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Post-apartheid Politics of Integration at a Residential Student Community in South Africa: A Case Study on Campus

Abstract

Student Village[1] is post-graduate residence at a historically white university in South Africa. Over eleven years into a new epoch of non-racialism in South Africa, some students lived in racially segregated communes. There existed a strong notion in the residence being studied that cultural differences between different races made it difficult to share living spaces. This study tries to explain why and how this occurs. Black participants emulated a black township lifestyle, which they considered as the only genuine black culture. This article sees this construction of black culture as part of black students' struggle to resist experiences of white, Afrikaner culture and domination at the university.

Introduction

Policies introduced after South Africa's first democratic election in 1994 were based on a legal and constitutional framework that promoted a democracy rooted in the ideals and principles of non-racism. Transformation policies encouraged reconciliation, reconstruction and development and also became an important tool to this end. The idea of national unity and reconciliation was the spirit within which these policies were promoted. It was also a central idea through which the institutionalisation of a human rights discourse became a priority (see Republic of South Africa 1995; Truth and Reconciliation Commission 1998: vol. 1, chapter 4, para 3). It was central to the process of transformation to address cleavages and systematic inequality that are a consequence of a long history of race and formal racial ordering in South Africa. In the spirit of national unity and reconciliation, transformation policies aimed to go beyond fostering tolerance amongst different groups. They are understood as part of a broad process of racial integration. This article is concerned with the politics of racial integration against the backdrop of transformation in the South African higher education sector. It is situated in the continuing and as yet incomplete process of transformation characterising both institutional life and political discourse in South Africa.

A National Committee for Higher Education, appointed in February 1995 by government, proposed policies for the transformation of higher education. A central feature of the transformation framework was 'increased participation' or 'massification' (Naaido 1998; National Commission on Higher Education 1996). This aimed to provide part of a remedy to the crisis of apartheid's segregated admission policy. Constituencies that were previously not able to access some institutions of higher learning would as a result gain access to any university. The introduction of black[2] students into institutions of higher learning that had previously been reserved

for whites was expected to rouse conflict, tension, social dislocation and even social fragmentation, rather than an 'easy-fit' and evolutionary assimilation (Moraka, 2003). For most of the white students – an erstwhile privileged ruling minority – this was their first contact with the previously structurally subordinate majority on constitutionally egalitarian grounds, and vice versa. To facilitate this process, so-called transformation policies were formulated (Department of Education 1997; 2002).

It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine the range, extent and contestation of arguments around racial integration. As a point of departure a broad description of a racially integrated society will suffice. Michael Banton captures the ideal of racial segregation as a stage where racial distinctions, though not fully ignored, are disregarded. He argues that when the stage of racial integration has been reached, 'race has much less significance than the individual's occupation and his status conferring roles' (Banton 1967: 73, Kitano 1991: 14). Banton's conceptualisation of racial integration is as good as any useful description of the intent of transformation policy in South Africa. I draw also on the premise that the voluntary sharing of 'intimate spaces' such as bathrooms and kitchens in residential places is a key indicator of non-racial practice amongst individuals of different races. The degree of racial integration provides both a qualitative indicator and a socio-political yardstick of the success of transformation policies.

The study on which this paper is based set out to describe and explain social interaction at a post-graduate student community where it was apparent that racial segregation was occurring, eleven years into the democratic dispensation. This paper looks specifically at the nature of racial segregation in this community and students' own perceptions and experience of it. This case study is concerned to establish what this group of students thinks about how they live and why they adopt living as they do via making use of two research techniques: participant observation and in-depth interviews.

The university's history and its process of transformation

This university is situated in one of the leading cities in South Africa. The university's media of instruction were initially dual medium (both English and Afrikaans). But in the early 1930s the council of the university passed a motion that the 'services of the University be instituted primarily to meet the needs of the Afrikaans-speaking section of the community', and Afrikaans would be the sole medium of instruction (Official History I, 1960: 66).[3] According to the university's official history, the making of an Afrikaans university in the service of the volk was the 'hope and ideal' of this university from its inception. A decade after the formation of the university, the editor of student newspaper, who later became a professor at the university, wrote that the university (then still a dual medium institution) should strive to 'one day completely feel at home on Afrikaans soil within our *volkslewe*' (Official History I 1960: 50).[4]

Loosely translated, *volkslewe* or 'life of the people' refers to the repertoire of social norms and everyday practices (including language) seen to represent a particular culture. The university would encourage and ideologically sustain the *volkslewe* of Afrikaans-speaking whites (See for example, Hugo 1941). Such sentiments need to be understood as part of the broader struggle and aggressive mobilisation of Afrikaner nationalists in South Africa at the time. (Du Toit and Giliomee 1983; O'Meara 1983;

Dubow 1987; Marks and Trapido 1987, Dubow,1994; Grobbelaar 1989). From as early as the 1930s and during the apartheid era that began in 1948, it was increasingly 'ethnic and political loyalty' that determined appointments, curriculum and the composition of the student body at this university (Mouton 1993; Mouton 1997; Southey and Mouton 2001; Mouton 2004).

At the beginning of the 1980s this particular university had a sizeable student body of which over two-thirds came from the Transvaal and half of these specifically from the greater metropolitan region in which the university is situated (Official History II 1987: 17). Only nine percent of the student body were white English speaking students. Addressing this English minority at the university in 1982, the vice-chancellor and rector said (in English): 'In welcoming such students in our midst, all we ask is: please come with an open mind and join in the exercise, but not with a total disregard of the ruler' (ibid). This statement underscores white Afrikaner hegemonic interests at the university, and power relations that privileged white Afrikaner *volkslewe*. By this time, the university could quite correctly claim that 'there is virtually no state department that has had nothing to do with the university', including 'official bodies, institutes, councils, corporations, firms etc – too many to name'.[5]

In 1987, the university reported rather dispassionately that after the Second World War, others races, '*anderskleuriges*', were gradually been drawn in closer proximity to whites. Although '*anderskleuriges*' had always knocked at the door of the university, in the early 1980s, 'the knock had become louder' (Official History II 1987, 400).[6] The university argued that given the context, it would have to make concessions to the demands of history, guided by the assertion of the 'Afrikaans character of the university' (ibid). At this stage, the university had begun to enrol a few non-whites, '*nie-blankes*', 'as individual cases' (Official History II, 1987: 401; Official History III 1996: 493).[7]

The university became increasingly concerned about the implication of this contact with non-whites, as far as the sharing of both public spaces (lecture halls, libraries, laboratories etc.) and more intimate spaces like its residences or *koshuise* were concerned (Official History II 1987: 402). The university's residences were considered a very valuable aspect of student life. Koshuise were among other things a 'home away from home' – a space of 'enthusiasm' and 'oneness' that 'drew the great majority of students with abundance' (Official History II 1987: 339). In the spirit of volkslewe, one student reported in a university publication that lodging in one of the university's residences made it possible for students to deliver a 'positive and useful contribution to his community'.[8]

In the period between 1982 and 1992, student numbers at the university increased from 16,854 to 23,375. During the same period, there were significant political changes in South Africa leading to formal negotiations with black political leaders in the early 1990s. On 16 October 1989, the university council took the decision that 'The [university], in line with other South African universities, sees itself as an open university'. Although admission to the university would solely depend on academic merit, the council added the important proviso that there should be 'recognition by the applicant of the traditional Afrikaans medium of instruction and character of the university' (Official History 1996: 31).[9] Eighteen months before the council's decision, on the 29th of March, 1988, the rectorate had already decided that students

that were not white, i.e., other '*bevolkingsgroepe*' (population groups) would live on the west wing of the upper level of one of the university's buildings (not an official residence)[10] (Official History III 1996: 31 and 473).

In its fourth volume of its official history, the university refers to the years 1993-2000 as a 'decade of transformation and restructuring'. Writing (in English) in 2002, the principal of the university reported that: 'the traditional Afrikaans character of the institution made way for a South African university community ... In short, the [university] became one in which South Africans could feel truly at home' (Official History 2002: i). He suggested that the university no longer had an Afrikaans character. In other words, it was now an institution of higher learning that was not a terrain of power for a white Afrikaans collectivity. There was no longer a need for 'outsiders' to acknowledge a 'ruler', i.e., a white Afrikaner hegemony. None is excluded, or even marginalised. Also, the university had become a community, a 'home' – the very symbol and expression of cohesion, acceptance and belonging. This statement clearly contradicts any sentiment that the university would be involved in a project to cultivate the volkslewe. Like other universities in South Africa, the university was to write and implement numerous transformation policies, according to the guidelines set out in the White Paper on Higher Education and the Higher Education Act of 1997 (See for example, University Policy 1998; 1999a; 1999b; 1999c). It is through these transformation policies that the university works towards what it calls a 'multicultural tuition'. These policies encompass 'the admission of students; democratisation and equity; quality assurance and academic restructuring and the pursuit of greater effectiveness and efficiency' (Official History, 2002: 8).

There exists a large body of literature that debates the various ways through which transformation can cultivate 'campus diversity' (Cross 2004) at historically white universities. This extensive literature addresses, inter alia, policy making, financing the cost of massification, restructuring the curriculum, leadership and the increasingly neo-liberal context of education (See for example, Cloete and Bunting 2000; Cloete and Moja 2005; Jansen 2003; 2005 and Wolpe 1995). By and large, this literature grapples with the often nebulous and tangled process of decision-making and constraint within the higher education sector emanating from the broader political life of the country that affect the nature and context of institutional change in South Africa.

Less attention has been given to analysing group identities and power relations that are emerging amongst students themselves, i.e. – the 'small politics' amongst student groups on the ground. Franchi and Swart (2003) and Walker (2005) respectively illustrate some of the various tensions that are associated with new processes of identity construction amongst university students in post-apartheid South Africa. This kind of empirical study creates space for a reconceptualisation of the shifting meanings and changing roles of identities like 'race', 'ethnicity' and 'culture' as groups mobilise around various claims to difference in a changing higher education environment.

Walker (2005) identifies 'default identities' at Northern University,[11] a historically white Afrikaans university in South Africa. 'Default identities' are those institutional and individual identities that enable the persistence of race by processes that either erase it or make it more obscure. Walker argues that 'default racism' makes possible the existence of a powerful institutional discourse of transformation that admits black students into the university, whilst simultaneously maintaining their exclusion. In

other words, despite the 'open' policy of historically white Afrikaans universities, and even the statement by vice-chancellor and principal of this university, that the university is 'truly home' to 'all South Africans' (Official History IV, 2002: i), black students could still feel marginalised and excluded from the life and community of the university.

According to Walker 'default identities' are 'characterised by a lack of reflexivity about norms of privilege of power'. At Northern University, Walker found that 'default racism' masked racism under the rubric of individualisation. Default racism was articulated in various ways, including a 'naturalising discourse which explains primary interactions grounded in sameness as normal' (Walker 2005). It is through this discourse of sameness and individual preference that students explained their lack of initiative to form relationships across racial boundaries. Students did not mention race as a factor that influences their association, or lack thereof, with one another. There is congruence between Walker's findings and those of Franchi and Swart (2003), namely a tendency not to articulate, but rather to 'silence' race. Franchi and Swart investigated the influence of race on how students, at the University of the Witwatersrand, constructed their identities in post-apartheid South Africa. They reported a paucity of reference to racial categories in students' self-reported identities. One possibility was that young people were attempting to move away from racial categorisations in ways that may not have been possible during apartheid. However, Franchi and Swart concluded that the limited use of racial markers probably indicated a 'silencing of race' or an attempt to 'deracialise identity', especially amongst those who continue to benefit from racially organised systems of privilege:

> ... the silencing of 'racial' identity is seen to fulfil the strategic function of self-presenting as aligned with the new dispensation's ethos on non-racialism and the ideals of national unity and reconciliation, at a time when the focus on 'racial' identity would serve to expose and denounce the illegitimacy of this privilege (Franchi and Swaart 2003: 230).

Fieldwork at Student Village[12]

Student Village is a post-graduate 'informal' residence housing around 290 students. The majority of students at Student Village were black South African students. The different sexes lived separately and each student had his or her own room. The kitchen and bathrooms in each unit were shared and all the residents had access to one laundry room, and a recreational facility with a television room. Student Village is a self-catering residence. This means the university provides stoves, refrigerators and in some instances microwave ovens in each unit. The units can accommodate between four and ten students. Each unit had at the least its own kitchen, a common room, a toilet and a bathroom. Student Village consists of forty units or communes, sixteen of which accommodated women at the time this study was carried out.

Whilst 'formal residences' generally accommodated undergraduate students, 'informal residences' accommodate postgraduate students, and at times a handful of senior undergraduate students. Student Village is an example of the latter. Of all these residences – both 'formal' and 'informal' residences – Student Village was the cheapest at the time the study took place.[13] At 'formal residences' the placement of students is guided by a racial quota prescription. The percentage of each race was calculated with 'consideration of the previous year's representative composition' of

the total student enrolment (University Policy 2003). (White students were and still are a numerical majority in the 'formal residences'.) According to the university administration, there were no prescriptive race quotas for student placement at 'informal residences' at the time. In this latter case, a student whose name appears on the top of the waiting list would be offered whichever vacant room was available.

However, Student Village's units are essentially racially segregated. White students generally lived together, although one or two so-called Asian South Africa students were at times interspersed amongst them. Black students on the other hand, shared living spaces with one another. In general, it was the case that black and white students did not share the same units at Student Village in other words. Also, in many instances, black residents of the same nationality shared the same unit. Put differently, the type of segregation at Student Village divided black students into separate subsets of people according to their nationality and ethnicity. At the same time, it isolated black students from the rest of the mainly white student body.

As a new resident at Student Village in January 2003, I held informal conversations with some of the other black students. Many that I spoke to considered racially segregated quarters to be comfortable, and in fact preferred them. It became more and more apparent to me that the pattern of racial segregation at Student Village was imbued with a sense of ordinariness and a spirit of normality. This immediately raised questions around the experience and construction of race in Student Village residents' everyday lives. It also raised concerns around the efficacy of transformation policies at the university. How much had transformation policies – that were so intimately knitted into the principles of non-racism and the vision of national unity – achieved? What were the reasons for the kind of social interaction between students and why did they accept this state of affairs?

It is important to emphasise that a case is chosen. Stakes (1998) argues that a case study should not be viewed as a methodological choice, but rather as 'a choice of the object to be studied'. For Stakes, a case study draws attention to the question of 'what specifically can be learnt from this single case'. A researcher who chooses a case study has designed a study that 'optimises understanding of the case, rather than generalisation beyond'. In contrast to studies of topics that are more general, Stakes emphasises the particular specifics of the case. He lists three types of case studies: The first is the intrinsic case where 'one wants better understanding of this particular case' and not necessarily an understanding of any phenomenon. In other words 'the researcher temporarily subordinates other curiosities so that the case may reveal its story'. The second is a collective case study, where a researcher studies a number of case studies jointly as an inquiry into the phenomenon, population or general condition. The third category of is the instrumental case study, where a particular case is examined to provide insight into a social phenomenon or even a refinement of theory. The case is looked at in depth, scrutinising and detailing its context and activities as a way of pursuing an understanding of the phenomenon or theory. According to Stakes's categorisation, this study approached Student Village as both an intrinsic and an instrumental case study. It is instrumental in that it aimed to refine the researcher's understanding of the experiences and consciousness of students given structural changes, i.e. policy, in their environment. It does not attempt to generalise its conclusions about social interaction at Student Village to any other residence at the

university or elsewhere. As an intrinsic case, Student Village reveals its story of racially segregated living that contradicts the spirit of racial integration in South Africa.

I collected data over a period of twenty months. In my role as a participant I recorded students interaction amongst themselves (for example, in their units, in the laundry or television room); their responses to notices about sport, administrative issues, and other organised activities; the organisation of their living spaces; their relationships with cleaning workers and the matron, and so on. As an insider I myself participated in everyday life at Student Village. I was part of many conversations and debates, and had a number of close friends. Hence, I was able to record some intimate parts of many students' lives, and had a real sense of their aspirations, setbacks and experiences. (Only some of these data are presented here, see Moguerane, 2006). In addition I carried out fourteen in-depth 'Problem Centred Interviews' (Witzel 2000).

Witzel's 'Problem Centred Interview' can be viewed as a corrective to the tendency for interviews to operate as 'question and answer' sessions – especially semi-structured interviews (Witzel 2000). This technique aims to encourage the participants to tell a story of their experiences – a life story so to speak, but focusing on an area that will most elucidate how they understand and experience certain social phenomena.[14] It is also intended to draw specific attention to the differences between the manner in which researchers conceptualise the meaning of social phenomena (through the lens of their theoretical perspectives) and how individuals understand themselves, give various meanings to, and experience the same phenomena. All fourteen interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Culture and intimate spaces at Student Village

Racially segregated living spaces in this case were part of an undocumented but openly practised 'policy'. Student Village was not the only 'informal residence' whose living quarters exhibited a racially organised pattern. In general, students hardly ever share flats with others of a different race at 'informal residences'. In response to my question as to why people were living separately, the administrator who was in charge of the section that handled student accommodation[15] said that conflicts typically occurred between students of different races and/or nationalities whenever they shared living spaces. She argued that the organisation of living quarters at Student Village for example, was a case of 'cultural' segregation,[16] rather than racial segregation.

Students themselves had a preference for this 'policy'. All but one participant argued that there are cultural differences between different groups. These were said to make it difficult, if not altogether impossible, to share living spaces with another of a different race especially. Even participant G who strongly felt that Student Village's units should be racially mixed, was also motivated by the idea that there are 'cultural' differences between races and that they are important. He felt that the university should encourage a mutual understanding between races about their unique 'cultural' characteristics by facilitating racially mixed units.

> ... we differ in characteristics, we differ in colour, but when we stay together, we should be able to integrate ... I should know what happens among whites: how do they feel when they are in a situation of what nature? How do they handle problems? When they do not

have food how do they behave? Do they also ask for help like Ubuntu of the black person, or maybe they do it in their own way? (Black man, Participant G)

Respondents generally perceived 'cultural' differences to be natural and irreconcilable. They also articulated the so-called 'culture' of different groups as if it were homogenous and unchanging. Although culture was most often seen as something innate, sometimes participants would acknowledge the role of socialisation, and would mention the role of upbringing and education for example. Participants moreover argued that it is natural for a group of people to be drawn to those who are 'culturally' most like them. An Indian man, who shared a unit with two white men and a Chinese man said:

... we want to live with our friends, and obviously, a lot of the time, birds of a feather flock together, and so therefore people in the same race ...our friends tend to be those people who are similar to you, right? Unfortunately a lot of the time it ends up being those who are more than just similar to you on an emotional level, but sometimes those that are similar to you on a racial level. Uh, let me put it to you this way right, you walk into a room full of white people, and there's one black person other than yourself, who would you go talk to first? (Indian man, I)

Race, 'culture' and community: white participants

Participant A was a white Afrikaans-peaking woman. She lived with six other white women in the unit. One room in the unit was unoccupied and this had been the case for at least one semester when she was interviewed. The interview took place in their kitchen, which had been stylishly transformed into a comfortable living room. She and her housemates had brought tablecloths, curtains, cushions, vases and other accessories to convert the standard bare kitchen that is characteristic of such units into a homely living area. This revamping of the kitchen was common in white students' units. All seven of these women had previously lived in the same 'formal residence' (undergraduate) at the university and had become close friends. Hence, they decided to share a unit at Student Village together. Moving into Student Village with friends from the formal residence was a frequent occurrence amongst white residents, and it shaped their experience of community at Student Village.

Participant A said her main focus was her final year project although she often went out with her housemates given their history. She mentioned this close relationship with her housemates as one of the reasons why she had very little interaction with other residents at Student Village, including those of other 'cultures'. She explained that she left the 'formal residence' and moved to Student Village in order to withdraw from active communal life with a large number of students. She described the formal residence as a site for a dynamic and vibrant social life, characterised by many activities and interaction with many students, both black and white. At Student Village she could live and interact closely with only those she already had established a level of intimacy with. Participant A expressed her willingness to live with other races, but argued that the university is aware of the difficulty posed by cultural differences between groups.

I don't mind to live with other people I don't know ... race, uhm, I think for the university it is better to put people together with each race, each culture, together, *daar gaan baie*

bakleiery wees, [there will be much fighting] because the culture is very different (White woman, A).

Participant A spoke about her experience in the formal residence to raise her concerns about racially mixed units at Student Village. During one year of her time at the formal residence she shared a flat with four other whites and one Indian woman. They shared one common room, a toilet and a bathroom. Participant A recalled a sense of loneliness and isolation that the Indian woman experienced whilst living amongst five whites. For this reason she was also concerned about being the only white person in a unit should Student Village move towards racially mixed units.

> But yah, maybe, they must put the same amount of uhm, let's say Indians and white people in one [unit] but not one Indian girl and four white girls in one place because I don't want to be the only white girl in the other cultures' houses ... She was on her own. She didn't mingle with us ... maybe it's the culture thing. She never came over. She was always studying or in her room ... I would see her once every two days if I went to the bathroom or something like that (White woman, A).

She tried to explain the lack of any meaningful interaction between the Indian women and the white women in the light of the very distant and disengaged interaction that existed between white and other students at the 'formal residences'. With visible frustration she described how many of the black women were never interested in the different range of social activities that made the formal residence such a vibrant place of interaction. These activities include sport, music concerts and even rituals that had traditionally been performed in the 'formal residences' for many years. She thought that one of the reasons why black women seemed disinterested in social activities was probably cultural differences between themselves and whites, but perhaps also a reluctance to 'mingle' with whites. She also suspected that black women could have felt threatened and endangered in some way. She did feel however, that if black women had 'really wanted to belong' at the formal residence, they would have taken part in these social activities.

Participant D was the other white Afrikaans-speaking woman who participated in the study. She was also interviewed in a kitchen that had been transformed into a comfortable living area. Like Participant A, she explained that she moved to Student Village because she wanted to have more privacy and less interaction with others. She then moved into a room at Student Village that had been vacant for a while. At Student Village she lived with six other white women. These included her three friends from the 'formal residence' and the black woman, participant M. Theirs' was the only exception to the dominating pattern of racial segregation at Student Village. (The circumstances under which this came about will be described at a later stage.)

Participant D's understanding of the contact and relation between blacks and whites at the university was also influenced by her experiences at a formal residence. Every year black women had occupied five of the fourteen rooms in her corridor at the 'formal residence'. They shared bathrooms, toilets as well as laundry rooms that were all situated in the corridor. Like Participant A, she described a very distant and disengaged interaction between black and white women. Also, her view of the interaction between the black woman (Participant M) and the white woman, echoes Participant A's apprehension around the sense of loneliness and exclusion surrounding being the 'only white (in this case black) girl in the other culture's houses'. According

to Participant D, the only black girl in the unit kept to herself. She referred to all seven of the white women jointly as 'we' and described the lack of real contact between 'them' and the black woman:

> We don't see her too often ... She's mostly in her room ... we just see her if she maybe wants to make her food ... yah, she's always busy with her friends (White woman, D).

Indeed it took some weeks to locate Participant M in order to ask her to participate in the study. Clearly she did not spend much time in the unit. As the only black resident to share a unit with white residents at Student Village, her experience was clearly vital towards understanding the dynamics of social interaction and the possibilities of racial integration at Student Village. For many weeks, Participant M was not present at her unit. According to the cleaning lady, at times Participant M was absent for many days on end. According to another black student who was not part of the study, Participant M spent most of her time in another unit for black women at Student Village. Two or three days after leaving her a message at this latter unit, contact was made and an interview was scheduled. Surprisingly, Participant M's experience of her interaction with the white women in her unit contradicted that of Participant D.

Participant M said living with students of another race did not bother her. She explained that before coming to study at the university, she had studied at another South African university where it was quite common for blacks and whites to share small flats at the residences. She said she also came from a suburb that she described as being 'predominantly Afrikaans' and so she was 'used to them'. This conveyed her understanding of Afrikaners as a unique and different group. Participant M portrayed her relationship with her housemates as characterised by a sense of familiarity and casual acquaintance. She emphatically and repetitively said that she has had no problems with them whatsoever.

> Yah, we are not friends, like friends, like we can go out together or something, but we're just housemates: if I need something I'll just knock in one of the girl's rooms: 'Don't you have some pritt [paper glue]? Don't you have some sugar?' – something like that, but obviously sometimes if everybody is sitting in the living room. I just join them ... I didn't experience anything strange with them. I can't lie. There's nothing. There is nothing (Black woman, M).

Instead, she felt that she and her housemates experienced interpersonal conflicts that one would expect to find when students of any race shared a unit. It was apparent that Participant M was continuously separating incidents of disagreement that could be a result of racial prejudice, from those that could simply be related to interpersonal issues. Particularly interesting was her description of her relationship with one white woman in the unit whom she found to be disagreeable. This woman would neither greet her, nor speak to her. Participant M had begun to suspect that this white woman was 'having a problem with [her]' because of her race. She then started to observe the relationships between this particular housemate and the rest of the white women. She subsequently came to the conclusion that in fact this white woman had 'a problem with everybody' because she was 'very reserved', not because she was racist.

I suggest that perhaps those factors that imbue racially segregation at Student Village with a sense of ordinariness can also be expected to normalise the distance and disengagement in the interaction between different races. In other words individuals

did not expect their level of interaction with those of another race to exceed extremely limited levels of familiarity. This is likely to be the case in the context where many aspects of contact between different racial groups are hostile and aggressive.

Race, 'culture' and community: black and Asian participants

There was a general feeling amongst both of the Asian men and the black respondents that it would be possible to implement racially mixed units at Student Village, were it not for the characteristics of white 'culture'. However, at the same time, when asked to provide specific examples, these participants singled out only Afrikaans-speaking whites and Afrikaner culture as a barrier against racially mixed units.

Participant L was an Asian man, who shared a unit with three Afrikaans-speaking whites. He was the only resident who was not black who watched television in the residents' TV room. He was also the only participant in Student Village's soccer team who was not black. He was one of a handful of residents whom I observed to have continual interaction with students of a different race at Student Village. Participant L described Afrikaners as a group that is ill equipped to interact with others on the basis of mutual respect. He suggested that Afrikaners had the kind of upbringing that did not expose them to people of different backgrounds. Moreover, he argued, Afrikaners were brought up to believe that they were superior to other groups. He explained that although he was on good terms with his Afrikaner housemates at Student Village, there was a level of intimacy they could not reach because his housemate 'placed demands' on him. Amongst such demands was the expectation that he should not have romantic relationships with white Afrikaner women. He related a fight between himself and one of his housemates given this expectation. As far as participant L was concerned, given the nature of Afrikaners, racially segregated units at Student Village made sense and were in fact necessary.

> There are many whites here who have this ingrained belief that they are like God's gift to humanity, and they think that they are some kind of superior existence, but I don't let their lies be my problem. If that's the way they were brought up and taught, that's their problem ... I won't let it enter my doorstep because I had another problem with another guy here, one of my neighbours (Asian man, L).

The other Asian man, participant L, explained that although formal residences where undergraduate students lived were racially mixed, an Afrikaner 'culture' dominated these residences. He suggested that as soon as students move into postgraduate informal residences, like Student Village, where there are no racial quotas, students who are not white Afrikaners immediately opt not only to separate themselves from white Afrikaners and their 'culture', but also to live with others who are most like themselves. Black participants also referred to activities in the formal residences as part of a distinct Afrikaner culture that permeated everyday life there. They viewed these experiences as a form of Afrikaner culture to which they were forced to conform.

> ... I mean look, the [university] believe it or not has Afrikaans hostels. I mean, uh, and sorry, that influence is great. It's a great experience, uh, it's fun whilst it lasts but I am not gonna be – what do you call it – brainwashed into that kind of environment, be part of a group, basically conform to a culture, but one that is foreign to me. I mean, most people, what they do is they generally go into a sort of a submission or they basically alienate themselves (Indian man, I).

> [At Student Village] there is a bit more freedom yeah, compared to the res [formal residence], and here there isn't so much uhm, forced interaction with people you know. You can do your own thing at your own time. [At the formal residences] they wake you up in the middle of mid-night to go sing for boys [a frequent event called Serrie], and yah, you need to account for your every movement and, you know, we leave high school, you are thinking: freedom at last. And you get here [formal residence] and you know, there's this whole thing which has you restricted (Black woman, F).

Black participants made reference to Afrikaner 'culture' as domineering and repressive. This claim was made in relation to the construction of an alternative black 'culture'. Whilst the former was viewed as burdensome, oppressive and coercive, the latter was described in the context of vibrant, urban townships where blacks could freely express their 'culture' and identity. Black students generally understood the 'predominantly black' Student Village as a community much like the township. In effect, at Student Village, black students' everyday life was similar to that of black youth in a South African township at some levels: inter alia, food and cuisine, language, music, gender relations (See Moguerane 2006). For example, instead of preparing what one respondent referred to as the 'Western food' served at the formal residences, black students often cooked *pap*[17] and relish. They listened mostly to *kwaito*[18] music, South African jazz and gospel music, and rarely spoke to one another in English. Black students that addressed other black residents in English were in fact often sneered at, and usually labelled as not being really black 'inside'. Black residents generally spoke to one another in so-called indigenous languages, or in 'township talk', otherwise known as *tsotsi taal*. This is a constantly evolving, urban dialect, mostly used in South African townships. It is made up of a mixture of all South African languages, and often reflects various trends in popular culture (Rudwick 2005). At Student Village this township lifestyle held – in a sociological sense – black students together.

> I'm staying in a township; I am a township boy. I'm a typical township boy. I am more comfortable at Student Village because Student Village is predominantly black, so that's why [I moved to Student Village]. It's one of those reasons (Black man, B).

> Uh, this [Student Village] is like predominantly black people – it's not like I'm racist or something, but I kinda feel at home? ... I don't have problems with white people. I prefer being with my black brothers and sisters. We gotta understand each other, you know. I have white friends, and Indian friends – all cultures but, I just love it when I'm around my own black brothers and sisters. They don't mind my music, you know, my location [township] life and all that kinda stuff (Black man, K).

Most black residents generally spent most of their leisure time on Student Village's premises – especially women – whilst their white counterparts generally spent weekends and public holidays elsewhere. Whilst white participants described Student Village as a residence with a heightened sense of privacy, black participants saw Student Village primarily as a residence where they could interact with other black students. In other words, for many black students, Student Village was a place for academic activity, but also an important space for social interaction and entertainment. A number of black students would often remain there during university vacations. Some women even brought their children or other relations to spend time with them at Student Village during these vacations. One of the everyday experiences that exemplified township life at Student Village were the many parties that black residents

hosted that were characterised by loud music and liquor. These took place often during the week as well as on weekends.[19] A black woman describes Student Village in these terms:

> ... sometimes you'll see people throw parties until early morning – especially black people – you know. You can hear a radio from House 20 whilst you are in House 13 [more than 10m away] (Black woman, E).

In fact, many black participants often mentioned that black people had a predisposition towards noisiness. They described how this 'cultural' difference between blacks and whites caused many clashes between the races at the formal residences where corridors and flats were racially mixed. Black 'culture' in these terms included a preference for noisiness, which whites were assumed not to tolerate. Moreover, a noisy township lifestyle was understood as the authentic black 'cultural' experience.

> No, thanks [to desegregated units at Student Village] – for the sake of peace. You know. Yes, heish, you know, the way we grew up. It's just, ag, mina I'm a township girl. I mean they [whites] are from the suburbs. They can't stand the noise (Black women, F).

Although the construction of black 'culture' certainly excluded whites and other races that did not live in black townships, it also excluded black individuals who did not emulate this township-like life. There was an implicit suggestion that such individuals are in fact not genuinely black. At the same time however, this same construction of black 'culture' also held the possibility of counting and accepting as black, all those who emulated a township 'culture', regardless of the colour of their skin, including whites. This can be clearly seen in the narrative below, where respondent K does not consider his black housemate from Uganda to be black at all.

> [My housemates], they are all black, then there's one who's not. He is from Uganda ... I've learnt like with Ethiopian people, they're not black man, they truly suck ... Let me say something: to me, I feel being black is not about the colour. It's about the soul – what you kind of believe in, in life, you know, because sometimes we do cross some white folk with a black soul. Uh, let me just put it to you: white life sucks. So, I mean, if a white person is prepared or to, you know, not really live whatever the kinda of lifestyle they are living, but try to at least adopt our culture because I think it's the best. (Black, man K).

Though black culture was a construction that clearly excluded categories of people, coloured and Indians for example, black participants described only white culture as being irreconcilable to blackness. The excerpt below shows how participant K compared his experience at a racially mixed formal residence and a 'formal residence' that had racially segregated corridors. At the residence he preferred, black students had separate corridors from their white counterparts. According to both participant K and participant J, black men lived a township life in their own corridors, and they were relatively unmonitored. Participant K remembered his experience within the black only corridors as thoroughly enjoyable. On the other hand, at the residence where corridors were racially mixed, he felt almost overwhelmed and 'controlled by the white system'.

> [Life in the segregated corridors] Ha, that was tight [very good, thoroughly enjoyable]. That was the best actually. Oh, it was the best. Okay, it was uh, predominantly black, okay […] Yah, okay, I liked it as well because you know, this confrontation [with whites], yah, I'm kind of done with it. Yah, and you know, it was just nice, just crazy. It

was crazy, like black *lokshion* [township] life actually, basically nice. Ah, [a racially mixed formal residence.] I have to use this word: it sucks. I mean, uh, we were more like, I felt, like controlled by the white system because the HKs [House Committee members] – they were white. Everyone is like white – the housefather, uh, the matron – everything. The food sucked, and everything so, I didn't like that (Black man, K).

Yet participant J who also lived in this racially segregated formal residence also remembered how beneath this pleasant township-like experience, lingered a sense of fear and powerlessness at what white men could do to black men. He explained that because white men were assured unquestionably of the university's protection, black men were always at the risk of being belittled and also physically assaulted by them. He said black men feared physical assault, which occurred during (some) nights when (some) white students would storm into the corridors of the black students.

When you enter the dining hall, you'll just be finding they [whites] would laugh at you, you know, just clearly. It would be for no apparent reason ... We [blacks] always used to be underdogs. So for a fight to occur it, I mean, it must have been initiated by them ... They would just see you and tell you some crap. When you respond they just kicked your ass and that's how it started. I can say we were afraid of whites (Black man, J).

The feeling of being controlled by whites and a sense of powerlessness was a thread that ran through black participants interviews as they described their previous experiences of racially mixed living spaces at this university ('formal residences'). This feeling was expressed in various ways. Sometimes it was a sense of fear and intimidation, as articulated by participant K above. Like him, some black participants felt that they were being overwhelmed by 'whiteness'. At other times black participants felt that whites did not relate to them as equals, and expected them to behave like servants. Participant E described how white women would shout at black women at the formal residence, telling them to keep their noise down.

Saying [that] you are making a noise, okay, I do understand. But coming in and shouting at me is another level because I mean we're the same level you and I. See? And then you are coming as if, like, you have authority over me or something (Black woman, E).

In the context of South Africa, white is a social category that includes all groups that are not black, coloured or Asian. Whiteness is also a contested and fluid category. Yet it was Afrikaans-speaking whites that were singled out by black and Asian students as an obstacle to racially mixed living quarters at Student Village. In spite of this, Afrikaans-speaking participants were not found to have any greater propensity towards a construction of stereotypes than other participants. This lack of a more pronounced stereotyping and racism amongst white participants has three possible explanations: In the first place, a black researcher carried out the interviews. It could be that white participants were even more cautious than other participants, not to portray themselves as racist. Secondly, because of the place of Afrikaners in South African history, Afrikaans-speaking whites were easy scapegoats. Other participants could justify their own process of stereotyping by casting in principle blame onto the group that was historically responsible for apartheid. Although these reasons cannot be completely disregarded, this study suggests that the role they played is relatively minor in the light of the third possibility. This is that there exists a set of power relations that continue to consolidate a white Afrikaner hegemony at this particular university. This is despite the discourse of transformation and the implementation of its policies. The university

historically trained only Afrikaans-speaking whites, and the medium of instruction was only Afrikaans (see above). It was a political home and an ideological think-tank for the then Afrikaner white ruling class. Arguably it is in fact this historical background that provides a sociological explanation for a context wherein a hegemonic discourse around cultural differences between the races can both exist and thrive. Overall, other groups experience a relative sense of powerlessness and alienation at the university, most especially poorer black students, some of whom lived at Student Village at the time of this study. This resonates with the 'default racism' identified by Walker (2005) at the historically white Northern University, as outlined above. Whilst there exists a powerful discourse of transformation and inclusion at this university, black students experience a sense of powerlessness and exclusion from life at the university.

> Another thing that is very clear I think if you look at the [university] we as blacks we are lacking in terms of, we don't have that sense of belonging to this institution ...we are only here for studies I think, but we lack that thing of a sense of belonging that this is our university: [that] we can do anything that we like, we are students, so there is a sense of belonging lacking (Black man, B).

It is within this context of both sociological and psychological powerlessness that racially segregated living spaces such as occurs at Student Village were normalised. Such living spaces became 'safe retreats' where black students in particular created the space to cultivate their own sense of belonging and autonomy. The case of Student Village represents at least one attempt to resist the pressures to conform to what is perceived as a foreign, coercive 'culture'. It follows that where a group is resisting what it perceives as an alien 'culture', there is a tendency to recreate and emphasise a distinct indigenous 'culture' – a 'real' or 'natural' 'culture'. These constructions of an indigenous 'culture' are synthesised into already existing notions of 'culture' in everyday practice and language on the wider university campus. In the specific case of Student Village, the notion of a genuine, indigenous blackness was drawn mainly from a knowledge and experience of township life.

White privilege and the politics of space at Student Village

Access to and control of living spaces was a field of incongruous and ambiguous power struggles between less affluent black students and white university administrators. For example, students that live in the university's residences do not require a readily available cash flow for sustenance and commuter costs to nearly as great an extent as those that live in privately owned communes and flats, and sometimes even family homes.[20] Further far fewer white graduate students were in need of university accommodation, than black students from the lower socioeconomic classes. Hence, there were often more vacant rooms available for the use of whites at Student Village than the number of whites who wanted them. In the process of carrying out interviews, I counted at least five vacant rooms in the four white units visited (all of these rooms had been vacant for at least six months.)

Whilst whites units were characterised by an excess of space, overcrowding was not an anomaly in black students' units. Often, black students hosted 'squatters' in their rooms. Squatting was both a consequence of a need by many less affluent black students for university accommodation, as well as a part of survival strategies amongst

black students at Student Village. Space was one of many valuable commodities that could also be shared and traded, like foodstuff, toiletries, small amounts of money etc. It was as a consequence of both a desperate attempt to access available accommodation at the university and a measure of good fortune that Participant M ended up sharing a unit with white students.

Respondent M moved to the university from a city 1600 kilometres from where the university is situated. When she first arrived in the city, she immediately applied for a place at any of the university's residences. She was placed on the waiting list, as is the practice. There were no vacant rooms available at the time. In the meanwhile, she moved into a bed-and-breakfast establishment. After two months in the city, the cost of rent had depleted all her finances, and she could no longer afford to pay rent every month and commute to campus daily. After many visits to their offices, the residence administrators eventually bent to her request and found her a room at Student Village. Respondent M explained that though she had accepted the room, she had felt that its living conditions were appalling. It seemed that a black man who was the caretaker at the time intervened, seemingly out of sheer embarrassment when he opened the room for her. He asked that respondent M be allocated a room that had then just become vacant in one of the units that accommodated white students. In that sense respondent M was accepted as a special case.

> The room that I was put in, it was not in a condition that a person can stay: the carpet was smelling and stuff. I went to [the caretaker] then he told me that the room you are allocated in, you can't sleep there, it's smelly and even the walls [are in a terrible condition – KM]. I just told him that if it's having some windows, or air and the roofing, I don't mind, because I was so desperate. I told him that I don't have money to live in a private accommodation anymore (Black woman, M).

However, respondent M explained that when she moved into this unit, she had discovered that there was in fact another room that had been vacant in the unit all along. This was in addition to the room that she had just been offered. This room remained vacant for the rest of the semester.

The university administrators did not disclose to those black students needing accommodation that vacant rooms were available in white units. Yet desperate black students often contested the boundaries of white power and privilege, and made definite claims to access resources at the university, including space. They motivated and legitimised these claims with reference to a democratic epoch, wherein equal rights and opportunity are enshrined in the constitution. The desperate need for accommodation notwithstanding, politics of identity and autonomy in the context of what black students perceive and experience as white Afrikaner 'culture' and control surfaced. Some of these students were only willing to accept accommodation at those places like Student Village, where they would live only with other black students. In particular they desired as little contact with Afrikaans speaking whites as is possible.

For example, participant J fiercely insisted that he would never have accepted an offer to a room in white students' units at Student Village. This was in spite of his desperate need for accommodation at the time, and the 'fights' between him and the white administrators over accommodation. Although he felt that he had a legitimate claim for space as a student of the university, participant J thought racially mixed

quarters were hostile territory where black students' freedom is hindered and undermined.

> ... at the moment, I'm convinced that if they [whites] don't like blacks, they don't like me, because I've never been in a situation whereby I come to a place – a white dominated place, and they just treat me good. So I'm under the impression that, you know, whites don't like me. I can't live with those boys. I won't be free, you know. I won't be myself. I won't be happy – let's just put it like that (Black man, J).

White students had a far greater leeway to choose both their housemates and the units they would like to stay in because there were often many vacant rooms available in their units. Black students were simply slotted onto the next available room in black units. This greater capacity to choose whilst having access to more space often allowed and motivated white students to move into Student Village's units with friends they had known for a few years at the formal residence. These students had a greater opportunity to transform the often alienating nature of institutional life into an environment that was more conducive to interaction in their units should they choose to do so. How white students communally planned and transformed their kitchens into more intimate living spaces, whilst black students kept them bare and (frequently dirty over weekends) is and was a poignant metaphor in this regard. With relatively few options to access community and holding social mechanisms (in comparison to white students), mobilising around a somewhat romanticised sense of township life was one way to forge togetherness and connectedness in the stark alienating nature of institutional life at Student Village, and this is what they do.

Conclusion

This article suggests that racial identities in post-apartheid South Africa have predictably been 'maintained' and continue to exist under the rubric of notions of the importance and significance of so-called 'cultural differences'. At Student Village the belief existed that there are 'cultural differences' between races. In this sense Student Village is characterised by a racial tolerance, rather than 'racial integration' as defined by Michael Banton.

These findings are understood to be evidence of inter alia the persistence and resilience of white Afrikaner hegemonic elements at the university. In other words, power relations between different races at the university – which cannot be viewed as unexpected in the light of the university's position in South African history – were skewed towards the systematic privileging of white students. At the same time, black students generally experienced feelings of alienation and powerlessness. These feelings were articulated as: having a lack of 'belongingness', being 'afraid', as well being 'underdogs'. Yet, black students were not passive victims in this regard. Racially segregated residences like Student Village became 'safe retreats' wherein black students established more holding and connected communities, cemented through a common identity of township life. A township way of life characterised the everyday life of black students at Student Village in significant ways. Through it, many South African black students at Student Village created a home for themselves and also a common identity of genuine 'blackness'.

Although racial segregation (under the guise of cultural segregation) disadvantaged poorer black students access to the costly commodity of living space,

racially segregated 'safe retreats' like Student Village were and still are a part of an active struggle of resistance against white Afrikaner hegemony at this university. This paper argues that it is through the use of a discourse of 'culture' that (perhaps as to be expected) ongoing racism and racial ordering are legitimised and sustained at Student Village. The paper has suggested in analysis that the discourse around 'cultural differences' is a 'silencing of race' (Franchi and Swart 2003) through a euphemism that is being used by different collectivities in various ways during the yet incomplete process of transformation at this university and indeed in South Africa overall.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. Student Village is a pseudonym for the post-graduate university residence where the research was carried out.

2. Although 'black' in the past has been used more inclusively to encompass all people of colour who were excluded from full citizenship under apartheid, 'black' has also been used to refer only to the subcategory of black Africans. My use of the term 'black' in this particular instance in the article denotes the more inclusive use of the word. Hereafter however, even though I acknowledge the difficulties of either black or African, since both these categories are socially constructed and can be problematised, I will use the conventional differentiated terminology since the respondents invariably did distinguish among black, Indian, white and coloured people. This does not mean I accept this particular categorisation as primordial.

3. In order to ensure anonymity, all documents that are written by the university, including the four volumes of its official history are used without any reference to the name of the university. For this reason, these particular sources are listed as Official university documents, and are not part of the overall bibliography. I only make reference to their titles and dates of publication, as well as the place of publication if the particular document was not published at the university. I use [university] to indicate those places where quotations from sources or from the transcripts of the interviews contained the name of the university.

4. Editor of the student newspaper: 'Sal ons kollege sig eendag helemaal tuis voel as Afrikaanse bodem te midde van ons volkslewe'.

5. 'Daar is feitlik geen staatsdepartement waarmee die [universiteit] nie te doen gehad het nie, en daarby is daar talle halfamptelike liggame, institute, rade, verenigings, korporasies, firmas, ens… te veel om op te noem' (ibid. 407).

6. 'Dit het meegebring dat anderskleuriges ook aan die deur van die [Universiteit] kom aanklop het. Die klop het al harder geword' (ibid. 400).

7. In 1969, a daughter of the Japanese consul-general in South Africa was the first non-white student to be admitted to the university. A few other individuals of other races were granted a limited access to the university as well. For example, in 1974, an Indian physician was allowed to use the library. Some academics were also granted permission to assist in the supervision of black postgraduate students who were enrolled elsewhere.

8. 'Koshuise, huis weg van huis ... huis van gemeensaamheid ... van lewensvreudge .. [daar is] 'n groot meerderheid wat met oorgawe daarin opgaan ...' (ibid. 339); According to one

student in *Skakelblad,* living in the residence ensures that 'hy na afloop van sy universiteitsopleiding 'n positiewe en nuttige bydrae aan sy gemeenskap lewer', ibid. 339.

9. 'Die [universiteit], in lyn met alle Suid-Afrikaanse universiteite sien himself as 'n oop inrigting. Toelating vir studie geskied alleenlik op grond van bewese akademiese meriete, asmede erkenning deur die applikant van die tradisioneel Afrikaanse voertaal en karakter van die Universiteit.'

10. This building was not one of the university residences. It was where the student council and other student bodies had their offices.

11. Northern University is a pseudonym that Walker uses for the university which she studies.

12. Given the high cost of accommodation, an increase in student numbers, and the need for more affordable housing, on 3 June 1992, a working committee of the university council was commissioned to proceed with the planning of a 'students' town', Student Village, covering an area of 22 968m² at a total cost of R6.1 million. At the beginning of 1993, 264 senior students moved into Student Village's 29 houses (Official History III 1996: 540-541).

13. At the time of the study, the cost of accommodation at Student Village was at least 18 percent cheaper than that at the formal residences, and about 24 percent cheaper than a shared room in one other 'informal residence'. It was also about 31 percent cheaper than a single room in this other residence.

14. In this particular study, in order to generate storytelling, and to probe how residents understood race and its influence on who they shared intimate spaces with, they were asked to talk about: (i) how they made the decision to live at Student Village; and (ii) their experience of their place of residence before Student Village and how Student Village compares to it. It was then possible to introduce and tackle issues of race according to the context of discussion that the participants created in their narratives.

15. Personal Communication, 3 September 2004, with Head of Residence Administration, at the university.

16. Respondents themselves spoke about culture in very reified terms: 'blacks do this ... white do that or black culture is this ... white culture is that etc'. In order to convey respondents' own perceptions and their own sense of reality, I use terms like black 'culture', township 'culture' etc in ideal typical terms, in order to reflect the respondents own understanding of the concept. The words 'culture', 'cultures', 'cultural' are inserted in quotation marks to reflect that although respondents tend to understand culture in this manner, I accept culture is a notion and a social practice that is fluid and changing. Accordingly, quotation marks are not used in the excerpts of the narratives included in the text. This paper conceptualises culture as a discursive concept rather than as a word with a particular meaning. Even its use by respondents at Student Village shows its pervasiveness, fluidity and elusiveness. 'Culture' referred to different categories at different times, ascribing to them meanings that were often contradictory. For example, in some contexts 'culture' was used to refer specifically to ethnic divisions amongst people of one nationality, and in other contexts, was used as a less antagonistic and confrontation-like euphemism for race. In yet other contexts 'culture' was used to refer to individuals' habits. These habits were at times assumed to be innate, whilst at other times they were understood as a consequence of upbringing.

17. Porridge prepared from maize meal.

18. A music genre that emerged in the 1990s in Johannesburg, and particularly popular amongst black youth, especially those in the townships.

19. Sometimes some of the researcher's housemates hosted 'house-parties' and invited residents from other units. They played music at very high volumes even if the parties were held during the week. Her unit was not the exception however. Black residents often hosted house parties in their units, and other black residents typically brought their own food and

beverages. Although sometimes these parties were a celebration of birthdays or other special events, there was not always a particular reason why a resident hosted a party. Although it was not only black residents that held parties, they tended to host parties much more frequently. This higher frequency was not only due to the fact that black students were a statistical majority, but also particularly because unlike their white counterparts, Student Village was the place where black students had fun and entertained themselves. It was my experience that this environment negatively affected one's academic performance.

20. University accommodation presents the following advantages: Students do not have to pay monthly rent. The cost of this accommodation becomes part of the university fees, and so one could at least hope to make arrangements for these fees to be paid through a bank loan or any other form of sponsorship – even if it is at a later stage. At the formal residences, the cost of food also becomes a part of the university fees. Students that cannot afford to buy their own provisions at informal residences like Student Village are sometimes allowed to make arrangements to eat on campus. Also, one does not have to worry about the additional costs of water and electricity, which have to be paid on a monthly basis at privately rented places of accommodation. There are also washing machines and dryers available at no cost, and so students have access to a free launderette at all times. Another added benefit of accommodation at the university is of course, the fact that the rooms are already fully furnished, and it is not necessary to buy any furniture, unlike moving into a private flat. Even if a student were to reside at one of the informal residences more costly than Student Village, that should not be interpreted as evidence of the availability of funds. Being accommodated at any university residence, whatever its cost, is a far more preferable situation than cheaper accommodation elsewhere. Private accommodation necessitates a *readily available* cash flow, which even the most expensive of the university residences would not require to as great an extent.

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