

Creating an African Riviera: Revisiting the Impact of the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront Development in Cape Town

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Abstract The use of leisure and tourism to re-image and redevelop cities has been interpreted as a mechanism for attracting capital and people. In a period of intense inter-place competition and urban entrepreneurialism, whole built environments become centerpieces of urban spectacle and display. Waterfront developments have become emblematic in this regard. Over the past two decades the redevelopment of the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront (V&AW) in Cape Town has been transformed from ‘port’ to ‘playground’ and is internationally acknowledged as one of the most successful of these developments. This redevelopment has, as has been the case with numerous other waterfront developments, not been uncontroversial. New tensions and conflicts have arisen over the use, meaning, and ownership of this space. The acquisition of the waterfront by a consortium of London- and Dubai-based property developers in 2006 has renewed concerns about the ‘plasticization’ of the waterfront and signals the symbolic start of a new phase in this waterfront’s development trajectory. The paper tracks the development of the V&AW since its inception in the late 1980s and argues that general critiques of waterfront developments sit uneasily in the Cape Town context. It is also suggested that these developments can fulfil a very significant and positive role for developing world cities.

Keywords V&A Waterfront · Cape Town · South Africa · Urban renewal · Urban regeneration

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Introduction

Urban redevelopment has emerged as one of the key concerns of urban social science in both theoretical- and empirical-based settings (Gotham 2001; Turok and Mykhnenk 2007). Among urban (re)development's many expressions, "the waterfront" must count as one of its most remarked upon articulations (Bunce and Desfor 2007; Hagerman 2007; Laidley 2007). The past four decades have witnessed many waterfront transformations from places where shipping and heavy industry dominated into spaces for residential, commercial, and leisure activities (Gospondini 2006; O'Callaghan and Linehan 2007). Shifting urban political economies, environmental concerns, and the associated societal relationship with nature, theories, and practices of urban planning, as well as the ebbs and flows of civil society action, have all played a role in defining and producing these transformations. Internationally, waterfront developments have been scrutinized since their inception. Academic reflection, not least in urban geography, sociology, and the planning fields, has been highly critical of waterfront developments, as indeed many urban renewal endeavors (Gotham 2001). Most of these debates have developed within the context of North American and, to a lesser extent, Western European cities (Dodman 2007; Turok and Mykhnenk 2007). A significant secondary literature has emerged in which the "horrors" of waterfront (re)development are decried (Gotham 2001). These new articulations of "creative destruction" (Harvey 1989) associated with global capitalist accumulation have become a supposedly universal 'public enemy.' While critics have clamored to highlight the neo-liberal roots of waterfront development and the same 'formulaic mechanisms' underpinning their apparent lack of originality (Richards and Wilson 2006), the academic critiques themselves have been equally monotonous and unoriginal.

The wider processes of global capital accumulation driving the transformation of Central Business Districts (CBD) and waterfront places in countries around the world have also provided the conceptual lens through which the revitalization of Cape Town's historic CBD (Lemanski 2007), the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront (V&AW) (Dodson and Kilian 1998; Kilian et al. 1995), and Durban's Point Waterfront (Grant and Scott 1996) have been analyzed. A far less critical and damning discourse than that found in the Anglo-American context has emerged in South Africa. On the whole, associated critiques of such developments seen elsewhere have found resonance locally. For example, it is the contention of Dodson and Kilian (1998; see also Marks and Bezzoli 2001 for related developments) that the neo-liberal mechanisms of commodification and spectacularization represent the axis around which the planning, design, development, and operation of the V&AW has evolved, ultimately benefiting the empowered and reinforcing the already uneven space economy of Cape Town. So too have the urban regeneration processes that have been stimulated by the V&AW in the adjacent CBD and Atlantic seaboard neighborhoods been critiqued (Lemanski 2007). Generally, however, it is clear that locally based reflections on waterfront development have seen the process as significantly more benign.

Toward the end of 2006, the V&AW was sold to a London-based development consortium, which also includes a very significant stakeholder in the form of the Dubai property development company, Istithar, developers of The Palm, The World,

and the Dubai Waterfront Resort. The stated objective of the consortium is to transform the V&AW into an ‘African Riviera.’ In the wake of such intentions, a range of concerns has since emerged. The unease currently aired range from the national labor union confederation COSATU’s claim that South Africa’s tourism crown jewels are being sold off to foreigners (Ensor 2006) and that the reported commitment to spending an additional \$1 billion on expanding the current development would (further) ‘plasticize’ the V&AW and replicate waterfront-scapes seen in countless cities elsewhere, to accusations of controversial dealings between the consortium and local political leaders (Joubert and Davies 2007, p. 8). Indeed, a range of waterfront pathologies have once more started to surface (Ensor 2006).

From a more academic perspective, the imprint of global capital accumulation on Cape Town is further articulated through the planning of massive resort-styled developments around the V&AW precinct and adjacent neighborhoods, as well as the CBD (Lemanski 2007). The possible dilemmas this presents in cities of the South, such as Cape Town, have already received attention in the work by Lemanski (2007) that questions the desirability of Northern inspired urban regeneration programs in the local context. She argues that given evidence elsewhere, seeking out place competitiveness can inhibit, or at least dilute, the ability of the local state to address domestic socio-economic redistribution and the wider question of whether cities in South Africa (and more broadly, cities of the South) should perhaps be avoiding the drive for globalized status.

This paper is set against the backdrop of this renewed concern over the appropriateness of waterfront development in countries such as South Africa. The paper provides a partial response by tracking the development history of the V&AW since its inception in the late 1980s to the point of its purchase by an international consortium of investors in 2006. After providing insight into the current status of its operations, it is highlighted that we need to re-think, or at least be cautious of, some of the critiques concerning waterfront development that have come to characterize current discourses focused on urban regeneration programs more generally.

Re-Orientation in the Role of Cities: Notes on an International Phenomenon

For the purposes of this paper, two broad themes related to waterfront developments in cities are outlined. The first relates to linkages between waterfront and economic development and the second to the importance of place identity in attaining causal linkage between waterfront and economic development.

Economic Growth and Waterfronts

The so-called globalization imperative has resulted in urban governments becoming increasingly entrepreneurial (Clark 2004; Harvey 1989). Increased entrepreneurialism has led to fierce interplace competition, with growth machine versus growth management (as well as sustainability) debates forming part of this discourse. Many of these concerns have been documented with reference to cities in the post-industrial North. However, numerous cities of the developing South have also engaged in a range of urban entrepreneurial programs, although they have not

attracted much critical academic reflection (Nel and Rogerson 2005; Rogerson 2006).

Within the developing world context, many South African cities present good examples of urban entrepreneurialism. Arguably, Cape Town presents one of the best examples where the local state has successfully recognized the need to formulate a local development strategy that moves beyond the city as simply being a competitive center for industrial production toward embracing the promotion of service sector activities, particularly those linked to leisure and tourism activities (Cape Town 1987, 1988, 1989a,b; Lemanski 2007; Pirie 2007). The Cape Town metropolitan government places considerable emphasis on making Cape Town 'one of the great cities of the world' and becoming an internationally competitive city (Cape Town 1995, p. 1). Lemanski (2007) argues that a key manifestation of this desire is witnessed in an extensive image (re)enhancement focused on consumption practices through the introduction of a suite of central business district renewal programmes and a spectacular post-modern waterfront that is unquestionably the most celebrated example of this type in South Africa, if not the developing world (Rogerson 1997, p. 182).

Many cities in the post-industrial North have witnessed the growth of themed, waterfront-based, entertainment, retail, and residential precincts (Shaw and Williams 2004; Goss 1999; Levine 1989). Its global scope stands testament to their commercial success (Shaw and Williams 2004, p. 257). Many of these themed developments are driven by partnerships between the local state on the one hand and regional, national, or international capital on the other hand. These developments provide ideal environments for replicating signs and motifs important within a globalizing consumer culture where post-modern marketing practices have reduced lifestyles to themes, signs, and text codes (Baudrillard 1983; Jackson 1995; Philo and Kearns 1993; Shaw and Williams 2004). Similarly, the transformation of Cape Town's V&A Waterfront into the 'African Riviera' is reported to be attained through the further enhancement of these global consumer culture(s)/lifestyle(s), including the construction of ten more hotels in the precinct and bringing in top fashion brands such as *Versace* and *Dolce & Gabanna* (Property24 2006).

It has been suggested that, in response to relentless globalizing consumption pressures, post-modern consumers now show a new awareness of the past – often in the form of a certain (misplaced) nostalgia (Harvey 1989). For Marxists scholars, in particular, this has been in response to the apparent alienating nature of capitalism that has led to the disruption and displacement of traditional structures. As a consequence, one significant trend has been the regeneration of the redundant spaces of modernity – typically old urban and industrial landscapes – to respond to late capitalist trends in leisure and tourist consumption. Two perspectives explain the processes that produce these changes. On the one hand, emphasis has been placed on the importance of place identity and place marketing in the increasing competition among urban places to be major tourism destinations. Zukin (1991) is of the opinion that these are attempts at exploiting the uniqueness of accumulated fixed capital, which would include waterfront heritage. On the other hand, others have viewed the links between post-modern tourism, heritage, and regeneration as part of a series of changes in the patterns of urban management. The latter approach is related to the growth of public–private partnerships, within the context of these new forms of governance, which have principally attempted to reverse economic decline

associated with the shift from industrial to post-industrial modes of production and consumption. These tourism-based urban regeneration projects have been positioned at various points along a continuum between the *growth-machine* and *growth-management strategies* (Jessop et al. 1999).

Competition, Place Identity, and Redevelopment of Waterfronts in Cities

The past two decades have witnessed increased interest in the economic significance of destination imaging as an instrument by which to increase competitiveness and place promotion, as well as a means by which to stimulate tourism growth (Rogerson 1997). Many authors have noted the increased use of tourism-linked competitiveness strategies like the hosting of large-scale sporting festivals, such as the Olympic Games and Rugby and Soccer World Cup competitions (Hiller 2000), and the redevelopment of derelict urban or dockland areas into festival market places within themed environments (Dodson and Kilian 1998; Pow 2002). The Victoria and Alfred Waterfront is currently in its sixth phase of development (Granger Bay precinct). With Cape Town hosting a range of qualifying games, as well as a semi-final match during the forthcoming FIFA World Cup 2010, an active campaign of place marketing, promoting South Africa's mother city, is starting to emerge.

Rogerson (1999) argues that the development of a particular 'image' by which a region can be associated forms an integral component of such strategies. In the process of enhancing competitiveness, the aim is to foster a specific 'place identity' that might be employed to draw investors and tourists to a unique tourist-scape. The qualifying caveat is, however, that some distinct setting and/or built environment is required to shield these types of environments from the "sameness" of places that is an inevitable by-product in an era of globalization. Other commentators have suggested further gains associated with improvements in the local environment, increased amenities and the creation of positive images through marketing, which lead to an increase in 'civic pride' (Law 2002).

Civic pride is argued to be directly linked to place identity usually interpreted as "a pot-pourri of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about physical settings as well as types of settings" (Proshansky et al. 1983, p. 60). Others have suggested a narrower definition describing place identity "as a psychological structure that arises out of individual's attempts to regulate their environments" (Korpela 1989). While yet, others argued that this emphasis obscures the collective nature of the relations between persons, identities, and material settings (Dixon and Durrheim 2000, p. 29). In support of our contentions in this paper, the ideas of Devine-Wright and Lyons (1997) that explain place identity in terms of group-based dimensions of identification with places are drawn upon.

Soja (1989) cautioned against analyses that treat places as innocent, depoliticized arenas in which people live and act. Keith and Pile (1993, p. 20) similarly noted that one must be aware of the 'transparence' of place, which may mask the fact that "politically there is a reactionary vocabulary of both identity politics of place and a spatialized politics of identity grounded in particular notions of space." According to Proshansky (1983, p. 57), "place identity is bound up with people's bodied transactions with material settings, including their attempts to manipulate them so as to reveal their selves." Each of these authors contends that it is precisely because

places and the identities they uphold appear self-evident that a critical perspective must be adopted (Dixon and Durrheim 2000). Manifestations of the visible global–local nexus exist in the ‘similarities and differences’ between urban heritage destinations (Green 2001, p. 194). In the fight against the ‘sameness’ and the insights from the research of Green (2001), Richards (1996), and Chang et al. (1996), the engagement of local agencies is critical in forming a distinctive character in heritage spaces.

The V&A Waterfront Development as Growth Enhancer

The advent of successful international waterfront redevelopments in the 1970s and 1980s led to increasing interest in the Cape Town docklands as a site of new economic growth. Following the neo-liberal turn of the developed North, commercial development and privatization were perceived as desirable ways of developing state and municipal land, not least lots of land adjacent to economically and physically degraded central business districts. From an economic point of view, the historic part of the Port of Cape Town had become underutilized as a result of changing shipping technology and harbor expansion. By the early 1980s, the original Dock’s Offices, Cape Town’s first power station, warehouses, and numerous smaller Victorian buildings had all suffered years of insensitive and inadequate maintenance and industrial use. The general environment reflected the limited concerns of a working harbor, although the fabric of the granite quay walls and timber wharves and jetties provided one of the most romantic settings in the city (De Tolly 1990).

In 1984, the Mayor of Cape Town, Alderman Sol Kreiner, formed a Waterfront Steering Committee and started lobbying to reestablish the city’s links with the sea. It was as a result of this committee that, in turn, a committee was established in 1985 by the Ministers of Transport Affairs and of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, to investigate the potential for greater public use of harbor areas. This resulted in the Burggraaf Committee Report in 1987, which proposed that the historic docklands around the Victoria and Alfred Basins be redeveloped as a mixed-use area focusing on retail, tourism, and residential development within the context of a continuing operation of the working harbor. The South African Cabinet accepted the recommendations in full in June 1988. When the V&A Waterfront Company was formed and work started in 1989, most Capetonians said “it would never happen” (Van Zyl 2005, 1).

The V&AW Development as Growth Machine

Today, the area has also become a powerhouse of growth. It is generally acknowledged that the V&AW represents the first step in a chain of major new investments extending back to the Foreshore, as well as the adjacent Green Point and Moullie Point (Goudie et al. 1999, p. 29), which would eventually become the site of among other prestigious developments, the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) and numerous hotels servicing the CTICC. Subsequently, a host of residential, commercial, entertainment, and retail redevelopments have taken place elsewhere in the CBD (see Pirie 2007).

Table 1 shows the five-phase progression of the V&AW to date and continued development in phase six and seven. At the end of October 1992, only 3 years after launching this project, the V&AW saw the completion of the 26,500 m² Victoria Wharf speciality retail and entertainment center. The additional restaurants, entertainment, and up-market shopping provided the critical mass necessary to make the V&AW the largest single shopping and entertainment destination in Cape Town, attracting both domestic visitors and international tourists. In September 1996, the 18,000-m² extension to the Victoria Wharf shopping center commenced trading. This reinforced the waterfront as a premier regional shopping destination. The 122-room five star Cape Grace Hotel on the New Basin's West Quay edge also opened for business in December 1996. The waterfront's flagship hotel, the 329-room international five star Table Bay Hotel on Quay 6 (in partnership with Sun International) commenced trading at the beginning of April 1997.

Table 2 provides some detail concerning the allocation of land at the V&AW. It is clear that, collectively, a range of land uses is found at the Waterfront. It is notable that with the exception of land set aside for the fishing industry, all the other land uses are newly introduced to the waterfront area. The most significant single land use category is that for residential use, a land use category not seen in the area's past.

The dramatic expansion of these developments is echoed in the number of visitors to the waterfront. The V&AW, although a site displaying various land uses, is primarily focused on recreation and leisure consumption. The success of this redevelopment is clearly reflected in the rapid rise in visitor numbers (Table 3). Currently, the waterfront is the most visited attraction in South Africa among overseas tourists. Surveys indicate a changing waterfront visitor profile, with a significant growth in tourist visitorship since 1993 (Table 3). Similarly, it is a key destination area among domestic visitors to Cape Town (Table 4). However, the V&AW also remains a popular site for leisure activities among Capetonians (Rogerson and Visser 2007).

Waterfront development does not only have the redevelopment of former industrial and harbor facilities as its objective but also seeks to generate employment. Table 5 summarizes the cumulative job creation at the waterfront from 1992 to 2004: independent studies of the job and income creation impacts of the V&A Waterfront were undertaken in 1992, 1994, 1997, 2000, and 2004. The findings of these studies provide an assessment of the project's contribution to the Western Cape economy.

Of the permanent jobs created at the V&AW, over 80% are newly created jobs, as distinct from firms or branches that may have moved to the waterfront from other locations in Cape Town. It, therefore, represents real regional economic growth and not displaced growth (Van Zyl 2005). About two thirds of the ongoing jobs created at the V&AW are in the low-skilled, entry-level categories of labour, such as waiters, salespersons, cleaners, laborers, and security personnel. Although 15% of the establishments employ less than ten people, 63% of the establishments employ more than 50 people.

In terms of employment in the construction and development of the V&AW, a cumulative total of 15,850 equivalent annual jobs have been sustained during the past 10 years. Of these, slightly more than 50% were in the lowest-skilled laborer category. As far as the types of employment created by the V&AW is concerned, it is

Table 1 Development and revitalization and ongoing processes

Time and development phase	Spatial context	Architectural style/theme/narrative	Major elements	New uses for old buildings	New superstructure
Phase 1: start, end 1989; completed, Dec. 1990	Pier head, precinct	Anti-modernism, nostalgia-imbued Victorian era	Refurbishment of the original -Docks offices, power station, warehouses and numerous smaller Victorian buildings. Completion of 26,500 m ²	Restaurants, taverns, specialty shopping, a hotel, theatre, craft market	Floating jetties introduced, hard and soft landscaping.
Phase 2: start, early 1991; completed, end 1993	Pier head, Precinct	Post-modern Victorian	Victoria Warf specialty retail and entertainment centre, Oct. 1992.		Waterfront City Lodge, 1993 Callex service station and regional head office completed.
Phase 3: start, Jan. 1994; completed, April 1997		Post-modern	Granger Bay: phase I, shore protection works May 1996. Oil tank Farm in the old quarry converted to a New Basin small craft harbor.		BMW Pavillion and Imax theater, Auto Atlantic BMW—Two Oceans Aquarium.
Phase 4: start, during 1996; completed, March 1997		Post-modern	1996: extension to Victoria Warf shopping center, 18,000 m ² .		122-room five star Cape Grace Hotel, 329-room international five star Table Bay Hotel on Quay 6.
Phase 5: start, July 1999; completed, Dec 2006	New and Upper Basin—Clock Tower Precinct	Post-modern	Residential marina development, Development of the Clock Tower precinct sees the integration of fishing industry with new uses; offices, retail restaurant, public ferry terminal.		550 dwellings and 200 moorings for yachts; Clock Tower precinct, 25,000 m; corporate headquarters, 5,000 m ² retail space, 3,000 m ² office space; Robben

Table 1 (continued)

Time and development phase	Spatial context	Architectural style/theme/narrative	Major elements	New uses for old buildings	New superstructure
Phase 6: start, 2006; completed, mid-2008			Sector two V&AW marina residential development, Kerzner International luxury 150 key One & Only V & A Hotel, Regional Head Quarters of BP 1,200 m ² extension of Victoria Warf Shopping Centre 1,600 bay parking garage Extension of V & A Hotel, 3 office space projects 1,800 m ² , 2 hotel projects in the Clock Tower Precinct		Island Ferry terminal 'Nelson Mandela Gateway to Robben Island'. 230 apartments, 150 bedrooms.
Phase 7: start, planning begins 2007; completed, 2010?		Creating an African Riviera	Stage 1: Jan. -July 2007, landscaping and beautification – additional parking commercial facilities, improvements to pedestrian access. Stage 2: Aug. 2007-Jan. 2010 , waterfront to be highlight of World Cup. Stage 3 Jan 2010?, new facilities to consolidate the waterfront as a leading global resort.		New yacht club and marina development, a cruise ship terminal, a train station, improved connections with airport.

Table 2 Allocation of land in the V&AW (<http://www.waterfont.co.za>)

Land information	Land use plan	Economic information
Total site area, 123 ha	Total development rights, 604,000 m ²	Completed projects, R1.88 billion
Land area, 88 ha	Retail, 46,000 m ²	Transnet Pension Fund/ Transnet/V&AW Investment, R955 million
Water area, 35 ha	Office, 130,000 m ²	Investment by others, R284 million
	Entertainment, 7,000 m ²	Marina Residential Development Phase 1: R220 million
	Museums, 13,000 m ²	Clock Tower Development: R405 million
	Hotels, 60,000 m ²	
	Residential, 250,000 m ²	
	Fishing industry, 98,000 m ²	

consequently fair to argue that employment appropriate to the low-skills base of Cape Town's poor has been created.

The research findings also indicated that an employment multiplier effect of 3.0 is applicable to the V&AW; whereby, for every job directly created at the waterfront, a further two are sustained elsewhere in the regional economy of the Western Cape. The V&AW has become the biggest individual ratepayer in the City of Cape Town, besides also paying full service charges for all municipal utilities such as water, electricity, and sewerage. According to Van Zyl (2006, p. 8), the most recent budget (2005/2006) of the V&AW paid R30 million in municipal property taxes – up from the initial payment of less than R1 million in 1990/1991. In addition, a further estimated amount of R35 million is paid in the current financial year for municipal utilities. Seeing that nearly all infrastructure at the V&AW was developed and is maintained at the expense of the company and not the public purse, the V&AW represents an extraordinary income stream at very little cost, both past or present, to the local authority. It is our contention that Cape Town has benefited dramatically from the development of the V&AW and will continue to do so in the years to come.

Local Agencies and the Character of the V&AW

Typically, waterfront developments are regarded as a *shared space* about which different groups often hold highly contrasting views (Hoyle 1995, 2002). The perspectives of local communities are often rather different from those of developers, politicians, planners, port authorities, or environmentalists. During 1988 and 1989

Table 3 Number of visitors to the V&AW

Number of visitors by year in millions														
1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
5.8	8.9	13.2	14.7	16.4	16.4	20.1	20.3	19.3	19.2	19.4	22.4	22.2	21.5	21.3

Table 4 Visitor profile

Visitor profile to the V&AW (%)	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Capetonians	65	61	50	66	65	50	58	44	46	46	55	58
Domestic tourists	27	28	23	18	22	28	18	29	23	24	24	24
International tourists	8	11	27	16	13	22	24	27	31	30	21	18

(during the *apartheid era*), a wide spectrum of near exclusively white organizations and interest groups in Cape Town were presented with the development intentions for the V&AW. During this public participation process, a procedure for soliciting public feedback on development proposals was formally constituted. A forum for discussing such proposals, the Waterfront Liaison Committee, was formed comprising numerous organizations (Box 1).

Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and Industry, South African Tourism, Cape Town Tourism, the Port of Cape Town Fishing Industry Association, the SA Heritage Resources Agency, the Simon van der Stel Foundation, the SA Planning Institution, the SA Institute of Architects, the South African Property Owners' Association, the Department of Environmental Affairs, the SA Cultural History Museum, the Federation of Hospitality Associations of South Africa, the Regional Development Council, the Cruising Association of SA and the Somerset Hospital Board.

In addition to the Liaison Committee, Ratepayers Associations representing residential areas adjacent to the waterfront were also consulted on development proposals. Although participation was broad, the identity of the participants was undeniably white. The plans for redevelopment strongly emphasized the significance of restoring ‘white-built’ heritage. The context was marketed as a restoration of white Capetonians’ maritime heritage – now, perhaps, South Africa’s most well-known example of conservation-led regeneration. However, the notion of heritage at the beginning of the 1990s was still a highly exclusionary one, with some highlighting obliteration (Worden 1994) of the histories and lives of the slaves, African dockers, and working class men and women who lived and worked at the harbor (Worden 1994). As the popularity of the waterfront has grown, it is apparent that it has become a “special space” for whites, in a sense, acting as an escape from

Table 5 Job creation at the V&AW

	1992	1994	1997	2000	2004	2014 (projected)
Permanent jobs						
Retail/office/entertainment	1,700	4,100	6,730	9,130	11,110	13,400
Harbor/fishing/industrial	4,500	4,500	4,220	4,220	4,500	4,500
Subtotal	6,200	8,600	10,950	13,570	15,610	17,900
Temporary jobs						
Construction/development	2,200	5,500	10,600	15,100	15,850	21,850
Total	8,400	14,100	21,550	28,670	31,460	39,750

the realities of a post-apartheid and increasingly Africanizing Cape Town (Worden and van Heyningen 1996, p. 224).

Some commentators, such as Worth (2004) argue that the development of the V&AW largely conforms to John Hannigan's notion of the "Fantasy City" (1998), which is based on a number of historic structures, including 15 designated national monuments. The mainstream debates concerning the 'hyper-reality' of themed, 'Disneyfied' spaces associated with post-industrial urban redevelopment programs criticize waterfront developments for their "failure to present an authentic" sense of place and time (Hannigan 1998). The V&AW has been subject to similar criticisms (Worden 1992; Cornelissen 2005), although it has to be acknowledged that the initial flurry of critique has subsided. We, nevertheless, argue that although there is some truth to such claims (initially), it has to be kept in mind that not only do a far broader range of consumers frequent the V&AW but that it has remained a real working harbor. The dry dock and ship repair facilities, the fishing industry, and the harbor operations, tugs, and pilot boats all contribute to provide "a theatre of movement for visitors to assist in ensuring that it functions as a real peoples' place" (Van Zyl 2006, p. 18). The harbor-scape has broadened its employment requirements to all skills levels, which are, moreover, vastly better suited to an increasingly post-industrial economy.

The re-establishment of physical links between Cape Town and its waterfront has created a quality environment: a desirable place to work, live, and play, and a preferred location to trade and invest for Capetonians and visitors, as well as giving Capetonians pride. It has exceeded expectations, and it has earned its place as South Africa's most visited destination (Van Zyl 2006, p. 2). Cape Town, and more generally South Africa, is now interpreted very differently as a result and has showcased not only an attractive city but underlined, in its regional context, a pleasant climate, rich history, and attractive winelands, surprising visitors with South Africa's technological advancement and the potential quality of life (see Rogerson and Visser 2006 for related issues in attracting international tourists).

This is not to say that the V&AW did not impact negatively upon other parts of the city. Initially, the very success of the waterfront revealed tensions within the social and commercial fabric of Cape Town. It initially drew business away from the Central Business District and neighboring Green and Sea Point areas (1990–2000). However, thereafter, the success of the V&AW was the very development that attracted new markets to these neighboring areas, which have subsequently led to large-scale (re)development in those areas. Increasingly too, new development in the waterfront is aimed at the super rich, which is spatially set apart from both the city itself and other parts of the waterfront. Indeed, the commercial success of both the residential and retail segments of the V&AW is placing pressure on the traditional maritime industries, which give the waterfront its unique character. In particular, the fishing industry is increasingly overwhelmed by the extent and scale of the commercial development.

Beyond the familiar tensions with commercial development alternatives, the question of whose heritage or identity is being conserved, or is to be restored, has come to the fore. Some identify heritage as inherently contested for a wide variety of reasons. It highlights particular arenas of heritage contestation – in this case, settler societies and post-colonial developing world – are most relevant (Shaw and Jones

1997, p. xviii). In contemporary South Africa, a conscious effort is being made to create a unified ‘South Africanism,’ a common identity to replace divisions (Worden 1996). In such a process of reconciliation and nation building, heritage is seen, in the words of a government White Paper, to play a key role in “facilitating the emergence of a shared cultural identity constituted by diversity” (Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology 1996, p. 7). Can the future development plans of creating an “African Riviera” contribute to this “shared identity”? To put it differently, our concern relates to whether the London and Regional Group will steer the waterfront toward a ‘Dubai-ification/plastication’ of the next phase of the redevelopment of the V&AW, or perhaps resolve the tension and include a most needed layer of ‘African identity,’ in the process, converting the waterfront from a mainly Victorian V&AW to a symbolically more inclusive (South) ‘African Riviera.’ Conversely, however, Sheryl Ozinsky (CEO of Cape Town Routes Unlimited) suggests “...the recent sale of the V&AW to a largely Dubai- and London-based consortium, ...show huge confidence in the Cape as destination, but notes that the people of Cape Town have to be proactively involved: This cannot be another Dubai, but let’s face it; if we as Capetonians don’t have our own vision for the waterfront, then the new owners will have no choice but to move in and do whatever they need to do” (Koblitz 2007, p. 23).

Discussion

Our discussion has highlighted two themes associated with waterfront development: *economic growth* and *place identity*. It was remarked that the South African discourse focused on waterfront development is small and far less critical. Nevertheless, at the general level the small body of academic work echoes the standard concerns of this type of urban regenerative mechanism, not least of which the nature of *economic growth* and *place identity* associated with waterfront development (cf. Grant and Scott 1996; Dodson and Kilian 1998; Lemanski 2007). However, whereas waterfront developments have seen a steady stream of research taking place elsewhere, there has not been much in terms of academic reflection on the V&AW locally. In part, this might be explained by the fact that it is now nearly two decades old, that it has been a success, and, as the following discussion will highlight, that much of the overly undesirable outcomes of waterfront development seen in the international debates do not really hold equal currency in South Africa.

Heritage, Identity, and Access

Initial critiques problematized the idea that one way to enable economic development was the commodification of heritage and by extension reformulations of place identity (Kilian and Dodson 1996a,b; Kilian et al. 1995). It is our contention that the commodification of heritage sites such as the V&AW, no matter how contested in terms of what it could be interpreted to represent historically, requires attention in South Africa. Most future tourism (and other) developments, as well as place marketing and planning, need to recognize heritage as an intrinsically necessary, but ultimately contested resource. Moreover, we need to be mindful of the fact that ‘new heritage’ is constantly in the making—admittedly building from a

fraught historical base. To adapt Gotham's (2001) sentiments, the disused industrial landscapes of the colonial and apartheid past have become the monuments of today, whereas the contemporary waterfront development will become the 'built heritage' of tomorrow.

The related issue concerns the British maritime architectural heritage (which has proven in the Anglo-American context to be ideally aligned for contemporary waterfront revitalization (Tunbridge 2002, p. 41) that is retained and embellished upon through the V&AW (Goudie et al. 1999). The profitable selling of externally focused heritage is interpreted as dissonant to emerging local identities throughout the formerly colonial world (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Shaw and Jones 1997). However, it is unlikely that the remnants of the colonial order such as the V&AW will retain its 'original identity.' We acknowledge that, beneath the surface of civility, (potential) tensions from the past racial discrimination and the present economic disparity persist between the white and newly empowered black middle class on the one hand and black communities of the population on the other hand. Indeed, the conservation of the historic or the natural environments to have sustainable relevance requires such inclusion.

That strand of thought is not wholly valid in the context of Cape Town. Cape Town was, and remains in many ways, different from other South African cities. Demographically, it does not and never had a majority black African population; the black population does not have the same historical claim to the region, whereas the colored and white population whose socio-cultural development does not share those of the rest of South Africa that represents a claim to the city's (and the waterfront's) heritage, that frankly, is justifiable. Importantly, colonial heritage is very much part of the local identity and the experiences thereof, not necessarily interpreted as repressive and certainly not irrelevant to the colored and/or white population. Indeed, for the colored community – the product of colonial miscegenation – their heritage is uniquely tied to the colonial past with the destruction of those colonial symbols, if ironically so, representing a destruction of their authentic past.

Problematic in the debates that decry South African waterfront developments is the feeling that commentators would seemingly rather see no development than any development. The apparent nostalgia some have shown to the redevelopment of the V&AW presents some challenges too. The fact of the matter is that Cape Town's harbor only employed a fraction of the city's people (mostly men), and this does beg the question as to whose memory and history is being mourned (cf. Kilian and Dodson 1996a,b). Interesting, too, is that we do not see the same enthusiasm for the redevelopment of, say, a former neighborhood into a decentralized shopping node (see Visser 2003 for related remarks). What we aim to underline is that these debates ignore the fact that the heritage of the docklands was largely invisible to residents of Cape Town before the V&AW development. It was only then that the narratives of earlier repression and dispossession started to surface – in the case of a former slave cemetery, quite literally so. Frankly, it was a no man's land. It was not accessible, it was not visited, and it simply did not hold much meaning for most Capetonians.

After its redevelopment, it became a 'white man's' playground that has expanded its appeal to also include at least lower–middle class cohorts and, on occasion, even the poor. Access has also often been a key concern for critics of waterfront

developments. However, whatever the critics might say, anyone with Levi's jeans, T-shirt, and good sneakers (this will include a very sizable part of the often 'wastelandish' townships of Cape Town's Cape Flats) is welcome at the V&AW. Let's be frank, access to (and some aspects of consumption of) the redeveloped space (as opposed to full participation) is not nearly as exclusionary as critics would lead us to believe of waterfronts, if not generally, then certainly the V&AW. Even from a spatial perspective, it is not plausible to argue that the V&AW is inaccessible in terms of its physical location. In terms of both private and public transport, this waterfront is, after Cape Town's central station, arguably the most accessible location in Cape Town. In addition, this does not only provide opportunities for a large proportion of Cape Town's residents to reach the waterfront development but, in fact, has opened up large parts of the Atlantic seaboard to Capetonians who do not, for example, have access to motorized transport.

Place Making and the Significance of the V&AW for South Africa

In "The New Waterfront – A Worldwide Urban Success Story" (Breen and Rigby 1996), Cape Town's V&AW is categorized as a "major waterfront transformation," comparable to those of Darling Harbor in Sydney, Baltimore's Inner Harbor, the Harbourfront in Toronto and Teleport City in Tokyo. It is recognized that many (of the transformations) have had a significant effect on civic psyche, touching, as they do, the souls of their cities and giving renewed pride to their residents. It is our contention that the place-making success of the V&AW has led to economic development that should be read at different levels of analysis.

Recent investigations, such as that of Lemanski (2007), acknowledge that positive regional economic impacts are associated with the broader urban regeneration of Cape Town that the V&AW enabled. While sensitive to the tensions that exist between the local and regional state institutions driving pro-poor developmental agendas on the one hand and seeking greater integration into the global economic system on the other hand, her conclusion is nevertheless that the poor of Cape Town and the region more broadly have not gained significantly from the V&AW and the urban regeneration that has followed in its wake. Such a view, however, ignores the larger economic whole in which the V&AW functions and is incorrect on a number of fronts.

Firstly, the employment impact of the V&AW cannot be ignored. Much is made of the service-industry-related nature of employment associated with waterfront developments, with the highly skilled on the one end and the very poorly skilled on the other end of the employment spectrum. Given the nature of unemployment in Cape Town, this perspective is trite to say the least, but we would agree that such jobs were created and are maintained at the V&AW. However, that would be to ignore a whole suite of service sector employment opportunities, catering to a range of skills levels that are located between these extremes in which much mobility and opportunity can be found. In addition, in the V&AW precinct itself, Table 5 for example, highlighted that the labour requirements in fishing-, harbor-, and industrial-related categories have remained fairly stable – thus, no one lost their existence owing to the development of the V&AW. On the contrary, employment has increased dramatically. Indeed, we would argue that it is highly unlikely that such employment growth could have been attained in the absence of the V&AW development.

Moreover, arguments, for example, pursuing greater investment in the harbor- and fishing-related industries (see Kilian and Dodson 1996a,b) in a context of global climate change and dwindling fishing stocks along the South African coastline would be particularly inappropriate.

As indicated in Fig. 1, the V&AW has also acted as a stimulus for the redevelopment of adjacent neighborhoods and districts such as the Foreshore and the historic neighborhoods of De Waterkant and increasingly Bo-Kaap. It is important to remember that local capital showed little enthusiasm for redeveloping the Cape Town CBD and its neighboring areas (Dewar 2004). Indeed, the average middle class South African is a neigsayer extraordinaire in terms of the possibilities of the country's CBDs. It is and it was the middle class allure of the V&AW that has made much of the new CBD developments possible. On the back of the V&AW and subsequent CBD regeneration, a suite of tourism products have been developed that create a wide range of employment opportunities across the Cape Town tourism space economy.

Secondly, in terms of the national level, a tourism system has developed around attractions such as the V&AW and the large-scale adjacent urban regeneration taking place in the historic centre of Cape Town's CBD. We argue that, in analyzing the benefits of the V&AW, one has to consider a whole package of economic opportunities, which we suggest go way beyond the immediate location of Cape Town. The V&AW is the single most visited site in South Africa and a key attraction in an industry that has grown to be a larger generator of wealth than mineral exports, accounting for about 10% of GDP and representing 8% of formal employment (Rogerson and Visser 2007). The national geography of tourism is not only closely linked to the waterfront but has strengthened a national tourism system that is seen as an international leader in terms of its attempts and ability to stimulate pro-poor tourism development. To keep the level of analysis at the individual city level is

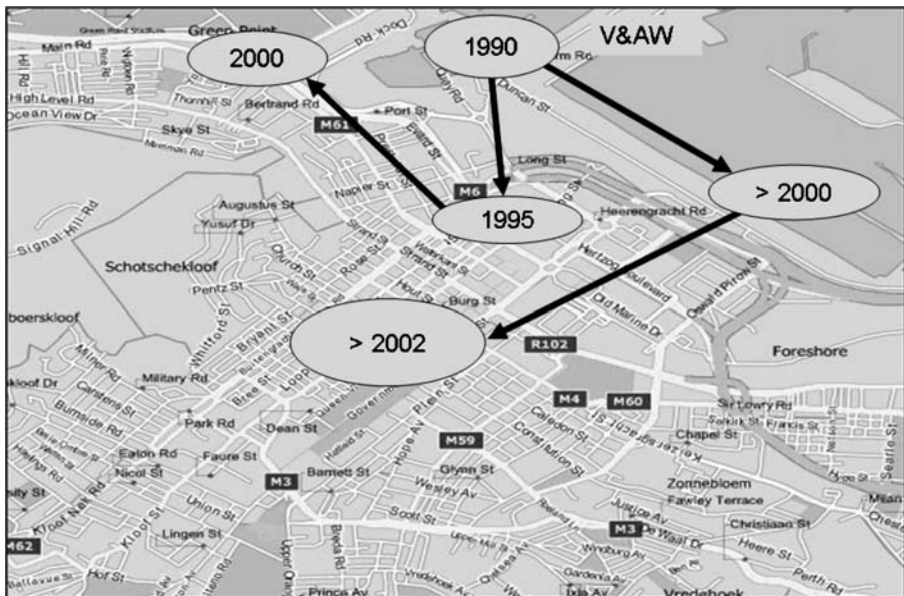


Fig. 1 The development of V&AW and its adjacent areas

clearly not to understand the significant scope of what and where a range of tourism geographies are generated and how they link to the V&AW but also to shun the impact the tourism system has on poor people across South Africa (Rogerson and Visser 2007). If the criteria for judging the success of the V&AW is that of alleviating the plight of the poor, it would emerge as a shining success and not the implied failure authors such as Lemanski (2007) aim to suggest.

Related to this point is the manner in which *global* investors perceive South Africa through successes such as the V&AW. New meaning systems of what Cape Town is, or what other cities in South Africa or Africa can be, closely tied to such redevelopment projects. We would argue that the gravitas of the waterfront in terms of current investment by overseas investors in both the V&AW and other adjacent areas cannot, and should not, be seen merely as only another instance of mobile capital traveling the world for the greatest possible return on investment. There is much more at stake in terms of enabling some South Africans, along with external investors, to re-imagine the city, particularly the inner city of Cape Town and increasingly, other main metropolitan areas' former CBD. As highlighted in Fig. 1, the success of the V&AW made possible a range of investments along the adjacent Foreshore area in the form of the Cape Town International Convention Center and the subsequent investment by an Irish developer in the form of three CBD street blocks. These investments are instructive, as indeed foreign investment was required to 'turn the corner' for the Cape Town inner city. These investments have in turn generated interest in the CBDs of, principally, Johannesburg, Durban, and Pretoria, which in turn provide a range of new economic opportunities.

Conclusion

In the light of the recent acquisition of the V&AW by a mainly foreign-owned consortium, the aim of this paper was to track the development of the V&AW since its inception in the late 1980s. Besides providing insight into the current status of its operations, the paper also suggested that local scholars have been less critical of the V&AW than similar developments elsewhere. Drawing on the V&AW experience, we argue that commentators elsewhere need to rethink some of the critiques that characterise current discourses concerning waterfront developments and urban regeneration programs. Working from suggestions made by Lemanski (2007), which question the desirability of a developing world city, like Cape Town, deploying urban regeneration projects such as waterfront developments, the paper provided insights into why this particular waterfront development should be embraced and why standard critiques concerning these developments are not valid in the case of the V&AW.

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