
South African cities and Globalization

Céline Vacchiani-Marcuzzo

**Édition électronique**

URL : <http://echogeo.revues.org/12047>

DOI : 10.4000/echogeo.12047

ISSN : 1963-1197

Éditeur

Pôle de recherche pour l'organisation et la
diffusion de l'information géographique
(CNRS UMR 8586)

Référence électronique

Céline Vacchiani-Marcuzzo, « South African cities and Globalization », *EchoGéo* [En ligne], 13 | 2010,
mis en ligne le 20 septembre 2010, consulté le 02 octobre 2016. URL : <http://echogeo.revues.org/12047> ; DOI : 10.4000/echogeo.12047

Ce document a été généré automatiquement le 2 octobre 2016.



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Illustration 1 – Centre des affaires, Le Cap



Auteur : Céline Vacchiani-Marcuzzo.

- 1 Born with colonial settlement patterns, the South-African urban system has experienced half a century of Apartheid. Under the effects of globalization, this urban system evolves as more developed urban systems and mature settlement patterns. This urbanization process (in the limits of functional urban agglomeration) makes South Africa one of the

most advanced countries in Africa in terms of urban growth. The world-wide economical integration in the dynamics of the South-African urban system, by the means of direct investments and multinational firms settling implies different impacts and disruptions. Nowadays, despite of a long insertion of South Africa in international commercial flows, location strategies of foreign firms contribute, like everywhere else, to a strengthening of the metropolitan level of the hierarchy (especially Johannesburg but also Cape Town). They do not produce a noticeable urban specialization. A long-term analysis of investors' strategies nevertheless reveals emerging trends of diffusion and catching-up processes, especially on the coast, in coastal cities (*cf. picture of Cape Town's CBD*) and in their peripheries.

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AUTEUR

CÉLINE VACCHIANI-MARCUZZO

Université de Reims, UMR 8504 Géographie-cités, vacchiani@parisgeo.cnrs.fr