Formalities and Informalities Through Community Policy Forums (CFPS) and Social Networks in an Era of Transformational Politics in South Africa[1]

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This article is about transformational politics in South Africa and the ways in which formal and informal communication, through 'rule makers' and 'rule enforcers', takes place by means of cell phone-based social and official networks. There is a recognition here that while the concept 'informal' has its origins in unlicensed trading in southern Ghana, its recent application brings out a more poignant aspect to its prevalence. I contend here that whether it is about setting up make-shift stalls amidst licensed shops or mobilizing resources as a survival strategy, stealing to survive, or forcing integration by building a shack in developed urban spaces, the common factor among them is that they generally serve as acts of defiance against the state. The evidence in this paper reveals the early anticipation, since 1994, of alleged rising levels of criminality in post-apartheid South Africa and for the need to formalize incorporation of urban residents into Community Policing Forums (CPFs). It is through an assessment of these factors that informal and formal discourses need to be analysed. What emerges here, through illustrations of formal and informal communications, are two issues juxtaposed to each other: racial strains and animosities of the past, implicitly resurfacing to show up the inefficiencies of service delivery in the post-apartheid state, and the inter-dependencies among the dominant racial categories.
Keywords: Community Policing Forums in South Africa, transformational politics, crime and criminality, formal and informal discourses.

Introduction

In post-apartheid South Africa, since 27 April 1994, political transformation was specifically related to a radical shift away from White domination to broader inclusiveness, with the intention to embrace all previously repressed population categories on equal terms. South Africa's racial hierarchy, legislated during the apartheid era through the population Registration Act of 1950, constituted in descending order, Whites, Coloureds (people of mixed descent who had voting rights during most of the apartheid era), Indians (originating in India and without voting rights) and Africans (from nine ethnic categories without any voting rights).[2] Academic interest in post-apartheid transformation emerged in areas of macro-based issues such as the national transformational agenda (De Wee 2016), economic transformation and neo-liberalism (Bond 2000), transformation in higher education (Reddy 2006) and, among others, the role of trade unions in political and economic transformation (Budeli 2012). Policies and actions that emanated from institutions that framed and guided these

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[2] In the decade prior to 1994 the African National Congress (ANC) led the struggle against apartheid to unite Coloureds, Indians and Africans under the rubric of 'Blacks', subsequently reinforced in the Employment Equity Act of 1998, and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000. But the reality now continues with selective preference of Africans through Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies for jobs and promotions.

processes continue to operate as key instruments of transformation at the formal institutional and legislative levels. Collectively, their aims are to entrench the process of democratisation on a non-racial basis. But beneath the veneer of this process there still prevail the challenges of integration and acceptance across ethnic and racial backgrounds that are better understood in terms of the informal relations among citizens of South Africa. What prevails at a formal level for public consumption is often not in sync with what prevails privately on the ground at an informal level. The ongoing dynamics between public and private in the context of formal and informal inter-racial relations in post-apartheid South Africa requires at least some interrogation.

The re-emergence of the informal-formal dichotomy over the last decade has brought forth more contemporary nuances that add to its earlier emergence in the 1970s. Keith Hart's (1973) provocative paper on the substantive migration of the Frafras from Northern Ghana into urban areas of Southern Ghana focuses on their entrepreneurialism outside of the registered formal sector. His ideas instigated significant debates globally and challenged some of the implicit notions that appeared to be inherent in his paper — such as whether the informal economy was independent of the formal economy, and whether the characterization was appropriate enough. Ray Bromley's (1979) editing of a collection of papers on 'the informal sector' facilitated an interesting array of ideas that lent itself to a challenging international discourse that stemmed from Hart's seminal paper. It raised a core issue about dualist notions of economies the world over as well as the integration and functionality of the marginalized masses to the mainstream national and international economies (Gerry 1979). Centring on economic activities, alternative concepts such as 'petty commodity production', 'unenumerated sector' and 'marginalization theory' revealed inaccuracies inherent in the dualist paradigms (Bromley 1979, Moser 1979, Gerry 1979). Collectively, these papers provide apt demonstrations of the interconnectedness between the formal and the informal. There is a somewhat juxtaposed resonance here in an earlier study by Becker (1963, cited in Müller 2015) on 'moral entrepreneurialism' — which introduced ideas on the 'rule creator' and 'rule enforcer'. The concept was revisited by Müller from 2010 onwards, culminating in a publication on cannabis dealers in Rotterdam, Netherlands (Muller 2015). More recent contributions to the formal-informal dichotomy adopt this perspective as well. But they serve as valuable contributions to the notion by focusing upon adherence or defiance by people to the political conditions that they encounter in varying situations (Gopfert 2012). This article adopts the view that whether people create a make-shift counter to set up an unregistered enterprise, or whether they build a shack in a squatter camp, such initiatives constitute acts of defiance against the harsh conditions that they have to live with.

Subsequent research by writers such as Pardo (1996, 2012) and Spyridakis (2012) place significance on the issues of localized patterns of 'moral entrepreneurialism' in at least two contexts. The first is of integration through acquisition of citizenship rights in Western European countries, and the other of an ongoing process of marginalization of the working-class people instigated by exogenously invested capital in places such as Naples and Piraeus. In these places there are different patterns of moral, social and spiritual capital upon which local inhabitants depend for their survival against either declining incomes or inhibited

through their statuses and negation of rights. While their informalities are often directed against the state as political defiance, it is the fabric of this tripartite resource base that provides sanction against the edging towards an anarchic state. Through protest actions in countries such as Italy and Greece, authorities have remained constantly engaged in reviews and correction actions to address these issues. Marginality in South Africa, as confronted by the marginalized, and as perceived by the materially well-off, has over the last two decades dithered over possibilities of anarchy, with race, privilege and exclusion being collectively posited as the defining factors within a state in turmoil. Such a perspective has become a defining factor in South Africa's post-apartheid (post 1994) transformation. Against the background of the concepts mentioned above, it is pertinent to view the state as the rule-creator, and to view the tax paying residents in suburban areas as an extension to the rule-enforcers — the police and Community Policing Forums with people from the informal settlements as those who transgress the rules by trying to enforce their integration in built-up residential areas through impermanent shack dwellings. But since 1994 in the post-apartheid state, public discourses and the written word were being radically transformed. However, within the context of informal communications and private feelings such resonance is neither axiomatic nor accessible to public scrutiny.

In a racially, ethnically diverse cum divided country such as South Africa, there are inherent expectations for characterisations and perspectives of 'the other' (outgroups) to be couched in formal and informal referencing. The formal and the informal are responses to social as well as legal expectations. What is projected as formal in public domains is what is expected of law-abiding and sensitive citizens, while what is spoken or written about through close-knit and private networks is viewed as informal. The problem, one among many, however, is a presumptuous position that there is unanimity in beliefs about the challenges to which South Africans are currently exposed. Formalities are defined here as adherence to acceptable norms and protocols, as set out by the rule creators, that may have legal implications or social repercussions if they are considered unacceptable deviations from legislated cum socio-political expectations. Cautionary measures are essentially around racial and ethnic sensitivities. In formalities that are governed by legislation in racially diverse populations, adhering to protocol remains a relatively safe mechanism that submerges the myopic, racist, ethnocentric or anti-social tendencies in individuals' personalized beliefs. They become compliant to rigidities that 'stick to the rules' and therefore remain out of the ambit of litigious possibilities. On the contrary, informalities are viewed as quite the opposite in that they serve as casually spoken words or written communication that portrays socially bounded in-group identities. In informalities, the in-group mentality among like-minded people create a space for issues such as the myopic, racist, ethnocentric or anti-social sentiments to be shared either as jokes, in casual conversations best understood among themselves, or seriously articulated as their reality. Dangers of being publicly exposed and falling prey to unconstitutional behaviour lay with wireless digital technology's social networking forums — where the casual sharing of information has the potential to create misplaced notions of sharing ideological views as well. In networks that accommodate a multiracial membership with conflicting historical experiences and ideological positions,

there is unlikely to be unanimity in political beliefs and, for that matter, references to people in general. The innumerable cases served against people all over the world for offensive texts, posters and videos through forums such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter, for instance, provide testament to this. In South Africa, one such platform is the Community Policing Forum, made effective through social networking via cell phone technology. Criminality, in the form of house breakings, car hijackings, murders and sexual assaults are widely viewed in racialized ways, with Africans being branded as the most frequent 'culprits'.

Criminality and violence are characteristic in an emerging democracy such as multi-racial South Africa, where impoverishment was an inevitable corollary of power, privilege and positionalities that were racially determined and legislatively sanctioned in favour of Whites. Other racially classified categories, in terms of the 1950 Population Registration Act (now repealed), were Coloureds, Indians and Africans, who were decreasingly privileged in this descending order (Puttick 2011;[3] see also, Schutte 2013, Le Roux 2016). However, the demise of such a system does not necessarily mark an abrupt end to the role and responsibilities that were held by people who were most favoured during apartheid. Their expertise in management of resources and projects are the outcomes of years of skills training within an ethos of systemic processes that were and remain racially biased. Such privileged statuses have the inherent tendency to reproduce socio-economic segmentation and continuously polarize societies. It is when such privilege visibly contrasts with material depravity in marginalized communities that neighbourhood crimes begin to escalate.

Over the last decade, the middle-class to upper-middle class suburb of Westville, a borough in South Africa's east coast city of Durban, has experienced a rapid escalation in criminality. House break-ins in the absence of their occupants have 'advanced' to violent home invasions in the very presence of their owners, and vehicle hijackings in driveways have become characteristic patterns of neighbourhood crimes in the suburb. However, Westville is no exception to South Africa, since similar crime levels are now rampant in most of the country. Their frequency has grown to more severe types of violence in attacks, particularly against those who have tended to either react defensively or escape to hide from criminal attacks. Criminal attacks in South Africa are calculated to take place within five minutes of its initiation since private security reaction time is between five and ten minutes. Neighbourhood reaction time occurs within a similar time frame, facilitated through android mobile phone social networks. Escaping to hide is tantamount to informing the neighbourhood social network, or alerting private security company, thereby endangering the criminal operation and enforcing a greater sense of desperation to 'rob and run'. Improved reaction times by private security firms, local social networks and (to some extent) the South African Police Services, have exacerbated violence by criminals. This has given rise to a two-fold complementarity of heightened awareness and paranoia — towards outsiders walking or driving through the area. But the awareness and paranoia are overwhelmingly against Blacks (Puttick 2011), since statistics reveal that perpetrators are predominantly from this broad category.

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[3] Puttick's thesis has a substantive reference list on White privilege in South Africa as well as relevant material on contemporary references and social discourses.

The perception was internationalised through the case of South African Brandon Huntley, who received refugee status in Canada in the year 2010. With greater enhancement, it exposed the divided perceptions of crime across race and class. While Huntley's lawyers had convinced an immigration review board in Canada that 'the ANC government was failing to protect the white minority from criminal violence perpetrated by black South Africans', at least 142 academics signed an open letter to Canada's Charge d'Affaires in South Africa denouncing their decision. They stated:

> The outrageously distorted representation of contemporary South Africa does not square with the realities in our country, by any factual measure. While the crime rates in South Africa are high as a consequence of numerous interrelated factors — many of which are the working through of the past brutalization of our society by the system of white supremacy, and none of which relate to inherent criminal tendencies in black people — it is simply untrue that white people are being targeted disproportionately. Black South Africans are much more likely to be victims of crime, largely because they are less able to afford the protections and security measures which most white South Africans, as still privileged citizens, are able to acquire (reproduced from: Silber and Geffen 2010: 1).

The academics' response to the Huntley case is given credence by a South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) report, derived from the Department of Correctional Services survey of 2007-2008. In an ironical twist against the popular perception, the SAIRR statistics revealed that members of the so-called coloured population are incarcerated at a rate almost double that of their black compatriots. Evidence suggested that the higher prison rate could be attributed to the prevalence of gangsterism. The notion of gangsterism in South Africa includes extortion, violent tendencies towards local residents, and organised thefts — stealing cars, stealing from houses and businesses — as well as alcohol and drug abuse. In October 2007, around 80 percent of the South African prison population was made up of Africans, who also made up 79 percent of the entire South African population. The SAIRR stated, however, that the coloured population was incarcerated at a rate of almost 651 per 100,000 people. Significantly, this was almost twice the imprisonment rate of the African population, which was 342 per 100,000 people in 2007. White and Indian populations were incarcerated at the same rate of around 60 per 100,000 people (IOL 25 November 2008).

It is, however, the frequency of African-dominated squatter camps amidst established White and Indian dominated middle- and upper-class residential areas that forces people to view the situation through Black and White lenses. This is a mind-set that is essentially a carry-over from the social insulation that apartheid created through the 1950 Group Areas Act.

Transformational Politics and Changing Urban Landscapes
Apartheid's demise was about destruction of the inhibitive constrictions that forbade the Black majority from freedom of movement and upward political and economic mobility. In the negotiated settlement that was reached between the ruling National Party (NP) and the

African National Congress (ANC), amidst other smaller political formations, there was enthusiasm that South Africa held the promise of a peaceful and hopeful future. The months immediately before and after the first general election were akin to a period of 'political springtime' — in which even the most conservative pro-apartheid forces within and outside South Africa were subdued by the sheer positivity that the negotiations had generated. But the euphoria of post-apartheid South Africa was short lived. After the first watershed general election of 27 April 1994, hope and enthusiasm about the future began eroding at a rapid pace as criminal activity was perceived to have rapidly risen. A major contributing factor to this was, in hindsight, the several measures that the post-apartheid state adopted to placate the expectant marginalized masses throughout the country, especially Africans. The ANC's adoption of their populist Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP)[4] turned infamous within the first few years of their election. Firstly, the programme was too urban based, and the phenomenal costs were realized only after its introduction. Secondly, the Minister responsible for the RDP unwittingly found himself becoming more powerful than the country's first democratically elected State President, Nelson Mandela, because the demand for urban housing and employment fell within his portfolio. Thirdly, the sudden draining of people from rural to urban enclaves meant severe challenges to service delivery expectations from a government that was only learning about the management of service delivery. Squatter camps became a serious threat to civil order and political stability over time, as social protest movements began demonstrating this. The RDP was thereafter gradually abandoned, although not openly through any form of public declaration.[5]

As the proliferation of squatter camps became more visible in urban landscapes, a concomitant belief began consolidating with the view that increasing criminality was a direct result of the post-apartheid state. Mark Shaw (2002) commented on the impact of policing and the high levels of crime in South Africa's transformative state. In an assessment of the book by the publisher, Indiana University Press, it was stated that Shaw 'shows how an increase in violent crime shapes society, police and government, and discusses possible solutions for the current crisis'.[6] Yet, fourteen years later in a joint paper with Anine Kriegler, Shaw (Kriegler and Shaw 2016) denied that there really had been an increase in South Africa's crime rate since 1994. In a captivating article for the Mail and Guardian, South Africa's leading investigative weekly tabloid, the denial through the caption alone was explicit: 'Myth busted: Facts show South Africa has not become more violent since democracy' (Kriegler and Shaw 2016). Their graphic representation of the murder rate from 1911 to 2015, for instance, was used to illustrate convincingly the point:

> **'**The murder rate did not begin rising in 1994 — exactly the opposite. There was a
> steady increase to the 1950s, a slightly more rapid rise to the 1960s, some years of
> relative stability, and then a massive spike to a peak in 1993.

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[4] A special Ministry of Reconstruction and Development was set up to deal with urbanization and transformational issues. They also produced a document called 'The RDP'.

[5] Rampant corruption in state departments continue to impact negatively upon service delivery in South Africa.

[6] See: http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/product_info.php?products_id=21249

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Then things turned around. From 1994 onwards, the murder rate fell by an average of 4% a year. Raw figures dropped from about 74 murders a day in 1994 to 49 a day in 2015, despite a population grown by about 40%. Internationally, trends this dramatic are rare and attract major research and theoretical attention. No one has yet noted or done much to investigate it in South Africa.

Murder rates today are not higher than ever. They have returned to about where they were in the 1970s. About 20% of the spike from the 1980s has been estimated to be directly attributable to political conflict. Periods of political and social upheaval tend to raise rates of all crimes, not just political ones. Recorded rates of other crimes like robbery and rape rose rapidly at the same time as murder did.'

A crucial question emerges from this assessment: Why do such perceptions about crime in South Africa, especially with Black Africans as the culprits, still prevail? The answer to this question is at least twofold. Firstly, it lies with the radical alteration of the urban landscapes brought about through an unbridled proliferation of African dominated squatter camps. Squatter camps are essentially about land invasions and holding landowners and the state to ransom by sheer force of numbers in their settlements. Intrinsic to this recurrent feature is the demand for free services, such as piped water, sanitation and electricity. Their relocation is a result of the absence of enabling rural development policies by the post-apartheid state, causing the impoverished African masses to relocate in huge numbers to urban areas. Most settlements are close to established working class but especially middle-class Indian areas. It is in these well-endowed neighbourhoods that employment and food is deemed to be readily available. But it is in the absence of free services, employment and restricted access to food that organised public violence often erupts and in which criminality has its roots. Such circumstances often serve as justifications for housebreakings, car hijackings and violent attacks against residents. These are the issues that feed into what is posited here as the second reason for the endemic violence in South Africa. People of all racial backgrounds rightly believe that criminality in the country is generally high. But during apartheid criminality was a recurrent and endemic feature in mainly working class and underclass areas, where living in the interstices of apartheid capitalism brought forth with it higher levels of tensions and violent contestations for scarce resources.

While the marginalised continue to live under the constant threat of attacks, as the letter of protest (mentioned earlier) to the Canadian authorities attest, the White, Indian and Coloured middle classes had not known as much about the alternative reality that prevailed among their African and Coloured fellow citizens in the townships and rural areas. Parts of Indian townships, too, were known for being no-go territories to outsiders and the police. The criminality that the urban neighbourhoods currently face is essentially a transference of the anger and mistrust that was originally contained within the working class and underclass rural areas and impoverished townships. It is now directed against the 'others' (Whites, Indians, Coloureds [and Africans]), whose material conditions are often excessively abundant against the marginalised masses. The racially-protected social boundedness, effected through the

Group Areas Act of 1950, operated especially in favour of Whites, and since 1994 began to disintegrate. Even the South African Police Force (SAPF), renamed South African Police Services (SAPS) after 1994, could no longer carry out their duties with the same racially exclusive pomp and valour. In Shaw's earlier publication (2002), his claim was that SAPS was not as effective as their predecessors were through the SAPF. The alternative reality, of the working class and underclass areas, had extended into the precincts of the privileged suburbs. The alternative reality, here, is about racially divisive laws that impoverished entire communities, and where impoverishment caused them to turn against one another.

In a group discussion in the area, two opposing comments somewhat captured the political divide between the privileged who view the problems through racially tinted lenses and the privileged who argue around historical factors that have shaped and determined contemporary realities nationally. As the frustrations of living under siege against criminal elements were raised with intense emotions, one respondent echoed these sentiments: 'This is precisely why apartheid should not have been dismantled. These bloody people know no bounds in turning stable situations into utter chaos.' A more politically aware resident of the suburb retorted: 'There is a history as to why this is happening here and all over the country. The chickens have now come home to roost. We have to deal with the situation with carefulness, otherwise we will have a race war that we will be responsible for.'

The comment above was directed at both participants within the group discussion and the wider neighbourhood. In the bodily gestures and finger pointing about where criminals appeared to be emanating from, the directions were indisputably towards squatter camps in Indian dominated neighbourhoods. Such gesturing was imbued with symbolisms of the past, albeit unintentional in their referencing, where undeveloped land is often invaded and where squatter settlements increasingly sprout. Their prevalence is linked to criminal activities, although not restricted to them alone. Neighbouring African townships too are deemed to contain 'reservoirs of criminals' who enter middle-class areas for the sole purpose of stealing and car hijacking. Ex-President Jacob Zuma's alleged complicity to corrupt governance and pilfering from state coffers is often made as a reference point to petty and organized crime, which is understood by many as a justification by those who are inclined towards criminal activity. Even the ideologically opposed residents were in agreement about one issue: that ex-President Zuma's pointed and continuous reference to the scams during White minority rule were desperate attempts to divert attention away from his own inability to serve as a political leader. Zuma's alleged association with corruption often tallied with the high levels of crime in the country. Unanimously approved by the group, one of the respondents expressed his perception of the criminals' intent for their actions saying, 'If the politicians at the top are stealing so much why shouldn't we?' It is against this background that the Community Policing Forum (CPF) emerged. Apartheid had crumbled by 1994 and the concept of CPFs was legislated by 1996. Such a measure was only possible through prolonged discussions by relevant state approved committees, which has to follow protocols and processes before promulgation. Implicit in this argument is the awareness by the post-apartheid state that the erosion of the robust euphoria and emergent environment was soon to become obsolete.

Policing Neighbourhoods

It is an accepted fact in South Africa that the SAPS is incapable of controlling criminality without the assistance of local communities, hence the establishment of CPFs. CPFs were introduced through ACT 108 of 1996, thereby encouraging a close partnership between SAPS and local communities. An appropriate appreciation for the establishment of CPFs is best achieved through the background of crime statistics in South Africa. The table below provides statistical information on at least 27 crimes in the year 2015. Overall, the stats paint a more negative outlook for crime in the country: of the 27 crime categories presented in the data, only 11 had decreases in reported criminal activity from 2014 to 2015.

Category	2014	2015	Change
Sexual offences as result of police action	4 720	6 340	**34.3%**
Truck hijacking	991	1279	**29.1%**
Carjacking	11 180	12 773	**14.2%**
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	118 963	129 045	**8.5%**
Robbery at residential premises	19 284	20 281	**5.2%**
Murder	17 023	17 805	**4.6%**
Attempted murder	16 989	17 537	**3.2%**
Robbery at non-residential premises	18 573	19 170	**3.2%**
Common robbery	53 505	54 927	**2.7%**
Drug-related crime	260 596	266 902	**2.4%**
Malicious injury to property	117 983	120 662	**2.3%**
Stock-theft	24 534	24 965	**1.8%**
Burglary at non-residential premises	73 464	74 358	**1.2%**
Shoplifting	70 487	71 327	**1.2%**
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	143 801	145 358	**1.1%**
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	182 333	182 556	**0.1%**
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	363 517	360 541	**-0.8%**
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	15 362	15 116	**-1.6%**
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	69 725	68 561	**-1.7%**
Burglary at residential premises	259 784	253 716	**-2.3%**
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	56 645	55 090	**-2.7%**
Common assault	166 081	161 486	**-2.8%**
Total Sexual Offences	56 680	53 617	**-5.4%**
Arson	5 458	5 127	**-6.1%**
Commercial crime	76 744	67 830	**-11.6%**
Robbery of cash in transit	145	119	**-17.9%**
Bank robbery	21	17	**-19.0%**

Figure 1. Biggest increase to biggest decrease in crimes 2015.
According to Africacheck.org, because of the time periods between reporting the data and the financial year it covers, SAPS crime data is often at least 6 months out of date. The data for 2015's stats covers April 2014 to March 2015. Africacheck also points out that uncertainty hovers over crime data as many crimes go unreported, the SAPS data is unaudited, and there is widespread mistrust of the SAPS itself. Source: https://businesstech.co.za/news/government/99648/2015-crime-stats-for-south-africa-everything-you-need-to-know/

Levels of criminality in South Africa must also be viewed against perceptions and records about SAPS. A total of 2.206 million crimes were committed in 2015, up marginally — 0.09% — from the 2.204 million reported in 2014. The United Nations Organisation for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODCCP 1999) locates an escalation of drugs in South Africa in the 1980s, a period of extreme political turmoil and challenge to the apartheid regime. The problems of drug control and crime prevention are exacerbated by numerous problems within SAPS itself; they range from corruption to complacency, tiredness and acting out of frustration. In recent years SAPS reported a substantial annual increase in civil claims filed for damages as a result of actions or omissions by its officials, and an even larger increase in pending claims. The 2014/15 SAPS annual report showed that pending claims stood at over R26 billion (R stands for Rand), which is equivalent to over a third of the SAPS budget. In 2014, the minister of police said that he was not satisfied with the number of civil claims made against the SAPS, and that increased police professionalism, coupled with compliance with the law and the relevant policies in place, should reduce the number of claims made. He had also instructed the national commissioner to address the issue of mounting civil claims, and the national commissioner instructed SAPS officials to comply with the law when making arrests or detaining someone, in order to avoid civil claims. There is a profound history to this contemporary situation, as Rakgoadi (1995) had argued. Rakgoadi averred that the country's transition to democracy required a radical transformation of all state institutions. In restructuring itself, the police institution had adopted community policing as part of its new vision of policing in South Africa. This vision included setting up community police forums at police stations throughout the country. The implementation of community policing through the CPFs has brought to bear the complexity, dynamics and diversity of this process and of social and political relationships at both the provincial and local levels, particularly in South Africa's wealthiest province, Gauteng. This situation, in turn, brought the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) situation to surface, since most were facing major challenges in the post-apartheid society. NGO problems ranged from lack of human capacity (owing to the gravy train) to lack of funding which threatened their very existences. During the 1990s foreign funders directed their funds to the democratically elected Government of National Unity, leaving very little for the NGOs.

Communities were obligated to enter into partnerships with SAPS in their processes of mobilising themselves into neighbourhood watch groups.[7] The norm is to encourage two people at a time to do day and night patrols on a roster basis. However much a siege situation prevails, all protocols ought to be observed. The public was warned to abide by the law and avoid situations akin to emotive outbursts or mass hysteria. There should be no direct confrontation with suspects or identified criminals, especially since they have a reputation for reacting violently. Hence, citizens' arrests are forbidden. Their first action in noticing anything suspicious is to call SAPS — mobilizing help from the community should only be done after SAPS presence in the area, followed by private security companies that patrol the area. The increase in crime has given rise to a proliferation in security company businesses

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[7] A version of the CPF rules can be accessed on: https://reviewonline.co.za/131625/ethics-a-must-for-cpf/

(Botha 2015). Many of these businesses have extended their services to improvements in home-based security, such as CCTV cameras and electric wire fencing. Residents have simultaneously increased other areas of home-based security such as spiked and/or barbed wire fencing, keeping vicious dogs and strengthening their burglar guarded doors and windows. Their vehicles, too, are fitted with anti-theft tracking devices, which are now made mandatory by the insurance companies. And insurance of household contents has become an equally big business venture.

Community Chat Groups and Social Networking

Social networking through cell phone technology is by its very nature a formalized construct. It is a medium through which people may choose to remain officious and act in strict accordance with constitutional requirements. But the same medium, albeit formal, may also be used to communicate in casual ways which ignore the officiousness that such forums may require. The community chat group, formed especially as a response to the increased levels of crime in Westville, has two main functions. First, it keeps residents informed about suspicious pedestrians and vehicles passing through their areas, day and night. Second, it supports and keeps patrollers and the neighbourhood informed during times of criminal activity. Against the background of properties that are an average of 2000 square meters per plot and are surrounded by high fencing and sanctified by the adage that 'good fences make good neighbours', Westville residents remain a generally bounded community with minimum neighbourly communication. Vigilance is therefore enhanced through cell phone technology, through which people get to know the neighbourhood residents by name, but hardly ever meet with them on a personal basis. Social networking through cell phone technology therefore enables seeing people on the network through WhatsApp profile pictures and Facebook. More importantly, it also enables photographs of suspects and places, and information on incidents of theft and attempted or actual house robberies to be circulated whenever the need arises. However, photographing someone walking or driving motor vehicles can be provocative, and circulation of photographs without prior permission has legal implications. Such acts are known to have jeopardized convictions because of the prejudice that such circulation of photographs carries with it.

With the rise of racially mixed neighbourhoods, formal and informal discourses are interspersed through these networks, often manifesting entrenched exclusivist social orientations of the past and present, much of which has to do with endemic crime. While post-apartheid laws encourage mixed neighbourhoods, resistance to them at suburban levels remains. Peculiar patterns of mixed neighbourhoods emerged since the demise of apartheid. In White dominated neighbourhoods middle- and upper-class Indians, and to a lesser extent Coloureds and Africans bought in such areas for at least three reasons: security is perceived to be better; police are believed to respond quicker and with more commitment than in working class areas; and properties in White areas are substantially bigger. In Indian and Coloured dominated neighbourhoods where the properties are literally half the size, averaging 1000 square meters, there are mixed feelings about police commitment to crime control, and

African dominated squatter camps prevail in ways that do not feature in White dominated neighbourhoods.

The sight of African pedestrians during working hours and after early evenings in each type of neighbourhood created different reactions in the social network groups. In White dominated areas, the social network is abuzz with messages of warnings and caution when unknown African pedestrians are seen. In Indian dominated neighbourhoods, it is a regular sight and therefore not as hastily circulated as a cautionary measure.

Herein lies a perception widely connected to the divide that attributes crime in the country either to historical inequalities based on White hegemony or to the conservatively inclined perception that criminality in South Africa can only be viewed through racialized lenses. It is in these issues that the formal and informal social networking through mobile phones manifests itself. Samples of texts from two WhatsApp networks draw a clear distinction between the formal (Patrollers network) and the informal — a social network that deals with 'anything', but also advertently serve as an extension to the patrollers network.

Samples of Formal Communication

In the Patrollers network there is a formality that distinguishes itself through the etiquette of formalized patterns of verbal and written communication. The pattern is encouraged since patrol groups are linked to police stations and by implication to state appointed prosecutors who are responsible for effecting charges against the arrested. Patrol groups communications may be of significance in the compilation of evidence against the arrested in court appearances, and are therefore devoid of derogatory remarks. For instance, on the evening of 19 April 2018, a report was circulated on the network that was strictly for patrollers and news about possible criminality. At 22.05 a report appeared about a possible house break-in. The report below was cautiously worded:

> 19 April 2018 (22h15): 'Police have just arrived. This is a perfect example of phoning 10111 before putting it on neighbourhood watch. Owner of house pushed alarm for ADT (private security company) when they saw the intruders on their property but then somehow neighbourhood watch was notified before police, allowing the suspects to possibly get away.'

> At 22h20 a suspicion was aired: 'They will try somewhere else if they didn't get in there. We need to be vigilant.'

> The very next morning at 08h03, a response to the above appeared: 'As per your suspicions D[8] […], it looks like those five suspects hung around Circle Drive, all night, and eventually got an opportunity this morning. Held up resident in the driveway and took his vehicle. Thursday nights remain one of the criminals 'working' nights, come rain or shine. Thursday night and Friday morning Patrollers, in particular, please be extra vigilant during your shifts.'

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[8] Full names are avoided as an ethical commitment to those who contributed to this research.

2 May 2018, 20h35: 'Report from a Chiltern East Resident: 4 suspicious males in brown Nissan Sentra at cnr of Duncan and Blair Athol… they driving slowly and did 2 u-turns […] still hanging around […] please be aware.thx.'

2 May 2018, 9h43: 'OPEN GATES PROTOCOL': Just a reminder of our protocol for dealing with open gates while on patrol: 1. Do not stop in the driveway as there might be an ongoing incident and you do not want to escalate it or put yourself in danger; 2. From your car observe the gate and motor for damage as well as the verge and as far as inside the property as you can see for any intruders; 3. If it appears safe walk to the gate but do not enter the property and use your flashlight to check for movement in the property; 4. If there is a bell or intercom press in to try and make contact with the residents; 5. If they answer, identify yourself as being from the NHW and indicate that their gate is open; 6. Wait a minute to see whether the gate closes. If not contact the residents again; 7. If you could not make contact with the residents via the intercom, please note that the security company boards on the property gate or fence and post a message about the open gate, property address and security company name on the Patrol group […].'

In each of the texts before the last one, the syntax and choice of words remained neutral and without reference to race. Such a level of cautionary language was the product of a process that included constant badgering by the more enlightened in the community to avoid racialized referencing in the texts. In the quoted texts below, however, the provocation by the less careful stands out against what is quoted above. The last text above provides clearer insight into the formality that is required of an officially recognized group linked to constitutional requirements and law enforcements. It is indeed in these texts that formality and protocols are required, especially for the legal implications they may carry.

Samples from Informal Communication

In the social network of the same neighbourhood there is a tendency among residents to be less careful and pointedly racial about their references to pedestrians and suspicious occupants in motor vehicles. The pseudonym 'BM' stands for 'Black Male'. It has become an important catch phrase with reference to suspects and the need to be vigilant. The texts below for instance, amplify the attitudes of those still inclined towards racial categorisations:

25 May, 16h39: '2 young BM walking up Milton with what looks like beer cans in their hands and looking into properties'.

29 May, 20h59: 'Drunk black male pitlochry/RH

29 May 21h42: '2 drunk BM walking up Milton, following […]'

8 June, 21h36: 'Drunk bm in Aberfeldy rd in transnet uniform'

28 May, 11h57: 'Large group of teenagers seen walking down at Pitlochry at Clackmanan when seen.'

12h25: 'I saw them also walking pitlochry wearing slops and casual wear probably going to the match'

And then a harsh retort:

'I don't see why a group of teenagers walking down a road or being casually dressed becomes a security issue. If they invade your home or harm you in some way it's another matter but walking on the road is not a crime as far as I know. Let's be reasonable.'

The reference to 'black males' serves as an important indicator about mindsets, about the racial divides that persist in a country that is still, rhetorically at least, trying to transcend racial barriers, who are the expected suspects in the area, and the constant need to remain vigilant. There are two issues that therefore remain intrinsic but juxtaposed to each other: racial and class differences. While the neighbourhood is becoming increasingly multiracial, relational attitudes remains distinctly racialized. They manifest mainly during rituals, family gatherings and religious festivals. Opposition is steadfast against Black home-based celebrations (including weddings and parties) with loud singing and music, animal slaughter during the Muslim Eid Al-Adha (animal sacrifice feast) at homes and at least two evenings per annum of noisy fireworks during the Hindu festival of Diwali. These events have acquired emotive slandering and oppositional racial and ethnic politics between those who observe and those who do not. In reactions through the social network, provocative statements such as 'Surely these people can respect others right to a peaceful neighbourhood', 'residential neighbourhoods should not be turned into abattoirs and slaughter houses', and 'Aren't Hindus confused and turning the festival of lights into a festival of noise?' bring out the tensions that surface among people with misguided feelings of privileged segmentation. While Muslims lost their battle to slaughter animals during Eid Al-Adha, Hindus remain protected by law to continue with fireworks displays and the busting of crackers. Apart from such festivals and social gatherings the social ethos in the neighbourhood is one of avoidance relations, especially in inter-racial socialisation and inter-religious socialisation.

Theft as a Form of Wealth Redistribution
In the dynamics between established residents and neighbouring squatters, as well as residents from neighbouring working-class African townships, the situation is largely, though not entirely, about undeclared contestations between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. Middle class residents are generally so materially privileged that they have unwittingly changed their areas into resource bases for the marginalized. On one level, they provide regular employment for women as domestic helpers and make gardening and other 'unskilled' or semi-skilled employment readily available for men. For those who care to find employment, albeit often at sheer subsistence levels of payment, work can be available. However, among a sizeable segment of the marginalized, survival by theft or trading in stolen goods has entrenched itself as a way of life. Acquisition of electronic goods such as laptops, mobile phones and televisions should morally speaking be sought through purchasing them. But among the poorly paid, the unemployed or those who choose to remain unemployed, there remains an

encrusted segment who justify theft and the circulation of stolen goods through reference to past and present inequalities.[9] While White hegemonic rule up to 1994 was consolidated through racially divisive legislation, the Black-dominated post-apartheid state, at national, provincial and local levels, remains tainted by perceptions and evidence of corruption through lack of service delivery. A culture of entitlement prevails through land invasions and their forced occupation, a demand for employment through affirmative action policies and a tacitly approved space for the circulation of illegally acquired goods in African townships, squatter camps, taxi ranks and market places. Such entrepreneurialism is justified as a legitimate form of 'redistribution of wealth'.[10] But it also demonstrates impatience and defiance against the prevailing political order. Theft, through the numerous ways that it takes place, is often understood by the thieves themselves as an act of wealth redistribution. In home invasions and car hijackings they are known to have told their victims that insurances will compensate them for their losses. One of the respondents in a group interview narrated his experience when he was forced to confront the home invaders: 'They told me not to be foolish and fight, because they would shoot me. One of them was quite blatant: "the insurance will pay you when you claim, so relax". I read in the paper last year as well how the hijackers told the guy that if he wanted to live he should not identify them, and just leave the rest to the insurance company.'

In all the incidents the perpetrators were African, and the victims were Indian and White. Their recurrence serves to reinforce racialized perceptions of criminality and criminals in the neighbourhood, although the SAIRR evidence is a demonstration to the contrary.

Conclusion

Against the background of criminals and criminality in most White and Indian dominated neighbourhoods, it is not unexpected that the perpetrator-victim dichotomy remains racialized. This is so despite the fact that integration of the residential areas constitutes a radical shift away from the racial exclusiveness of the past. Observation of the formal, through adherence to the rule creators in the country, forbids such attitudes, although among the rule enforcers, especially among residents and their informalities, reference to Black Africans remains condescending. But the national statistics reveal an ironic datum which defies popular belief; namely, that Africans are the most inclined towards criminal behaviour in the country than other population categories. When viewed against the prosecutions of every 100,000 people in the four main population categories, people from the category 'Coloured' outnumber Africans. It is for this reason that the Patroller cum CPF networks most closely connected to the police avoid a racial description of the suspects sighted in the area. But it is in the cell phone-based social networking that residents feel free to racialize their discourses about their fears and anxieties. Herein lie likely answers to dynamics of transformational politics in South Africa and to the ways in which the formal and informal patterns of social networking interconnect to the political and social orders of the past and

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[9] Several interviews with African workers have revealed this as an option. Some among them are self-declared thieves.

[10] A term used by one of the respondents who claimed to do a livelihood through stealing only.

present. The complexity of the prevalent power relations is intrinsic to where and how people live, either in materially well-off homes or in make-shift structures in squatter camps. Among the established residents there is the recognition that for the state they are a significant segment of the country's tax-paying base; but among the residents of squatter camps there is a recognition that they are representations of the frustrated majority whose votes are crucial to the survival of the dominant political party. What emerges, either in the ways people communicate through the social networks or in how frequently they steal, is the articulation between the material and non-material means of communication. In either aspect, there is a profound statement made against the state for not being able to maintain law and order or not being able to demonstrate concern about the plight of the marginalized. This effectively constitutes a defiant challenge to the political status quo and demonstrates wilful intent to defy the state in the socio-political re-engineering of the post-apartheid state. When White and Indian middle-class residents demonstrate disenchantment with the state through patrol groups and social networking, and when the African marginalized invade and occupy land close to the established middle classes, they also demonstrate a close resonance to Pardo's (1996) reification of the relation of agency to organization and structure at macro and micro levels. Pardo's analysis, like LaPalombara's (1987) concept of 'defiance of the political status quo' and Sartori's (1976) 'polarized pluralism', unearths the dynamics of the middle classes against their neighbouring squatter camps in Westville as well as the remainder of the country's middle-class neighbourhoods. Against the disorderliness and seeming self-destructive tensions in South Africa's expanding urbanism there is also a coexistence of cordiality and acceptance in an era of transformational politics, however disconnected they may be from contemporary realities. Both residents and squatters demonstrate their inter-dependence through the need for labour, and squatters are known (clandestinely) to lead both patrollers and police to the arrest of suspects. Hence, established residents and squatter camp residents have become inter-dependent resources for each other, albeit within perennial protests against an uncreative complacent state.

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