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Traces of the Past: *The Bantu World* and Black South African Travel Mobilities in the 1930s

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Abstract

Racism has been imprinted on the landscape of South African tourism. This paper offers a glimpse of the early impact of race on the development of tourism as the travel movements of most Black South African travellers were restricted by pass laws and segregation legislation. The research adds to an emerging scholarship and debates surrounding the historical development of tourism in South Africa. It provides a window on the traces of the past and of a travel movement by Black South Africans during the 1930s. Analysis is undertaken of the content of *The Bantu World* newspaper which shows that among the Black urban elite there is marked evidence of tourism mobilities. This period was dominated by VFR flows albeit with elements of overlapping leisure and health-related travel movements. In addition, the appearance is observed of an incipient tradition of business travel by Black South Africans at this time.

Keywords: racism; mobilities; Black travellers; *The Bantu World* newspaper; South Africa

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Introduction

According to Jernsand et al. (2023: 2) race "is a socially constructed category with real consequences and has historically been used as a mechanism of power, creating hierarchies of privilege". Arguably, race is one of the several critical foundations for marginalization in tourism (Struwig & du Preez, 2024). As pointed out by Struwig & du Preez (2024: 1) tourism preferences and travel behaviour are considered historically-loaded constructs and can be impacted by images and traces from the past. Racial discrimination in tourism has been a well-documented theme in the United States (Bottone, 2020a, 2020b) as well as in Australia (Ruhanen & Whitford, 2018). For Rabkin (1975: 4) "racism is the most constant factor in South African life" and therefore it is essential to understand its unfolding impacts on travel and tourism. The urgent need for historical perspectives is therefore especially important in settings such as South Africa where practices of systematic racism impacted tourism behaviour. This paper contributes to the limited historical literature about travel and racism in South Africa. The aims are modest, namely to examine the travel mobilities during the 1930s decade of Black South Africans whose lives and livelihoods were marginalized in the context of racist legislation designed to achieve segregation and to maintain white domination (Rallis, 1993). Using an historical approach the study recovers traces of the past of Black South African travel mobilities. An analysis is undertaken of the travel content and insight on the mobilities of Black South Africans through *The Bantu World*, a national newspaper that was launched in the 1930s. The analysis is structured into four uneven sections of material. First, the literature review briefly contextualises this study within an emerging and increasingly vibrant historical scholarship on tourism in South Africa. The second section provides context by situating the development of a Black press in South Africa and the distinctive role of *The Bantu World* newspaper. Issues of methods are then discussed followed by findings. The results relate to examining both the restraints on Black travel movements and on disclosing the outlines of travel movements that were occurring in the 1930s study period.

Literature review

In terms of international tourism research the analysis is grounded in the view which is articulated by Walton (2005: 3) that it is "important that tourism studies should begin to pay serious attention to the relevance of historical research and writing to its concerns". Historical research can uncover traces of tourism past and assist the reconstruction of past patterns of tourism which is acknowledged as an essential research challenge for tourism scholars (Walton, 2005). The appearance and strengthening of an historical tradition in South African tourism scholarship is distinctive in tourism writings concerning the Global South and provides new insight into processes of tourism destination change (Saarinen & Rogerson, 2021). Arguably, looking at literature which has been generated over the past two decades, South Africa provides several examples of the relevance and merits of pursuing historical research on tourism. As is documented elsewhere these contributions have emerged from research works produced by tourism geographers as well as South African historians (Rogerson & Visser, 2020; Rogerson, 2024). Historical tourism studies in South Africa have been pursued at various scales of investigation - national, regional, and local - for both urban and rural areas and interrogated a range of different issues. Thematic investigations have documented the appearance of several early variants of niche tourism, such as fishing (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2024a, b) and mountaineering (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2024c, d). Further thematic research documents the shifting composition of the accommodation services sector at different geographical scales of analysis (C.M. Rogerson, 2011; J.M. Rogerson, 2018, 2019, 2020; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2018, 2022a) and including the activities of early African entrepreneurs in the hotel industry (Sixaba & Rogerson, 2019). In addition, studies have appeared on the initial development of health tourism (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021a), the transnational marketing of South Africa as a tourism destination (Rogerson, 2024), the evolution of caravanning as a mundane form of urban tourism (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021b) and, the growth of business and conference tourism in South Africa (C.M. Rogerson, 2019).

The historical South African tourism landscape has been shown to be imprinted by racism. The creation of racialized landscapes of tourism, racially-segregated tourism spaces (C.M. Rogerson, 2020; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020a) and of the struggles against the making of such racialised spaces in terms of beach apartheid have been scrutinised (J.M. Rogerson, 2017). The differentiated character of urban tourism has been unpacked in historical studies for major cities such as Johannesburg and Pretoria (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2019, 2021c, 2022b) as well as several small towns (Drummond, 2024; Drummond et al., 2021; J.M. Rogerson, 2019; J.M. Rogerson & C.M. Rogerson, 2023; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020b, 2024e). Historical investigations with a rural geographical focus include works on the evolution of rural tourism (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2021d), heritage tourism (van der Merwe, 2019, 2024), and rural tourism in the former Bantustans which were forged under apartheid (C.M. Rogerson, 2022; C.M. Rogerson & J.M. Rogerson, 2023; Rogerson & Sixaba, 2024; Sixaba & Rogerson, 2023).

Undoubtedly a landmark study in South African tourism scholarship is the book *Safari Nation* authored by the historian Jacob Dlamini (2020). This volume represents a Black history and perspective on the Kruger National Park, one of South Africa's most significant and iconic tourism spaces. Dlamini (2020) stresses the presence and mobilities of Black South Africans in the face of a battery of legislation that sought to curtail their independent movement and foster racial segregation and segregated tourism spaces. *Safari Nation* tracks the histories of black mobility – specifically tourism – in the context of colonial South Africa. Critically, Dlamini (2020) points to the appearance of a small African elite – 'New Africans' – who valued the educational aspects of tourism and engaged actively with travel and tourism. This research aligns with that of Dlamini (2020) who views the 1930s as a critical moment in the history of Black mobilities in South Africa. This moment is documented by the growth of a national press which was targeted at the Black elite.

The black press and *the Bantu world*

The early origins of black newspapers in South Africa were of mission-controlled publications and relate to the decades of the 1830s and 1840s (Switzer, 1997). A second short-lived phase in the history of the Black press in South Africa was the appearance in the mid-19th century of a small group of independent African-owned newspapers (Couzens, 1984). The year 1932 is identified by Couzens (1976: 6) as "the key turning point in the history of the black press". This was the time of the foundation of the Bantu Press (Pty) Ltd which launched *The Bantu World* as a national newspaper. The instigator of the Bantu Press was a white entrepreneur, B.G. Paver, who saw newspapers as a critical potential medium for advertisers to reach out to the huge opportunities of the growing black urban consumer market (Couzens, 1984). During the 1920s and 1930s the tempo of Black urbanization in South Africa had accelerated greatly. For example, in 1927 the urban African population of Johannesburg was estimated to be 136,000 persons; nine years later the first official census recorded a figure (likely underestimate) of 229,122 persons and by 1946 estimated to be nearly 500,000 in total (Rabkin, 1975). Significantly, the publicity material sent out by The Bantu Press to its prospective advertisers was titled "Black Gold, a new market and its media" (Rabkin, 1975: 44).

The rationale for initiating *The Bantu World* was rooted also in the observation that between 1921 and 1931 the literacy rate among Black South Africans had improved from 9.9 percent to 12.4 percent and with the rising levels of urbanization the need arose for a newspaper to express the 'needs and aspirations' of the African readership (Couzens, 1976). *The Bantu World* first appeared as a national weekly newspaper in April 1932. For Switzer (1997) the white-run newspaper would shape the form as well as the content of South Africa's black press in the generation after 1932. Indeed, it was argued that as a commercial newspaper aimed at the urban African market – especially on the Witwatersrand – *The Bantu World* had virtually no competitors for two decades and filled the vacuum left by the demise of an independent African press (Rabkin, 1975). Manoim (1983: 101) argues that in its earliest days *The Bantu World* was "consciously elitist" and aimed mainly at those individuals "who had 'made it' in black terms". According to Switzer (1988: 351) these largely-educated and practicing Christian elites "saw themselves, and they were perceived by others, as the vanguard of an African middle-class culture in a white-dominated, racially stratified society". This emergent urban-based middle class included cohorts of lawyers, nurses, clergymen, school administrators, journalists, skilled craftsmen, business individuals as well as educated tribal chiefs and headmen (Switzer, 1988).

The newspaper targeted the black elite in part because of their literacy as "the very act of reading a newspaper conferred status" and further because they were "the only blacks advertisers were interested in" (Manoim, 1983: 101). During the 1930s the largest section of advertisements were for health-care products, necessary consumer items such as food, clothing and furniture, as well as a cluster of luxury items targeted at the most affluent market segment of potential consumers (Switzer, 1997). Among what might be considered as luxury items at the time were cigarettes, sewing machines, cosmetics, torches and batteries, gramophones and use of the services of opticians and estate agents (Switzer, 1988). Advertisers were seeking to impact "westernised blacks with the means to spend on consumer goods" and the content was largely written by a cohort of educated black journalists "with white aspirations who defined their world in terms of western values" (Manoim, 1983: 101). The offerings of leading education institutions, such as Lovedale, and of major industrial schools also were prominent features in each issue of the weekly newspaper.

Arguably, as reflected both in the works produced by Couzens (1976, 1984) and by Suriano & Sifelani (2021), *The Bantu World* was viewed as 'the arbiter of taste' in urban African culture throughout the 1930s. Most writers in this newspaper were seen as politically moderate or 'liberal' (Couzens, 1984). As a whole they fashioned a "discourse of appropriate moral outrage" against the racially segregationist policies of the time (Suriano & Sifelani, 2021: 291). Of note is that influential African contributors included also members of the early African National Congress as well "of urban black institutions promoting accommodation within the white system" (Suriano & Sifelani, 2021: 290). Although *The Bantu World* was proclaimed a national newspaper its circulation mainly concentrated in the urban areas of South Africa's economic heartland in the Transvaal – the Witwatersrand - as well in Swaziland (Rabkin, 1975).

Content in the newspaper was produced in six languages, namely English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho and Tswana. Arguably, the tone of the content was dominated by non-partisan and non-political news and was "focused unabashedly on the cultural concerns and leisure-time activities of the African *petty bourgeoisie*" (Switzer, 1988: 357). Society news was paramount as the paper "was saturated with reports of dances, beauty contests and other competitions, fund raisers, farewells and reunions, exhibitions, teas, dinners, parties, receptions, concerts, speeches and meetings" (Switzer, 1988: 357). Coverage of sports events was also extensive with greatest focus given to soccer, tennis and boxing. A special segment of the paper was dedicated to a supplement for women and their lives, the content of which was dominated by issues around home-making (Switzer, 1997). Masola (2018: 94) argues that the women's pages "bring into question the representation of black women at the time of print but also issues about black womanhood as espoused at the time". Advice was offered variously in terms of "cooking recipes, household hints (making and repairing of clothes and curtains, cleaning blankets and linen, economising in the kitchen), health and home remedies, personal etiquette (stressing good behaviour and cleanliness), safety (the most common dangers apparently involved fires, poisons and weapons), child rearing, love and marriage" (Switzer, 1988: 358-359).

Methods

The study adopts an historical approach which is viewed as one of the beneficial and innovative approaches towards researching tourism and hospitality studies (Olya et al., 2020). In this investigation the content of the weekly copies of *The Bantu World* was examined for the period 1932-1939 which included the first few months following the outbreak of hostilities of the Second World War. The copies of the newspaper were accessed in digital format from the collections of South Africa's National Library. Articles and advertisements concerning mobilities or im-mobilities were identified for content analysis. Of special interest for this analysis is the attention which was accorded in many issues of *The Bantu World* during the 1930s to the mobilities of the urban-based African elite. This was most strongly evidenced in the English-language social pages and discussions around leading Black personalities. Switzer (1988: 357) observes that much interest centred on "who was visiting-thanking-seen with doing what with-spending time with whom, who had arrived or departed (often the city – Johannesburg), who was attending what function". In addition, further insight can be gleaned of the mobilities of this elite group from reports and stories which appeared about the movements of local business individuals as well as of conferences, sports events and entertainment. As well as mobilities there is certain coverage in the newspaper during the 1930s of the restrictions on mobilities which were associated with the implementation of pass laws. Overall, the merits of exploring mobilities through the lens of the content of *The Bantu World* are demonstrated by Masola (2018) in her analysis of a selection of articles in the newspaper to highlight the politics of mobility surrounding black women in the 1930s.

Results

The findings are contextualised within a review of documentary sources which recall the early development of restraints on the movements of South Africa's black population through the regime of pass laws and the enactment of segregationist legislation. The content analysis builds upon the rich detailed studies of the content of *The Bantu World* as produced by Switzer (1988, 1997), Masola (2018) and by Suriano & Sifelani (2021). The specific focus here is upon discerning traces of past travel patterns of this Black elite in urban South Africa during the 1930s. Two sections of findings are presented. The first sub-section addresses issues of im-mobilities and of the restraints which were imposed on the freedom of movement of the Black population in colonial South Africa. Against this backdrop in the second sub-section evidence from *The Bantu World* is provided of the specific growth and nature of tourism movements by Black South Africans in the study period 1932-1939.

Growing policy (Im) mobilities

South Africa's notorious regime of the pass laws was the major vehicle used to control the freedom of movement of the Black (African) population and limit access to labour markets both in urban and rural spaces (Hindson, 1987). According to Savage (1984: 1) the pass laws "have occupied the central position in the process of policing the African population and directing them into places dictated by whites". The history of pass laws goes as far back as the 18th century when slaves in the Cape Colony were required to carry passes to authorize their movement between rural and urban areas. The continued refinement and application of variations of pass laws to limit the mobility of the African population was an inextricable part of a legal apparatus designed to maintain white domination (Rallis,1993). In addition, following the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, it served during the early 20th century as a means for directing flows of African labour into 'white' agriculture and industry and into the geographical areas where it was demanded (Hindson, 1987; Savage, 1986).

Prior to the establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910, the four former colonies and republics had pursued separate policies with regard to segregation (Christopher, 1990). By the opening of the 20th century in the Cape there had evolved a system of passes and controls to restrict the numbers of Blacks migrating into urban areas. After the establishment of a unitary state in 1910, uniwhich form policies were pursued which introduced a degree of conformity into the South African scene. As Christopher (1990: 421) points out the political philosophy adopted was segregationist which was "in line with the thinking of the dominant White electorate of all political persuasions". Indeed, segregation was driven by successive white South African governments to manipulate the country's economic, social and political geography in order to attain and maintain white political and economic supremacy (Rallis, 1993).

Frankel (1979) considers the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 as the first Union-wide legislation to control, manage and segregate Africans through the regulations of the pass laws. This legislation set down a national structure for the administration of urban Africans and allocated powers to municipalities to restrict entry into urban areas as well as to expel the

unemployed, idle or disorderly (Savage, 1986). The underlying rationale for such measures was based on the recommendations of the 1922 Stallard Commission which contended that Africans should be in urban areas only as long as they 'ministered unto the needs of Whites' (Rich, 1978). Christopher (1990) highlights the mass of regulations, including pass laws, to effectively control Black movements and activity in urban areas where they were officially regarded as 'temporary sojourners'. According to Maharaj (2020) this policy was a central state response to demands from various white groups (shopkeepers, small traders, property owners, and workers) who campaigned for rigid segregation, the application of influx control measures, as well the termination of property rights for Black urban residents. The enactment of the pass laws applied only to African men; only in the 1950s were African women ensnared with the 'tightening of the noose' of pass laws in South Africa (Yawitch, 1984).

Despite it being a landmark piece of legislation Maylam (1995) cautions that one must avoid over-estimating the significance of the first Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923. Notwithstanding the powers which were granted to municipal authorities to limit and control the entry of Africans into urban areas through influx control, by 1937 only 11 towns had systematically used such powers (Savage, 1984, 1986). Of note, however, is that the strictest application of such influx control measures occurred in urban areas of the Transvaal which was centred upon the economic hub of Johannesburg. National government introduced a number of amendments to the Urban Areas Act in 1930 and 1937 in order to better equip local governments with powers to control and restrict the mobilities of Africans (Maharaj, 2020). Especially significant was the alterations made by the 1937 Native Amendment Act which "tightened up pass laws on a national basis, linking them directly to provisions governing labour supplies and introduced measures giving African workseekers fourteen days to find work or leave town" (Savage, 1984: 26).

During the 1930s the content of *The Bantu World* reflected frequently upon these policy issues around Black mobilities and most especially the resentment and outrage which was expressed against the restrictions and operations of the pass laws. For example, in 1932 a correspondent for *The Bantu World* observed that of the total convictions under pass law legislation, the majority were geographically concentrated in the Witwatersrand. Reports in 1933 indicated that in the Union as a whole there were 42 000 convictions under pass laws of which 39 000 were recorded in the Transvaal (*The Bantu World*, 4 November, 1933). Under a headline 'Pass Laws Creating Criminals' it was stated that "if there were laws… that have made the Bantu people hate the White-man and be bitter against his rule, they are the pass laws" (*The Bantu World*, 4 June, 1932). The article flagged that there "can be no doubt that many white people think that the pass laws serve as a preventive against crime" (*The Bantu World*, 4 June, 1932). With the impact of economic depression in the 1930s another opinion piece on the pass laws proclaimed "they drive thousands to crime, and their rigid enforcement when the country is in the throes of acute unemployment is an injustice that makes one's blood creep" (*The Bantu World*, 4 June, 1932, 26 August, 1933). The repressive role of the pass laws and their impact in 'manufacturing criminals' was a constant theme in the 1930s (see eg. *The Bantu World*, 23 September 1933, 30 September, 1933, 9 June, 1934). Opinion pages were full of statements on "the futility of pass laws" (*The Bantu World*, 13 January, 1934) and of 'laws that operate harshly against Natives' (*The Bantu World*, 9 June 1934). Particular objection was drawn to the demands made at railway station booking offices that passes be shown at the time of the purchase of tickets for travel (*The Bantu World*, 14 October, 1933). Objections to similar demands made to show passes also were highlighted at Post Offices (*The Bantu World*, 4 November, 1933).

Coverage was given to representations made by deputations of the Transvaal African Congress either for the complete abolition of pass laws or for the introduction of exemptions (*The Bantu World*, 23 December 1933). In 1937 once again calls were repeated for the repeal of the pass laws which were viewed as responsible for police harshness (*The Bantu World*, 1 May, 1937). In 1934, however, the lead article on the front page of the newspaper could report on minor progress towards the modification of the pass laws and of "exemption rights extended to all deserving men" (*The Bantu World*, 25 August 1934). The details included the introduction of special exemptions from the pass laws to "Africans in certain occupations and also to those of good character" (*The Bantu World*, 25 August 1934). Among the list of occupations for exemption were policemen, ministers of churches, local administrators, and chiefs and headmen appointed under the provisions of the Native Administration Act. Opinion articles welcomed such exemptions as well as for those persons 'certified to be of good character' and stressed that such policy changes might temper the hostility towards the pass law legislation (*The Bantu World*, 25 August 1934). Another small concession was that from September 1936 it was reported that curfew hours were extended by one hour from 10pm to 11 pm on grounds that the earlier hour "created a hardship for a large number of respectable and law-abiding Natives who often exceeded that hour in returning home from meetings and social gatherings" (*The Bantu World*, 22 August 1936).

Notwithstanding these minor concessions a stream of reports underlined the continuing high rate of pass law convictions and further highlighted the repressive impact of regulations. One prominent member of the clergy giving evidence on the administration of the pass laws stated that "The European runs to the police for safety and the Native runs away from the police for safety" (*The Bantu World*, 28 November 1936). He added certain members of the police "seem to take particular delight in demanding passes from natives, especially if they had the impression they were educated" (*The Bantu World*, 28 November 1936). Further hardships highlighted in 1938 surrounding the implementation of pass laws were condemned in a report that one unfortunate African in Kimberley and charged with being without a pass would have to walk back to his home area to obtain such a pass as he had no money to buy a railway ticket (*The Bantu World*, 12 February, 1938).

Black travel movements: Growth and purpose

The central finding that emerges from analysing the content appearing in *The Bantu World* during the period 1932-1939 is that the Black elite was engaged in travelling at this time despite the restrictions and pass law controls. Arguably, the reasons for

travel are little different to those reported in studies concerning contemporary patterns and trends in South African urban tourism (Rogerson & Rogerson, 2014, 2017, 2021). The evidence is clear that the Black elite – and in particular the Black elite on the Witwatersrand – who were the major readership for *The Bantu World* engaged in mobilities for reasons of holiday, business, and above all for visiting friends and relatives (VFR). Tables 1 and 2 provide selected examples of the reports that regularly appeared on the weekly social pages of *The Bantu World* in 1932 which attest to mobilities for purposes of VFR and holidays.

Table 1: Examples of travel for VFR purposes

Date	Column	Report
24 December 1932	Who's Who in the News This Week	Nurse E. Sechaba of the Nursing Home, Durban is on the Rand spending her holidays among friends
23 September 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Mrs H. Madibang from Heilbron is spending her holiday with her eldest daughter in Doornfontein.
14 October 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Miss Leva of East London is in the city and staying with friends in Yeoville.
21 October 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Miss J. Mbongeni left the city on Wednesday for Louis Trichardt on a short visit to her relatives.
4 November 1933	Some of the People in the News This Week	Mrs M. Mahamo of Ladysmith has left for home after spending a month in the city with her relatives
4 November 1933	Some of the People in the News This Week	Nurse N. Xaba of the City Deep Hospital has arrived from her holidays with her parents in Natal.
16 December 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Miss Abigail of the Lovedale Institution is spending her holidays with her parents at Crown Mines.
23 December 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Mr. W.Z. Sidane, formerly a teacher and in Klerksdorp, is in the city and stays with relatives at Klipspruit location.
23 December 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Mr F. Fihile of Lovedale is spending his holidays in the city with his parents.
6 January 1934	Who's Who in the News This Week	Mr. S. Maroega who is High School Student at Lovedale Institute, left recently with his sister for Luderitz S.W.A. to spend their holiday with their uncle a well-known businessman.
31 March 1934	Who's Who in the News This Week	Miss Elizabeth Tlabane left the city for a week's holiday in Potchefstroom. She will be the guest of her sister who is a Nurse.

Source: Author based on *The Bantu World*

It is evident from Table 1 that the Witwatersrand, with Johannesburg at the core, was both a major source as well as a destination for VFR travel. The content in Table 2 shows that an overlap exists between the categories of leisure and VFR travel and that it would be inappropriate to make a sharp distinction between the two purposes of travel at this time. One obvious exception is the educational trip to the seaside of Durban which was an essay competition for "Bantu schoolboys" organised by *The Bantu World*. The winners of the competition – open to entrants across the Witwatersrand – would enjoy "ä free holiday" described as "in the nature of an educational trip and every effort will be made to ensure the scholars visit as many places as possible" (*The Bantu World,* 2 December 1933). The winners' trip occurred in August 1934 with reports that "the seaside party spent an exciting time in Durban, saw the wondrous beauty of South Africa's gateway to the East, and visited commercial and industrial establishments as well as the great African colleges around Natal's largest city" (*The Bantu World*, 11 August 1934).

Table 2: Examples of travel for holiday purposes

Date	Column	Report
2 July 1932	The People in the News This Week	Mr. S.S. Tema of Stofberg is spending his holiday in Johannesburg. Mr Tema was formerly assistant Secretary of the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives
17 December 1932	Who's Who in the News This Week	Rev. J. Makaya of the Church of Africa Aliwal North has returned to Aliwal North after spending a month's holiday in the Rand
24 December 1932	Who's Who in the News This Week	Mr Gama Mtombesi, Head Teacher of Amalgamated School, Odendaalrus, O.F.S., is spending his holiday on the Rand.
24 December 1932	Who's Who in the News This Week	Mr L.G. Leshe of Pietersburg, an old Lovedalian, is spending a holiday on the Rand and will return to Pietersburg after a fortnight
23 September 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Mr Sol of the Crown Mines Native Hospital has arrived from Mafeking after spending a fortnight holiday
23 September 1933	Who's Who in the News This Week	Staff Nurse Mzilikazi of the Crown Mines Native Hospital is away on a month's holiday in the Cape.

Source: Author based on *The Bantu World*

Overall, what is apparent from the content in *The Bantu World* was that regular travel movements were taking place throughout the year for holidays to visit or stay with friends and relatives. Although precise statistical data cannot be generated Table 1 and 2 suggest the expected pattern of increased travel flows during the Easter and Christmas periods. Nurses, students, clergymen, teachers and administrators are among the most prominent groups reflected in Tables 1 and 2. Mode of travel was predominantly by train. Some evidence was found, however, of car ownership as for example in 1932 it was reported that "Mr and Mrs A.N. Mokoena of Pietersburg left their home by car on a visit to Johannesburg this week" (*The Bantu World*, 5 November 1932). With the exception of one recorded case of travel to South West Africa most of the examples listed in Tables 1 and 2 relate to VFR or holiday travel that would be classed as domestic touring. This said, several instances were found of longer movements for 'regional' travel outside South Africa with individuals travelling from the Witwatersrand to destinations in colonial Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Mozambique as well as to Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland.

Arguably, the largest share of the reported 'comings and goings' as reported on the social pages of *The Bantu World* during the 1930s were for VFR and/or holiday purposes. Beyond such visits it is apparent that travel flows from and to the

Witwatersrand were occurring for reasons of health or for business purposes. Table 3 gives examples of health considerations as the driver for travel mobilities by Black South Africans during the 1930s. Seemingly, the health facilities of the Witwatersrand were an attraction for in-bound movements. But, also, that health considerations could be the central reason for travel from the Witwatersrand to other parts of South Africa at this time.

Table 3: Examples of travel for health purposes

Date	Column	Report
16 December 1933	Some of the People in the News This Week	Mrs B.J. Ngele of Braamfontein who is spending a month's holiday at Meyerton for health reasons is expected back before Christmas
23 December 1923	Who's Who in the News This Week	The brother of the Paramount Chief of Bakwena is in the city for health reasons The brother of the Paramount Chief of Bakwena is in the city for health reasons
17 February 1934	Who's Who in the News This Week	Miss Lipheka of Johannesburg was among the passengers bound for the Cape on Wednesday night. She had an urgent bed-side call from her father who lies in critical condition in Kimberley.
31 March 1934	Who's Who in the News This Week	Miss M. Mahoma of Victoria West who has been on the Rand for several months on health reasons left the city on her return home on Monday in much improved health.

Source: Author based on *The Bantu World* Source: Author based on *The Bantu World*

The most striking set of findings are those presented in Table 4 which provide evidence of early business travel mobilities by Black South Africans in the 1930s. The findings on business travel are of particular interest as this form of travel mobility was not discussed in Dlamini's (2020) important examination of Black travel in South Africa. From Table 4 we have reports showing that travel for business purposes was not uncommon and could be the result of individuals business travel, tribal matters or movements to attend conferences. Further signs of business travel are contained in reports appearing in the feature articles of *The Bantu World*. Regular reports are published of conferences for teachers, administrators, the church, and health personnel. Among several examples are included the Advisory Boards Congress in Johannesburg (*The Bantu World*, 17 December, 1932), the Bantu Teachers Federation Conference (*The Bantu World*, 17 December, 1932), the Transvaal Eisteddfod (*The Bantu World*, 10 December, 1932), the Bantu World Trade Exhibition (*The Bantu World*, 24 February, 1934), and, The Empire Exhibition hosted in Johannesburg during 1936 (*The Bantu World*, 29 August, 1936). Political conferences such as those hosted by the African National Congress also generated flows of business travellers.

Other types of business travellers included the touring undertaken by different groups of entertainers (jazz bands, orchestras, choirs) as well visits by Black farmers to sell their produce at the Johannesburg Municipal Market. In 1934 several reports appeared of 'progressive Bantu cattle owners' who were travelling into Johannesburg to sell their livestock at the Newtown market (*The Bantu World* 31 March, 1931, 28 April, 1934). The existence of what would be termed 'informal business tourism' also was evidenced in reports appearing of rural herbalists bringing their produce into the city for sale at market places such as the Jubilee and Salisbury Compound (*The Bantu World*, 16 April, 1932).

Table 4: Examples of travel for business purposes

Date	Column	Report
2 July 1932	The People in the News This Week	Paramount Chief Sechele of the Bakwena Tribe in Bechuanaland accompanied by his Secretary is on a visit to the Rand for the purpose of seeing his people.
2 July 1932	The People in the News This Week	Chief D.L. Masapha of Basutoland is on a short visit to the Rand.
9 July 1932	People in the News	Mr. S.B. Macheng who attended the special conference of the African National Congress in Kimberley returned to the Rand last Monday.
9 July 1932	People in the News	Professor D. Jabavu of Fort Hare who was one of the speakers at the recent Missionary Conference spent a few days in the City en route to the Cape.
5 November 1932	Who's Who in the News This Week	Nurse A.V. Mangena of Bridgmore Hospital was in the city last weekend in preparation of the nurses meeting which takes place tonight.
17 December 1932	Who's Who in the News This Week	The Head Teacher Methodist Higher Mission School, East London has arrived in the City with the choir for recording purposes and Eisteddfod competition.
4 November 1933	Some of the People in the News This Week	Mr P.L. Twala of Bethlehem spent two weeks in the city on business.
31 March 1934	Who's Who in the News This Week	The Rev. E.S. Mtimkulu of the Bantu Methodist Church left the city on Friday for Dannhauser and Zululand in connection with church matters.

Source: Author based on *The Bantu World*

Conclusion

Racism has been imprinted on the landscape of South African tourism. Colonial South Africa provides an early glimpse of the impact of race on the development of tourism as potential Black travellers necessarily navigated an environment of pass laws, segregation and the existence of only a limited infrastructure of accommodation services (Dlamini, 2020). This study contributes to the emerging literature and debates surrounding the historical development of tourism in South Africa. More specifically, it provides a window on the traces of the past and of a travel movement by Black South Africans which was gathering momentum during the 1930s. Examination of the content of *The Bantu World* newspaper shows that (at least) among the Black urban elite there is evidence of a phase of tourism development. This period was dominated by VFR flows but with elements of overlapping leisure and health-related travel movements. In addition, there is interesting material which suggests the appearance of an incipient tradition of business travel at this time. Further, in terms of research approach, the study

demonstrates that the mining of the content of newspapers of the Black press can be a useful and as yet largely untapped source for pursuing historical tourism research. One limitation is, however, the need to embrace a wider range of historical source material in order to understand the lives and (im-)mobilities of unskilled factory workers, domestic servants or labourers (Switzer, 1988). The everyday experiences of 'the common people' however, largely went unrecorded for the readership of *The Bantu World* with the exception of reports about crime, accidents and the activities of illegal urban brewers.

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