

Everyday Experiences and Aspirations in Selected Lower Class Townships of Johannesburg

Irikidzayi Manase

***University of the Free State, P. O. Box 339, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa
E-mail: irimanase@gmail.com***

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ABSTRACT This paper examines the journalese narratives by Dibetle and Harber and Vladislavic's fictional depiction of a selected Johannesburg lower class township experiences. The paper draws on concepts about walking in the city, everyday city cultures and imaginaries of city and township life discussed by critics such as De Certeau, Mbembe, Dlamini and Nuttall. It examines the nature and presence, in the selected townships, of the intersection between the colonial and apartheid social, spatial and historical influences, and that of the post-apartheid multi-racial transformation agenda in determining the township residents' everyday practices, sense of belonging and identities constituted as they make meaning of their specific township experiences. The paper examines the residual effects of colonial and apartheid discrimination on the city and how its opening to multi-racial democracy has mapped the lower class townships as a bleak and marginalized space, which nevertheless is paradoxically constituted by some residents into a radiant and liveable space.