeep of heritage homes in the Bo-Kaap in some way. A child

can see it even the beggar can see the missing element here. Is the city supposed to care about this? It's an important part of the city, it's part of their asset. Isn't Cape Town Tourism supposed to care about this? Is it not part of what they sell? Then it's obvious."

CONCLUSION

In a recent analysis Knieriem (2025, p. 1) goes so far as to state that "if there is one word in geography that can be described as politically charged, it is gentrification". The novel contribution of this paper is in broadening extant scholarship and debates around gentrification in the urban Global South through an examination of the contestations surrounding urban change and restructuring in the environment of post-apartheid South Africa.

The neo-liberal policy context provides the setting for the progressive advance of gentrification in Cape Town's historical inner-city neighbourhood of Bo-Kaap. The City of Cape Town authorities have adopted a growth at all costs mentality which provides the base for much of the area's development trajectory and restructuring. The findings illustrate the contention of Logan and Molotch (2010) that the demand for growth premises the vision and purpose of the local government and supersedes meanings of community. It is evident boosterism is employed by the authorities of the City of Cape Town as they revalue land prices, improve international competitiveness and employ marketing strategies which are geared to attract external investors. While these strategies support economic development, the costs to local communities are acknowledged only minimally. It becomes apparent then that gentrification processes are purposefully supported by the state in a fashion similar to those documented in cities of the Global North (Lees, 2003). Local government mandates for job creation and economic growth provide the contexts for both large-scale property developments and tourism expansion which have placed financial gains above all else. As Todeschini (2017) maintains powerful property developers determine where and what gets built in inner-city Cape Town, including in the space of Bo-Kaap. Through its current pro-growth urban planning the city authorities of Cape Town therefore exacerbate the uneven patterns of development inherited from apartheid planning (Scheba et al., 2021). Arguably, within the context of spatial justice the current trends of gentrification in the Bo-Kaap are reinforcing socio-economic polarization and confirming it as a defining feature of gentrification processes in the urban Global South.

Acknowledgements

Useful inputs to the paper were provided by Lulu White, Robbie Norfolk and Betty White. The authors wish to thank the two journal referees for valuable comments.

REFERENCES

- Ah Goo, D. (2018). Gentrification in South Africa: The 'forgotten voices' of the displaced in the inner city of Johannesburg. In J. Clark & N. Wise (Eds), *Urban Renewal, Community and Participation*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature.
- Andersen, A. P. (2021). *A Qualitative Study of Gentrification and its Effect in Woodstock, South Africa*. Master's Thesis, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway.

- Atkinson, R. (2003). Introduction: Misunderstood saviour or vengeful wrecker: The many meanings and problems of gentrification. *Urban Studies*, 40(12), 2343-2350. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0042098032000136093>
- Atkinson, R., & Bridge, G. (2010). *Globalisation and the new urban colonialism*. In J. Brown-Saracino (Ed.), *The Gentrification Debates: A Reader*. New York, USA: Routledge.
- Bourne L. S. (1993). The demise of gentrification? A commentary and prospective view. *Urban Geography*, 14(1), 95-107. <https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.14.1.95>
- Brown-Saracino, J. (Ed). (2010). *The Gentrification Debates: A Reader*. New York, USA: Routledge.
- Brown-Saracino, J. (2017). Explicating divided approaches to gentrification and growing income inequality. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 43(36), 1-36. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-060116-053427>
- Clark, E. (2005). *The order and simplicity of gentrification: a political challenge*. In R. Atkinson & G. Bridge (Eds.), *Gentrification in a Global Context: The New Urban Colonialism*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Cocola-Gant, A. (2018). *Tourism gentrification*. In L. Lees & M. Phillips (Eds), *Handbook of Gentrification Studies*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 281-293.
- Davids, A. (1980). *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap: A Social History of Islam at the Cape*. Cape Town, South Africa: South African Institute of Arabic and Islamic Research.
- Donaldson, R., Kotze, N., Visser, G., Park, J., Wally, N., Zen, J., & Vieyra, O. (2013). An uneasy match: Neoliberalism, gentrification and heritage conservation in Bo-Kaap, Cape Town, South Africa. *Urban Forum*, 24(2), 173-188. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12132-012-9182-9>
- Finio, N. (2022). Measurement and definition of gentrification in urban studies and planning. *Journal of Planning Literature*, 37(2), 249-264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08854122211051603>
- Freeman, L. (2006). *There Goes the 'Hood: Views of Gentrification from the Ground Up*. Philadelphia, USA: Temple University Press.
- Garside, J. (1993). Inner city gentrification in South Africa: The case of Woodstock, Cape Town. *GeoJournal*, 30(1), 29-35. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00807824>
- Ghertner, D.A. (2015). Why gentrification theory fails in 'much of the world. *City*, 19(4), 552-563. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2015.1051745>
- Glass, R. (1964). *London: Aspects of Change*. London, UK: MacGibbon & Kee.
- Gotham, K.F. (2005). Tourism gentrification: The case of New Orleans' Vieux Carre (French Quarter). *Urban Studies*, 42(7), 1099-1121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00420980500120881>
- Gregory, J.J. (2016). Creative industries and urban regeneration – The Maboneng precinct, Johannesburg. *Local Economy*, 31(1), 158-171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269094215618597>
- Gregory, J.J. (2019). *Creative industries and neighbourhood change in South African cities*. In J. Knight & C.M. Rogerson (Eds.), *The Geography of South Africa: Contemporary Changes and New Directions*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International, 203-211.
- Harding, A., & Blokland (2014). *Urban Theory: A Critical Introduction to Power, Cities and Urbanism in the 21st Century*. London, UK: SAGE.
- Harris, A. (2008). From London to Mumbai and back again: Gentrification and public policy in comparative perspective. *Urban Studies*, 45(12), 2407-2428. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098008097100>
- Horn, A., & Visser, G. (2023). Tourism gentrification in urban Africa: Towards a research agenda. *Studia Periegetica*, 43 (3), 7-24. <https://doi.org/10.58683/sp.599>
- Jessa, S. (2025). *Rights and Responsibility: Neighbourhood Change and Tourism Development in the Bo-Kaap*. PhD dissertation (Tourism and Hospitality Management), University of Johannesburg.
- Jessa, S., & Rogerson, J.M. (2025a). Tourism gentrification in Cape Town's Bo-Kaap: Socio-economic transformations and displacement. *Bulletin of Geography: Socio-Economic Series*, 69, 129-143. <https://doi.org/10.12775/bgss-2025-0032>
- Jessa, S., & Rogerson, J.M. (2025b). Overtourism in Cape Town: Local stakeholder perspectives. *Modern Geografía*, 20 (4), 117-140. <https://doi.org/10.15170/MG.2025.20.04.07>
- Jethro, D., & Lehloenya, M.A. (2023). Call to prayer: The sound of the adhan, heritage and shifting urban identity in Cape Town. *Anthropology Today*, 46(3), 213-228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23323256.2023.2279074>
- Knieriem, M. (2023). Why can't we grasp gentrification? Or: Gentrification as a moving target. *Progress in Human Geography*, 47(1), 3-23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03091325221135564>
- Knieriem, M. (2025). Towards a better understanding of the gentrification-resistance nexus: A comparative case study. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 1164-1185. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.13352>

- Koens, K., & Milano, C. (2024). Urban tourism studies: A transversal research agenda. *Tourism Culture & Communication*, 24(1), 275-286. <https://doi.org/10.3727/109830423X16999785101653>
- Kotze, N. (2013). A community in trouble? The impact of gentrification on the Bo-Kaap, Cape Town. *Urbani izziv*, 24(2), 124-132.
- Kotze, N. & van der Merwe, I.J. (2000). Neighbourhood renewal in Cape Town's inner-city: Is it gentrification? *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, 28, 39-46. <https://doi.org/10.4314/jfec.v28i1.52787>
- Lees, L. (2003). *Super-gentrification: The case of Brooklyn heights, New York City*. In J. Brown-Saracino (Ed.), *The Gentrification Debates: A Reader*. New York, USA: Routledge.
- Lees, L. (2012). The geography of gentrification: Thinking through comparative urbanism. *Progress in Human Geography*, 36 (2), 155-171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132511412998>
- Lees, L., & Rozena, S. (2025). A gentrification stage-model for London? Through the 'looking Glass' of Kensington. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, e70012. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.70012>
- Lees, L., Slater, T. & Wyly, E.K. (Eds). (2010). *The Gentrification Reader*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Lehloeny, M.A. (2022). *Fourth Space: Sonic and Aural Dimensions of Cape Town's Historic Urban Landscape*. Masters dissertation (Conservation in the Built Environment), University of Cape Town.
- Logan, J.R., & Molotch, H. L. (2010). *The city as a growth machine*. In J. Brown-Saracino (Ed), *The Gentrification Debates: A Reader*. New York, USA: Routledge.
- Maharaj, B. (2020). The apartheid city. In R. Massey & A. Gunter (Eds.), *Urban Geography in South Africa*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 39-54.
- Marcuse, P. (1985). *Gentrification, abandonment, and displacement: Connections, causes, and policy responses in New York*. Washington University Journal of Urban and Contemporary Law, 28(1), 195-240.
- Massey, R. (2020). *Urban renewal in South African cities*. In R. Massey & A. Gunter (Eds.), *Urban Geography in South Africa: Perspectives and Theory*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature, 265-282.
- McDonald, D.A. (2012). *World City Syndrome: Neoliberalism and Inequality in Cape Town*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Mermet, A-C. (2025). Gentrification-induced displacement made visible: Shop displacement and tourism gentrification in Reykjavik. *Geografiska Annaler Series B: Human Geography*, 107 (3), 269-291. <https://doi.org/10.1080/04353684.2024.2334222>
- Mezaros, M., Paccoud, A., & Lees, L. (2025). A 'gentrification regime' change: The fiscal roots of buy-to-let gentrification in Dudelange, Luxembourg. *Urban Studies*, 2117-2135. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980241303626>
- Mirzakhani, N., Solatni, A.A.N. & Hedayatifard, M. (2025). Application of machine learning in understanding urban neighbourhood gentrification: A meta-synthesis review. *Cities*, 162, 105973. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2025.105973>
- Nhlabathi, S.S., & Maharaj, B. (2021). *Gentrification, social activism and contestations in Cape Town (South Africa)*. In I. Dominguez- Mujica, J. McGarrigle, & J.M. Parreño-Castellano (Eds), *International Residential Mobilities: From Lifestyle Migrations to Tourism Gentrification*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 291-308.
- Nieuwland, S., Lavanga, M., & Koens, K. (2025). Using adaptive cycles and panarchy to understand processes of touristification and gentrification in Valencia, Spain. *Tourism Management*, 106, 105011. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2024.105011>
- Rogerson, C.M. (2025). The inhospitable city: Historical racial segregation in Johannesburg c. 1890-1970. *Modern Geografía*, 20(1), 83-106. <https://doi.org/10.15170/MG.2025.20.01.05>
- Rogerson, C.M., & Rogerson, J.M. (2021). *The other half of urban tourism: Research directions in the Global South*. In C.M. Rogerson & J.M. Rogerson (Eds.), *Urban Tourism in the Global South: South African Perspectives*, Cham, Switzerland: Springer International, 1-37.
- Rogerson, C.M., & Rogerson, J.M. (2025). Racial discrimination in tourism: The record of apartheid Cape Town. *Modern Geografía*, 20(3), 47-67. <https://doi.org/10.15170/MG.2025.20.03.03>
- Sager, T. (2011). Neo-liberal urban planning policies: A literature survey 1990-2010. *Progress in Planning*, 76(4), 147-199. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.progress.2011.09.001>
- Sánchez-Aguilera, D., & González-Pérez, J.M. (2021). *Geographies of gentrification in Barcelona: Tourism as a driver of social change*. In I. Dominguez- Mujica, J. McGarrigle, & J.M. Parreño-Castellano (Eds), *International Residential Mobilities: From Lifestyle Migrations to Tourism Gentrification*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 243-268.

- Scheba, A., Turok, I., & Visagie, J. (2021). Inequality and urban density: Socio-economic drivers of uneven densification in Cape Town. *Environment and Urbanization ASIA*, 12(1), 107-126. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0975425321998026>
- Smith, N. (2002). New globalism, new urbanism: Gentrification as global urban strategy. *Antipode*, 34(3), 427-450. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00249>
- Smith, N. (2009). Revanchist planet. *Urban Reinventors*, 3(1), 1-17. <http://www.urbanreinventors.net/3/smith1/smith1-urbanreinventors.pdf>
- Smith, N. (2010). *A short history of gentrification*. In J. Brown-Saracino (Ed.), *The Gentrification Debates: A Reader*. New York, USA: Routledge.
- Todeschini, F. (2017). Open Conversation - Controversial architecture: The case of a large building development approved by the City of Cape Town in the Bo-Kaap-and the decision appeal. *Architecture SA*, 83,14-22.
- Todeschini, F., & Japha, D. (2024). *Cultural identity and architectural heritage in Bo-Kaap, Cape Town*. In N. Al Sayyad (Ed.), *The End of Tradition*. London, UK: Routledge, 187-209.
- van Eeden, J. (2022). South African heritage postcards: The same old story? In G. Lees-Maffei & R. Houze (Eds.), *Design and Heritage: The Construction of Identity and Belonging*. Abingdon: Routledge, 215-228.
- Visser, G. (2002). Gentrification and South African cities: Towards a research agenda. *Cities*, 19(6), 419-423. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0264-2751\(02\)00072-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0264-2751(02)00072-0)
- Visser, G. (2016). Urban leisure and tourism-led redevelopment frontiers in central Cape Town since the 1990s. *Tourism - An International Interdisciplinary Journal*, 64(4), 397-408. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/170570>
- Visser, G. (2019). Gentrification in South African cities. In J. Knight & C.M. Rogerson (Eds.), *The Geography of South Africa: Contemporary Changes and New Directions*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International, 195-202.
- Visser, G., & Kotze, N. (2008). The state and new build gentrification in central Cape Town, South Africa. *Urban Studies*, 45 (12), 2565-2593. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098008097104>
- Weber, R. (2002). Extracting value from the city: Neoliberalism and urban redevelopment. *Antipode*, 34(3), 519-540. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00253>
- Wikipedia (2024). *Bo-Kaap*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bo-Kaap> [Accessed 12.08.2024].
- Yee, J., & Dennett, A. (2022). Stratifying and predicting patterns of neighbourhood change and gentrification: An urban analytics approach. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, e70012. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12522>
- Zukin, S. (2010). *Gentrification as market and place*. In J. Brown-Saracino (Ed.), *The Gentrification Debates: A Reader*. New York, USA: Routledge.

Submitted:
September 02, 2025

Revised:
October 10, 2025

Accepted and published online:
October 21, 2025