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« *Our rural sense of place* »

**Rurality and Strategies of Self-Segregation  
in the Cape Peninsula (South Africa)**

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**Introduction**

This article concerns the local use of so-called rurality as political ways of self-segregation in the socially and racially very segmented Cape Peninsula, which is today incorporated into the vast metropolitan Cape Town area. Self-segregation concerns white people who choose to defend their “sense of place” by avoiding contact with those who are not part of it (depending on social and cultural criteria; concerning France, see Charmes, 2011 and Pinçon, Pinçon-Charlot, 2003; for the USA, see Chevalier, Carballo, 2004 and for South Africa see Pape, 2003). The South African context for the application of this notion is very specific, and implies a form of perpetuation of past legacies of socio-racial units dating from the apartheid era, without this being either totally admitted or fully assumed by the residents concerned. As such, the “right to the village”, which is incarnated in the Cape Peninsula by defending a rural living environment, serves as the main instrument in defending this “historical” self-segregation.

Rurality does not exist in itself: it is a social construction that, in the South African context, turns out to be very complex. Indeed, South African rurality is often associated with very different representations of rural life depending on the population groups concerned (Briedenhann, Wickens, 2004), and on their reference to a shared past, considered as a patrimonial golden age. It covers a wide diversity of socioeconomic and landscape situations, and is perceived differently depending on

cultural membership. For white people, African<sup>1</sup> rurality is often pejoratively associated with the former Bantustans which combine poverty and isolation. This perception explains why they despise "Eastern Cape migrants" (i.e. Xhosas from the former Bantustans of Transkei and Ciskei). On the other hand, "true" rurality, i.e. not "African" but associated with the notion of "countryside", is connoted positively by white people and defines a privileged lifestyle, based on environmental and landscape amenities, as testified to by the existence of "country clubs". *[Rurality] has a character quite the opposite of most of our usual lifestyles – unrushed, uncluttered, traditional, unspoilt landscape and usually quiet*" (Briedenhann, Wickens, 2004, p.194). White rurality increasingly tends to include white Afrikaans-speaking farmers who, for a long time, were pejoratively considered by white English-speaking South Africans as rustic peasants (or *boers*) confined to agricultural production in the South African rural space.

This racialised dualism of rurality refers to the unequal distribution of agricultural lands to the benefit of the Whites under apartheid (Vircoulon, 2003), and to the post-apartheid re-legitimation of a "country", "village" and "community" lifestyle outside the large metropolises. Some white South Africans seek to get out of their minority urban condition by claiming the "right to the village", with a view to claiming new forms of hegemony in existing areas reinvested with "village" and "country" values. The claims and practices of residents' associations bring out attributes offering a "rural" and "village" feel, in both literal and figurative senses. What are these attributes, and why do these associations consider that they have a rural feel?

The "right to the village" is expressed in a lifestyle which, in the face of the dominant metropolitan population groups, comes up as segregating. An illustration of this is found in St Lucia, in the KwaZulu-Natal Province (Guyot, 2006-a), Hogsback in the mountains of the Eastern Cape Province (Guyot, Amilhat-Szary, 2010) or still, as an

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<sup>1</sup> Naming "racial" groups in South Africa is a terminological as well as a political issue. The classification established by apartheid included "Whites" (South Africans of European origin, including Afrikaners and English-speaking South Africans), "Indians" (South Africans of Indian origin), "Africans" (South Africans of African origin) and "Coloured" (a heterogeneous group including people of mixed ancestry and all those who did not fit in the former categories). This classification was at the basis of identities and remain used for the census, the reason why researchers continue to use it while condemning it.

even more extreme case of “village” ethnic withdrawal, Orania in the Northern Cape Province (Rogerson, 2006). While the example of the Cape Peninsula is closer to experiences guided by the renewal of pseudo “village” authenticity, it also differs from these through the peri-urban or even peri-metropolitan nature of the areas concerned. The situation in the Cape Peninsula challenges the paradoxical interpretation of the “right to the village”, removed from the emancipating perspectives of Lefebvre’s “right to the city”. The “right to the village” is not being mobilised at the service of the working class, but at the service of elites; it is not used to widen access to space, but to restrict it; and it is not a tool for power sharing but, on the contrary, implies the capture of local decisions. In the context of the Cape Peninsula, rurality and urban sprawl result in a conflict of representations between several forms of intensive house building in the outlying suburbs, for non-white and poor people versus white and well-off people, which invariably refers back to the legacies of apartheid urban policies (Future Cape Town, 2013). The “right to the village” of the ones (i.e. the well-off Whites) is opposed to the “right to the city” of the others (Miraftab, 2007 and de Bruijn, 2010). While the spatial justice process implies the acquisition of specific rights (Gervais-Lambony, 2013), it also needs to include a whole reflection on issues of legitimacy and legality of access to space. As such, the rurality being defended by a minority, seems to go against an “urbanity” which is still little accessible for a majority that lives in town, and that does not benefit from its advantages for all that.

Rurality is defined by its Cape Peninsula promoters as a specific lifestyle based on self-segregation (Charmes, 2011; Pape, 2003), in a rural atmosphere and a protected landscape that can potentially be the subject of heritagisation (Belaidi, 2011; Guyot *et al.*, 2014). It also entails a strong territorial identity of self-segregation summarised by most of the residents concerned as “*our rural sense of place*”.

Following Tuan (1977, 1990), Xu (1995) defines the ‘*sense of place*’ as a sense of belonging to a place invested by a strong landscape identity, expressed by a combination of toponymic criteria, personal or historical accounts, original life experiences or even a spiritual dimension. In the context of the Cape Peninsula, this

expression indicates an exclusive sense of belonging to a former rural space, and at the same time the uniqueness of that very space in relation to landscape, architectural (Manning, 2004) and cultural criteria. Victor and Fryer question the issue of post-apartheid architecture in South Africa and, following Lipman (1993), wonder about the current bases for its identity. *"Whose memories do [our] buildings stir, whose nostalgias do they gratify, whose cultural roots are being acknowledged"? By refusing these questions, we negate the active role required of us in rebuilding our nation. Instead of creating we 'erase local senses of place'; we remain stuck, fixed in our dislocation to a place that is 'never at home', 'forever elsewhere'"* (Victor, Fryer, 2008). As a result, the substance of the *'sense of place'* idealised by the residents concerned, is clearly being questioned in the context of South African identities permanently in search of re-legitimation, and for which the issue of nostalgia felt for a place is capital (Gervais-Lambony, 2012), especially in the face of the supposed national political will to see Europeanism eliminated in South Africa, as happened in the 2000s with then President Thabo Mbeki's promotion of African Renaissance, particularly as regards toponymy (Giraut *et al.* 2008). Ballard and Jones (2011, p.132) in particular speak about the importance of references made to *"the rural aristocratic romance of preindustrial Europe, as well as Nature"* in the development projects of the new enclosed residential complexes in the Durban area.

*'Our rural sense of place'* is used as an argument in defending and conserving a territory that seems threatened by undesirable – i.e. poor and non-white – urbanisation, whether through the development of existing suburbs or low cost housing development projects, and by its integration – highly contested since 1995 – into a large metropolitan area (Cameron, 2005). Indeed, while the entire population of Cape Town increased by 46% between 1996 and 2011, during the same period the African population increased by almost three times more, i.e. 124%<sup>2</sup>. From a socioeconomic point of view, while 47 % of Cape Town's households, in 2011, earned

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<sup>2</sup> Over the 1996-2011 period, the coloured population increased by 28 % and the white by 7,8 %.

very modest monthly incomes of less than R3 200 (around €290 in 2011), this was the case for 69 % of "Africans"<sup>3</sup> (see Map n°1).

Our methodology consisted of bibliographic work as well as field work carried out in March 2013 and April 2014 for the UNPEC project in the Cape Peninsula. Thirty-five people were interviewed. A systematic electronic survey with residents' associations was carried out, and a spatial database was built. Field and written interviews were carried out essentially with the representatives of residents' associations, metropolitan ward councillors, civil servants and National Park representatives. Cartographic databases (on a cadastral scale) relied in particular on the interpretation of photos complemented by verifications carried out on site by the authors. The surveys focused on the formerly rural areas of Constantia, Hout Bay, Noordhoek, Kommetjie and Scarborough–Red Hill.

Interviewed residents covered two categories: "former" and "new" residents. "Former" or "historical" residents live in the Peninsula since the apartheid era or even before that for older residents. Most are retired or close to retirement and have at their disposal an important social and economic capital; they include followers of the "cultural" landscape heritage (cultural rurality in Constantia and Hout Bay) and conservationists ("naturalised" rurality in Noordhoek and Scarborough-Red Hill). "New" residents are more diversified and include the neo-rich who are attracted by the safety of landscaped gated communities, and "alternative" people who seek to develop – often with the family – socio-cultural and environmental integration projects, while defending the *sense of place*. Most non-retired residents work in Cape Town as professionals or as consultants by teleworking.

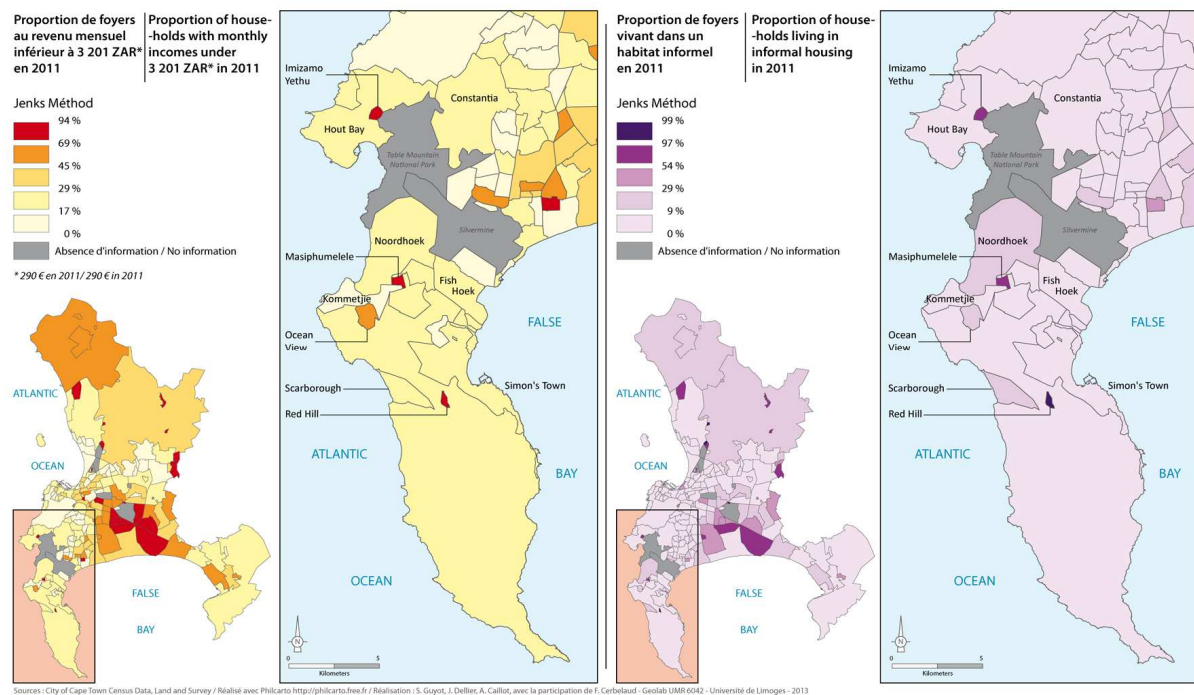
This article analyses the different identity and territorial strategies enabling residents to keep their territorial exclusivity, living environment, and their influence on local political decisions. They have come together into various residents' associations since the beginning of the 1990s. The heritagisation of rurality, through "village" toponymic and architectural referents, but also through the agricultural component, has been invoked by these associations in defending their right to a certain quality of

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<sup>3</sup> In 2011, 40,8 % of Coloured households and 15,3 % of white households had incomes less than or equal to ZAR3 200,00.

life and land privileges. Therefore what is the new rural geography of the Cape Peninsula advocated by these residents' associations (legacies, current forms and uses of rurality)? In which way does rurality function as a new metropolitan territorial marker?

**Map n°1: Socioeconomic Disparities in the Cape Peninsula: Percentage of Households with the Lowest Incomes and Informal Housing**

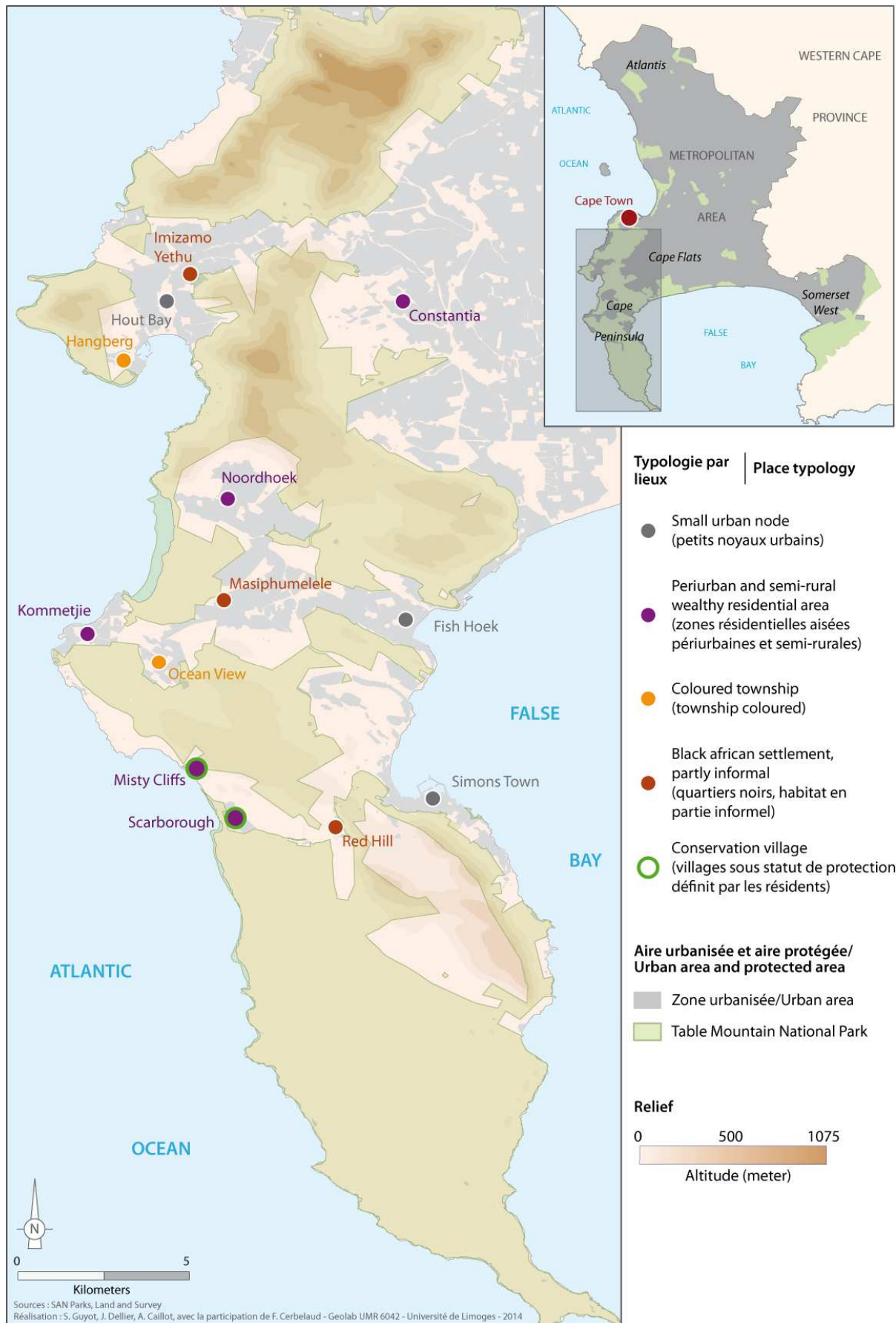


### 1/ New Rural Geography of the Cape Peninsula

In South Africa, the Cape Peninsula was the first territory to be colonised by the Whites in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Cape Town, one of today's three major metropolises in the country, was developed in the North. To date, the centre and south of the Peninsula are still not strictly part of the urban continuum and, rather, constitute a peri-metropolitan area, often taking on a semi-rural aspect. This area (Map n°2) is made up of small urban nodes (Hout Bay, Fish Hoek, Simons Town), a periurban and semi-rural residential area (Noordhoek and Scarborough) which is sometimes agricultural (the vineyards of Constantia), punctuated by two Coloured townships (Hangberg and

Ocean View) and several partly informal African settlements (Imizamo Yethu, Masiphumelele and Red Hill).

**Map n°2: Typology of Residential Spaces in the Cape Peninsula**





### **1.1. Legacies of the Peninsula: The Urban Sprawl-Rurality Debate**

Conservation in the Cape Peninsula and the nearby existence of a multimillionaire metropolis, partly explain the current tension found between the desire to limit certain forms of urbanisation, and the desire to ensure the settlement of disadvantaged non-white populations. The attractiveness of the Peninsula makes urbanisation “from the top” inescapable. However, although real estate prices make the arrival of disadvantaged populations more complicated, land invasion as seen in Imizamo Yethu (Hout Bay) or Masiphumelele (Kommetjie), are still a risk. The issue of urban sprawl then comes to mind, whether as a promoting or repellent factor of rurality, depending on how populations perceive it. Whereas the notion of urban sprawl was a criticised aspect of the white suburban development of the apartheid city, it was used by all interviewed representatives of residents’ associations, to designate the danger which the arrival of Eastern Cape African populations represents for the Peninsula. The same dual meaning also applies to the notion of rurality that goes from a pejorative meaning, designating the African lifestyle in the Bantustans, to a new metropolitan pseudo-country ideal with a tinge of Europeanness. The status of rural administration territory of the Peninsula during apartheid (see DIVCO further on) and the fact that African populations were forbidden to reside there, partly explain this shift in perspective.

Indeed, under apartheid, the Cape Peninsula, which was an archetype of racial division policies, was almost exclusively reserved for white populations under the Group Areas Act (1950). As such, Africans were forbidden to reside on the Peninsula, particularly those from Luyolo (near Simons Town) who had been evicted in 1965 (Guyot *et al.*, 2014). As to the Coloured, they were moved to the two townships of Hangberg and Ocean View which were built in 1968, thereby dispossessing dozens of families from their “country” lifestyle in farms located in the Peninsula’s countryside (Haysom, 2007; Trotter, 2002; Heiss, 2001). This denial of Coloured rurality led the Whites to control all the rural areas on the Peninsula during the 1970s. The ranges of Table Mountain and the Peninsula, and the jagged coastline serve as decor to a

mosaic of wine-growing, pastoral and residential rural areas owned by wealthy white owners.

Most of the Peninsula's territory was administered by the Divisional Council (DIVCO) created in 1855, and by the Regional Service Council (RSC) from 1985 to 1995, both being rural administrative authorities under apartheid. Within the Peninsula territory of the DIVCO, several rural localities, similar to villages made up of scattered houses, also have their own local councils: Llandudno, Hout Bay, Constantia, Noordhoek, Kommetjie and Scarborough. This implies that residents are strongly linked to their local organisation. As early as the end of apartheid, the Peninsula was progressively integrated into the Cape Town metropolitan authority. In reaction, residents created several tax payers' associations (see Table n°1).

A new post-apartheid urbanisation front then saw the arrival of mainly African populations (Xhosas and foreigners) on the Peninsula. The fact that African domestic workers had to reside on site due to difficulties encountered when travelling between Cape Town, the Cape Flats<sup>4</sup> and the rest of the Peninsula, became a necessity. While this new form of urbanisation caught up with former spatial inequalities, the conditions of its development between informality, sanitary challenges and the perpetuation of underpaid labour turned it into a stopgap instead.

The first arrivals on the Masiphumelele site (Map n°3) began in the 1980s. *"In the early 1980s a group of 400-500 people started the informal settlement in the area where the Longbeach Mall is located, close to where Masiphumelele is today. They came from Khayalitsha, Nyanga and Langa townships, more than 30 km away. At first there were no facilities – no streets, water or toilets<sup>5</sup>."* Part of this housing became formalised in the early 1990s, thanks to the action of charity organisations. The same process was to take place at the same time in Imizamo Yethu on the slopes of Hout Bay.

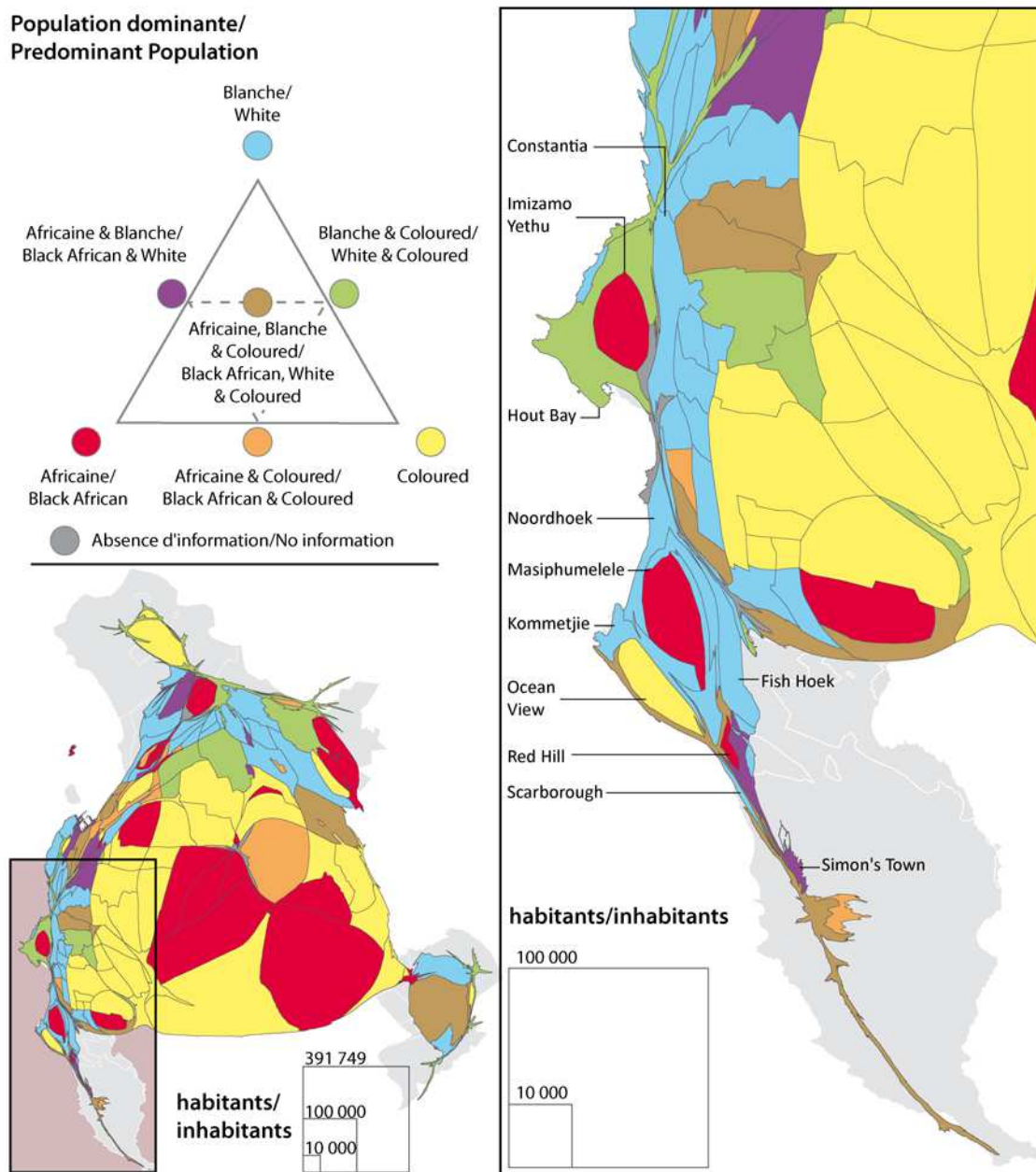
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<sup>4</sup> The Cape Flats, stretching on the coastal plain in the South-East of Cape Town, were used by the apartheid regime as a settlement zone for non-white populations and today remain marked by this legacy, with many informal extensions having developed around the townships planned during apartheid.

<sup>5</sup><http://www.scenicssouth.co.za/civic-community/our-communities/masiphumelele>, visited on 30/05/2013.

The way Imizamo Yethu and Masiphumelele grew over the years drastically changed the demographic balance between Whites, Coloured and Africans on the Peninsula. While the 1996 census accounted for 14 000 Blacks, that of 2011 accounted for 50 000 (see Map n°3). Many former white residents are concerned by this new urban crowding, and are using a renewal of “their” inherited rurality as a possible shield.

**Map n°3: Anamorphic Map of the Cape Peninsula Population by Suburb in 2011.**

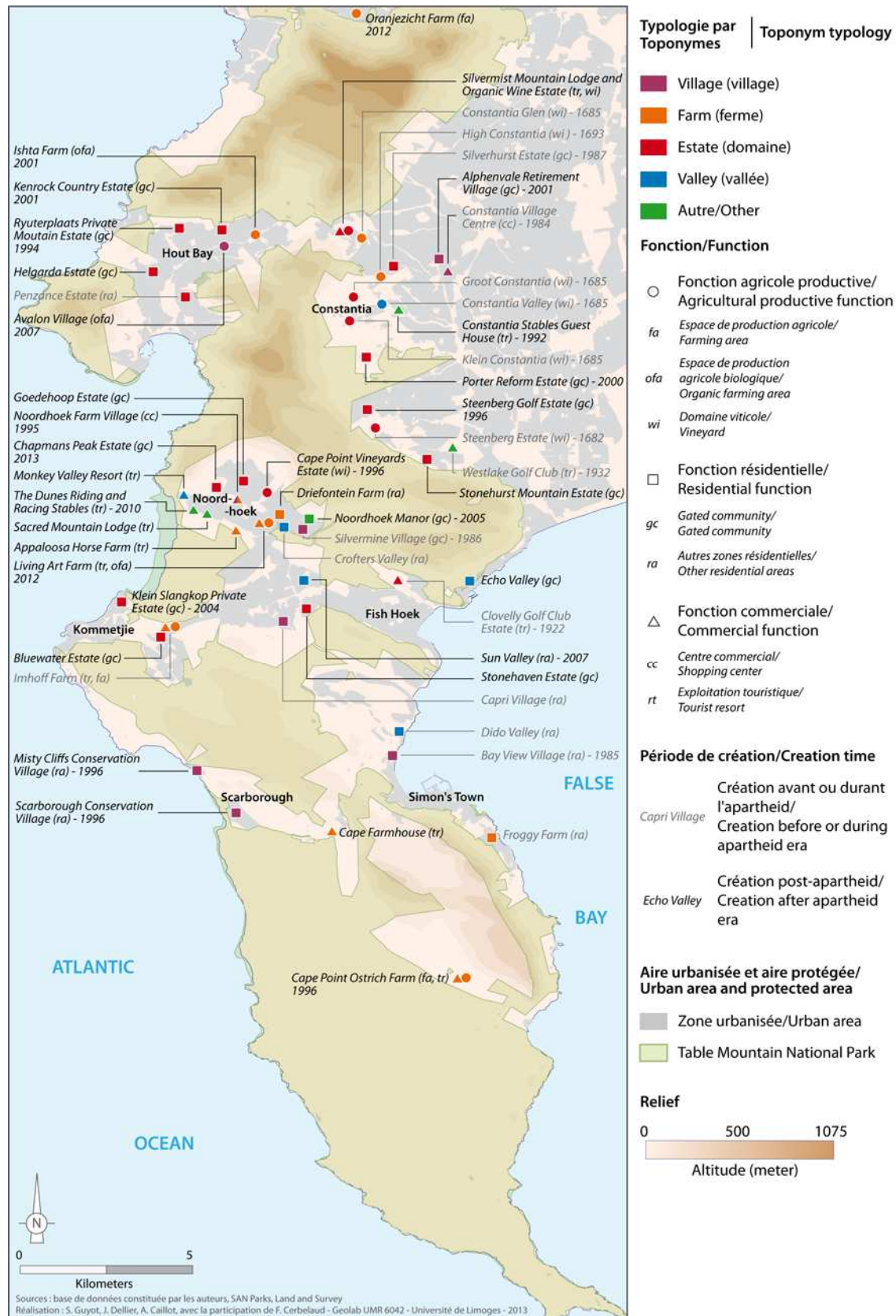


Sources : City of Cape Town Census Data, Land and Survey  
 Réalisation : S. Guyot, J. Dellier, A. Caillot, avec la participation de F. Cerbelaud - Geolab UMR 6042 - Université de Limoges - 2013

## **1.2. Spatio-Temporal Dynamics of the New Peninsula Rurality**

Map n°4 shows the diachronic location of all rural-sounding toponyms currently used in the Peninsula. Villages, farms, estates and valleys are the main terms used in this case. These toponyms relate to white rural South African geography, and can be found in the heart of agricultural regions producing fruit or wine in the mountain areas of the Western Cape Province (Franshoek, Paarl, Ceres and Montagu). They refer to history, buildings, landscapes and nature. The Peninsula area being characterised by more than fifty of these toponyms, shows that those concerned feel strongly about identifying with rurality, such actors being residents, contractors, farmers, elected representatives, etc. One third of these denominations were given during the colonial or apartheid era, and the rest thereafter (authors' survey, see Map n°4). As such, the Peninsula represents an area where rurality comes up as a contemporary construction, by using many historical legacies as legitimization factors.

### Map n°4: The Use of Rural Toponyms in the Cape Peninsula



Before apartheid, "estate" was the most used term in denominations to designate wine estates. After apartheid, the most used term was "gated community" which is organised in much the same way as residential estates, by referring to the rural or natural heritage of the Peninsula, based on Cape Dutch architecture or indigenous flora (e.g. Kenrock Country Estate in Hout Bay). Then comes the term "farm" which suggests a shift from the agricultural function (e.g. Ishta Farm) to the commercial function (e.g. Imhoff Farm, see photo n°1), and serves as a vector of tourist marketing on the Peninsula (Cape Farmhouse). Although the term "village" is only used a dozen times, it can designate potentially significant residential operations (e.g. Silvermine Village in Noordhoek). Sometimes it designates shopping centre (e.g. Constantia and Noordhoek) and sometimes actual villages (e.g. Misty Cliffs and Scarborough). The other terms cover a greater diversity of situations: valleys, stables, etc.

**Photo n°1: Imhoff Farm, using productivity as alibi for an all-out commercial development: restaurant, craft, camel rides and theme parks. (Photos by the authors, 2013)**



Constantia appears as the historical heart of this rurality. Most toponyms dating from the colonial period are found in that area, with the term "estate" dominating and characterising mainly old wine farms. The residents of Constantia play on the so-called authenticity of their rurality. Noordhoek, on the other hand, is the very archetype of the rural resurgence process. This is where we find the most post-apartheid rural denominations covering the entire typological range under study (villages, estates, farms). This is well represented by the Noordhoek Farm Village which comes up as the commercial and tourist centre of the area. Interestingly, the

Lonely Planet guide described it as a “false village” (sic)<sup>6</sup>. Noordhoek Farm Village, which was built in 1995, borrows many of the codes of Cape Dutch architecture (ornately rounded gables, whitewashed walls) while adapting others (corrugated iron instead of thatched roofs and artificial lawns) (Photo n°2). In Noordhoek, rurality is used as an argument to maintain property prices high, linked to an unequalled quality of life in the Peninsula, thanks to existing natural amenities. Hout Bay also includes many post-apartheid rural denominations which are definitely specialised in the residential function, with the use of the term “estate” dominating to designate “gated communities”, and which sometimes borrow other words evoking the surrounding landscape (Ryuterplaats Private Mountain Estate). Kommetjie and the southern section of the Peninsula in particular, cover a greater diversity of chronological, toponymic and functional situations. Beyond toponymic terminology, the quest for rurality, between pseudo authenticity and artificiality, takes on additional forms going from landscape representations to architectural archetypes.

**Photo n°2: Cape Dutch-inspired architecture and artificial lawns in Noordhoek Farm Village. (Photos by the authors, 2013)**



<sup>6</sup><http://www.lonelyplanet.com/south-africa/cape-town/restaurants/deli/noordhoek-village-farmstall>, visited on 13/11/2013.



### 1.3. Building Neo-Rurality

The rural identity of the Cape Peninsula relies on the persistence of productive agricultural spaces (Caillot, 2013), although practices and productions have experienced deep changes since the end of apartheid. Except for the wine estates of Constantia, which take advantage of their historical reputation, the majority of the other estates appeared after 1995. As for the rest, certain cattle breeding farms have disappeared and been replaced with residential developments or niche productions (organic market gardening, ostrich farms etc.): Cape Point Vineyards created in 1996, Avalon Village in 2007 or, still, Living Art Farm in 2012 (Map n°4). Or they adapted by significantly diversifying their activity in the image of Imhoff Farm (see Photo n°1). These changes, in addition to ensuring a renewal of activities and agricultural landscapes on the Peninsula, contribute to the image of rurality as quality of life (local productions of quality: wine and organic vegetables).

In parallel and on the whole, the development of residential areas, “gated communities” in particular since the end of apartheid, tourist accommodations and various leisure activities (golf and horse riding), exemplifies a shared architectural and landscape archetype. Borrowing from Cape Dutch architecture<sup>7</sup> and resorting to endemic plants contribute to conveying aesthetics associated with large colonial estates, as well as a sentiment of landscape uniqueness and authenticity (Manning, 2004; Victor, Fryer, 2008; Ballard, Jones, 2011). In this regard, the “gated community” of Ruyteplaats Estate, in upper Hout Bay, benefits from its own nursery of indigenous plants, and offers residents complete immersion in a real botanical garden, keeping however a few exotic species such as pine trees, for that Mediterranean feel (photo n°3). “Neo-rurality”, which is caricatured in the case of Noordhoek Farm Village, with its artificial lawns (photo n°2), is used to create a “village” identity directly in contrast with the metropolis.

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<sup>7</sup> The Cape Dutch architectural style is typical of the Cape Colony in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the canons of this style relying on the use of ornately rounded gables, whitewashed walls and thatched roofs.

**Photo n°3: Alleys in Ruyteplaats Estate in upper Hout Bay, between upmarket residential area and botanical garden. (Photos by the authors, 2013)**



Concerning landscapes, the latest residential or tourist developments took place outside these villages, on sites with quality panoramas. This is the case of the Monkey Valley Resort which is overlooking Noordhoek beach, where thatch roofs dominate the residential fabric in the west (photo n°4). Paradoxically, by keeping on trying to become different, particularly by looking for sites with the most attractive panoramas rather than to blend in, these new developments tend to jeopardise the authenticity sought after initially.

**Photo n°4: Views from Chapman's Peak Road: the loose residential fabric of Noordhoek (left) and the Monkey Valley Resort in front of Noordhoek beach (right). (Photos by the authors, 2013)**



Other representations, mixing rurality and the context of the Peninsula, are also called upon by residents. In the case in point, an “end of the earth” image has been developed, favoured by geographic location and reinforced by the relative isolation offered by the reliefs of the Peninsula. Presenting a confined area as being wild and protected, legitimates segregation as organised by residents in order to avoid any form of urbanisation. The fact that Scarborough and Misty Cliffs claim the – non-official – status of Conservation Village, illustrates this (photo n°5).

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**Photo n°5: Misty Cliffs, village at the end of the earth or holiday resort for rich Cape Townians? (Photos by the authors, 2013)**



## **2/ Rurality: New Metropolitan Territorial Marker?**

In the Cape Peninsula, each locality has one or several residents' associations taking part as pressure groups in local participative governance, whether during public consultations organised during the constitution of planning documents (City of Cape Town (a), 2011), or within the framework of more specific and localised – or even NIMBYst – claims. The minutes of public consultations concerning the Southern District Plan of 2011 (City of Cape Town (b), 2011), are very instructive in this regard. Residents' associations are indeed very much represented in the volume allotted to comments. They elaborate an important argument at the level of the environmental impacts of urbanisation, as well as about the supervision of future urbanisation projects. More specifically, these associations intend to show the existence of a Peninsula-specific identity distinct from that of Cape Town, which should be defended in the face of ongoing metropolisation. Some elements are thus commonly mobilised such as architectural coherence around the Cape Dutch model, low urbanisation density, the presence of productive agricultural areas and a lifestyle perceived as being a village-like and quality lifestyle due to the many natural amenities.

Residents view the Peninsula's integration into the metropolitan organisation as a potential risk. The fact that all these associations, except for that of Kommetjie, have been created recently says a lot in this regard, and vis-à-vis the post-apartheid restructuring of the Peninsula's administrative divisions (Table n°1). The refusal of residents to see their territory taken over by actors outside of the Peninsula is not directed at the metropolitan authorities in particular; some residents' associations are also refusing to accept the fact that SANParks is showing an interest in protecting the natural heritage and in managing invasive plants.

At the town-planning level, these associations share the same alarmist vision concerning the Peninsula's rampant urbanisation. Rapid land consumption and the progressive transformation of the Peninsula's towns into Cape Town suburbs, mainly due to the settlement of well-off populations, are fought against by these associations: the interventions of residents' associations recorded during the meetings on the Southern District Plan (City of Cape Town (b), 2011), show that this opposition concerns two distinct logics of defence, as illustrated by the examples of Constantia and Noordhoek.

**Table n°1: Defence of rurality in the Peninsula by residents' associations**  
(source: local association survey)

<b>Name of association</b>	<b>Territory concerned and date of creation</b>	<b>Claimed objectives</b>	<b>Problems for the future of the Peninsula</b>	<b>Opinion on Cape Town</b>
<b>Noordhoek Conservancy</b>	Noordhoek 2004	Local governance and protection of rurality	Congested roads	Mixed opinions, but the Peninsula lost a lot by being integrated into a vaster metropolitan structure.
<b>Hout Bay &amp;</b>	Hout Bay &	Local	Informal	The scale of the

<b>Llandudno Heritage Trust &amp; Hout Bay and Llandudno Environmental Conservation Group</b>	Llandudno 1996	governance and protection of natural and cultural heritage	housing, unemployment, crime and transport issues	metropolitan structure is not right. Argues for a municipality that would only include the Peninsula (the territory of the former DIVCO, NDLA).
<b>Kommetjie Residents and Ratepayers Association</b>	Kommetjie 1940	Local governance	Urbanisation	A more restricted level of governance would lead to better serving local populations.
<b>Misty Cliffs Village Association</b>	Misty Cliffs 1996	Local governance and establishment of "conservation village" status, protection of rurality	Urbanisation	A large metropolitan structure does not lead to understanding the problems that are specific to our village.
<b>Red Hill Conservation Group</b>	Red Hill – rural Red Hill Landowner Conservation Group in	Protection of indigenous biodiversity on the private properties of Red Hill –	Bad management of eradication of exotic plants used	Negative opinion about the corrupted metropolitan structure which has increased by a lot a tax land that did not exist during

	1993, and took its current name in May 1998	through a network of private nature reserves – and eradication of exotic plants	in high-lighting inconsiderate development s	the time of the Div Co. Its main objective remains the development and urbanisation of plots that supposedly remained vacant.
<b>Constantia Properties Owners' Association</b>	Wine estates of Constantia (except for Steenberg) and neighbouring residential suburbs 2003	Local governance and protection of historic and cultural environment. Ensuring security and speaking on behalf of residents to local councillors.	Urbanisation, alteration of the landscape, crime	Positive opinion about the policy conducted by the city of Cape Town. Openly opposed to projects conducted by the ANC (low-cost housing) and by SANParks (protection of endemic flora leading to deforestation programmes in favour of Fynbos).
<b>Scarborough Residents and Rate Payers</b>	Scarborough 2006	Local governance, establishment of "conservation village" status, protection of natural and rural heritage.	Informal housing, urbanisation.	Seen as a threat, Scarborough being the last rural and alternative bastion of the Peninsula which has not yet been transformed into a residential suburb of Cape Town.

## 2.1. Constantia, Defending Self-Segregation through Heritagisation

The first principle, which is found more in the north of the Peninsula in suburbs that contribute to the continuity of the metropolitan urban fabric (Constantia, Hout Bay & Llandudno), seeks mainly to put a break on the establishment of low income households. In the eyes of residents' associations, these households are responsible for the denaturation of the living environment, due to their greater density and a more heterogeneous architecture. The notion of village and resorting to cultural heritage are used here to justify residents' opposition to the development of low cost housing and, as an indirect result, to the settlement of new black and poor families in these mainly white and well-off areas (Pape, 2003). While this objective is reached for Constantia, it is not the case for Hout Bay where coexistence between the residents of Imizamo Yethu (informal housing) and those of rich suburbs prove to be contentious (Monaco, 2008; Swanepoel, 2013).

The suburb of Constantia is situated on the eastern slope of Table Mountain. Its population is predominantly white (75 %) and very well-off. As such, 37 % of households earn more than ZAR 52 201 (5 000 €) per month, against only 5 % on the entire Cape Town metropolitan scale. This can be explained historically, where the presence of wine estates helped to forge the identity of this upper middle-class Capetonian suburb. It can also be explained through the progressive exclusion of the non-white working-class populations, mainly Coloured in this case. Racial segregation policies under apartheid and, later, the relegation of Coloured<sup>8</sup> farm workers towards the outskirts, helped to change the social fabric in favour of the rich. The political efforts deployed by residents' associations, including Constantia Properties Owner's Association (CPOA), with a view to ensuring that the asset value of a suburb located right up against a South African wine estate is recognised (Rouvellac *et al.*, 2012), are fully in line with this approach which consists in defending a self-segregation reserved for the rich. The discourse developed so far, particularly during the negotiations around the Southern District Plan, points at first to the continuous degradation of the rural character of Constantia, because of recent

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<sup>8</sup> Like the farm workers who used to live on the Steenberg farm in Constantia where they worked and who, today, have been moved to Westalke on the Cape Flats.



developments that fail to respect local architectural cohesion (Manning, 2004). In doing so, the CPOA is seeking to have a number of constraints ratified, particularly that concerning respecting upmarket architectural standards for any new building project. In parallel, the CPOA is fighting against the potential subdivision of existing plots into housing sites. Indeed, beyond its many parks, Constantia, with an average surface area of 2 000 m<sup>2</sup> per plot, has the lowest density compared to other Cape Town suburbs – except for the villages in the southern section of the Peninsula. The CPOA is also defending the landscape with its codes from the colonial period, by opposing the tree felling programme targeting “exotic” pine, oak and eucalyptus plantations, as part of a fynbos restoration programme<sup>9</sup> conducted by SanParks. Finally, the CPOA, since 2005, has been actively supporting the cultural heritage application of the Groot Constantia<sup>10</sup> historical wine farm with UNESCO, in the hope of seeing its action for singling out Constantia becoming legitimate.

## **2.2. Noordhoek: Wilderness and “Village” Amenities**

The second approach in defending self-segregation is more representative of the south of the Peninsula (Noordhoek, Kommetjie, Misty Cliffs and Scarborough). It takes place in an area which is geomorphologically separated by mountains from the rest of the metropolis. As such, only three major roads, including a toll road, link the south of the Peninsula to the rest of Cape Town. This relative isolation, which is the cause for the urbanisation differential between North and South, more recently became a factor of attractiveness and, at the same time, provoked a logic of differentiation and the refusal to be assimilated into the metropolitan area (see Table n°1).

Noordhoek, on the west coast of the Peninsula, has a mainly white and well-off population, recently in full development due to its proximity with Cape Town. The resulting population development led to new commercial as well as touristic

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<sup>9</sup> The generic name ‘fynbos’ refers to scrub vegetation with an extremely rich biodiversity. These formations are made up mainly of species endemic to the floristic region of Cape Town.

<sup>10</sup> Groot Constantia stems from the division of the property of the last Commander and first Governor of the Cape Colony, Simon Van der Stel, who contributed to making of Constantia the cradle of the vineyards of South Africa.

development projects which are being highly opposed to. Residents' associations, such as the Noordhoek Environmental Action Group (NEAG), are contesting such development in various ways, by issuing petitions or serving writs<sup>11</sup>, whether these concern new shopping mall car parks or the implementation of activities for various events on wine farms. More globally, these associations capitalise on the limits of the Peninsula's development, considering the lack of existing infrastructure. With tensions on the property market, residents' associations argue for greater local control. For this reason, residents' associations in the south of the Peninsula differ according to whether they adopt a more environmentalist or agricultural approach, thereby privileging either the conservation and renaturation of the Peninsula – by creating networks of private nature reserves around properties such as Red Hill, to fight against the proliferation of invasive plants, or the protection of productive agricultural land within the framework of local agriculture – by creating alternative farms such as Avalon Farm in Hout Bay, or Art Living Farm in Noordhoek (Caillot, 2013).

The ultimate goal for the other residents' associations is to reach the status of Conservation Village, as claimed by the residents of Misty Cliffs and Scarborough, although not officially endorsed by the metropolitan authority; this status comes with an array of restrictive measures concerning any new building (zoning, architectural rules and environmental measures). Defending "village" self-segregation goes even further with directives concerning the strict elimination of invasive plants (on alien plants and the building of a post-apartheid national identity, see Giraut *et al.*, 2005), and the regulation of outdoor leisure activities edited by the Misty Cliffs Village Association<sup>12</sup>.

### **2.3. Territorial Impact of Actions Carried out by Residents' Associations**

The objectives pursued by residents' associations active in the Cape Peninsula, obviously mean to impact on the territory, by criticising the metropolitan authority which is too far removed from local issues. All these associations campaign, to

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<sup>11</sup> For more details, see <http://www.neag.org.za/>, visited on 26 June 2014.

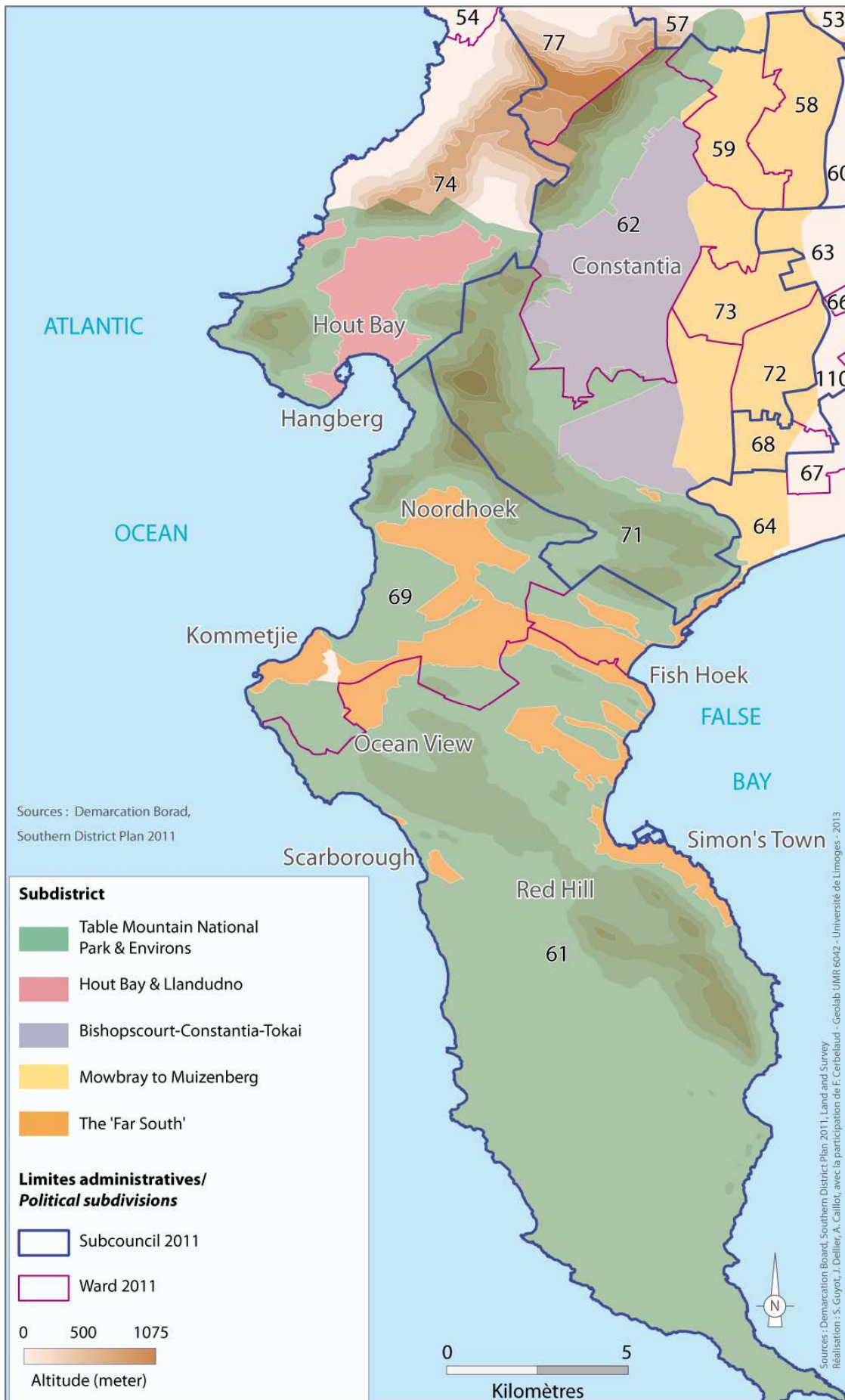
<sup>12</sup> (<http://www.mistycliffs.org.za/>).

various degrees, with a view to influencing the decisions of a local governance that was confiscated by the metropolitan authority at the end of the 1990s, by becoming involved in the political sphere (on Johannesburg, see Bénit-Gbaffou Claire *et al.*, 2012), by organising public meetings and by commenting on the various town planning documents. All reference made to historical villages in the different denominations of these associations (Constantia POA, Hout Bay RRA, Noordhoek C, Kommetjie RRA, Scarborough VA, etc.) is a legacy of local councils active during apartheid, within the DIVCO rural authority.

Post-apartheid divisions into wards did not completely make it possible to bring about this legacy in the eyes of the residents. The South African ward, as basic unit of post-apartheid municipal geography, combines a political representation with the ward councillor who is elected every five years, and a participation process carried out within the ward committee. When areas were being divided into wards, residents tried to avoid losing their spatial "cohesion". The significance of territoriality within wards is discussed at length by Gervais-Lambony (2008).

While the ward division of 1996 led to the creation of distinct wards combining a historical village with a non-white area, the new 2001 then 2013 metropolitan divisions show significantly different contours (Map n°5). In both scenarios, Hout Bay and Constantia were able to maintain their territorial coherence (wards 74 and 62), or even their socio-racial exclusivity in the case of the latter. On the other hand, the south of the Peninsula was subjected to a number of groupings during the latest division in 2013, particularly where the Coloured township of Ocean View near Kommetjie, was attached to Simons Town (ward 61) (Table n°2).

### **Map n°5: "Political" and "Planning" Divisions in the Cape Peninsula**



**Table n°2: “Political” and “Planning” Divisions in the Cape Peninsula**

Town Planning Division (apartheid act LUPO 1985 <sup>13</sup> )  Political division (post-apartheid, Law, several phases 1996, 2001, 2013 <sup>14</sup> )	<b>Planning District</b> (metropolitan planning level)	<b>Planning district</b> (planning level)  <b>Potential spatial          referent of          residents’          associations</b>	<b>Sub-Suburb</b> (smallest basic urban unit, formerly villages under apartheid)  <b>Potential spatial          referent of          residents’          associations</b>
<b>City of Cape Town</b>	8 districts (from A to H)  The Peninsula is located in district “H”.	Several sub- districts per district - 5 for district “H”	The suburb is the metropolitan geographic basic unit and corresponds to a homogeneous and spatially differentiated built-up area.
<b>Subcouncil</b> (metropolitan deconcentration level)	Several sub- councils within planning district	Several sub- districts within sub-council	Several suburbs within a sub- council
<b>Ward</b> (aims at post-apartheid socio-racial mixing)  <b>Spatial referent of          ward councillors [50%          of the municipal</b>	Several wards within planning district	<b>Spatial          mismatch          between wards          and sub-districts          (except for          Constantia and</b>	Usually several suburbs socially and racially differentiated within a ward

<sup>13</sup>[http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/planningandbuilding/Publications/Documents/Land\\_Use\\_Planning\\_Ordinance\\_No\\_15\\_of\\_1985.pdf](http://www.capetown.gov.za/en/planningandbuilding/Publications/Documents/Land_Use_Planning_Ordinance_No_15_of_1985.pdf), visited on 9 July 2014.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.demarcation.org.za/>, visited on 9 July 2014.

<b>council]</b>		<b>Hout Bay, to a certain extent)</b>	
Voting district [polling station] (smallest unit of electorate. Several polling stations per ward)			Several suburbs within the same polling station or several polling stations for the same suburb (depending on density)

The divisions of the metropolitan planning sub-districts present the same type of territorial logic. Constantia and Hout Bay each have their own planning sub-district (in pink and purple on Map n°5), while the south of the Peninsula is made up of one and the same broken sub-district (The Far South, in orange on the map) despite the diversity of village profiles making it up. The visions developed in the last Cape Town Spatial Development Framework (City of Cape Town (a&b), 2011) are partly following the claims of the residents' associations under study, which is a way for the metropolitan authority to avoid turning influential tax payers against it. These visions are, respectively:

*"A distinctive area of rural capeness, that celebrates unique valley landscapes, productive lands, living environments, and local recreational and tourism experiences, connected to neighbouring areas and the rest of the city through accessible routes and public transport"* for Constantia (City of Cape Town (a), 2011, p.122);

*"An urban valley area renowned for its natural and cultural beauty, with a well-defined and protected natural environment, and recognised for its distinct semi-isolated valley sense of place and living experiences within the metropolitan region, vibrant tourism and service orientated economy, and with world class natural amenity*

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*and historical heritage areas accessible to all city inhabitants"* for Hout Bay (City of Cape Town (a), 2011, p 119); and

*"An area renowned for its natural and cultural beauty, with a well-defined and protected natural environment, and recognised for its collection of areas of distinct sense of place and urban character, vibrant tourism and service orientated economy, and with world class natural amenity areas accessible to all city inhabitants"* for the Far South (City of Cape Town (a), 2011, p 133).

While the possibility of access by all residents is clearly explained for the sub-districts of Hout Bay and the Far South, it is not the case for Constantia which only ought to be "connected to the rest of the city" through flows of tourists or labourers, while maintaining its rural Capeness. The vision advocated for Hout Bay recognises the importance of the historical heritage defended by some of its residents. On the other hand, the vision of the Far South sub-district comes across as being not specific enough to potentially constrain development projects that do not match the priorities defended by certain residents' associations. In the end, political, electoral and planning divisions seem to go along the same lines: status quo for the centre of the Peninsula (Constantia and Hout Bay), and greater openness to changes for the Far South. As a result, the territorial impact of residents' actions seems to be underlain by the territorial layouts decreed by the metropolitan authority.

Indeed, in Constantia as in Hout Bay, there is very high collusion between residents' associations and ward councillors. As such, Mrs B and H, the DA local councillors for wards 62 and 74, work in co-operation with the CPOA and the HBRRA. As to the owner of the largest property in Constantia<sup>15</sup>, she is a member of the CPOA and Constantia Green Belt, and is very close to the ward councillor and certain administrative departments of Cape Town. Her goal is to prevent land in Constantia from being broken-up while arguing for reasoned tourist openness. The almost perfect superimposition of the ward perimeters, the planning sub-district and margin of action of residents' associations, lead to make common cause with one another and speed up certain issues. It is thanks to this strong political link that Constantia

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<sup>15</sup> Interview on 8 April 2014 in Constantia with N., Alphen Hotel.

managed – for the time being – to prevent the building of low cost housing on public land belonging to the provincial government<sup>16</sup>. In this case, the vote for the ward councillor, who like the Mayor of Cape Town is also a DA member, can be explained by a logic based on localism.

In the Far South, issues are different and the links between associations and ward councillors appear looser or even critical. On the one hand, there are many residents' and conservationists' associations (NC, NEAG, KRRRA, MCVA, SVA, RH, etc.) with different agendas (management of micro-local issues or environmental activism), and on the other hand ward councillors must manage a territory which is vaster than the perimeters of the associations and which has high implications during elections. Considering the growth of the African population in Masiphumelele, there is a possibility that ward 69 with a DA majority becomes ANC during the next local elections in 2016. As a result, DA ward councillor Mrs P needs to win over new support from Masiphumelele residents if she is to win the elections, and as such cannot meet all the demands of white residents' associations. Moreover, these associations are divided between those who yearn for past localism (NC, KRRRA, MCVA, SVA) and those who would like to see nature conservation being reinforced (NEAG, RH), especially when considering the way the Table Mountain National Park is managed, which is often the subject of criticisms (Guyot *et al.*, 2014).

The political impact of residents' associations in the Peninsula is multi-scaled. Tempted by localism against the distant and authoritarian metropolitan authority, they nonetheless use political as well as metropolitan planning tools to achieve their ends, or go around problems by directly attacking the national representation incarnated by the national park.

## Conclusion

The "right to the village" in the Cape Peninsula can be understood as a set of claims aiming at defending several and mostly inherited types of rurality, based on self-segregation and a sense of place, and at demanding their protection, extension,

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<sup>16</sup> The province is governed by the same political party as the ward of Constantia and the municipality of Cape Town, i.e. the DA.



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institutionalisation and heritagisation. The objective of the territorial mobilisation based on the notion of rurality by residents' associations in the Cape Peninsula, is mainly to defend self-segregation. We have shown that this rurality is rooted in history as well as in the places and landscapes of the Peninsula.

Yearning for political localism such as the former Cape Divisional Council, the post-apartheid multiplication of toponyms referring directly to villages and rurality, as well as conservation and rural reinforcement strategies, constitute the main elements of the new rural geography of the Cape Peninsula. Political mobilisation strategies are implemented by various residents' associations in order to build, legitimise and defend rurality in a territory which is still perceived as operating autonomously from the Cape Town metropolis. While political mobilisation methods seem identical for all residents' associations, involving the critical monitoring of proposals and Cape Town spatial development framework, active participation in forums as well as the organisation of public thematic meetings, on the other hand the referents being mobilised and the electoral alliance strategies are different.

The towns of Constantia and Hout Bay are connected to the urban continuum of the metropolis and seem integrated into the logic of political (homogeneous wards) and planning (homogeneous sub-districts) demarcation. Some of their inhabitants defend the heritagisation of rurality against other population groups who are poor and mostly non-white, with the confirmed support of ward councillors. This is a self-segregation strategy, well integrated into metropolitan politics and which leaves little place to the motivations of the disadvantaged populations<sup>17</sup>. On the other hand, residents' associations in the Far South are found in greater numbers and diversity; they seek rural autonomy from Cape Town in particular, and reinforced nature conservation, especially in the face of the Table Mountain National Park which is often removed from their micro-local preoccupations. Any potential evolution will most likely come from the capacity building of modest residents seeking to enforce their right to nature – as guaranteed by the national park “for all and forever” (see

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<sup>17</sup> Except when they call on the Restitution of Land Rights Act (retrocession in Constantia in May 2014, to the benefit of Coloured families dispossessed during the 1960s), or when white residents cede their land in their favour (recent cession by a tax payers' association in Hout Bay to include the poorest residents).

Belaidi, 2011) – and to the city via ward committees, and to enter a political game still not sufficiently representative of the diversity of issues, which are the ultimate legacy of long years of apartheid.

### **N.B.**

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