

Hotel location in Africa's world class city: The case of Johannesburg, South Africa

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Abstract. Urban tourism is of rising importance for economic and tourism geographers. One of the most important elements for urban tourism is the hotel economy. Against a backdrop of international debates around the location of hotels in cities in both developed and developing countries this article unpacks the changing geography of hotels in South Africa's largest city, Johannesburg for the period 1990 to 2010. Johannesburg is one of the leading and growing destinations for urban tourism in South Africa. Its hotel scape has been radically transformed in the past two decades. It is shown that the shifting geography of hotel development in Johannesburg reveals a complex pattern of disinvestment in certain city spaces and subsequent reinvestment and re-vitalization of those spaces as well the changing patterns of hotel investment towards the new successful nodes of business and leisure tourism in the city.

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Contents:

1. Introduction	182
2. Location of hotels in cities	182
3. Johannesburg	184
3.1. Changing urban structure of Johannesburg	184
3.2. Changing tourism economy of Johannesburg	185
3.3. The changing location of hotels in Johannesburg	186
4. Conclusion	193
Acknowledgements	194
References	194

1. Introduction

Cities are major tourism destinations. Accordingly, urban tourism is recognized now as a significant form of tourism in several parts of the world. Over the past two decades as a consequence of global economic restructuring and the decline of traditional urban-industrial activities in much of the developed world, local governments have turned to tourism as one element of strategies for regeneration and urban economic development. As stated by Ioannides and Timothy (2010: 149) often ‘urban policymakers view tourism as an economic panacea’ and cities which formerly were centers of production have been re-invented (or sought to be re-invented) as centers of consumption. With the growth of place competition the significance of tourism has further been enhanced and it now represents an important research focus for urban sustainable development debates in the developed world (see e.g. Law, 1992, 1993; Kagermeier, 2012).

Following the benchmark works in the 1990s by Law (1992, 1993) urban tourism continues to attract considerable research attention (Hall, Page, 2009; Ashworth, Page, 2011; Li, Bihu, 2012). Among a range of issues that recently have come under academic scrutiny are evaluations of urban tourism product and visitor satisfaction (Ben-Dalia et al., 2013), local impacts for gentrification (Fuller, Michel, 2014), residents perceptions (Wang et al., 2005), sustainability evaluations of urban tourism (Wang, Pei, 2014) and the pro-poor impacts of urban tourism in both settings of the developed and developing world (Butler et al., 2013; Frenzel, 2013). In the developing world urban tourism also has become the focus of much research attention; in particular the most well-documented are the experiences of urban China (Wang et al., 2005; Li, Bihu, 2012) and South Africa (Rogerson, 2002, 2004, 2011a; Rogerson, Visser, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2011; Ferreira, Visser, 2007; Ferreira, 2011).

The growth and success of urban tourism is inseparable from the establishment and expansion of the accommodation sector (Arbel, Pizam, 1977; Jansen-Verbeke, 1986; Timothy, Teye, 2009). Timothy and Wall (1995: 65) state ‘hotels are the purest and most visible manifestations of tourism in the city’. For tourism scholars, including geographers,

the evolutionary development, internationalization as well as the location decision-making around hotels are therefore issues of rising importance (Niewiadomski, 2013a, 2013b; Rogerson, 2014; Yang et al., 2014). It is observed, however, that research on hotels traditionally has been the preserve of hospitality researchers. This said, there is much less research available on the role of hotels as part of the wider local, national and international tourism economy. In particular, in terms of human geography it is apparent that hotels are a remarkably under-researched topic for both economic geographers and tourism geographers (Niewiadomski, 2013a). Further, there is a marked spatial unevenness in hotel research with most existing research confined to studies on the USA, Europe and Pacific Asia especially on China. From a global perspective research on the hotel sector in Africa is comparatively sparse (Rogerson, Rogerson, 2011; Rogerson, 2014). It is against this backdrop that this article investigates the changing location of hotels in South Africa’s major city, Johannesburg, which aspires to be Africa’s ‘world class city’ (Rogerson, Rogerson, 2014).

2. Location of hotels in cities

In a landmark overview of hotel location research Yang et al. (2014) draw attention to the multi-disciplinary nature of scholarship and the emphasis upon location factors as critical for successful hotel investment. Indeed, in cities Yang et al. (2012: 675) maintain that for hotels ‘the importance of location cannot be over-emphasized’. This said, nearly 15 years ago Egan and Nield (2000: 613) pointed to the sparseness of research investigations of the intra-urban location of hotels. At present, most existing empirical work is examining the location of hotels in so-termed ‘tourist-historic’ cities either in Europe (Ashworth, Tunbridge, 1990; Urtasun, Gutiérrez, 2006) or Asia (Timothy, Wall, 1995). Other works on hotel location exist for various cities of Canada (Wall et al., 1985), Israel (Arbel, Pizam, 1977; Shoval, Cohen-Hattab, 2001; Shoval, 2006), Turkey (Dökmeci, Balta, 1999) and USA (Baum, Mezias, 1992). In urban areas of the developing world Oppermann et al. (1996: 55) stated that ‘analyses of hotel location and the evolution of the urban

tourism landscape are almost non-existent. Over the past two decades, however, a number of contributions have appeared on the location of hotels in modern urban tourism destinations of the global South. For Asian cities these include works by Oppermann et al. (1996) for Kuala Lumpur, by Bégin (2000) for Xiamen, and by Yang et al. (2012) for Beijing. For African cities there has been the welcome appearance of research which unpacks the location and decision-making about hotels in Kumasi, Ghana (Adam, 2013; Adam, Amuquandoh, 2013; Adam, Mensah, 2013) and in South Africa's major coastal cities of Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth (Rogerson, 2012).

The existing literature considers the question of urban hotel location from a variety of perspectives. Shoal (2006) applies a concentric land use model based on the principle of land rent curves and representing a derivative of the classic von Thünen agricultural land use model (von Thünen, 1826). This model situates the hotel district in the city centre and more specifically between the CBD and a zone of commerce. Other studies on hotel location build upon the benchmark work of Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990) on tourism accommodation patterns in historic cities. Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990) introduced a model of urban hotel location for the tourist-historic city. The model differentiates the tourist-historic city into distinct zones where specific hotel profiles cluster. Six types of hotel locations are recognized: (a) historic city locations; (b) railway station locations; (c) along main access routes; (d) clusters of small and medium hotels in 'nice' locations; (e) large modern hotels in a transition zone between the CBD and historic city; and (f) the urban periphery including along motorways and airport transport interchanges. Each of these zones corresponds to a particular hotel profile.

For geographers special importance attaches to understanding the transitional zone which is recognized in many tourist cities as the prime location for new hotels and tourist-oriented activities. This zone is viewed as positioned between an increasingly specialized tourist-historic core and a new commercial centre 'integrating tourism and hotels into the renewed urban structure' (Bégin, 2000: 452). Bégin (2000) examined the changing patterns of hotel location in the Chinese city of Xiamen. The goal was to analyze how the distribution of hotels

evolved amidst the radical transformations which have affected Chinese urban and tourism developments. The results confirm that whilst tourism is a relatively recent activity in urban China the patterns of hotel location correspond closely to what was described by Ashworth and Tunbridge (Bégin, 2000). Analysis of hotel distributions in this Chinese city indicated that as tourism expanded and new hotels opened the centre of gravity gradually shifted away from the old core towards more recently developed neighbourhoods. This spatial shift occurred for similar reasons as recorded in European tourist-historic cities, namely the lack of available land for new hotels, congestion in the old town, restrictions on building size and accessibility (Bégin, 2000). Overall, it has been forwarded that hotel location is an important index of changing inner city space. Often, however, these changes may take place in hotel location 'in relation to urban changes' (Bégin, 2000: 463). In addition, shifts in hotel location frequently evolve in relation to transformations in transport technology. For example, with the growth of air travel, the importance of the airport as a significant location for developments began to parallel earlier periods when access to railway stations was a key determinant for hotel locations (Oppermann et al., 1996; Shoal, Cohen-Hattab, 2001).

In examining existing scholarship two sets of broad determinants of hotel location are identified. The first are location attributes which relate to accessibility, agglomeration advantages, and general level of urban development. Accessibility is considered a prime factor as "hotels are keen on locations that are proximate to their potential markets because hotels seek for increased demand from potential guests" (Yang et al., 2012: 676). The factor of accessibility underpins the historical tendency for hotels to cluster at central locations which would have large demands for accommodation either in central business districts or central tourist areas (Oppermann et al., 1996). Other prime areas for hotel development linked to access considerations would be airports, railway stations and iconic tourist attractions. Agglomeration is considered a further issue in hotel location as in most cities hotels are clustered rather than randomly distributed. Within often relatively compact and well-defined geographic areas or 'hotel districts' there will be high levels of localized competition as in New York's Manhattan

hotel industry (Baum, Meziar, 1992). Hotel entrepreneurs confront important location choices for new establishments, whether to locate a new venture close to or far from competitors, both in geographic and product space (Urtasun, Gutiérrez, 2006). Several authors point to negative aspects of the impact of hotel development in inner city areas, especially within historic cities. In particular, it is argued that hotels divert scarce land from business and housing in inner-cities and the increasing flow of tourists intensifies pressure on the general state of urban infrastructure. The construction of hotels in the inner core of historical cities can threaten their unique and famous skylines as was the case in Istanbul (Dökmeci, Balta, 1999).

In terms of location attributes the choice of hotel location in urban areas is highly dependent on changing urban development which inevitably changes structure and which evolves over time (Yang et al., 2014). This leads to an acknowledgement that in many cities the patterns of hotel development are associated with the location of hotels which have been founded in different time periods (Oppermann et al., 1996; Shoval, Cohen-Hattab, 2001). Beyond these generic location attributes Yang et al. (2012) point to the significance for hotel location of certain individual hotel characteristics. The most notable individual characteristics that must be considered in understanding the location of hotels at the intra-urban scale are size, star rating and market segment. Hotels of different size, star rating and those catering to different market segments can have different location logics. For example, hotels with different star ratings target different potential markets and as a result their locational preferences will differ (Yang et al., 2012).

Overall, it is confirmed from a range of international case studies that the development of tourism accommodation is not evenly or randomly distributed throughout cities rather it is confined in clusters to certain specific locations (Yang et al., 2014). The importance of location attributes varies between individual cities. Critical influences upon the geography of hotels in cities will relate to the morphology, history and various economic functions of the particular city in question, as well as the type of urban tourism. It is against this backdrop that our attention now turns to the case study of hotels in Johannesburg, which is the economic and commer-

cial heart of South Africa, and in particular to a focus on the period 1990 to 2010 which straddles the shift to democracy and of national tourism growth which accompanied the country's re-entry into the global tourism economy (Rogerson, Visser, 2004).

3. Johannesburg

3.1. Changing urban structure of Johannesburg

Johannesburg is the most economically powerful urban centre in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the 1994 democratic elections and freed of the sanctions of apartheid Johannesburg has reaffirmed itself as a globally linked economic hub with core responsibilities for hosting large corporations with trade and investment links spread across sub-Saharan Africa (Murray, 2011; Rogerson, Rogerson, 2014). A number of prestige projects and initiatives have been undertaken in order to re-image Johannesburg as Africa's world class city. In terms of its essential function, Johannesburg assumed the role as central place of control and linkage and of organizing the capitalist economy of South Africa and the wider region of Southern Africa (Surborg, 2011; Rogerson, Rogerson, 2014).

Over the past two decades the urban fabric of Johannesburg has witnessed many changes with regard to patterns of spatial development and areas of investment and disinvestment. Johannesburg has been described as a "city of extremes" (Murray, 2011). Historically, spatial distortions in the urban geography of Johannesburg arose from apartheid planning and the fact that Johannesburg's prosperity has shifted from a reliance on industry and mining to finance, information technology, business services, tourism-related activities and creative industries such as the arts, music and entertainment. This transformation of Johannesburg's economic base has resulted in the reorganization of its spatial environment wherein the original urban core has given way to suburban nodes to the north of the inner city (Beavon, 2004; Murray, 2011).

In 1990 the Johannesburg CBD housed the headquarters of sixty-five of the hundred largest companies listed on the Johannesburg stock exchange, thirteen of South Africa's thirty largest companies, six of the country's eight mining conglomerates, and

nine of its eighteen leading life insurance companies. Furthermore the inner city was South Africa's financial centre and hosted eleven of the leading sixteen banking institutions, the Johannesburg stock exchange and the National Reserve Bank. During the 1980s the central city began to show some signs of socio-economic stagnation, a trend which accelerated dramatically during the 1990s as businesses started to abandon the historic downtown core and instead relocate their facilities in the decentralized office and commercial nodes in the rapidly urbanizing northern suburbs (Rogerson, 1995; Rogerson, Rogerson, 1995, 1997; Murray, 2011). By the mid 1990s the inner city of Johannesburg was an area with high office vacancies, unregulated street trading, poor urban management, abandoned buildings and squatting, overcrowding and neglected public spaces (Murray, 2011: 88). At the same time the city's northern suburbs such as Rosebank, Sandton, Hyde Park and Midrand experienced the rapid growth of new office parks, upscale hotels, suburban shopping malls, light industrial developments, and upscale residential accommodation. This flight of business enterprises from the central city stripped it of its corporate headquarters and its commercial/retail base.

By the early 2000s a number of high profile projects were sponsored by the municipality in order to reverse the inner city decline that had taken place within the Johannesburg inner city. These projects included the creation of a Fashion District, Jewel City and a number of cultural-heritage developments to energize urban tourism (Rogerson, 2002). This trend has continued more recently since 2010 as the eastern portion of the inner city has been revitalized by the Maboneng district which merges loft living, creative industries, clubs, theatres and markets into a desirable urban hub. The inner city business improvement districts, initiated in the 2000s, are also showing dividends as these flourishing sub-nodes within the inner city are showing inward investment and commercial rental growth. The successful conversion of office blocks into residential space has re-introduced leisure facilities and some life after dark into the former abandoned inner city.

Since the early 1990s Johannesburg's northern suburbs have become examples of the "urbanization of suburbia" in that they have attracted capital investment in the form of head quarter office

complexes, industrial parks, shopping malls, upscale hotels, leisure and entertainment spaces (Murray, 2011: 107). The form of Johannesburg's suburbia is not characterized by concentric rings or along main roads radiating out from the core but rather in scattered clusters and along orbital roads. In particular the Sandton node has grown exponentially since the 1990s and is the premier decentralized node in Johannesburg. It is now home to a wide array of prestigious and iconic buildings including the Johannesburg stock exchange and many of the country's banking, commercial and legal head offices. In addition, Sandton is the premier shopping and leisure destination exemplified by the landmark Sandton City mega-mall, exclusive restaurants and home to some of the most exclusive hotels in Johannesburg. Within the Sandton business district a number of exclusive apartment blocks have recently been built and surrounding it are leafy up-market residential areas. Moreover, Sandton is the location for Johannesburg's International Convention Centre and the heart of business tourism within Johannesburg (Rogerson, 2002).

3.2. Changing tourism economy of Johannesburg

For the growing tourism economy of South Africa, the works of Rogerson and Visser (2004, 2007) stress the significance of cities as core tourism destinations. Indeed, the country's tourism space economy is highly polarized with its major geographical poles of tourism activity concentrated around the three major metropolitan areas of the country, namely Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg.

Johannesburg has benefited from the post-apartheid expansion of tourism which has occurred in South Africa and has been a major beneficiary from the expansion of both international and domestic tourism which has taken place in the country over the past two decades, and most especially since the 1994 democratic transition (Rogerson, Visser, 2007). The city of Johannesburg is what would be described as a 'non-traditional' urban tourism destination. The city's trajectory of urban tourism development has taken a different course to that of other major South African cities such as Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth which are long-established

coastal leisure destinations. As well as the expansion in Johannesburg of convention centres for business tourism, urban tourism has been boosted by new product development in terms of cultural and heritage tourism attractions, sports tourism, struggle tourism and shopping tourism geared to the requirements of regional tourists from sub-Saharan Africa (Rogerson, Visser, 2011). In addition, considerable impetus for new product innovation and tourism product upgrading derived from South Africa's hosting of the FIFA 2010 Soccer World Cup during which Johannesburg was the most important host city (Ferreira, 2011) and experienced the greatest boost in urban tourism (Rogerson, Visser, 2011).

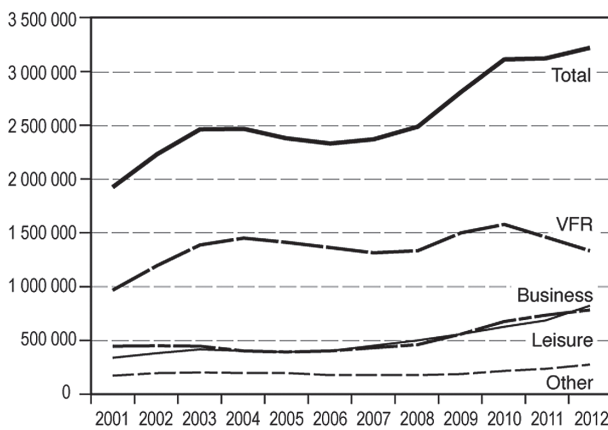


Fig. 1. Johannesburg Tourism: Trips by Purpose, 2001-2012
Source: Global Insight

A broad profile of tourism in Johannesburg can be obtained from analyzing the local data available for tourism trips and bednights from the Global Insight data base. This information confirms Johannesburg position as one of the leading destinations within the tourism space economy of South Africa. Between 2001 and 2012 the total number of tourism trips for Johannesburg is estimated to have expanded from 1.9 million to 3.2 million in total. Of this total the largest share of trips, as is the pattern nationally, is accounted for by trips to visit friends and relatives (VFR travel). As is shown on Figure 1, VFR travel accounts for 41 percent of trips by 2012. It is significant, however, to record the rise of Johannesburg as both a destination for leisure and business travel. With the country's largest cluster of corporate headquarter offices and decision-making Johannesburg is overwhelmingly South Africa's

most significant business tourism destination. For visitors from other countries in sub-Saharan Africa Johannesburg is a major shopping destination and often likened to Dubai in Africa (Rogerson, 2011a). Of significance also is the city's rise for leisure travel for both international and domestic travelers.

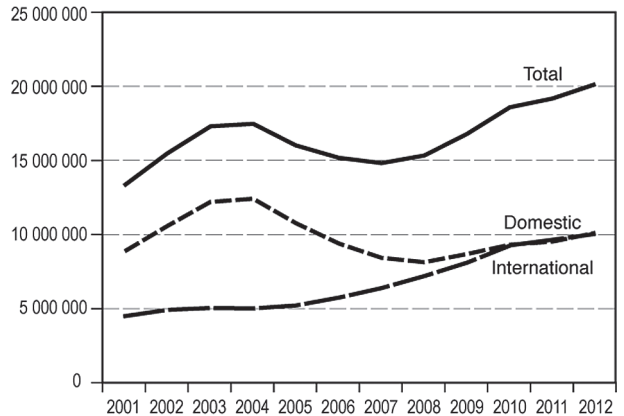


Fig. 2. Johannesburg tourism: bednights by Origin of Visitor, 2001-2012

Source: Global Insight

Figure 2 shows patterns of bednights in Johannesburg as broken down between international and domestic visitors. It reveals that the city's traditional importance as a focus for domestic tourism is now matched by its significance for international travel. In terms of international trips the greatest element in the Johannesburg tourism economy is visitors from sub-Saharan Africa and in particular of cross-border shopper/traders mainly from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia and Malawi (Rogerson, Visser, 2006; Rogerson, 2011a). Long haul international tourists from Europe or USA spend shorter periods in Johannesburg as compared to Cape Town. For international long haul visitors to Johannesburg, township tours around Soweto are increasingly an organized business and a regular add-on to the itineraries of tourists (Rogerson, 2004, 2008).

3.3. The changing location of hotels in Johannesburg

A brief overview of the changing hotel stock in Johannesburg is provided as a backcloth to discussing the changing location of hotels in Johannesburg.

Table 1. Number of Hotel Establishments 1990-2010

	1990	2010	% Growth
Johannesburg	107	137	28

Source: Author's data base

Table 2. Number of Hotel Rooms 1990-2010

	1990	2010	% Growth
Johannesburg	9,146	13,839	51

Source: Author's data base

Table 3. Components of Change in Hotel Stock 1990-2010

Location	1990 No Hotels	2010 No. Hotels	Births	Deaths	Stayers	Change
Johannesburg	107	137	112	82	25	+30

Source: Author's data base

Table 3 illustrates the underlying 'churning' of properties as indexed by hotel births, deaths and stayers. This reveals a dramatic turnover of hotel stock within Johannesburg over the two decades from 1990 to 2010. Of the total existing stock of 1990 establishments 77 percent of Johannesburg hotels ceased to exist by 2010. Indeed, it shows that as much as 82 percent of the city's hotel stock in 2010 was constructed after 1990. These results underscore a radical restructuring of the hotel property stock in Johannesburg and reveal an extensive turnover of hotel properties in the city (Rogerson, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c).

In addition to the changing number of hotels and hotel rooms available there has been a fundamental shift in the size and quality of Johannesburg

The heightened tempo of tourism within Johannesburg is reflected in the expansion of the hotel sector. Tables 1 and 2 provide the basic data on hotel stock change in Johannesburg between 1990 and 2010. Johannesburg shows a rather modest performance of 28 percent in terms of hotel growth and a stronger performance of 51 percent in terms of growth of hotel rooms available. This is accounted for both by the city's late arrival as an urban tourism destination as well as by the considerable closure of an existing stock of hotels from the apartheid era that were little more than thinly veiled liquor outlets rather than providers of tourism accommodation (Rogerson, 2011b).

hotels. In 1990 most of Johannesburg's hotels were 50 rooms or less in size, however, there has been a major hollowing out of hotels in Johannesburg in the size classes of 1-10 rooms, 11-20 rooms and 21-50 rooms and growth is in evidence in the Johannesburg stock in the three size classes of 51-100, 101-250 and 251-500 room hotel establishments. These represent size ranges for hotels offering accommodation to both domestic business travelers as well as international leisure and business visitors to the city (Rogerson, 2013a). In terms of quality, there has been an upward shift in the quality of hotel stock with a much higher proportion of hotels graded as 3-5 star accommodation as opposed to the lower 1-2 star stock of hotels.

Table 4. Number of Hotels by Star Grading 1990-2010

Star Grading	5		4		3		2		1	
Year	1990	2010	1990	2010	1990	2010	1990	2010	1990	2010
Johannesburg	5	24	4	39	16	44	25	6	56	20

Source: Author's data base

Table 4 shows the massive decline in Johannesburg's 1 and 2 star hotels and the growth of higher quality hotels particularly new construc-

tions of three and four star hotel establishments. Against this context of the shifting structural character of Johannesburg's hotel economy, attention

turns now to the changing spatial patterns of hotel accommodation in the city and to identify local trends in relation to wider processes of urban restructuring. This intra-urban analysis is conducted at two levels. First, it will trace the changes in

the spatial distribution of hotels within Johannesburg over the two time periods of 1990 and 2010. Second, a more fine grained investigation shows quality shifts as indexed by star grading at the suburban level.

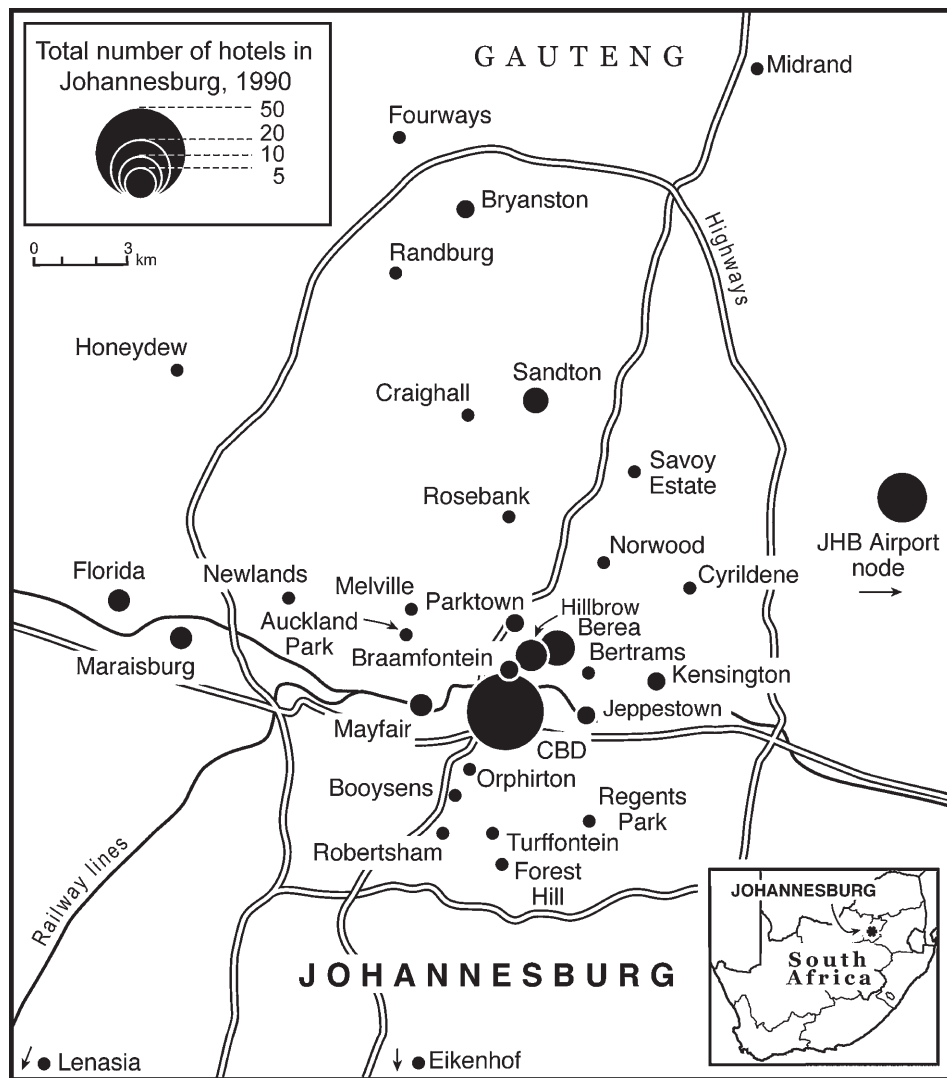


Fig. 3. The Spatial Distribution of Hotels in Johannesburg 1990

Source: Author's data base

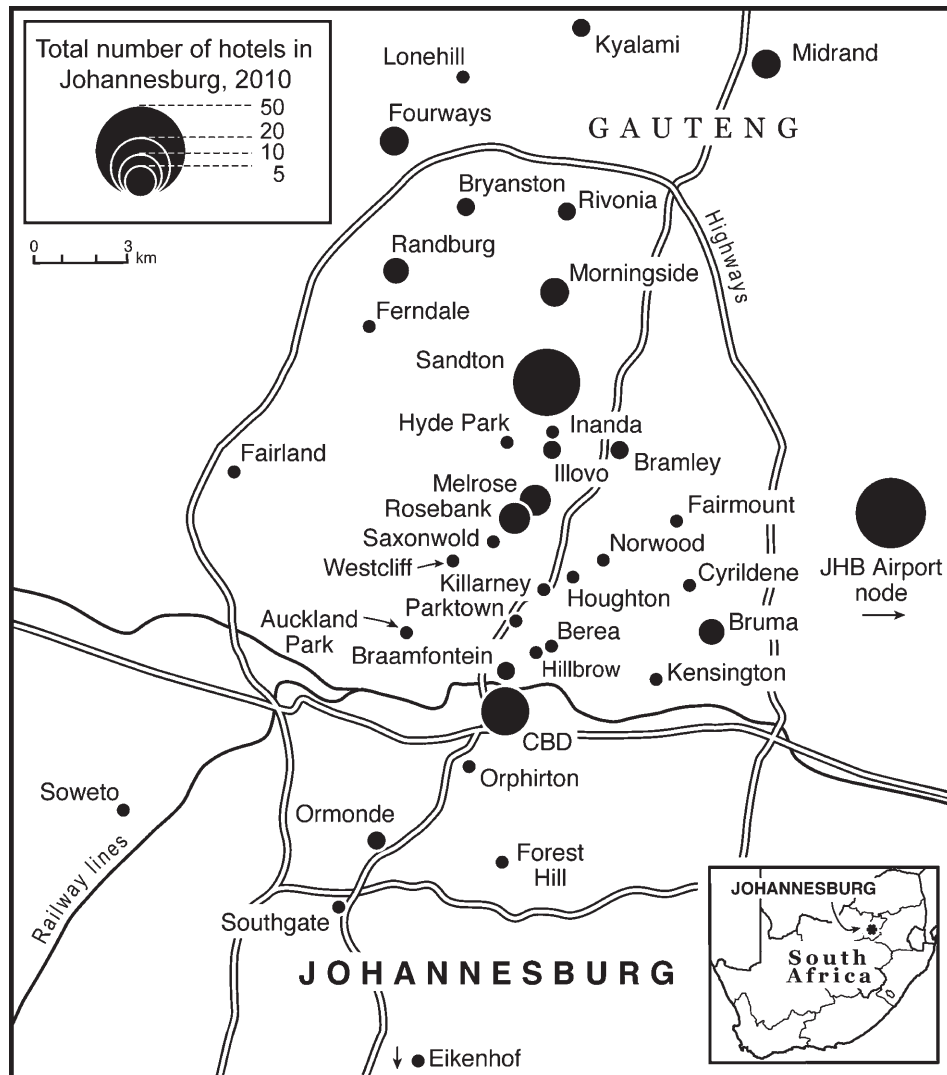


Fig. 4. The Spatial Distribution of Hotels in Johannesburg 2010

Source: Author's data base

The changing location pattern of hotels in Johannesburg is mapped out on Figures 3 and 4. The locational distribution of hotels has been recast fundamentally during the two decades of 1990 to 2010. In 1990 the hotel geography of Johannesburg exhibited a strong cluster in and around the CBD and its immediate environs. The most notable focal point for hotel development was in and around the CBD, with the city's iconic Carlton Hotel at its heart, and the adjacent suburbs of Berea, Hillbrow and Braamfontein as important zones also for hotel developments. From the mid-1990s the inner-city economy of Johannesburg experienced decline and

a similar pattern of decline impacted upon the tourism economy. The first serious signals for the declining inner-city hotel economy appeared in 1993 with the downgrading of the five star Johannesburg Sun International, built only in 1986, to a three star Holiday Inn Garden Court. The significance of the downgrade of the Johannesburg Sun International can be appreciated by the fact that at the time of its construction it was the most expensive hotel development in South Africa costing an estimated R1 billion. The rapid deterioration of the hotel sector in the inner city was further confirmed in 1998 with the closure of the Carlton Hotel, an iconic part of

the Johannesburg cityscape and formerly a five star luxury hotel. When the five star, Johannesburg Sun Hotel opened its doors in 1985 there were five other grand hotels competing for the city's prestige-minded, wealthy (and white) visitors: the Carlton, Landdrost, President, the four star Rand International, and Victoria. Gradually these hotels either downgraded their facilities or closed completely as new luxury accommodations in areas such as Sandton, Rosebank, Westcliff and Bedfordview lured customers away (Murray, 2011).

The newer growth nodes for tourism and hotel development in Johannesburg have shifted northwards away from the inner city to suburbs such as Rosebank and the emerging new CBD of Sandton. The suburbs of Rosebank, Sandton as well as Melrose, Randburg and Morningside emerged as the new growing spaces for hotel development in Johannesburg in a parallel with geographical shifts taking place in the patterns of commercial and retail developments in the city. The rapid expansion of the critical segment of business tourism accelerated the shift towards the strengthening business hubs of Rosebank and Sandton (Rogerson, 2002; Beavon, 2004). Indeed, these areas became critical axes of what Crankshaw (2008: 1692) describes as the 'post-Fordist spatial order of Johannesburg'. By the early 2000s Rosebank and Sandton could no longer simply be described as 'suburbs' rather they were "totalized suburbs" which comprise large clusters of offices, shopping malls, and recreation and tourism facilities, including the construction of major new hotel developments (Crankshaw, 2008).

The northward shift in the geography of hotel developments in Johannesburg was given further impetus by the relocation of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange to Sandton. This relocation further consolidated the attractiveness of Sandton for the local and international headquarter offices of banking and financial services, legal, and accounting enterprises. Construction of the Sandton Convention Centre, which opened in 2002, was a critical step in putting Johannesburg on the national and international competitive map for convention tourism and again reinforced the attractiveness of the Sandton node for tourism (Rogerson, 2002). The Sandton node thus emerged as the leading business tourism hub as well as new leisure/retail cap-

ital for the metropolitan Johannesburg area. With the announcement that Johannesburg would be the major location for the 2010 FIFA World Cup from 2006 a wave of new hotel developments and refurbishments commenced in the Sandton area and the surrounding suburbs of Sandown, Morningside and Fourways. In addition, the Rosebank area further consolidated as an important hotel node in the city both for business and leisure tourists.

From 2008 there emerged a trend within Johannesburg for the emergence of what might be described as 'new hotel spaces' in the city. Among these new hotel spaces the most significant is that of a re-emergence of hotel developments in the inner-city. The re-emergence of the inner city as tourism zone for Johannesburg is linked to wider initiatives which have been ongoing since the late 1990s to physically regenerate and economically revive the inner city economy. One recent initiative which is linked to a boutique hotel development is the establishment in City and Suburban (the eastern edge of the CBD) of the Maboneng Precinct as a focal point for arts and creative industries which are re-using former light industrial buildings. The use and upgrading of the Ellis Park area for hosting major national and international rugby games as well as a venue for FIFA World Cup also has been a further stimulus to revival of the inner city as a tourism zone. Other nodes of rediscovery in the inner city for hotel investments have been around the headquarter offices of major mining houses and banks as well as close to the Newtown cultural district. In respect of new hotel spaces, one must note the establishment in 2008 by the London based InterContinental Hotels Group of a 48 room four star hotel which is situated in the Kliptown area of Soweto, which has been the focus of heritage tourism initiatives. This hotel is especially noteworthy for the fact that it is the first major hotel investment since 1994 in a formerly black township. Finally, in terms of the geography of hotel developments in South Africa's major city it should be noted that the city's international airport, O R. Tambo, is a vibrant hub or cluster for hotel developments. Nevertheless, in the geography of metropolitan Johannesburg, the hotel cluster falls outside the boundaries of the city and is actually located in the neighbouring metropolitan area of Ekurhuleni.

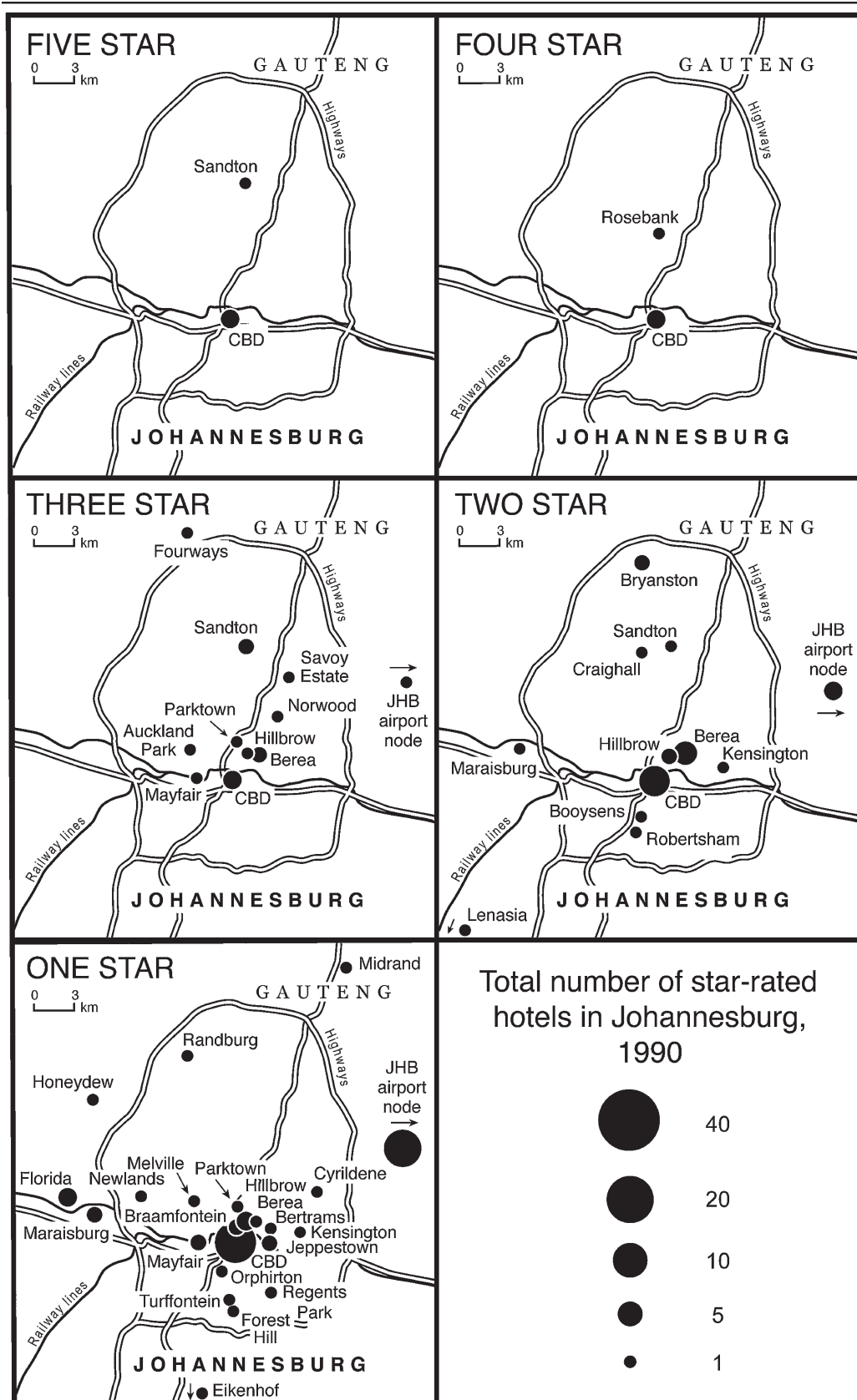


Fig. 5. Spatial patterns of hotels in Johannesburg 1990 by star grading

Source: Author's data base

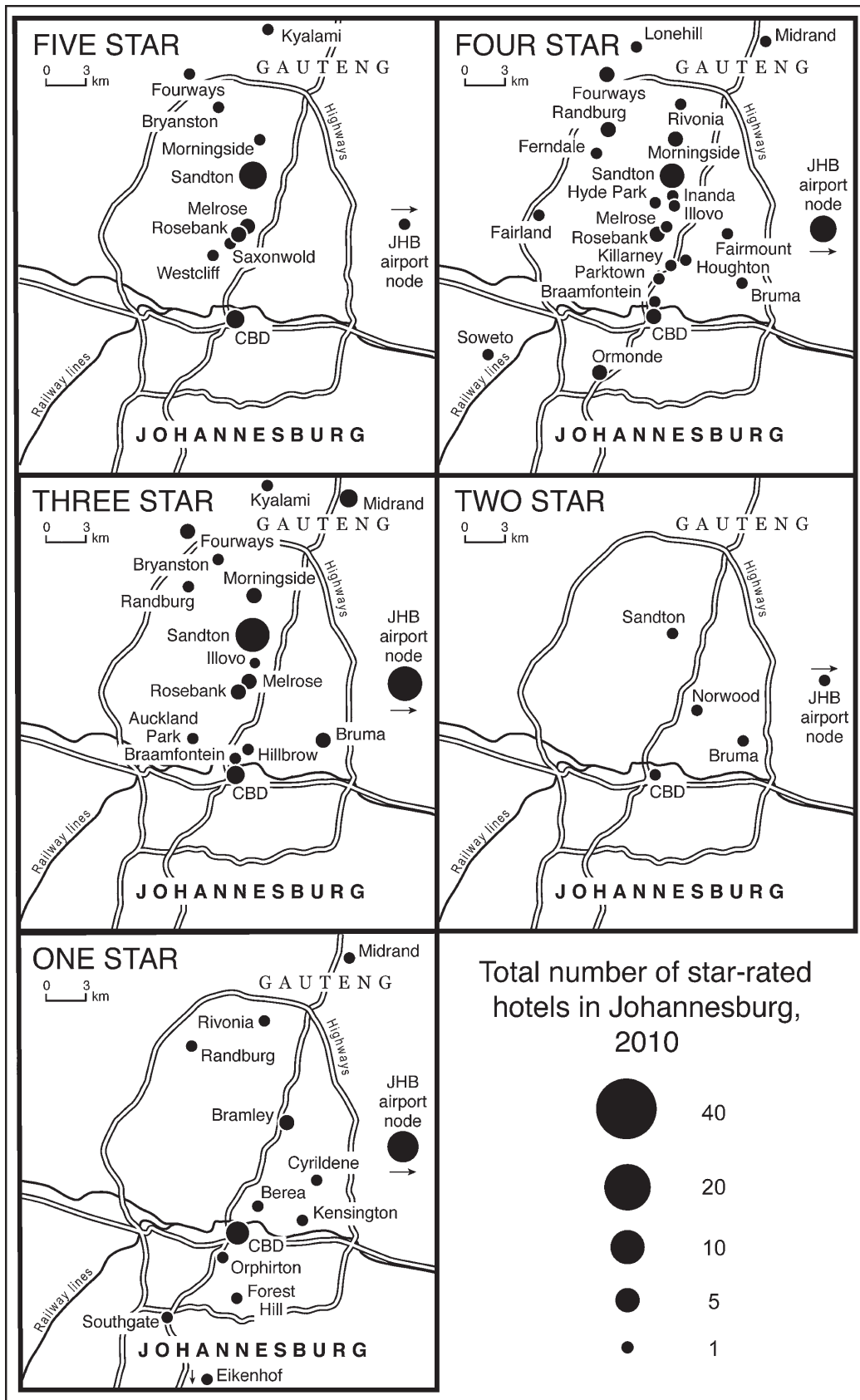


Fig. 6. Spatial patterns of hotels in Johannesburg 2010 by star grading

Source: Author's data base

Johannesburg demonstrates the existence of the spatial differentiation of hotels of varying quality standards. This is shown on Figures 5 and 6 which map the location of hotels by quality standards. In 1990 it is striking that the Johannesburg CBD is the focal point for hotels of all grades of accommodation (Fig. 5). The location of one star accommodation shows a spread of these hotels into the adjacent suburbs of Hillbrow, Braamfontein and Berea and also significantly an extension of one star hotels into the mainly industrial suburbs to south and west of the CBD. Examples would be Ophirton, Turffontein, Maraisburg and Newlands. Many of the one star hotels in these suburbs represent examples of mainly liquor dominated hotels with limited poor standard accommodation. In the grade of two star accommodation as well as the dominance of the CBD of note is the cluster in Berea and a scatter of developments in the northern suburbs, in particular around Bryanston. In the middle to up-market range of hotel accommodation the location of three star accommodation, outside of the CBD, the most notable clusters are in Berea and at Sandton. For four and five star hotel facilities, the sparseness of these types of accommodation is observed with the only luxury hotels outside of the CBD to be found at Sandton and Rosebank.

By 2010 the location of hotels of different quality standards in Johannesburg has been radically restructured (Fig. 6). The CBD hosts the largest share of the rump of one star accommodation. Of note, however, is that newer branded limited service one star developments (such as Formula One and Road Lodges) are situated in the northern suburbs including Randburg and the new office/light industrial node of Midrand. The hollowing out of the category of two star accommodation in Johannesburg by 2010 is a striking phenomenon with the few hotels of this standard located at Sandton, Norwood and Bruma. A radical change is observed between 1990 and 2010 in the patterns of three to five star graded accommodation in Johannesburg. The key change is the demise of the former dominant CBD clusters and the corresponding rise of groups of three to five star accommodation in the emerging new leisure tourism and especially business tourism hubs in the city. Of special significance is the rise of Sandton as the axis for both the categories of medium range three star accommodation

and luxury four to five star accommodation in the city. Other important nodes for three star accommodation are observed as Rosebank, Morningside, Fourways and Midrand, areas which have enjoyed growth of business tourism because of the decentralization of office and commercial businesses to the environs of these suburbs. Beyond the Sandton cluster, other suburbs which have notable developments of four and five star accommodation include Rosebank, Rivonia, Hyde Park and Illovo, suburban areas that might be called 'nice' using the categorizations of Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990) as well as significant retail and office nodes in the city. Finally, in the category of luxury four and five standard accommodation in Johannesburg one notes the 'new' or re-emergent spaces for hotel development such as the inner city, Soweto and Ormonde, close to the Gold Reef City theme park.

4. Conclusion

In the field of economic geography Niewiadomski (2013a) maintains that the hotel industry is largely under-researched. This article contributes to the growing scholarship and debates around the location of hotels as part of the rise of urban tourism. The study of Johannesburg's changing hotel economy between 1990 and 2010 confirms the importance of a number of issues which are highlighted in the existing literature. The Johannesburg example provides empirical evidence for both the emergence of hotel clusters in a new CBD location, namely Sandton, as well as the establishment of new hotels in the upmarket northern suburbs, which can be characterized as 'nice' locales. In common with what Bégin (2000) observed for Chinese cities, there has been a gravitational shift in the axis of the urban hotel economy. In Johannesburg, however, the core drivers of change are linked to the physical and economic decline of parts of the inner city and the emergence of a post-Fordist spatial order as described by Crankshaw (2008) rather than issues of congestion in an historic old core or of restrictions on building size and accessibility.

Overall, the shifting geography of hotel development in Johannesburg reveals a complex pattern of disinvestment in certain city spaces and subsequent

reinvestment and re-vitalization of those spaces as well the changing patterns of hotel investment towards the new successful nodes of business and leisure tourism in the city. A further comment on the Johannesburg experience is that the city's international airport (albeit located outside its municipal boundary demarcation) has attracted a critical cluster of 'airport hotels' in the manner of the distinct market segment as observed by McNeill (2009). In final analysis, any understanding of hotel change in Johannesburg, South Africa's aspirant world class city, is inseparable from broader processes of local economic restructuring and the growth of service-oriented cities which are driving changes in the spatial patterns of the country's urban centres as a whole. Distinct and changing geographies of hotels of different quality standards are recognized in the Johannesburg context; these reveal both commonalities and differences with the international experience of hotel location.

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