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Amandla. Ngawethu?
The Trade Union Movement in South Africa and Political Change

Doctoral Dissertation

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Contents

PREFACE

Amandla! Ngawethu! Power! Power to the people became the rallying cry for millions of South Africans during the 70s and 80s. There was no doubt about the legitimacy of the demand under the restrictive apartheid state.

Until 1979, rights and privileges in the South African labour market were restricted to "employees, – other than the natives". Professor Nic Wiehahn, the architect behind the legal dispensations, which extended the definition of employees, and thereby gave blacks access to trade unions and bargaining rights, said about the new labour movement to emerge:

> "Don't worry, it is just a big dog with small teeth."

However, the "barking" and fighting of the union movement escalated. When I first came to South Africa in 1987, unions were at the leading edge of the struggle for democracy. Pro-democratic political parties were banned and in exile, civics operated under tight restrictions, political activities were also severely restricted and the media had little space (and interest) on commenting on activities and suppression in the black areas.

In early 1997, unions organised around 40 per cent of the formal workforce and free democratic elections have taken place extending political rights to blacks for the first time. The major union federation COSATU is in alliance with the majority political party and union leaders are part of the transitional government and a constituent assembly.

This doctoral thesis focuses on the role of labour in the process of political transition and more specifically, the way unions may affect the development of citizenship, democratic culture, and thereby the legitimacy and stability of a democratic South Africa.

Boudon (1974) says there are arguments for unequal distribution of gains, access to achievements or needs, but there are no arguments whatsoever, for differentiation of *opportunities*. Living under racism, discrimination and apartheid suppression for three years made a strong impact upon me. Morally, politically and academically, my attention was

turned towards institutions and mass movements that led the struggle against apartheid and the union movement thereby became a "natural" focus.

Research is supposed to be value-neutral and objective, but it never is! Still, I have been particularly aware of the balance line between being "close" while supposedly "distanced" in my analyses. I find no reason to hide the strong political and personal respect I have for the trade union movement in South Africa. I've also found some of my best friends in the South African unions. The best I can do is to make people aware of this "connection" and strive to not make it affect my results and conclusions. The "closeness" has on the other hand also been an advantage to my work with this thesis. This is not a thesis written in Norway about a "far-away" country, but rather a thesis written in the *middle* of the transition process inside South Africa, with close access to information and the action of the struggle.

I want to thank several people for help with and inspiration to the end product being tabled here today. In 1987, I approached four COSATU affiliates in order to get access to do interviews in their sectors; Food and Allied Workers Union, Transport and General Workers Union, South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union and the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa. Some of the COSATU affiliates had at that stage been approached by people introducing themselves as being from the *Human Science Research Council*, but who were actually security police who wanted to probe on the "revolutionary potential" of COSATU unionists. Since "furthering the aims of a banned organisation" could carry a five-year jail sentence until 1990, many labour activists simply avoided discussions about politics. Many were reasonably and under-standably cautious about reporting on any activities that could be interpreted as illegal under apartheid security legislation. And unionists were therefore naturally cautious when approached by anyone wanting to do research and surveys amongst their members! Thanks to Adrian Sayers, Dave Lewis, Ebrahim Patel, and Ebrahim Wake for giving trust, co-operation and assistance to an unknown foreigner. I was at that stage still considering doing interviews at the workplace and for that reason started also approaching employers in order to get access. This strategy proved however to be very demanding in the late 80s, and employers were not particularly helpful nor trustful.

Thanks to Johann Maree who was my supervisor when I started this thesis at the University of Cape Town (UCT), to Ari Sitas who inspired me through his "workers culture" projects and publications, to Karl von

I INTRODUCTION

In 1984, political repression in South Africa was severe. Pro-democratic political parties were banned and operated either underground or in exile. The media had no interest in or means for reporting on what happened outside the "white areas". Anti-government activities were outlawed and severely punished. Those with the courage to challenge apartheid laws, the Anti-Communism Act, or the several States of Emergency to follow soon found themselves detained, jailed, under banning orders or far worse. Population groups were not allowed to mix, except in employment practices based on social and legal hierarchies. Whites had status, power and wealth. Blacks had repressions, Bantustans and poverty!

In 1994, a new democratic government was elected. Since then, the freedom to organise, speak, and practise religion as well as the protection of the law and constitutional rights have been granted on an equal basis to everyone. Former political activists are now in government and hold top civil service positions; the political and institutional apparatus has been reorganised; and the various population groups are now expected to intermix without prejudice or racial intolerance and to establish a common national identity.

These changes were dramatic in more than one sense. At the political level, they made headlines all over the world and held out the hope of change for people still living under authoritarian systems around the world and in Southern Africa. But the transition was also traumatic for academics, for it was unexpected and challenged many "old-established truths".

The received wisdom in academic circles is that economic growth and increased educational levels are the chief criteria determining the evolution and survival of democracy and that without them it may break down, a thesis that has frequently been confirmed by international experience. In the case of South Africa, some argue that it was international sanctions and pressure that finally turned the tide towards democracy. For many South Africans it was the *struggle* that led to victory and it was only the sacrifices and risks taken by millions of individuals

inside South Africa that made victory possible. But what were the characteristics and role of this struggle? What form did it take? And to what extent, and why, did it get support inside the country?

Some people believe that structural factors, such as industrialisation, modernisation and economic development, determine political developments. Others argue that it is culture which shapes history. While some say that individuals take part in struggles and collective action for democracy because it is *rational* to do so, others argue that it is the sociological and not the rational, "economic man" thesis which explains collective action. The argument that popular mobilisation and the strength of civil society in South Africa helped bring about the fall of apartheid in many ways cuts across both structural and cultural explanations. Civil society is formed by both structural and cultural factors and likewise also helps to shape them. Individual attitudes and organisational activities give shape and meaning to economic and political factors and they also carry forward and re-interpret culture. This determines the impact of structural and cultural factors on democratic change and consolidation. This thesis focuses on the role of civil society in the struggle for democracy in South Africa.

A close scrutiny of the political transition in South Africa will give us a better understanding of the processes underlying that transition and, even more important, of the challenges to the consolidation of democracy that lie ahead. In the flow of history each step influences the next. If it is true that increased income, wealth and improved living conditions are crucial factors for democratic consolidation, then South Africa faces a bleak future in this respect. Economic growth has been low or stagnant for years, inequalities in income and wealth are severe, and political cleavages based on race and ethnicity have taken a firm hold through decades of apartheid. While some say that economic development and modernisation influence the development of democratic citizenship, others argue that it is engendered chiefly by the establishment of a civil society and broad community engagement. Civil society can provide the basis for collective action and mobilisation for democratic *change* in the short term and for democratic *consolidation* in the long term. In South Africa, the trade-union movement is generally regarded as having a special place in this respect. This thesis will look at:

> How the trade-union movement, as an interest organisation, may have influenced the distribution of resources and thereby served as an agent for political change in South Africa.

How the unions may have functioned as laboratories for political learning and thus as mobilisers of collective action.

The role of the unions in the development of citizenship, democratic culture and the legitimisation of a democratic South Africa.

1 A newborn or stillborn democracy?

1.1 The theoretical point of departure for nation-building

The United Nations added some fifty new states to its roster of members between the early 50s and the mid-60s (Rokkan 1987). While interest in nation-building had initially concentrated on European political development, following the process of decolonialisation in Africa and Asia political and academic attention turned towards regime transformation and the shifting relationship between politics and society. The increasing number of legally independent countries brought with it a wide variety of efforts to describe, analyse and develop theories about the criteria for political change in the developing world. Although the great flurry of new state formations in Africa and Asia was initially expected to lead to the spreading of democratic principles and practices, in the mid-80s many countries were still waiting for democracy to happen. This situation changed in the late 80s and early 90s, however, when democracy received a fresh boost as the most legitimate and popular political system around the world in what has been described as "the third wave of democracy" (Huntington 1991). Democracies were born in Eastern Europe, Latin America and, last but not least, in Africa. Another new wave of academic interest in the conditions for democracy was triggered off on that basis.

Studies of political development were often based on the implicit or explicit assumption that the process of change would follow a linear process from "traditional" agrarian societies to "modernity"; from a society characterised by low levels of specialisation and wide-spread illiteracy, governed by centralised power structures and elites without broad mass participation, to a modern, mobile, culturally dynamic, urban, differentiated society with a high level of popular participation (Coleman 1960, 1988; Østerud 1978).[1] Early studies of political change emphasised the *developmental* process of change,[2] or political change as a *functional* response when existing cultural and political structures were unable to

confront challenges without further structural differentiation and cultural secularisation (Almond & Powell 1960). Early approaches to the study of African politics had the same focus. At the heart of these modernisation theories was the essential claim that the structures and processes of human society develop from simple forms of traditions to complex expressions of modernity (Leftwich 1996:7).[3]

Yet, these views of modernisation were soon criticised by the "dependency theory", which was based on what had been observed of nation-building in practice in many Third World countries (Frank 1969, Amin et al. 1987). Perceptions of development or modernisation were criticised for simplifying the differences between "traditional" and "modern" and for neglecting the variety of state forms in-between. Furthermore, they were criticised for being ethno-centric in taking Western states as models for development and thereby legitimising the power relations between modern and traditional societies - between "developed" and "developing" countries.[4] Furthermore, there is sufficient evidence of cases where ethnic identity does not wither away with modernisation but is rather strengthened and accentuated (Simpson 1994).

Although there is confusion and disagreement as to the causes, content and direction of political change or development, there seems to be a certain consensus about *some* of the elements involved in the process of

[1] See also the modernisation theory: Parsons 1977, Rostow 1960.

[2] Pye (1966) mentions some of the many definitions of political development: (i) as at prerequisite for economic development; (ii) as the politic typical of industrial societies; (iii) as political modernisation; (iv) as the operation of the nation-state; (v) as administrative and legal development; (vi) as mass mobilisation and participation; (vii) as the building of democracy; (viii) as stability and orderly change; (ix) as mobilisation and power; and finally (x) as one aspect of a multi-dimensional process of social change.

[3] Modernisation is also perceived as a specific historical period, as an abstract quality of development or as an elite strategy. See Bendix (1966-67) for the first, Parsons (1951) for the second and Nettl (1967) for the third. Østerud (1978: 10-15) describes all these interpretations as well as the criticism of the modernisation theory and I draw heavily on his work in these introductory arguments.

[4] Modernisation theory was also attacked for its lack of attention to international systemic influence (Skålnes 1993). The dependency theory explained development (or lack of it) as an effect of international relations and, in particular, of international trade. In fact O'Donnell (1973) states that the strains produced by heavy emphasis upon import substitution led to the emergence of new, stronger, and more lasting forms of authoritarian rule in the developing world.

political change (Pye 1966) or nation-building. In general, a process of change from authoritarian rule to democracy is characterised by a general spirit or attitude of equality. Equality refers to mass mobilisation and active citizens, universal laws and appointment to political office on the basis of achievements. Furthermore, there is broad agreement about a certain level of performance, effectiveness and efficiency in the execution of public policy and rationality in administration as well as a secular orientation towards policy. Finally, a third theme running through the scholarly debate is that political development entails some degree of differentiation and specialisation. In addition, there has been an increasing focus on the idea that political change is not linear but occurs in unexpected and to some extent inexplicable "jumps". At the same time, it has also been acknowledged that political change in Africa, Asia and Latin America had local and regional characteristics which were impossible to deduce on the basis of the political change that took place in the course of European nation-building. Eisenstadt (1986) pointed out that modernity was not necessarily needed for interest-articulation and conflict-solving in a process of political transition and change. In fact, in several countries traditional mechanisms could well take care of such functions (Eisenstadt 1986).

Nation-building and democracy in Africa
Early studies of African politics were written mostly from a modernisation perspective, with the basic principle being that African societies were in the process of becoming modern rational entities in which efficiency and scientific logic would replace traditional values and belief systems.[5] In economic terms, modernisation was seen as commensurate with mechanisation, industrialisation and economic growth. In social terms, it was defined as increased individual mobilisation controlling the political importance of communal identities and establishing procedures for resource allocation. In political terms, modernisation was seen as institutional expansion, involving rationalisation of the government apparatus, power concentration, some measure of political participation and an augmentation of capacity in order to meet growing demand. Yet, by the 70s it had become painfully clear that these approaches could not keep up with the rapid and problematic pace of events in Africa. Thus, the

[5] This section draws upon work by (Chazan et al. 1992:15-17).

dependency and underdevelopment school focused not only on the process of development but also on the roots of underdevelopment. In their view, the beginnings of Africa's systematic impoverishment were linked to European imperialism, which brought Africa into the global economy in a structurally unequal manner. But while it dispelled the false optimism of the modernisation school, dependency theory was almost uniformly pessimistic in its evaluation of the future prospects for Africa. On this basis, a group of scholars emerged who concentrated on studying events from an African nationalist point of view and saw the importance of the *state* and state action in grasping the roots of the political and economic crisis in Africa.

The post-colonial state in Africa increasingly became associated with declining performance and with authoritarian rather than democratic forms of government through the 70s and 80s. In fact, scholars shifted their attention from the capability to the *incapability* of the state in Africa[6]; its functional decline, instability and inability to bring about intended changes in society (Azarya 1988). Research on political instability in Africa became a growth industry. Lemarchand (1988:149) stated about the role of the African state that:

> "Peasants avoid it, urban workers despise it, military men destroy it, civil servants rape it and academics ponder the short- and long-term results"

Reasons for the bad performance of several African states have been variously argued as being the personal failure of leaders, structural weaknesses of the state, the legacy of colonialism, international dependency (Azarya 1988) and demands for structural adjustment programmes from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Adedeji 1994). Several scholars have pointed to the political systems Africa inherited from the colonial period (Young 1988).[7] Profoundly

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[6] Jackson & Rosberg (1982) state that what maintains and defines states in Africa is a juridical definition of a recognised territorial unit of the international community. In terms of their ability to exercise control, however, – i.e. to articulate, implement and enforce commands, laws, regulations and policies, – few African states could in their opinion be defined as states.

[7] The colonial state-building included a comprehensive "cultural" concept in which racist ideas were elaborated in ideological terms.

embedded in the colonial state was a command relationship with civil society, reflected in its laws and practices, its mentality and even its imagery. The new African leaders' strong preference for a state-led economy and political system was derived from colonial practice (Rakner 1992). One-party states were established in several African countries as a means of enhancing national identity by suppressing linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity that colonial boundaries had left them with.

New political regimes in Africa thus often tried to defuse potential political conflicts in civil society by incorporating all interest groups into their own one-party state.[8] Furthermore, they took steps to take control through nationalisation of the economy. There is widespread agreement today that this variant of statism led to both political and economic failure (Skålnes 1993). The harsh reality of state formation in post-colonial Africa was, in Bratton's (1989:409) opinion, that in many countries, the apparatus of governance began to crumble before it had been fully consolidated after independence. Various terms have been applied to describe it, such as "the weak state", the "swollen state" or the "patrimonial state". Common to all these descriptions is a system in which personal wealth and prestige is acquired through public office.[9] With political control of economic development, economic problems tend to become political problems as well. As the state failed to meet public demands, its legitimacy declined and people started to regard the state as an alien institution (Bratton 1989).

The conditions which led to the rise of the states of Western Europe and the growing sense of identification with these states on the part of the population were unlikely to be repeated in Africa (Tilly 1975, Simpson 1994). Yet, the 90s have seen a new wave of democratic change sweeping Africa. About fifty countries have gone to the polls. All in all, this is the largest and most fundamental wave of political change to have taken place since the era of independence in the 60s. How can we explain this shifting relationship between politics and society in Africa?

After a long period of economic crisis in the 70s and 80s, many African governments had been forced to implement stabilisation and structural adjustment programs.[10] These reforms posed an ideological challenge to the predominantly statist orientation of the post-colonial

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[8] I. G. Shivji (1986) uses the term "statisation", which refers to the incorporation of all major civic and interest organisations into the one-party state.

[9] African governments are also known to devote a higher percentage of total expenditure to public sector wages and salaries than in any other world region.

years and gave rise to legitimisation problems for governments. Two views on the probable sources of democratisation have been discussed on this basis. The first attributes the drive towards democracy to the pressures of "political conditions" imposed by Western governments, i.e. calls for institutional political reforms of a liberal kind from a coalition of international financiers. The second view traces the movement towards democracy to the failures of the post-colonial state to resolve the problems of governance. Chazan (1988) argues that the instability of authoritarian rule was closely tied to the resilience of association life and local political culture.

Both the modernisation theories and the dependency school helped to identify some of the principal problems faced by African political systems. Yet, they also had major weaknesses (Chazan et al. 1992). The modernisation theory put stress on structural and economic factors rather than socio-cultural factors and emphasised economic growth while paying little attention to the question of who the beneficiaries of economic activity were. The dependency studies, on the other hand, did not permit refined analysis of variation and degree of specific trends and patterns. Insufficient attention was devoted to the determined nationalism of many African leaders, to the continuing significance of ethnicity and to the intricacies of the political upheavals that took place on the African continent during the 70s and 80s. The statist school, finally, stressed the inner workings of power politics in Africa and paid little attention to state-society relations. Chazan et al. (1992:22) highlight a problem common to all schools of political analysis in Africa when they point out

> "...the propensity of political scientists to employ a top-down approach to the study of politics on the continent. Political processes and political conflicts have been interpreted as revolving exclusively around formal state structures, either separately or in their international context".

However, politics in Africa cannot so easily be reduced to activities on the national scene (ibid). State institutions relate to non-formal structures and civil society. And civil society relates to the state. Power constellations are

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[10] Stabilisation referred to demand management and potential short-term gains in foreign exchange earnings and savings, while "structural adjustment" emphasises supply-side changes that usually take several years to bear fruit (Akwetey 1994).

not entirely state-centric. Both the struggle for independence and the post-colonial period in Africa were also marked by civil society activities, whether carved along ethnic, religious or class lines.

1.2   From apartheid to democracy?

1990 saw the real dawn of political change in South Africa. Several apartheid laws had been lifted in the late 80s and more were abolished in February 1990.[11] Free parliamentary elections took place for the first time in 1994 and local elections followed in 1995 and 1996. The Constitution was finalised in 1996 and new, fully democratic elections are to be held in 1999. How can these changes be explained and what is the likelihood that the new-won democracy will be transformed into a stable, consolidated democracy without breaking down?

The new democratic government started its job with a distinct advantage over many states in Asia and Africa in that the overwhelming majority of the population recognises South Africa in territorial terms. It also has the advantage of extensive international support in the form of funding and solidarity for the restructuring process ahead. However, although apartheid laws have now been formally lifted, the cumulative weight of apartheid racism still marks every aspect of society. Enormous differences in the *real* distribution of socioeconomic resources remain. Access to education, infrastructure, healthcare and social services varies according to residential areas, which, in turn, to a large extent overlap with race and population groups. South Africa has one of the highest levels of inequality in wealth and income in the world. There are also differences in the distribution of resources between rural and urban areas and between groups living in the ten traditional "homelands" established under apartheid and people living in other areas. The government's *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (RDP) promised millions of jobs, houses, electricity, water and schools in the years to come. Simultaneously, several factors limit the ability of the government to deliver: large amounts

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[11] President de Klerk opened Parliament on February 2nd 1990, announcing the unbanning of the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party and the Pan Africanist Congress. For more detail on the South African transition process, see Chapter 3.

of expenditure are already tied up in various programmes and in paying off public debt, in maintaining the civil service inherited from apartheid as well as in financing compromises reached during the political negotiations. There are major economic challenges posed by the need for a fundamental restructuring of the whole economy. Economic growth is far below the required minimum of 6 per cent,[12] there is fiscal deficit, domestic fixed investments are in decline and the capacity of the economy to create or maintain employment has been deteriorating for years.

As if these challenges were not enough, a national identity, a common political culture and democratic tolerance have to be established in the process. Whites, blacks, coloureds and Asians are gradually integrating, but the uneven distribution of resources, economic restructuring and the sluggish reform process may easily contribute to racial tensions and intolerance. The development of tolerance towards other people and their opinions would seem to be a crucial component in a democracy emerging to replace a political system based on racism and *intolerance*. Lack of contact and communications across racial and ethnic groups may easily have undermined mutual confidence and trust. Constant political repressions and restrictions led to racial and social differences in organisational experience, knowledge, participation and democratic learning. Political discrimination by the apartheid regime and clear preferences and benefits for certain parties are likely to have contributed to political tensions and intolerance. The 90s witnessed a high and increasing level of violence, with frictions based on political conflicts, ethnic and regional differences, social hierarchies and competition for access to scarce resources. From 1990 until approximately the beginning of 1994, 12,000 people died in politically motivated violence. In 1994, more than 1,600 individuals died as a result of violence in Natal alone. There is still political violence in certain areas in 1998 and criminal activity is high by international standards.

While the South African state's policy of segregation throughout the apartheid era encouraged frictions and gave rise to a lack of political legitimacy and a dearth of democratic culture and participation, collective political action in *civil society* took a new turn in the 80s, when increasing numbers of people were mobilised. Strikes, stay-aways, political marches and meetings became the channels for millions of people's protest against

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[12] Which the government has stated as the minimum required to reduce unemployment to 17 per cent by 2006.

the regime. Organising political platforms around both class and ethnicity may constitute an explosive mixture. One important question now is how to turn opposition activists into active supportive citizens *within* the formal channels of participation. While the first transition in South Africa was from authoritarianism to democratic elections, the second transition is from a democratically elected government to an institutionalised, *consolidated* democratic regime. With third-wave democracies (Huntington 1991[13]) the problem is not the overthrow, but the erosion of democracy: the intermittent or gradual weakening of democracy by those elected to lead it (Huntington 1996) or else a decline in political authority and increase in general anarchy amongst those who supported and voted for democracy. Fifty per cent of blacks and 28 per cent of whites in Gauteng say that members of their most disliked party should not be allowed to live in their neighbourhood. Furthermore, 20 per cent of blacks disclosed in 1994 that they were under pressure to vote for a party they did not support.[14] In 1995, electoral turnout at the local elections was only around 30 per cent.

Cleavages and the character of conflicts have been a main theme of nation-building theory. Confronted by severe polarisation, any regime is prone to challenges and potential collapse. Dahl (1971:124) states that the beliefs of the people, and in particular those of political activists, are a key element in the complex processes by which historical sequences or sub-cultural cleavages are converted into support for one kind of regime or another. The most popular way of explaining beliefs is to attribute them to self-interest; another is to attribute them to culture. The building of democratic citizenship may become crucial here.

So on what basis can we explain democratisation and nation-building in South Africa? Unlike Europe, which forms the basis for Rokkan's model of nation-building, political development in South Africa has not followed the separate phases of state formation, nation-building

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[13] Huntington dubbed the period following the establishment of democracy in Portugal in 1974 as the "third wave" of global democratic expansion. He defines a wave of democratisation as "a group of transitions from non-democratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumbers transitions in the opposite direction during that period". (1991:15).

[14] Interview with Lawrence Schlemmer in (Human Science Research Council) in. *Finance Week,* May 5, 1994.

and thereafter interest articulation through class conflicts.[15] The South African State was a legal, but not legitimate entity before 1990. Furthermore, class conflicts preceded the legitimate state formation and nation-building process. In fact, European nation-builders had the advantage of solving the main problems of state formation before the pressures for popular participation and redistribution were put on the agenda. By contrast, many post-colonial states in Africa have had to deal with all these challenges at the same time. South Africa is no different in this respect. On the other hand, political developments have not followed the path of independent, post-colonial Africa either. While black rule was secured in the 60s in the rest of Southern Africa,[16] South Africa continued to be governed by white "European" authoritarian rule. The problem in South Africa is argued to be the lack of an ethnic core around whose values a nation could be constructed, or more precisely, the existence of a *number* of competing strong ethnic cores (Simpson 1994:472). Western Europe had the former; Africa, to some extent, had the latter. But is race the only, or the dominant, factor explaining the struggle for democracy and nation-building in South Africa?

1.3   The nation-building framework

The *political interaction framework* goes beyond the limitations of existing schools of thought, each of which contains important insights, and attempts to concentrate more directly on the complex processes and factors at work on the African continent (Chazan et al. 1992:22-29). This framework presumes that the state-society relationship is central to understanding the political dynamic of Africa today. It focuses on identifying the multiple factors at work and acknowledges that social, economic, organisational and cultural factors all define constraints and available options at any given historical moment. Government institutions are indeed significant actors, but so are individuals, social groups, organisations and traditional authority structures. Political competition encompasses struggles over material, political and normative resources,

[15] This argument refers to Rokkan's (1987) models of nation-building.
[16] With the exception of Zimbabwe and Namibia, which only gained their independence in the 70s and Namibia in 1989, respectively.

over identity and interests, over institutions and symbols. By studying the political process in South Africa from this perspective, it may be possible to trace more accurately the shifting political patterns.

Rokkan (1970) is concerned with the functional preconditions for nation-building – i.e. with the conditions for reintegrating the separate elements created by the territorial system. He identifies four thresholds in the processes of democratisation and mass mobilisation: legitimation, incorporation, representation and finally, the threshold of executive power (1970:79). The threshold of *legitimation* is the point from which there is effective recognition of the right to petition, express criticism, demonstrate against the regime, etc. – i.e. the rights of assembly, expression, etc. The threshold of *incorporation* refers to the time it takes before formal recognition of participation is extended to everyone on an equal basis. The threshold of *representation* refers to how high the original barriers to representation of new movements are. Finally, the threshold of *executive power* refers to the powers of the legislature versus the executive and the barriers to parliamentary influence on executive decision-making.
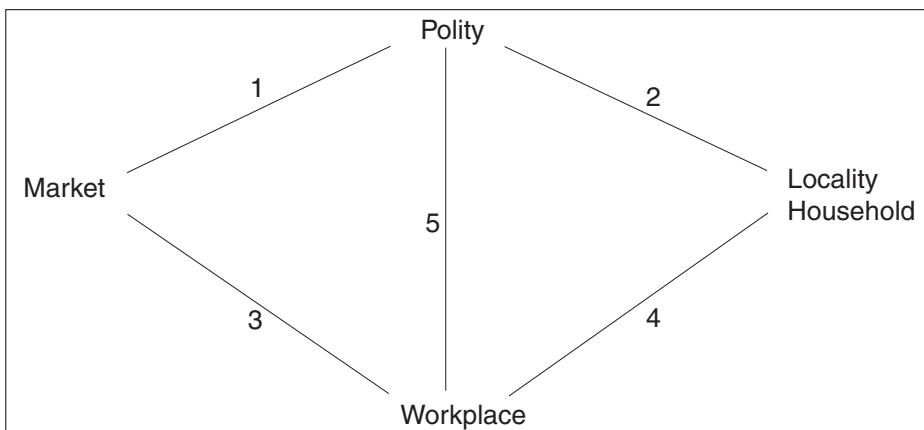
Rokkan distinguishes four main functional segments in system integration: the material basis of the population (economy); resources for the protection of territorial borders (power); mechanisms for conflict regulation and control of deviations (law); and conditions for national identity through language, religious orientation and symbols (culture). Furthermore, his model caters for the social process approach by mentioning indicators of resources that will be available within each of the above-mentioned functional segments and what costs integration will bring if it is followed by mobilisation of support or opposition. Finally, Rokkan includes actors and organisations in his model as a point of departure for mapping out the various strategies of and cleavages between actors from the different functional segments. The basic model that Rokkan operates with is therefore one with four functional segments in which different groups of actors or elites are born and ultimately in which resources can be mobilised either in alliance and support or in opposition.

An adjusted version of Rokkan's model is used in Figure 1.1 below, which portrays a tentative model for democratisation and nation-building in South Africa. It includes four segments or arenas. These are the spheres or segments of society generally recognised as generating interests, potential cleavages and culture. The pressures, counter-pressures and political competition within these segments take the form of struggles over material, political and normative resources, over identity and interests and over institutions and symbols and in turn determine the extent to which,

and the speed at which, the thresholds mentioned above are crossed. The important point is that civil society may play a role in all these segments. Institutions and organisations can potentially be formed in all of them and the way they are structured and the resources they have at their disposal will influence the extent to which their segment will become the leading element in explaining the political transition process.

The first dimension (1) shown in the diagram is the economic dimension, the one between the market and the polity. Ideologically this was expressed in South Africa as the cleavage between the extremes of capitalism on the one hand and a planned economy on the other hand and between big capital on the one hand and the National Party (NP) and its constituency in government before 1994 on the other hand.

Figure 1.1   Model for Nation-building in South Africa

Right from the beginning, the NP drew its support first and foremost from the Afrikaner working class, and it embarked upon a massive series of affirmative action programmes and a planned economy in order to build a welfare system and create jobs for poor white Afrikaners. While big capital also supported apartheid initially, it became increasingly clear within business circles that the *economy* could benefit from free market forces and a reformed apartheid.[17]

[17] Business is, however, heavily criticised by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1997) for having silently supported apartheid and made enormous profits on the system for several years.

The second dimension (2) is the territorial dimension of pressures and counter-pressures between centralisation and decentralisation. In South Africa this was expressed before 1994 as a conflict between whites on the one hand and blacks on the other hand. In the traditional Rokkan model the cleavage is between the polity trying to centralise and individuals resisting. In South Africa, however, the cleavage was one of the centre attempting to centralise the "white" areas while simultaneously decentralising black communities through the establishment of Bantustans and homelands and the segregation of population groups and by denying blacks political, social and economic rights. The territorial dimension became a cleavage between whites and blacks executed by the NP and the institutions of white apartheid government on the one hand and the black liberation movements – the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) – on the other hand.[18]

The third dimension (3) is the functional dimension, relating to industrialisation and what in Europe became known as the Industrial Revolution. The industrial dimension is expressed as the potential cleavage between social classes and between employers and workers. The fourth dimension (4) is between a potentially elitist working class and the wider community, while the fifth dimension (5), introduced additionally into the diagram, is between a potentially politically conscious working class on the one hand and the apartheid government on the other hand. Rokkan argues that in order for us to understand political change or nation-building, we need to analyse the relationship between pressures and counter-pressures and loyalty, opposition and mobilising potential both within and between these dimensions or arenas. Conflicts along one axis may cut across another, overlap with it or simply provide the mobilisation for conflicts along other axes. We will use the political interaction framework in our analysis of the relationship between the state and civil society in South Africa while keeping in mind Rokkan's model when analysing the mobilisation of resources in the various arenas as well as the pressures and counter-pressures between the arenas. The resources and mobilisation

[18] When the liberation movement was banned and forced into exile, its role was taken over by the Mass Democratic Movement, The United Democratic Front and other organisations of civil society.

of actors in other arenas and the interaction between the actors within the various arenas define the constraints on and options available to civil society at any given time and its relationship to the state.

1.4 The bases of democracy

The cultural basis of democracy

Explanations of democratic change generally omit, in Almond and Verba's (1980) opinion, the psychological basis of democratisation. The experiences of several processes of democratisation around the world, however, point to the need for the development of a common political culture and political mobilisation of people if the nation-building process is to result in a stable democracy and offer favourable conditions for economic development. Sartori (1976) argues that ideological polarisation and fragmentation are characteristics of ineffective, "breakdown-prone" democracies. Political culture is looked upon either as a *direct* condition for stable democracies (Almond & Verba 1963, Putnam 1993) or as a crucial link *between,* for example, economic development and democratic stability (Diamond 1994, Inglehart 1990, Lipset 1981 et al.). It is, in Dahl's (1971:166) words, widely recognised that differences in the political cultures of various countries help to account for differences in the nature of their political systems.

Political culture is the aggregate expression of people's priorities and values concerning national integration and the legitimacy of a political system. It is a set of attitudes, beliefs, sentiments and evaluations about politics at a given time and about the role of the self in the political system (Almond & Verba 1963, Diamond 1994b).

Political philosophers from Aristotle onwards stressed that democracies are maintained by active citizens participating in civic affairs, by a high level of information about public affairs and by a widespread sense of civic responsibility (Almond & Verba 1980).[19] Simultaneously, there are also those who highlight the dangers of *too* high levels of participation for

[19] In the *Republic,* Plato likewise argued that governments vary in accordance with the dispositions of their citizenry (quoted in Putnam 1993:11). Rokkan also says that the statebuilding process includes activation of the population through a gradual access to citizenship (1987).

the stability of democracy.[20] The degree of participation can, however, be perceived as less important than the form and content of that participation. The stability of a regime can be assumed to be most affected by whether popular participation takes place *within* regulated channels or in opposition to them and by the degree to which participation is based on a consensus about the legitimacy of the institutions and procedures of democracy.

Studies of democratic consolidation that include an examination of the role of political culture have in the past tended to focus heavily on the political elite (Dahl 1971, Rustow 1970, Lijphart 1977). Gradually, however, the importance of the development of a mass democratic culture in the emergence and consolidation of democracy has come to be recognised. Politicians in newly established democracies are now appealing for a "new political culture" which breaks with the attitudes of political deference and economic dependency inculcated under earlier one-party rule. In the 60s the main explanation for democratic stability or breakdown, or indeed for the way in which the whole democratic process functioned, was, on this basis, sought in the values and identities acquired by citizens:

> "It was on the supportive attitudes of citizens, learned from parents, friends and school, that the major institutions – government, parliaments, parties – all rested"   (Conover & Searing 1994:24).

Likewise, Bratton and Liatto-Katundu (1993:2) state:

> "The political culture embodied in the attitudes of ordinary people affects fundamentally whether such countries will be successful in installing and consolidating democratic governance. Stated more bluntly: the survival of democracy depends upon whether citizens are willing to defend it".

Prominent analysts of democracy have asserted that democracy requires a distinctive set of political values and orientations from its citizens: moderation, tolerance, civility, efficacy, knowledge and participation

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[20] The limitations of using the degree of political activity as an indicator of political stability, civility, etc. are illustrated by the fact that political participation has hardly ever been higher than it was in Germany than under Hitler or in the Soviet Union under Stalin's decade long regime from the early 40s.

(Diamond 1994b). Not only are people's values and priorities important for political stability but also how they express them and the rationality underlying their development. Dahl (1992:45) states that if democracy is to work, it requires a certain level of *political competence* on the part of its citizens:

> "In newly democratic or democratised countries, where people are just beginning to learn the art of self-government, the question of citizen competence possesses an obvious urgency".

Studies of newborn democracies in, for example, Latin America have noted the lack of *legitimacy for political institutions* together with the lack of strong, efficient and at the same time representative state structures (O'Donnell 1994). Likewise, studies of newborn democracies in Eastern Europe point to the lack of trust in political institutions and organisations (Rose 1994). Furthermore, studies of several African countries have stressed the increasing gap between state bureaucracies and the people (Chege 1995, Callaghy 1994). Without popular trust in and support for the content, decisions and institutions of democracy, regimes become vulnerable to collapse in periods of economic and social distress (Lipset 1981). It is, in other words, an unsatisfied mind rather than the actual supply or distribution of resources that produces revolutions or political opposition.[21]

When new democracies confront problems in delivering goods and services, legitimacy for their institutions and for the process of decisionmaking becomes even more critical. The unique nature of the Northern European welfare states rests, for example, on the public consensus that confers legitimacy on their institutions and compromises. Interest groups that lose in the first round know that they may win in the next. Interest groups that are in the minority in the first round know that they may be in the majority in the next. People therefore operate with a long-term perspective on social change. In newly established democracies, on the other hand, legitimacy for political decisions is critical, and even more so, legitimacy for institutions and respect for the principle of majority rule. Thus, Lipset (1963:1) states:

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[21] Davies (1971) is generally regarded as having produced one of the classic contributions to the theory of revolutions.

"Without consensus – a political system allowing the peaceful 'play' of power, the adherence by the 'outs' to the decisions made by the 'ins', and the recognition by the 'ins' of the rights of the 'outs' – there can be no democracy".

Habermas contended that the seeds of fundamental change can be found in crises of legitimation and other related crisis tendencies (Held & Krieger 1983:491). A legitimation crisis will occur when there is broad opposition to government policies and when the conflicts around which the opposition is organised cannot easily be integrated in the existing framework. This is how apartheid collapsed, but how can democracy be sustained? Migdal (1988) argues that ethnically divided societies are prone to fail in meeting the criterion of civility. South Africa is *the* country that went furthest in building structures and cultures of ethnic division. Does that mean that there is no hope at all for consolidating democracy in South Africa? Political learning is the "process through which an individual acquires his particular political orientations, his knowledge, feelings and evaluations about his political world" (Dawson et al. 1977:33). There are two schools of thought concerning the development of civility and of attitudes supportive of democratic developments. One says that socio-economic developments build civility. The other says that civility may be developed through organisational engagement.

The socio-economic basis of political learning and democracy

It is widely assumed that high levels of socio-economic development will favour transformations towards democracy and help maintain it after it has been established (Dahl 1971). Poverty or affluence shows up in all sorts of ways in addition to per capita income: in increased literacy and education levels, welfare etc., all of which are, in turn, linked to democratisation. Not only competitive politics in general and not only democracy in general, but *polyarchy* in particular is significantly associated with high levels of socio-economic development (Dahl 1971:65).

Distribution of *income and wealth* is, according to Lipset (1963), the most important source of interest-conflict in complex societies. Lipset (1963) showed that the lowest per capita income countries consistently fall into the "less democratic" category. Other contemporary democratic theorists[22] have stressed various aspects of modernisation, such as wealth and education, in their discussions of the underlying conditions for stable and effective democratic rule. Social scientists concerned with develop-

ments in the Third World, such as Arturo Israel,[23] assert that unless a country becomes "modern", it cannot raise its performance to the level now prevailing in the developed world.

Interests, political demands, democratic citizenship and democratic stability are thus generally considered to be generated by socio-economic development and modernity. More developed countries produce more literate and educated citizens who, in turn, demonstrate greater participatory skills and increased democratic consciousness. In allocating socio-economic resources – i.e. income, wealth, status, education, etc. to its people, every society also allocates political resources. In other words, income, education and so on affect the degree to which people take possession of their formal political rights and transform them into political participation and influence.

So are education, income and wealth the source of democratic attitudes and behaviour amongst citizens in South Africa? Dahl (1971) argues that theories that emphasise socio-economic development as the chief basis for the emergence of polyarchies fail to explain a number of deviant cases. They do not, for example, explain the case of India with its democracy and low GNP per capita; nor do they explain the cases of high-income Latin American countries with authoritarian systems, which existed in the 60s. They do not explain either the fact that Toqueville's polyarchy had a relatively low GNP per capita while simultaneously developing an advanced democracy, as in *Democracy in America* (Dahl 1971:69)! As Dahl (ibid) rightly points out, to demonstrate that a relationship exists between socio-economic development and democracy does not tell us anything about the *causes*. Can it be that we have to look elsewhere for intermediate factors that make socio-economic development have a constructive effect on the emergence and preservation of democracy? Can it be that there are factors that can play important intermediate roles while simultaneously contributing themselves to the building of democratic skills and competence amongst people?

[22] Dahl (1971;1982) puts forward the same argument.
[23] Referred to by Putnam 1993:11.

The organisational basis of democracy

Another set of explanations of preconditions for democracy involves the extent to which there is a widely differentiated and articulated social structure embracing organisations with relatively autonomous interests – i.e. civil society as an agent and laboratory of democratic change. Although most democratic transitions are negotiated and controlled transitions at the leadership level, they more often than not rely upon stimulus and pressures coming from the mobilisation of independent groups and grassroots movements. Although political change seems to follow its own course, people and their organisations are what gives it its impetus. Civil society can affect the distribution of socio-economic and political resources, build institutions and contribute to the development of a national democratic culture, thereby giving legitimacy to a new system and creating a balance between conflict and consensus.

The need to build or reinforce a strong civil society in order to promote successful democratic consolidation has been underlined during the past few years by the political changes in Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America. But the arguments of pluralist democracy preceded these events. The major claim of pluralist democracy is that multiple identities can, and should, be given social and political recognition through the operation of interest groups. Civil society thus has an important role to play in the process of democratic consolidation (Diamond 1994, Putnam 1993). Walzer (1991:302) argues that:

> "Only a democratic state can create a democratic civil society; only a democratic civil society can sustain a democratic state".

This thesis attempts, however, to show that the above statement is exaggerated. A democratic civil society can also develop under an authoritarian system and serve as an impetus for the democratisation of the state. However, while the influence of a democratic civil society on the sustainability of a democratic state has been grossly underestimated, it is not the *only* factor of importance. Civil society takes many forms and characters and while it can serve democracy, it can also undermine it. Our aim is to find out how, and under what conditions, civil society can play a constructive role.

Economic growth, the redistribution of resources and political culture are factors usually perceived as created or perpetuated by the state or political parties. Simultaneously, the success of economic and political restructuring is closely related to the degree that individuals and

organisations respond positively to these impulses. Simultaneously, while some scholars look at regime transformation in terms of micro-level processes and individual political mobilisation, such studies have not succeeded in identifying the factors of importance either for mobilisation or for its outcome. Many argue that the extent to which popular mobilisation is organisationally channelled will determine the political character and stability of regime transformation. Organised interests in civil society compensate for people's lack of rights and resources and influence their patterns of political activity and their priorities. The focus here is on civil society as the *intermediate variable* between the individual and the state.

"Civil society" has been given a variety of definitions. While some embrace the concept of civil society as a norm for society – i.e. as "the opposite of nepotism", "decent societies", etc.[24] – others perceive civil society as everything that is outside the realm of the state or as the self-organisation of society in *opposition* to the state (Hall 1995). Gellner (1995) defines civil society as a set of diverse non-governmental institutions that are strong enough to counterbalance the state and prevent it from dominating and atomising the rest of society. This is a minimal definition. Diamond (1994:5) regards civil society as:

> "The realm of organised social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules. It is distinct from 'society' in general in that it involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions and ideas, exchange information, achieve mutual goals, make demands on the state, and hold state officials accountable".

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[24] Civil society is often associated with moral standards. Civil society has, for example, for Hall (1995) and Perez-Diaz (1995), everything to do with the modern world in which civilised social practices and interactions between the state and society are particularly crucial. This part of the civil society litterature tends to be Eurocentric and imbued with liberal democratic values and thus carries too much of ideological baggage in order to be a fruitful point of departure for the present analysis in the following. We will look instead at the organisational and pluralistic aspects of civil society,- while also recognising that civil society has an effect upon political learning.

Oxhorn (1995) stresses that the strength of civil society is measured *inter alia* by its collective capacity both to resist subordination to the state and to demand inclusion in national political structures.

Diamond (1994) in fact argues that in the current wave of democratisation, no phenomenon has more vividly captured the attention of politicians and academics than that of civil society challenging authoritarian regimes. And O'Donnell et al (1986) argue that the "resurrection of civil society" can play a critical role at key moments in the uncertain course of political change.

Social developments and "structure" are perceived by Hall (1995) as being interlined with ideological codification: social developments can be held back by an absence of ideological codification and similarly, ideological advances can be stymied if they lack institutional support. Social organisation breeds on the basis of culture, but culture, including a civil or democratic culture, also develops within the organisations of civil society. Hence civil society embraces *and* nurtures civic culture. Dahl (1971:36) argues that it was probably most common amongst the older and more stable polyarchies that the development of public debate and competitive politics preceded the expansion of suffrage:

> "As a result, the rules, practices, and the culture of competitive politics developed first among a small elite, and the a? critical elite. ... Later, as additional social strata were admitted into politics they were more easily socialised into the norms and practices of competitive politics already developed among the elite".

But surely the organisations of civil society also have the potential to build democratic skills amongst people at the grass-roots level.

1.5   Unions as agents or laboratories for democratic consolidation

Rokkan (1987) introduced a distinction between the numerical (or electoral) and the corporatist (or functional) channels of interest articulation. The one centres on the individual, the other on organisations. Organisations may, however, also serve as alternative or additional sources of political influence for the individual and may affect the priorities and attitudes the individual brings into the numerical channel. Rokkan (1987)

argues that both the numerical and the functional channels need to be studied in order to grasp changes in political systems. Both follow their own institutionalised rhythms: in the former case, elections, referendums and parliamentary sessions; in the latter case the corporate channel ideally follows regulated bargaining sessions and institutionalised relations between organisations and the state. For long periods, these two processes will run parallel, but they may in periods of crises interfere with one another, and events in the one may disturb events in the other. These processes may, moreover, become interlined in cases where they serve as alternative channels for political pressure and each may also influence the impact the other has on politics.

The corporate channel may influence politics in more than one way. Institutions in the labour market can serve as *agents* for political change through their impact on individual living conditions and on economic developments in the market and through the role they play as collective pressure groups in the political sphere. What is often overlooked, however, is that they can also serve as *laboratories* for political change by teaching the individual democratic skills and values on the basis of the norms and practices that they as agents carry forward.

Unions as agents for political change
Organised civil society has pushed for and influenced democratic change in several different ways: on the basis of numerical strength, through interactions between elites, through control of key assets or through access to other political resources. The role of labour movements has been particularly neglected in studies of political change. In our opinion, more attention should be directed towards organisations that emerge out of economic development, for these can influence both the pace and direction of political change. Studies from Latin America as well as Southern and Eastern Europe point to the instrumental role of unions in the process of regime transformation. Likewise, recent studies show that unions had a political role to play in periods of change both in Zambia and in Namibia.

Trade unions are first and foremost regarded as organised representatives of workers' economic interests. However, the notion of unions playing a political role outside industrial relations and collective bargaining is not new. Trade unions may directly affect the form and content of public policy as collective *organisations*. Studies of corporatist arrangements in Western Europe show the participation of unions in state

structures and in the formation of public policy. Marxist or neo-Marxist scholars have argued the collective power of unions in overthrowing capitalism or moderating the malfunctions of free market forces.

The political role of trade unions has mostly been studied under politically stable conditions rather than in unstable systems, during crises or during regime transformations (Feuer 1991). While theoretical and normative works regard trade unions as having revolutionary potential (Hyman 1971; Poole 1984; and Gorz 1973, 1975), the role of trade unions in the nation-building process and in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy has been argued by only a few (O'Donnell et al 1986, Przeworski 1988, Valenzuela 1989). Owing to their key position in the economy and their ability to resort to strikes and other sanctions, trade unions may affect economic growth and policies more than other organised interests. Furthermore, unions may contribute to the institutio-nalisation of industrial relations by establishing rules and frameworks for interaction and conflict-solving, which, in turn, may promote institutio-nalisation in other areas. Negotiations in one area often contribute to the establishment of networks or segments of sectoral interests, which may then serve as an impetus for political change.

Newly established democracies keen to create a broader basis of representation and thus enhance their own stability have often done so by giving the organisations of civil society greater access to the political and administrative sphere. Broad representation by and consultation with interest groups in civil society has the effect of enhancing the legitimacy of political decisions and support for their implementation in practice. In countries marked by strong cleavages along the lines of race, ethnic background, religion or gender, democratic legitimacy and stability in the reconciliation process tends to be favoured by political and administrative institutions in which people from these diverse backgrounds are represented. If the conflicts inherent in nation-building are to be managed efficiently, opposing camps need to be able to compromise, and institutions must be established to bridge cleavages.

People need to become involved in new political institutions and decision-making processes, for the danger is otherwise that they will join protest movements or sink into a state of apathy and alienation that may make them vulnerable to mobilisation by anti-democratic forces. National institutions that have succeeded in winning popular legitimacy may thus contribute to the development of a sense of national community and identity (Finer 1962). However, development research has primarily concentrated upon the role of *political* institutions, while civil society

institutions to a large extent have been overlooked. The extension of some political liberties to blacks – i.e. the right to organise economically, played an important role in their wider struggle for democracy. This thesis therefore looks at economic development as an important condition for the process of political change, important because it creates *institutions* – i.e. organised elements of civil society – that can serve as organisational focuses and sources of political learning for citizens.

A rich organisational life supplements the role of political parties by stimulating political debate and participation. Involving people in the decision-making process is one way of making people more committed to the goals and ideals of democracy. Widespread participation in decision-making through legitimate channels prevents people from becoming alienated from democracy and from becoming easy targets for undemocratic forces. Civil society also serves democracy by creating channels for the articulation, aggregation and representation of interests. A final important function of organised sections of civil society is to increase knowledge about and create a consensus around structural, political and economic reforms amongst citizens.

Unions as laboratories for democratic consolidation

How and where do people acquire the competence and knowledge to become responsible citizens, as mentioned by Dahl (1992)? How do people learn to strive for democracy? How does a country gain legitimacy for its institutions and support for democratic procedures?

Studies of trade unions and politics have mostly focused on unions as collective organisations and *agents* for political change. However, unions can also serve as important forums or *laboratories* for individual political learning.

Political values are studied in the light of *learning or socialisation*. The emergence of new values and attitudes takes place within given contextual frameworks with their own sets of values, norms and rules that determine what is legitimate and useful in order to achieve certain goals (Lysgaard 1976). Traditionally, academics differentiate between political learning and political socialisation. While political socialisation refers to beliefs facilitating adaptation to a community,[25] political learning is a

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[25] "Becoming social". See Conover and & Searing (1994), as well as chapter 9, for a clarification of the concepts of political socialisation versus learning.

much broader concept and refers to the acquiring of any political belief. In fact, however, most studies of political socialisation have concentrated more on people's political interests, party preferences, etc., rather than on their adaptation to a community.

Of concern for democratisation processes and the *consolidation* of democracy are how people become citizens and how political culture evolves. The notion of being a citizen embraces not only the act of voting but also all other activities entailed in being a loyal member of a political community. This includes political participation, civil activities and public service, including participation in voluntary organisations or interest groups. Different citizenship profiles are constituted by different sorts of civic identities and modes of public life.

Political activity and values are closely connected with social structures. The process of childhood or primary socialisation is generally regarded as the most important phase in determining what political values an individual will later hold and what activities he or she will engage in. In fact, the cleavages contributing most often to political instability in newly established states are religion, language, race and ethnicity – all of which are acquired during this initial phase of childhood learning. Recently, however, interest has increased in adult political learning. Kieffer (1983) describes the political learning process as one in which a mobilising event or "action" is followed by a period of reflection during which the individual gradually becomes more aware and active. Such a dialectic relationship between action and reflection indicates that political learning takes place not through reading and passivity but rather through engagement and activity. Through organisational experience and partici-pation individuals confront life with changed values and expectations. Research done on voluntary organisations shows that they serve as important learning grounds for individual politics. Toqueville suggested that involvement in local government and voluntary associations is a condition for the stability of the democratic system in that it, for example, helps to train potential opposition leaders in political skills (Lipset 1963:8). A number of scholars point to the fact that organisations run on democratic lines can indirectly promote the political democratisation process by influencing the values and political activities of their members (Mann 1973, Sklar 1982).

Political learning and culture are formed by structural factors, socio-economic conditions and institutions where people spend a considerable amount of time. The workplace is one such institution. Much research has focussed on working life and the workplace as an arena for learning. Most

of these studies, however, have looked at productivity-related topics. They focus on conditions for improved efficiency and to what extent the structuring of decision-making, and of work itself, help to increase individual loyalty to the company and thus to improve performance. Cole (1919, 1920), on the other hand, looks at participation in industry as political participation in its own right and claims that industry holds the key to a truly democratic polity. Pateman (1970) focuses on the importance of the workplace as an arena for political learning as well. She argues that the more participatory a working environment is, the more community-oriented and active the individual will become outside work.

By disseminating ideas and creating consensus amongst their members, organisations become channels for conflicts that might otherwise take place between individuals or between the individual and the state (Toqueville 1954, Lipset 1963). O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead (1986) credit unions with a more radical or "revolutionary" potential. They state that the greatest challenge to authoritarian rule is likely to come from the new or revived identity of the working class and its capacity for collective action. Through union participation, workers internalise new knowledge and experience. On this basis, unions influence members' political values and the direction of their participation and may thus have an indirect influence on the pace and direction of political change.

1.6   The problems and questions in focus

This thesis focuses on the transition to democracy and the preconditions for the sustainability of democracy in South Africa. I am not going to *measure* the level of democracy or give a *causal* explanation for its emergence or durability.[26] However, I will discuss factors that may have affected change in the short term and thereby helped to increase the probability of democratic consolidation and stability in the long term. Civil society will play a central role in our discussion as the basis for an investigation into the organisational and cultural bases for democratisation in South Africa. I start with the assumption that the attitudes of civil

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[26] Dahl (1971:71) expresses the problems of causality well: "To demonstrate that a relationship exists tells us nothing about causes. Causes can be teased out of data only with the help of theory".

society and the civil activity that I describe will have some significant *relationship* to the way the political system operates and will thus affect its stability, legitimacy and effectiveness, even if the content and direction of this effect is still unclear. During periods of crisis, politics becomes a struggle over the basic rules of the *game*, rather than over allocation of resources *within* a given set of rules. We ask which factors contributed to *changing* the game in the first place and which contributed to maintaining the struggle for the allocation of resources *within* a given set of rules..

The primary concern of this thesis is to examine the mechanisms and organisations in civil society that can contribute favourably to democratic transition: directly, by functioning as collective agents for political change through their impact on economic developments and the distribution of resources and through their ability to exert collective political pressure on the government; and indirectly, by mobilising pressure in the territorial and economic dimensions. As a secondary consideration, it also looks at how organisations may help to develop civic virtue and thus create a political culture that provides legitimacy for the government and hence a strong basis for democratic transition.
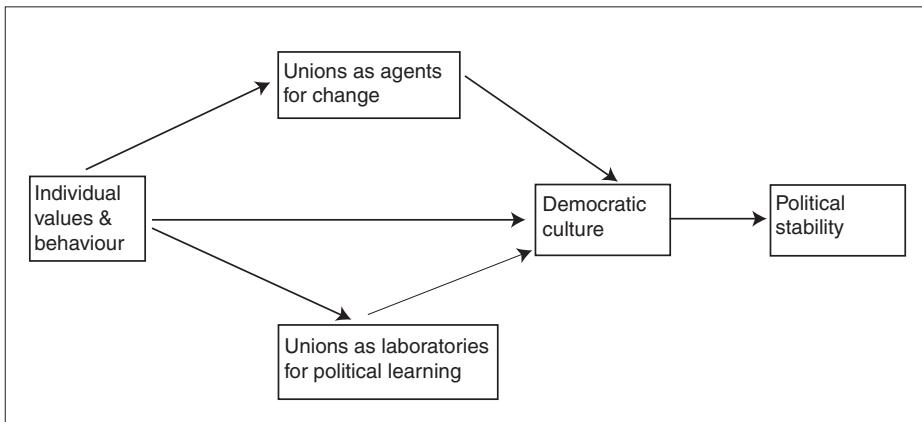
International expectations of the role of civil society in the process of democratic consolidation are high, even though many argue that in the case of Africa such expectations are likely to be disappointed. African civil society, it is argued, is still too weak to be a supportive basis for democratic consolidation. Gyamah-Boadi (1996) argues, for example, that, given the deep-seated and multi-faceted problems it faces, African civil society will probably not play a key role as an agent of democratic consolidation. This hypothesis will be questioned below.

This thesis addresses the role of the union movement in the democratisation of the state. It looks at the labour movement's role as a collective actor and its potential role as an *agent* for democracy. It also looks at the role organisations, and labour in particular, may play as a training ground for democratic culture – i.e. what is referred to as unions as *laboratories* for democracy. The thesis pays special attention to unions affiliated to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and concentrates on the new trade-union movement which emerged during the 70s and its role in the politics of South Africa up till 1995.

The questions to be addressed

The aim of this study is four-fold. *First*, to reach a better understanding of political culture and to assess the state of democratic citizenship in South Africa. *Second*, to establish the role of civil society as a collective agent in the process of political change and democratisation. *Third,* and related to the previous question, to establish the role of the trade-union movement in the process of democratic transition. *Fourth*, and most importantly, to shed light on the impact unions have on workers' political priorities and activities as laboratories for political learning. Figure 1.2 below is a map or framework for thinking about political learning or the development of political culture in this thesis. Using this as a starting point, we can attain a better understanding of the impact unions have on the integration of population groups, ethnic segments and social classes and thereby the role of unions in equalising political resources and moderating political cleavages. On this basis, we may thus assess the influence of unions on the South African democratisation and nation-building process.

Figure 1.2   Trade Unions and the Consolidation of Democracy

1. Citizenship, political culture and cleavages

Guaranteeing formal rights is not sufficient to establish a real democracy with widespread participation and popular influence. And establishing a formal democratic system with popular involvement is not sufficient to consolidate a legitimate and stable democracy in the long term. The view advanced here is that communal citizenship demands an active citizenry and that citizenship is grounded in relationships that are bound together by common activities and traditions (Barber 1984). According to this view, politics is a fundamentally public activity which people engage in for the

collective good. The quality of communal citizenship depends not only on whether participation takes place but also on the spirit in which it takes place (Conover & Searing 1994). Civic virtue entails willingness to subordinate personal interests to the public good, and it is a public-minded spirit that inspires people to place the welfare of the community ahead of their own.

Simultaneously, while political culture influences democracy independently of other factors, the development of a democratic culture cannot be taken for granted as a natural by-product of democratic institutions, rights or practices. All countries are characterised by cultural diversity, by the existence of different and sometimes incompatible ways of life and attitudes that seek to preserve themselves in a variety of ways.[27] It seems critical, however, that cultural and ideological cleavages should be kept to a minimum and that there should be some degree of common national identity, legitimacy for the state and civic virtue. Cleavages are most damaging to democratic consolidation if they overlap or are concentrated.[28]

Cleavages may persist even after the structural conditions that gave birth to them have changed or evaporated (Knutsen 1986, Lipset & Rokkan 1967). Within countries, elements of political culture are shaped by factors such as life experience, religion, education and social class. These factors may be regarded as socialisation settings through which the broader political culture is filtered and within which people develop a sense of citizenship and civic orientation (Conover & Searing 1994). Inglehart (1977) uses the terminology pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial to distinguish between different types of cleavage. Pre-industrial cleavages are ascriptive variables like religion, race, gender, language and territorial

[27] But cultural diversity takes several forms (Parekh 1994). Karl Deutch measures the extent of unification and integration in a nation by the rates (and cross products) of assimilation and mobilisation. Assimilation refers first and foremost to the proportion of the population who have become speakers of the predominant language. Mobilisation in turn refers to the proportion of the population which has entered the urban, if not nation-wide system of social communication (Rokkan 1970).

[28] Dahl (1971) argues, for example, that it is more damaging to democratic consolidation, or the development of polyarchies, if nation-states are dominated by one main cleavage or by several overlapping cleavages where only two groups are competing for interest representation. There is with other words, advantageous for democracy if *several* groups compete for benefits and positions.

identity. Industrial cleavages are related to the polarisation pattern underlying industrial societies – i.e. status and hierarchical variables, such as income, occupation, education and union membership.[29] Political cleavages may be defined as relatively stable patterns of polarisation, which explain the variance in our dependent variables concerning communal citizenship: political participation and a civic culture (Inglehart 1984, Knutsen 1986). Socio-structural, pre-industrial cleavages are generally presumed to be the most important in shaping political attitudes in developing countries. South Africa, however, is characterised as both a developed and underdeveloped country simultaneously. Does this therefore mean that the pre-industrial cleavage model has yielded to a more class-based pattern of political polarisation, particularly in urban working-class areas? In other words: has the legacy of apartheid created a more typically industrial class-based society?

Cultural diversity, the ideological basis of apartheid, the complete segregation of population groups, restrictions on political activities and the state of emergency that existed until 1990 are some of the factors that have helped shape what is probably the most important cleavage in South African politics: *race*. The legacy of apartheid, with its lopsided distribution of socio-economic resources, serves to perpetuate the racial cleavage. The various racial groups will, in gross terms, have different interests and priorities as well as different ways of expressing them. However, over the past twenty years, a wealthy black middle class has also emerged.

Education, income and wealth, as signs of modernity, have generally been regarded as very important for the development of democratic citizens and must, therefore, be expected to moderate the influence of race as a political cleavage in South Africa.

There are also other potential cleavages like gender, religion and employment, which may rectify, cut across or reinforce the cleavages of apartheid. The structure and character of conflicts – i.e. whether different conflicts cut across or overlap with one another – will influence the nature and seriousness of national conflicts and the potential for national integration. The question is whether large numbers of citizens will fail by significant margins to meet the standards of civic competence mentioned

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[29] Post-industrial variables reflect individual level values, particularly those based on post-economic needs. This dimension is particularly related to Inglehart's post-materialist dimension (Knutsen 1986).

by Dahl (1992). In South Africa, a closed hegemony was relatively abruptly transformed into a polyarchy by the sudden granting of universal suffrage and rights of public contestation. Such a path may, in Dahl's opinion, drastically shorten the time available for learning complex skills, acquiring an understanding of democracy, and for arriving at what may be an extremely subtle system of mutual security (1971:34-37). In his opinion there would appear to be few, if any unambiguous cases in which this shortcut has been successfully taken.

Summary of the main questions addressed in the first part of the thesis:

- What is the content of political culture in South Africa?
- How do political priorities and values, democratic consciousness and political activities differ according to race, gender, social background and income?
- What are the main cleavages in South African politics?
- Do these cleavages cut across one another or overlap?

2. Civil society, unions and democracy

Civil society contains a large number of organisations and groupings. Given that almost half the political electorate in South Africa today is in formal employment, organised labour is undoubtedly one of the most important, if not the most important of these. Workers have been at the forefront of the political struggle and are thus an important constituency for the new government. Trade unions constitute, alongside the Church, the largest organised grouping. Progressive unions played an important role in the process of democratisation by mobilising workers for political action while simultaneously improving their wages and living conditions. The future of democracy depends upon the degree to which labour market institutions and the labour movement manage to create and enforce the legitimacy of democratic institutions, to moderate economic expectations and to form a co-operative rather than a confrontational approach towards the new government.

     "Developments or decisions at one step set conditions for or constraints for the next" (Rokkan 1977). Putnam (1993) likewise argues that social contexts and history shape institutions. In order to understand the present role and challenges of the union movement, we need to comprehend their historical role. Unions as forums for individual political

learning must also be studied in terms of the trade unions' organisational, political and industrial strength. Political learning in unions and the internalisation of trade-union values is conditioned *inter alia* by the union movement's norms and values and its organisational structures. Workers will join unions for their ability to deliver benefits and wages, for political reasons and/or for reasons of solidarity and the wish to belong to a collective. The external strategies and priorities of the labour movement will affect the loyalty and support as well as the political learning of the workers.

Galin (1994) argues that it has been widely accepted that in most non-democratic countries, governments have tended to be the dominant actor, while trade unions were at best tolerated and otherwise closely controlled and often repressed. The myth of the strong state and weak unions has prevailed. However, it is a myth that may be exploded. Trade unions tend to play a major role in the struggle against non-democratic regimes. They constituted one of the main (or *the* main) opposition pressure groups in countries such as Poland, Brazil, Zambia and South Africa. It is, however, hard to find clear portrayals of the relationship between political transformation and trade unionism, let alone explanatory theories.

Whereas economic factors may be a main reason for most workers joining unions, South African unions were also perceived as the main internal opposition to apartheid and therefore as a force and arena for political struggle. The goals, strategies and success of the unions in attaining their goals will be one of the key factors to be considered when looking closer at the effect of unions upon their members' internalisation of political values and activities. Whereas many will argue that South African unions in general, and COSATU in particular, were one of the main forces that brought apartheid to an end, others downplay their role. Huntington (1984:205) states that unions may serve as a source of autonomous social pressure in a democratic direction and cites Western Europe and the United States as examples. He also touches upon the unions' struggle against the racist oligarchy in South Africa:

"At the same time, the experience of these cases also suggests the limits on the extent to which, in the absence of political parties, labour unions can affect political change".

Adler et al. (1992) argue, on the other hand, that labour had a profound impact on political change up until 1990. They argue this on the basis of labour being strong and united and in a strong working alliance with political parties but still independent and unlikely to be part of a transitional government. However, they base their conclusions on the conditions for political influence mentioned by Valenzuela (1989). The presence of some, or even all, the conditions for political influence does not necessarily mean that unions actually had that influence. These factors may be indicative but not conclusive.

If the political channel is closed, we may easily expect a politicisation of the organisations in the corporate channel. South African unions used a whole range of strategies, from opposition to co-operation, in pursuing their political and economic goals. We need to investigate in more detail the reasons for the union movement taking on these political goals, to consider assessments of their political success and to examine the political strategies they adopted and the political resources they had at their disposal. Our aim is to be able to assess better the role of organised civil society in the process of political transformation *and* to be able to view the content, norms and aims of politicisation as a point of departure for political learning in the unions, which we will turn to below.

Summary of the main questions to be addressed in the second section of the thesis:

- What role did the union movement play in the process leading to the new democratic South Africa?

- What were the political resources, identity and strength of the union movement?

- In what ways and areas is it reasonable to argue that they affected the probability of democratic transition?

3. Unions as laboratories for political learning

In South Africa, education, socio-economic background and income as well as religion tend to overlap with belonging to specific population groups. It therefore becomes critical to assess how organised civil society can affect political cleavages and conflicts. Conover and Searing (1994) argue that the nature of social organisation affects social integration and

is, consequently, in a strong position to influence citizenship. Lipset argues that trade unions help to integrate their members in the larger body politic and give them a basis for loyalty to the system (1963:1):

> "It is precisely in those countries where workers have built strong unions and obtained representation in politics that the disintegrative forms of political cleavages are least likely to be found".

Many people expect workers to be the backbone of left-wing, socialist values and an active citizenship. Others claim that workers tend to develop intolerance and authoritarian values or that in the future they will mainly concentrate on pursuing their individual interests rather than engaging in collective struggles. Democracy creates new rights and opportunities, but it also carries with it new interests, dilemmas and identities. While the struggle against apartheid involved fighting for the vote, for democracy and for political equality, we have few indications as to the political activity, expectations and priorities of workers *within* regular politics. The labour movement portrays itself as a main driving force for reconstruction and development in the future. But the role and strategies of labour will depend first and foremost on the interests and priorities of the workers it represents.

Those with class-oriented approaches, participatory democrats and instrumentalists all indirectly imply that organisational participation will lead to stronger commitments to the basic norms and values of the organisation. A number of scholars point to the fact that organisations characterised by democratic decision-making structures can indirectly promote the democratisation process by influencing the values of their members and their pattern of political activity (Mann 1973, Sklar 1982).

South African studies indicate the importance of political learning in unions. Activity at the shop-floor and grass-roots levels increased as the democratisation of the labour movement took place during the 80s (Maree 1987, 1989; Lambert & Webster 1989). Workers brought the increased self-confidence they gained in the unions into the community (Friedman 1987). As they gained increased control over their lives at the workplace they wanted to have increased decision-making powers in their lives after working hours too. Unionised workers organised street and area committees in their local communities, reflecting the democratic structures of their unions (Sitas 1985). In Friedman's (1986) words: "labour unions

can work as laboratories for democracy". A survey carried out at the beginning of the 60s showed that organised workers were much more responsive to political calls than unorganised workers (Lambert 1978:148):

> "Their trade union activity has given them heightened political consciousness and they also respond more readily when appeal is made on a factory floor as opposed to a residential basis, as they feel that there is less chance of dismissal if the whole factory is involved".

Sitas (1992:3) argues that one of labour's most far-reaching achievements was the creation of a new democratic culture and within that a new surplus consciousness:

> "a surplus in that it could not be contained by stricture; struggles produced a need to work, a need to think and a need to be, within a climate of accountability and solidarity".

Was, and is, this accurate? Workers will gain access to new knowledge and experiences through participation in unions. But in what direction will this take them? Do unions build a radical revolutionary working-class movement which challenges the state? Do trade unions build a more participatory, democratic, tolerant and politically competent workforce? Or do unions now attract, or nurture, a workforce concerned with their own individual interests rather than those of the collective?

Values and norms imparted through participation in unions may be reinforced by the democratic values of the South African opposition and the fight against apartheid. But in what direction and according to what perspective can we expect the characteristics of political learning to be expressed? Will they result in a collective consciousness of class interests, in participatory democracy or in instrumentalism? Will they give rise to a communal or a contractual citizenship? Unions may function as agents for political change without serving as laboratories for political learning amongst their own members. Or vice-versa, they may serve as democratic laboratories without functioning as agents for democracy in the larger sphere. If, on the other hand, union members are similar to unorganised workers in their political priorities and activities, we may assume, but not conclude, that unions have had an influence on society at large.

It is against this background that we pose the main questions of this thesis:

- To what degree will organising and participating in unions give members competence that can be transformed into increased democratic consciousness, and political participation?

- To what extent will political values and behavioural patterns be conditioned by organising and participation in unions? Can unions level out ideological cleavages between various groups in South Africa?

- Is it community engagement, specifically participation in unions, or socio-economic development which determines democratic citizenship in South Africa?

The effect of politics on unions and union scenarios

Once the political system has begun the transition to democracy, trade unions seem in several cases to suffer an abrupt setback in their status, expressed in limitations on their ability to pursue political, and at times even economic, goals (Galin 1994). Why may democracy have a weakening impact on trade unions? A democratic environment encourages pluralism and thus potential rivalry within and among trade unions and between unions and other interest groups. Furthermore, as trade unions cease to be the spokesmen for the opposition and turn their focus to traditional trade-union activities, various groups that needed the unions for political purposes under authoritarian rule will use other channels under democracy. This implies that unionisation rates may be affected.

As political change takes place, changes may also occur in civil society. There is individual learning, but also organisational learning. Organisations based on opposition and engaged in the struggle for political change now have to find new goals, identities and strategies.

Lipset (1963) argues that the struggle for political freedom by the workers took place in the context of a fight for economic rights: universal suffrage as well as freedom of organisation and of speech were necessary conditions for a better standard of living, social security, etc. Such a pluralist instrumentalist approach to the political role of unions suggests that after the elections South African unions will concentrate on "bread-and-butter" issues.

In some countries, the authoritarian state has succeeded in subordinating the union movement to the state or the party. In many African countries, unions are in fact seen as functioning as a brake on political change rather than as an instrument for change (Kraus 1988). Coleman and Rosberg (1964) point out that unions in Africa are presumed to behave more as political institutions than as bargaining agencies for collective interests. However, what is most striking in their opinion is the failure of unions to become politically involved during the colonial period, their limited political impact when they did become involved and their restricted role after independence. This may call into question the democratisation potential of labour and raise questions as to why unions in one country opt for different solutions to those in other countries.

Corporatist, pluralist and socio-political trade-union perspectives will all have different expectations about the role and identity of unions after democracy has been won. Organised civil society, which contributed to political changes and democratisation, may end up functioning as a barrier to the consolidation of democracy or else serve as a stabilising factor in a future South Africa. However, the unions' role in the process of political change and the consolidation of democracy will depend, *inter alia*, upon the degree to which they have loyalty and support amongst their own members. The degree to which members feel loyalty towards and identify with the unions will, in turn, depend on the ability of the unions to deliver economic and social goods as well as on the overlap or gap between union goals and leadership on the one hand and shop-floor priorities and aspirations on the other hand. The response of organised labour to new challenges in balancing the short-term needs of its membership against the long-term needs of stability and institutional peace with a future government is of decisive importance for the nation-building process in South Africa.

Linking the collective and the individual

This thesis addresses both the numerical/territorial and the functional/corporatist channels or dimensions of nation-building. Democratic theory has either failed to recognise the importance of civil society when explaining democratic developments in developing countries or else failed to address the content and processes of civil society. Furthermore, academics often take for granted a model of democracy which is shaped on the basis of liberal representative Western democracies and then exported to developing countries. The possibility that a different, but genuinely

participatory democratic model may already exist in these countries and that it might be carried forward not by the state but by civil society itself is largely overlooked.

The two perspectives of individual learning and collective action will be dealt with separately, but they are clearly connected. Understanding the organisational strategies and goals of labour and community groups requires an examination of the ways in which workers and community residents understand and analyse the structures they confront and find themselves within. Organisations are given their ideological and social stamp at the time of their foundation and early consolidation (Stinch-combe 1965). But while union priorities represent workers, they also *shape* workers' expectations and attitudes. Class forces take shape and have their political impact through organisations, but the logic of an organisation also shapes the reality of those interests (Cawson 1986:87). Furthermore, the socialisation required to build individual competence and stimulate collective action can take place both through union structures and through participation. While building individual capacity may give people the competence to participate, it rarely makes them *feel* strongly enough about issues in order to do so. Politics is a matter of emotional mobilisation as well as competence and the collective organisation of the trade-union movement may, through its norms, strategies, and general success in protecting workers' interests, foster and deepen such feelings of influence, opposition and protest (Rokkan 1965)

This thesis would like to refresh the studies of democratisation and nation-building with theory and methods from two other fields. First, we utilise theories on state-union relations and organisational theory in order to highlight the role of labour as an agent for change in South Africa. Second, we look at the political culture concept in the light of an analysis of political socialisation and learning at work in order to understand the role of labour as a laboratory for change.

People's beliefs will determine their actions and thus the pressure on governments for political change. Yet, beliefs are formed both by interests and by the culture in which they are born. Trade unions are interest organisations, but they also carry forward, shape and reproduce culture. The various perspectives on political learning and the institutional arrangements they shape will affect workers differently depending on the type and overall norms and goals of the organisation. Figure 1.3 below portrays the various potential effects on political learning and action of the different combinations of union goals on the one hand and of internal strategies, organisation and culture on the other hand.

Figure 1.3   Political Learning in Different Institutional Settings

	Instrumental values	Participatory values	Class-oriented approach
Pluralist union movement	individual interests, social and economic concerns	individual interests, participation in other forums as a side effect	Syndicalist, workers' collective on the shop floor
Corporatist union movement	individual interests, political participation in order to promote economic interests	Broader national interests and participation	Socialism as a "step by step" approach, reformism
Union movement as channel for socio-political struggle	Broad political goals for a limited period to gain economic rights	Democracy in all spheres of society, collectivism	Class and collective action

While the two potential roles of unions as both interest organisations and agents for political change and as laboratories for political learning are closely connected, the studies of the two dimensions imply a different focus and methods. While treating them separately in the thesis, we will link them again in the final section with a discussion of the implications for nation-building and democratisation theory.

1.7   Design

This thesis is divided into five parts consisting of a total of fourteen chapters. The first part introduces the problems to be addressed, and the realities taken as the point of departure for the thesis. *Chapter 2* focuses on the methodological and statistical approach of the study and the problems and limitations of such a study as well as its relevance. The processes of nation-building and democratisation must take national political, socio-economic and cultural characteristics as their point of departure. *Chapter 3*, therefore, traces the history of apartheid. Attempts to explain political

change have often failed to explain national variances. However, comparable experiences and earlier studies may, nonetheless, provide us with the dimensions and factors to be considered within the South African context, even if their relative weight and importance may be different to that in other countries. Chapter 3, therefore, also addresses what the general sources of impetus for democratic change are and focuses specifically on what drives political change in South Africa and what the content of this change is. Furthermore, we discuss the general conditions for democratic consolidation and specific aspects of the legacy of apartheid which pose dilemmas and challenges for the new nation.

The second part of the thesis addresses nation-building in South Africa in terms of theory and empirical knowledge concerning democratic consolidation. In *Chapter 4* we discuss political culture specifically and the extent to which a participatory, civil culture exists in South Africa. *Chapter 5* addresses the potential role of civil society in the process of democratic consolidation and also how the structures and culture of civil society may reinforce one another.

The third part of the thesis looks at the role of trade unions in particular. *Chapter 6* discusses the political role and resources of trade-union movements in an international perspective. Something also has to be said about the way in which the working classes gain characteristics different from the regimes with which they interact. The history of South African labour will therefore be outlined in *Chapter 7*. The political impact of its collective organisational pressure will be looked at in *Chapter 8*.

While the first three parts of the thesis studied unions as *agents* for political change, the fourth section analyses the role of unions as *laboratories* for political change. Our present knowledge about the building of citizenship is too thin to support deductive theoretical constructions and far too thin for inductive efforts (Conover & Searing 1994). Conover and Searing argue, however, that we can take an important step towards the construction of such theories by (a) specifying the projected patterns of the relationship between a sense of citizenship, civic orientation and the behaviour of citizens; (b) identifying additional key factors that are likely to prove important in shaping the development of citizen variables; and (c) suggesting the processes through which these additional factors might be expected to influence citizenship. This is exactly what we are attempting to do here. *Chapters 9 and 10* look at the theory and South African empirical knowledge of political learning and pre-industrial cleavages, respectively. *Chapter 11* addresses working-class consciousness and industrial cleavages, while *Chapter 12* analyses the role of

trade unions in moderating the political importance of other cleavages. On this basis, we also need to approach the question of overlapping or diverse cleavages or of concentrated or dispersed inequalities in South Africa.

The fifth and final section of the thesis sketches out the concluding remarks. What conclusions can we draw from the data, information and analysis in the thesis for the theory of nation-building and democratisation? *Chapter 13* addresses these questions. *Chapter 14* discusses more specifically the conclusions we can draw from this study for the practical and political work of the union movement as well as outlining a brief scenario for the union movement based on the previous analyses.

2 Concepts and Methodology

2.1 Ethnocentric or universal knowledge

The economic and political problems of the developing world have triggered off a large number of studies on conditions for democracy and for the maintenance and consolidation of popular rule once it has been established.

A process of democratisation, once started, does not necessarily end in a stable democracy. And factors explaining the *initiation* of processes of democratisation, reform and political change may not be satisfactory when it comes to securing and explaining the *stability* and *legitimacy* of a new regime. Rustow suggests looking at democracy from two different points of departure: one is the genetic perspective, which refers to how democracy is established; the other is the functional perspective, which examines how democracy thrives and functions once it has been established (Rustow 1970, Rakner 1992). Midgaard (1994) likewise indicates that there are three stages in the development of democracy – how democracies are established, how democracies are maintained and stabilised and finally, how the quality of democracies is improved – and corresponding academic research on each of these stages. This thesis deals with the first and second stages – i.e. with nation-building in South Africa.

Modernisation theory argued that the developing world would reach the same level of development as countries in the Western world through industrialisation and economic development and through contacts and trade with the modern world.[30] *Economic growth* was, furthermore, pinpointed as essential to promote and stabilise democratic change.

[30] Parsons (1977) and Rostow (1960) et al. Dependency theory argued, on the other hand, that the relationship of the developing world to the "modern world" was based upon the former being "low-paid" suppliers of raw materials, which in turn would inhibit economic and political development in the developing world.

Huntington (1996:5) points out that although non-Western, non-wealthy democracies do exist, almost all the non-democratic countries in the world are either poor, non-Western, or both. Economic development, measured in increased income per capita, industrialisation, urbanisation and general modernisation, will, it is argued, bring about a general transformation of society through greater literacy, generally higher educational levels, greater exposure to the media and thus greater openness and a deeper insight into politics amongst people.

Political development in South Africa on the basis of low (or negative) economic growth, sanctions and a reduction in trade with the rest of the world (and, as a result, the establishment of a "laager" economy at home) poses a challenge to such theoretical positions. Moreover, they deal mainly with the structural conditions for political development. In response to this, cultural theories evolved which were more concerned with the attitudinal and behavioural aspects of democracy. Political culture came to be seen as an important background for people's interpretations of and responses to changes in structural factors and as a crucial link between economic, industrial and demographic changes on the one hand and the emergence and consolidation of democracy on the other hand.

But are the preconditions for democracy universal – i.e. is the necessity of economic growth, redistribution, a democratic culture, etc. equally valid for all countries, despite differing national characteristics? Can the same criteria be applied to developing democracies as to established ones?

We find a tendency in research on nation-building and democratisation to try to transplant the Western model of democracy and participation and the conditions underlying it to non-European settings by defining democracy itself and/or the preconditions for it according to specific existing models in European countries.[31] These are either directly applied in comparative studies or else used as points of departure for arguments about modernisation in, or the spreading of democratic ideals[32] to, developing countries. In addition, European models are used to define the concepts of modernisation, democracy etc.

[31] O'Donnell argues, accordingly, that existing theories and typologies of democracy refer to *representative* democracy as it exists, with all its variations and subtypes, in highly developed capitalist countries (1994:56).

"European models of modernisation have dominated all thoughts on development since the Second World War. This is probably one of the biggest political and economic barriers to stable development in Africa"   (Nilsson & Abrahamson 1995).

Biryuko and Sergeyev (1994) argue that our understanding of democratisation will not be facilitated if we ignore the way democracy is interpreted within the culture in question. Because democracy is interpreted differently in different cultures, progress towards democracy in a given country can only be assessed in terms of the meaning ascribed to democracy by the relevant political agents, not by reference to abstractly defined criteria or indices. But it is illogical, and a definitional fallacy, in Holden's (1974) opinion, to define democracy by induction from the practices of any one political unit or any one sub-set of political units. We cannot, Ryan argues (1970), define democracy in terms of the population of any particular country, for then we can no longer praise that country for being democratic – in other words, we cannot praise a society for qualities which belong to it by definition rather than by political contrivance (Saward 1994).

At the same time, if we tie our definitions of democracy, participation, democratic culture and political competence (as well as the preconditions for these) too closely to the structures of European politics and take these as our point of reference, we may have a problem in assessing the full meaning, cause and rationality of these concepts in other settings. Lukes (1970:194) asks the following rather simple but nonetheless important question:[33]

"When I come across a set of beliefs which seem prima facie irrational, what should be my attitude to them? Should I adopt a critical attitude, taking it as a fact about the beliefs that they are irrational, and seek to explain why they came to be held? .... Or should I treat such beliefs charitably; should I begin from the assumption that what appears to me to be irrational may be interpreted as rational when fully understood in its context?"

[32] Research on cultural diffusion indicates that Western cultures diffuse rapidly to non-Western settings on the basis of technology, new production forms, etc. (Almond and Verba 1980).
[33] Which may also be regarded as the postulate of phenomenology.

His response is that beliefs should not only be evaluated by the criteria that are to be discovered in the context in which they are held. They must also be evaluated by the criteria of rationality that simply *are* criteria of rationality, as opposed to criteria for rationality in a given context (Lukes 1970:208). Hollis (1970), on the other hand, argues that a "universal" sense of rationality has never been discovered empirically, which puts Lukes' philosophical problem in a different light.[34] Hollis (ibid) argues instead that "universal" rationality is not so much universal as necessary, unless academics are to destroy their only means of identifying a specific set of beliefs. "We cannot understand the irrational, and to suppose that we can, is to run into vicious circles. But we can understand the rational in more than one way".

Almond and Verba specify the content of their democratic or civic culture by examining attitudes in a number of operating democratic systems, rather than inferring the properties of democratic culture from political institutions or social conditions. Moore (1966) goes as far as to question whether it is possible to have a general model of political development.

> "The historic preconditions of democracy or authoritarianism covering small countries as well as large would be likely to be as broad as to be abstractly platitudinous".

Within European settings, we have a relatively good picture of political socialisation – from childhood learning to adult socialisation. Political culture and the degree and content of politicisation vary, however, according to specific periods and issues. Particular people or issues may have a mobilising effect in one specific period while none whatsoever in other periods. We do not know enough about how learning processes are affected by political transitions, unstable political conditions or revolutions: goals and preferences may, in fact, change rapidly. Neither do we know much about the effect of opposition cultures upon learning. We assume that political culture, which is inherited and translated by new

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[34] Hollis also makes a good point about "the bad circle" constituted by the impossibility of verification: "his (Lukes') only access to native perceptions and specifications is by translating what they say about what they perceive. He would therefore have to translate before discovering what they perceive and to know what they perceive before translating". (1970:214).

citizens, is administered, implemented and formed by state structures. In many cases in the developing world, however, it may be civil society which assumes a predominant role. Rational choice theory assumes that preferences are exogenous and in some sort of equilibrium (March & Simon 1984), which may be hard to assume in settings of uncertainty and rapid transitions. Furthermore, goals themselves may change, which is difficult to assess with rational choice theory. Revolutions, revolts and political struggles may give rise to new identities, which can most fruitfully be analysed in terms of mixed motivations and combined perspectives of social action. We will return to this later.

If a democratic model of a participatory state is to develop, it requires, according to Almond and Verba (1980), a political culture that is consistent with it. But the transfer of the political cultures of the Western democratic states to the emerging nations in Africa and Asia is, in their opinion, highly problematic. The working principles of a democratic polity are subtle and diffuse and can be transplanted only with great difficulty, undergoing substantial change in the process (Almond & Verba 1980:4)

> "The complex infrastructure of the democratic polity - political parties, interest groups, and the media of communications - and the understanding of their inner workings, operating norms, and social-psychological preconditions are only now being realised in the West".

Almond and Verba question whether the open polity and civic culture, man's discovery of a humane way to handle social change and participation, can spread to the developing world. But are we not taking the idea of diffusion too much for granted and thereby neglecting the possibility that democratic ideals, values and rationality may have developed independently in certain non-Western countries? And by doing so, are we not overlooking the possibility that the agents and content of democratic values and social actions and the rationale *behind* them may be different in these non-Western countries?

Tilly (1975) points out that the conditions which led to the rise of states in Western Europe and the growing sense of identification with these states are unique and unlikely to be repeated outside Europe. Centuries of warfare in Europe helped to consolidate the state by forcing it to improve its administration and served to unite the population in the face of external threats.

The interconnection between economic development and type of government is not clear. Democracies tend to have more literate and educated people, their per capita income and wealth are higher and they enjoy a greater proportion of the amenities of modern civilisation (Almond & Verba 1980). Still, these perspectives cannot explain the significant deviant cases: Germany and France were classified as unstable democracies in the 30s while ranking high on the indexes of modernisation (Lipset 1960). And Cuba and Venezuela ranked high in economic development while maintaining dictatorship and instability through the 80s and 90s (Almond & Verba 1980). Furthermore, while it has been held by many that grave economic inequalities in the population have an injurious effect on popular rule (Hadenius 1994, Muller 1988), South Africa itself ranks almost at the top of the world league table when it comes to a distorted distribution of income and wealth. Explanations of political change in one part of the world often fail to explain or predict political changes in other parts. Moreover, why does political change take a peaceful form in some countries, while instability, violence, coups and countercoups tear others apart?

Universal norms

Collier and Levitsky (1996) have identified more than 550 "subtypes" of democracy.[35] Unless we want to lose our only instrument for political analysis and the development of knowledge, we need to keep our definitions of "end-state" norm universal – i.e. the definitions and norms of democracy. In that respect, a democratic transition is not completed until free, contested elections have been held and rulers govern democratically (Linz & Stepan 1996). This minimalist definition is, however, not substantial enough. We can differentiate as a point of departure between this *electoral* type of democracy and one referred to as *liberal* democracy.[36] Dahl's (1971) concept of polyarchy, which requires political competition and participation as well as substantial levels of freedom and pluralism that enable people to form and express their

[35] Quoted in Diamond 1996.
[36] Diamond (1996:23) argues that many of the "third-wave" democracies have only achieved electoral democracy. This gap between electoral and liberal democracy has, in his opinion, become one of the most striking features of the "third wave".

opinions, should be chosen as a point of departure. Linz and Stepan (1996) argue that in order for a democratic transition to turn into a consolidated democracy, certain behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional dimensions must be present:

> "Behaviourally, democracy becomes the only game in town when no significant political group seriously attempts to overthrow the democratic regime...and the newly elected government which has emerged from the democratic transition is no longer dominated by the problem of how to avoid a democratic break-down. Attitudinally, democracy becomes the only game in town when, even in severe political and economic crises, the overwhelming majority of the people believe that any further political change must emerge from within the parameters of democratic procedures. Constitutionally, democracy becomes the only game in town when all of the actors in the polity become habituated to the fact that political conflicts within the state will be resolved according to established norms, and that violations of these norms are likely to be both ineffective and costly"   *(Linz & Stepan 1996:16)*.

Within the category of consolidated democracies, there is a continuum from low-quality to high-quality democracies (ibid). While some argue that democracies need to be not only liberal but also *participatory*, the degree of popular political participation will here be viewed rather as a component which will add quality to democracies. Low-quality democracies may carry problems which endanger the consolidation process. We need to focus all our attention upon instruments and determinants of consolidation within specific settings.[37]

Political change seems to follow its own pace and direction on the basis of national and regional characteristics. Dahl (1971) argues, however, that universal suffrage and the development of political opposition or public contestation are closely interlined. *Both* have to be present in order to qualify as a democracy (or *polyarchy* in his words), but they can to some

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[37] We regard the instruments and process of democratic consolidation as being dependent upon national characteristics. It does not follow from this, however, that democracy can be achieved by *undemocratic* national means (ref. to the attempted legitimisation of authoritarian rule in Eastern Europe).

extent develop independently. The relationship between the two will depend upon national socio-economic, cultural and organisational characteristics.

2.2   Culture and structure

Our aim in the following is to see how political action and culture are shaped, affected or influenced by socio-economic conditions and the organisations of civil society. We look at attitudes and preferences in the hope of discovering the values behind them. On this basis, we aim to find out what the unions' influence may have been on the consolidation of democracy. For this purpose, we cannot conclude that specific values are decisive for democratic breakdowns but only suggest that specific sets of values may be more congruent with democratic survival than others.

The main criticism of the literature on political culture is that it imputes a causal direction to the relationship between culture and structure,[38] implying that culture produces structure (Almond 1980). Wildavsky argues that it is culture that generates people's preferences and that these in turn drive the political process (Street 1993). Marxists and functionalists, on the other hand, treat culture as subservient to material forces or systemic requirements and attribute only a limited role to attitudes and ideas in explaining political activity (Street 1993).

Others argue that the very separation of the attitudinal dimension from the behavioural dimension tends to give a conservative bias to research on political culture. Their criticism is that too much power is attributed to socialisation variables. There is a tendency, they say, to overlook the importance of political structure, in particular deliberate and organised efforts to *transform* political culture, such as in Cuba or in Communist countries (Fagan 1969, Ticker 1973) or the apartheid regime's policy of separate education etc. in South Africa. Berry (1970) argues that the actual causal pattern might be one in which a satisfactory democratic experience produces civic culture in a rational learned way.

[38] Almond and Powell (1966:21) argue that "by structure, we imply the observable activities which make up the political system". They imply a certain regularity to them and refer to particular sets of roles which are related to one another as structures.

Most political culture traditionalists will, however, underline a dual relationship between political structure and culture. Almond (1980) regards the criticism of *The Civic Culture* that political culture causes political structure as incorrect. Political culture is treated both as an independent and as a dependent variable, both causing structure and being caused by it (ibid:29). Rogoswski's aim (1976) is to arrive at a relatively open conception of political culture, viewed as causing behaviour and structure, as well as being caused by them, and including adult political learning and a rational cognitive component. Rogowski attacks political culture theory as being too loose and diffuse for it to be accepted as explanatory theory. Political learning and development are, on the other hand, about interwoven relationships: behaviour affects reflection, preferences and attitudes through which we adjust our behaviour at the micro-level. Political structures and culture at the macro-level are likewise interlined and affect each other through more long-term processes. In order to use culture as an explanatory factor, we need to identify its agents, institutions, processes and values. Furthermore, if political culture is formed as a reflection of the political structure of a specific country, we need to keep in mind that most of these discussions have taken Western states or formal political structures as the determining factors. Civil society and the civil society cultures that follow informal structures and that are seen as the product of the interplay between various formal and informal structures in specific non-Western settings have been less studied. The relationship between culture and structure is still unclear – i.e. what comes first: "the chicken or the egg". It may be more fruitful to bear in mind that there can be no chicken without an egg and no egg without a chicken. Political institutions can enforce patterns of behaviour that, in turn, give shape to values. If we keep in mind that the relationship is dual and interactive and embraces both the state and the civil sector we may have the most fruitful point of departure.

2.3   Political attitudes and actions: diverging perspectives

Three to four million man-days were lost in strikes in South Africa every year through the late 80s and early 90s. Millions of workers, students and others were involved in politically motivated stay-aways. People turned up in their hundreds of thousands to demonstrations, boycotts, political marches and meetings. At the same time, political activities were severely

restricted and sanctions were imposed. South Africans also engage in a high degree of organisational activity. People take part in civics and residence committees, youth and students' organisations, women's groups, savings clubs, etc. If we assume that post-1994 political stability is closely related to the attitudes, priorities and activities of citizens, we may turn to the question of *how and where political culture, competence and action developed* in order to predict the content of future citizenship.

People's values and priorities are important for political stability, and so are the way they express them and the rationality underlying their development. Theories of social action can be divided into two mainstream schools of thought: the first explains man's actions as a response to his environment; the second explains his actions as pursuit of a goal. The first perspective argues that actions differ because environmental conditions differ, while the second argues that the individual is governed by his intentions. In Coleman's (1973) words:

> "In philosophy and religion, these two perspectives sharply divide two sets of beliefs. The first is of man as a creature of his fate (...), the second is of man as the architect of his future".

Likewise we find two major schools of thought on working-class politics: one focuses on "sociological man" who is motivated by the principles of psychological and social integration. The other sees man primarily as an "economic man" who tries to maximise his self-interests and who is moved by rational perceptions and motivations (Lafferty 1974).

Skinner (1971), as an "extreme" *behaviourist,* argues that we can follow the path taken by physics and biology by turning directly to the relationship between behaviour and the environment while neglecting supposed mediating states of mind. According to behaviourists, the environment does not "push" or "pull" social action, it selects responses (Grøgaard 1995). Culture is on this basis not the expression of a general will or "group mind", but evolves when new practices further the survival of those who practice them (Skinner 1971:132). *Rational choice theory* will, on the other hand, argue that we need knowledge about opportunities and preferences in order to explain social action.[39]

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[39] If preferences are equal, stimuli variance is cited to explain variance in action, - i.e. in a behavioural manner (Hedström 1993, quoted in Grøgaard 1995). While scholars disagree on the relative importance of preferences and opportunities in

Rational choice theory

The main component of rational choice theory lies in its focus upon *the individual* as the unit of analysis.[40] Based upon descriptions of goals, interests, preferences and budgetary or environmental constraints, rational choice theory aims to explain various kinds of human behaviour. It looks at individual action as the causal mechanism linking structures to the outcome being explained.[41] Structures and institutions form sets of constraints or opportunities – i.e. sets of possible courses of action. Rational choice theory defines the mechanism by which people choose among alternatives. A certain consistency of choice is required as part of the definition of rational actors. Furthermore, preferences are expected to be rank-ordered and transitive.[42] Most rational choice theorists expect rational action to involve utility maximisation, though self-interest need not imply selfishness.

In the late 70s, critiques emerged of the narrowly defined economic rational choice model (Cook & Levi 1990, Rakner 1995). Rational choice theory was criticised for not serving as an adequate predictive theory for action, because it failed to answer how preferences were developed and why people's preferences differed. A new school tried to bridge this gap by arguing that *institutions* provide the key constraints and shape incentives for the evolution of decision-making. Rather than abandoning the concept of rational actors, *the new institutionalism* seeks to modify rational choice theory by describing the strategic context in which individual behaviour takes place. The new institutionalism lays down the rules on the basis of which players are identified and prospective outcomes and alternative

explaining behaviour, some will argue that all human beings have essentially the same preferences and desires,- it is only the opportunities which differ (Elster 1989:15): they argue that "choice almost doesn't matters, because any variations in behaviour must be explained by variations in opportunities".

[40] In political science, a theory of conflict and self-interest has evolved from the 17th century (Mansbridge 1990:3). The "rational choice" school in the second half of the 20th century made explicit the underlying assumptions of "adversary democracy" (ibid).

[41] Rationality is, however, defined differently by the main protagonists of the theory. Davidson (1980) argues that in order to understand man and attribute beliefs, desires and values to him, we have to assume that in his patterns of behaviour, belief and desires, there is a large degree of consistency and rationality. Elster (1982), for his part, distinguishes between more than twenty kinds of rationality, some of which are in conflict with one other.

[42] If A is preferred to B, and B to C, then A must be preferred to C.

modes of deliberation are determined (Shepsle 1989, Rakner 1995). Social outcomes are thereby explained on the basis of agent preferences *and* institutional features. Rather than determining choice, however, institutions provide certainty under uncertain conditions and thereby help foster co-operative and habitual behaviour (Rakner 1995).[43]

There are several forms of rationality as well as different interpretations of its content.[44] Føllesdal (1982) identifies some forms of rationality as being: logical consistency (a person's beliefs shall be logically consistent with each other); well-foundedness of beliefs (our beliefs should be well supported by evidence); well-foundedness of values (our norms should be well founded in ethics); and finally, rationality of action, which he looks upon as a process of considering alternative courses of action, ranking the alternatives and on that basis taking a decision before acting. Elster (1983:1-2) distinguishes between "thin rationality" and "broad rationality".[45]

> "Thin rationality leaves unexamined the beliefs and reasons that form the reasons for the action whose rationality we are assessing, with the exception that they are stipulated not to be logically inconsistent.... Consistency is in fact what rationality in this thin sense is all about.... The broad rationality involves more than acting consistently on consistent beliefs and desires, we also require beliefs and desires to be a substantive rationality...grounded in available evidence...closely linked to judgement...and autonomy".

Rational choice theorists seem to believe that their theories apply equally to all situations irrespective of time and place and circumstances. Given a social phenomenon, what is needed in order to explain its origin is the strategies that rational people will pursue in those circumstances and the

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[43] Although there exists a large variety of definitions of institutions, a commonly agreed (although broad) understanding is "the rules of society and organisations which facilitate co-ordination among people by helping them form expectations" (Rutton and Hyami 1984, quoted in Rakner 1995).

[44] Within the theory of rational choice, there are broadly, two traditions (Grøgaard 1995). *One tradition* postulates perfect rationality in social action. The other tradition discusses subversions of rationality (("sour grapes")) (Elster 1983).

[45] It could, however, be pointed out that Elster's problem seems to be how to tackle the *sources* of preferences, rather than arguing for strict or loose,- thin or broad, distinctions of rationality.

aggregate effect of those strategies.[46] Elster states, however, that there are many cases in which rationality can do no more than exclude certain alternatives, while not giving guidance as to the choice between the remaining:

> "If we want to explain behaviour in such cases, causal consideration must be invoked in addition to the assumption of rationality. If we require rationality in a broad sense, this will be the rule, rather than the exception" (1983:2).

Political socialisation and learning

Whether life is really characterised by deliberate choices and decision-making is contested. New life was breathed into culturalist approaches to the study of politics by the ethnic sub-nationalism and religious fundamentalism which accompanied many of the third-wave democratisation processes (Bratton & Liatto-Katundu 1994). This led political theorists to express dissatisfaction with the application of economic models of rational choice to the study of politics (Bratton & Liatto-Katundu 1994). In debating the causes of political action, the criticers of economic models are falling back on considerations of moral values (e.g. Etzioni 1988), social capital (e.g. Coleman 1989) and a sense of civic community (e.g. Putnam 1993). In contrast to theories that assume that action is choice based on individual values and preferences, theories of political structure assume that action is the fulfilment of duties and obligations. March and Olsen make this an important distinction:

> "In a choice metaphor, we assume that political actors consult personal preferences and subjective expectations, then select actions that are consistent with those preferences and expectations. In a duty metaphor, we assume political actors associate certain actions with certain situations by rules of appropriateness" (1984:741).

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[46] According to Hollis (1970), an assessment of social action and rationality first needs to take into account the following three distinctions. First, action needs to be distinguished from the event. Second, cause must be distinguished from correlations. Third, subjective and objective meaning also needs to distinguished. Elster (1983) would agree within the two first two distinctions, Skinner (1971) with none of them.

Rational choice is instrumental and guided by the outcome of action – i.e. actions are valued and chosen not for themselves, but as an efficient means to an end (Elster 1989:22). By contrast, behaviour guided by social norms, moral values or duties is not concerned with outcomes.

What is appropriate in a particular situation is defined by the political and social system and transmitted through socialisation. Socialisation theory perceives activity and values as closely connected with social structures. Values and atti-tudes are formed on the basis of "where people come from" – childhood, kinship, family structures, education, population groups, religion and education. Religion, language, race and ethnicity are seen as the cleavages contributing most often to political instability in newly established states, and all are acquired through childhood learning. Experiences are not seen as manifest political experiences, but they have political consequences (Almond & Verba 1980).

Support for political communities and regimes, patriotism and identity are argued to be related to psychological bonds basically developed in childhood. Easton and Dennis (1969) found, however, that the relevance of childhood learning varies a great deal according to the type of orientations being investigated. Several studies of childhood socialisation failed in explaining the deviant behaviour of youth and adults. In the late 70s, research into learning reacted to disappointments with earlier theoretical frameworks by turning the field's focus in a new direction: namely, towards attitude change during adolescence and adulthood (Conover & Searing 1994).

The Civic Culture study was one of the first to stress the importance of adult political socialisation and experiences and to demonstrate the relative weakness of childhood learning (Almond 1980:29). Almond and Verba (1963) argue that later experiences in school, but particularly in the adult workplace, were more closely correlated with political competence and participation (Almond 1980:25). They noted that membership and activity in organisations could independently produce civic competence. Pateman (1970), Cole (1919, 1920), Lafferty (1981) and others focus on the importance of work as an arena for political learning and argue that the more participatory the environment surrounding the individual at work, the more community-oriented and active he or she will become outside work.

2.4 Accumulated perspectives

Through the 50s and 60s the attention of politicians and academics in South Africa was drawn towards the subversive, subservient culture of blacks internalising their inferior status in society. The Black Consciousness Movement of the 70s grew out of a student movement which wanted to rectify this. However, resistance politics in South Africa also had long traditions, from the early emergence of the ANC in the 20s to the accumulation of civics, union and political activities over the course of several decades. In the 80s, individual and collective action took on new forms, identities and intensity. How can we explain this? Does it reflect a natural accumulation of resistance, "ups and downs" in activities due to external circumstances, or the attitudes and behaviour of various subcultures?[47] If the last is the case, what serves to develop these subcultures?

Calhoun (1991) is one of many who argue against rational choice theory by stating that certain actions cannot be explained in terms of expected outcomes. Actions involving great risks and bravery are good examples of such actions (Calhoun 1991, Olberg 1995). Mandela's decision to go to jail, or to stay in jail when he was offered the opportunity to go free in exchange for abandoning publicly the armed struggle may be interpreted as one such action. Likewise, there are many examples of people demonstrating against the regime in actions involving great danger, such as the "march upon Bisho" in 1992 when the march proceeded even though the marchers faced the guns of Ciskei military forces.[48] Likewise, thousands of people risked their properties, safety and lives by sheltering people on the run and put their own and their family's lives in danger by joining the ANC or other underground forces. Many whites risked everything they had by supporting "the struggle" although they had nothing to gain directly and a lot to lose. How can we explain people engaging in actions even when they know the outcome is "doomed" (Calhoun 1991, Olberg 1995)?

[47] It may of course reflect elements of all three.
[48] Ciskei was one of the so-called "independent" homelands. Marches to Ciskei were organised in 1992 as part of the mass actions to symbolically "take power". Although the marches were peaceful, they were met by military forces and thirty people were shot dead in August 1992.

Moral compulsion, new identity, norms and ideology may be the motivating factors behind social actions and heroic actions. Calhoun (1991) argues, for example, that Chinese students had developed a personal identity that would have been damaged if they had surrendered to the authorities in Beijing in 1989.[49] He argues that the concept of identity and "honour" is fundamental in actions that cannot be explained by rationality and interests. Rational choice analysis, focusing on pre-existing interests, fails to explain such phenomena as heroic action because interests and action follow from identities which may be shifting. Rational choice theory can deal with changing preferences but does not have much scope for explaining changing goals. Elster (1989:24) argues on the other hand that self-esteem is essentially "a by-product of actions undertaken for other ends – it cannot be a sole purpose of activity".

Yet, the motivation behind workers' involvement in politically motivated stay-aways was not urgent instrumental protection of individual interests against mass retrenchments. The motivation was long-term and political and the "irrationality" refers to the choice of short-term costs (wage loss and physical danger) as opposed to long-term insecurity or uncertainty and unclear gains. It seems hard to assess the rationality of such actions without knowledge about culture, identity, morals and norms, or without what Bereyikian (1992:652) calls the "framing of decisions".

Values, identities, norms and morals are formed on the basis of cultures passed on from one generation to another, but also changed and adapted by new generations and institutions. Street argues that in order for political culture to have an explanatory force in relation to action, it must do more than simply fill out the details of political action; it must shape or determine the character and intentions of that action (1993). A cultural theory must hence shape action more persuasively than materialist or rational choice theories (Street 1993), or at least demonstrate that political culture is an indispensable and decisive factor in the equation. The point here, however, is not to present political socialisation theory as an alternative or rival to rational choice theory. Rather we need to see how they can complement each other in order to explain mixed motivations. People are both rational and influenced by "irrational" motives. People are

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[49] The suppression was so total and so inhuman that they *had* to react in order to maintain their dignity and identity.

influenced by culture and institutions, which shape identities, norms and "rationality" – and on that basis action – in a way which is difficult to assess with rational choice theory alone.

Bereyikian (1992) states that the decisional determinant of action is not the expected outcome but how the choice is perceived relative to the status quo. Furthermore, we need to look at how decisions are presented and framed. In order to overcome individual fatalism, the revolutionary organisation needs to shift people's perception of poverty, suppression, etc. as a personal matter and make them see it as related to socio-structural relationships. Individual fatalism is thereby replaced with the notion that change can be affected by individual action through organisational means.

Elster (1989) argues that collective action comes about as a result of a variety of individual motivations: self-interest, altruism, social norms, or some combination thereof. In reality, co-operation occurs when and because different motivations reinforce each other. Socialisation theory and rational choice theory have often failed to overlap. Rational choice theory has been concerned with describing the choices people make, while political socialisation theory has occupied itself with the basis on which people make their choices.

While rational theory has been little occupied with the rationality of values and norms (Føllesdal 1982), political socialisation theory has paid equally little attention to rationality in the actions and values emerging from the socialisation process. The new institutionalism introduced by March and Olsen (1984), however, can fruitfully be combined with theories of political learning in order to explain actions. Inglehart (1990) argues that rational choice and political culture theories are not incompatible but complementary modes of explanation. The *cultural theory* expounded by Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky discusses a cultural rationality (Selle & Berntzen 1991).[50] They argue that individuals will always be rational in pursuing their goals, but these goals will be related to the culture they are part of. Culture is no longer separate from structure but is seen as the link between values and action: "what matters most to people is their relationship with other people and other people's relationship with them" (Wildavsky 1984). Shared values legitimise and reinforce social practices. Different types of social organisation determine political cultures. Bereyikian (1992) argues that we must expand the concept of "framing"

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[50] The theory is elaborated in Douglas and Wildavsky (1983); Douglas (1985); and Wildavsky (1986a,b)

and the understanding that individuals invoke different interests, priorities, attitudes and decision-making rules in different structural contexts. Coleman (1994:95-96) argues that the principal virtue of the sociological school (which says that action is governed by social norms, rules and obligations) lies in its ability to describe and explain the way that action is shaped, constrained and redirected by social context. The virtue of the economic school is its principle of action. Coleman argues (ibid) that actions are shaped, redirected and constrained by the social context – i.e. norms, interpersonal trust, social networks and organisations, but in the "social school" perspective, the actor has no "engine of action". The social and economic schools should be combined, both in order to understand individual behaviour and in order to understand the relationship between individual action and social systems (Coleman 1986).

Social action may be guided by *both* consistent rationality and by identity, social norms and values. In order to understand the former, we need to examine the development of the latter. This is particularly important when we confront societies undergoing rapid transition where goals, preferences and identities may change equally rapidly.

Alternative actions

Blacks in South Africa under apartheid had three options: escape, protest or imitation, or in Hirschman's (1970) words: "exit, voice and loyalty"[51]. For decades, racism was the constitutional basis of society. The system prescribed separate residential areas for the various population groups. The institutional mechanism which produced apartheid was the linking of political, economic and social rights to group affiliation and area of permanent residence rather than to citizenship in an internationally acknowledged sense of the word. Figure 2.1 shows an ideal typology of options for actions in South Africa. A simple division of exit, voice and loyalty activities, without further discrimination, is not enough. Different

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[51] Hirschman (1970) draws a distinction between *exit,* which in his opinion is a market response, and *voice* and *loyalty,* which are political responses. Voice and loyalty are modes of behaviour which are intended to communicate a condition that needs to be addressed. I would, however, argue that *exit* is not simply an attribute of a market situation, but also a potential reaction to a system and condition with which one has no communication and to which one finds no solution.

kinds of *voice* options may, for example, carry different weight and give different results in terms of their impact upon government decisions or political change. We must therefore distinguish between passive and active forms of activity in the typology.

These different routes to action may all be reactions to different ideological influences in society. They may all be rational, but they will need to be explained by the subcultures and institutions in which they emerged and were internalised (see Figure 2.1).

Greenberg (1983, 1986) and Lafferty (1985) put organisational learning in working life into a broader context. They emphasised that the impact of organisational learning upon political values and behaviour would differ from one national setting to another. According to them, the learning effect would be conditioned by the national political context – i.e. whether the political context is based on values which the learning context (trade unions) mediates. The long resistance to the state and the role of civil society in the struggle against apartheid suggest that it is worth looking at existing organisations in civil society that can provide a frame of reference for individuals' political learning and build democratically competent citizenship as well as leadership. However, the political context in South Africa also exposed people to other ideological frameworks that need to be considered as a point of departure for a study of the development of democratic culture. One of these is provided by the family, another by the workplace and a third by opposition or resistance organisations and networks.

Figure 2.1   Options for Action in South Africa

	Imitation (Loyalty)	Escape (Exit)	Opposition (Voice)
Passive	* Suppressed reactions * Alienation * Tacit support	* Dreams of a better future * Individualism * Alienation * Withdrawal	* Silent opposition * Sit-ins * Sit-downs * Go-slows * Peaceful protests
Active	* Pro-apartheid activities * Attitudinal support for separate development	* Support for alternative cultures * Emigration	* Armed struggle * Collective action

The daily lives of South Africans are informed by four distinct cultural and institutional legacies: the traditional African value-systems; the value-system of apartheid and colonialism; the industrial, class-based society; and finally the legacy and practice of opposition and resistance politics. Each of these "systems" attempted to enforce what Migdal (1988) has called "social control". Successful social control is reflected in compliance, participation and legitimacy, and the rules of behaviour are constructed from rewards, sanctions and symbols (du Toit 1996:23). The aim of apartheid culture was to entrench loyalty and imitation through the institutions of separate development. Traditional African values, on the other hand, may stimulate "exit" but not necessarily opposition. Protest as such may be stimulated by the specific traditions of organisational civil society. Industrialisation and urbanisation may entrench individualism (escape or loyalty) in the pursuit of further individual economic advancement or collective class actions. These ideological settings or "social control" systems will influence people in different directions and carry cleavages and conflicts between and within them.[52]

Apartheid: a culture of suppression and inequalities

Apartheid was intended as separate structural development and was to carry with it a reinforcement of subcultural values. The whole "legitimacy" of apartheid (at least according to its architects) was to entrench an ideology of differentiated status and inequality. Hierarchies were entrenched through status and position in society and at work. Afrikaner nationalism was a response to the privileged position of the Afrikaner *Volk* while at the same time reinforcing it.

Apartheid ideology was expressed not least through the education system. "Bantu education" was developed in order to teach blacks their "proper place" in society. The whole education system (including the curriculum for whites, coloureds and Indians) reflected inequality and differentiated status. This is illustrated not only in different curricula, the

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[52] Divided and conflicting social systems and ideological settings may also cause the decay of social cohesion and of social fabric. One indication of this can be found in the crime statistics, which haves shown a worrying trend. Furthermore, divorce rates have increased dramatically; likewise the number of children being born outside marriage (in 1980, 43 per cent of African children were born outside marriage).

discriminating portrayal and status of the different population groups in school textbooks, etc., but also in history (which stated that "man came to South Africa when the whites landed in 1652"), in the persistence of Afrikaans as the main language of teaching, etc.

The apartheid state exemplified Western concepts of sovereignty and territoriality (for whites) at the expense of notions of nationality and legitimacy (for the whole population). It sought to provide whites with "normal democratic politics", and Africans with alternative frameworks: exclusion, Bantustans and repression. In order to make sure that the one frame did not impinge on the other, total segregation was provided for, in addition to the banning of certain political literature, restrictions upon media reporting etc. In one sense then, the Western model of representative democracy was brought close to home for the millions of blacks who could now "see it, but not touch it"!

Afrikaner society itself is said to have been built upon hierarchies and inequalities. Status and respect for authorities is held high. The concepts of human rights, fairness and tolerance, as interpreted by schools, religion, and political institutions, etc., were all based upon hierarchies of values and status in which blacks had a clearly inferior status. Constant humiliation came with it, and dignity and human rights were denied to the large majority. NP supporters are also generally perceived as putting a relatively strong emphasis upon law and order, morality and religion. A majority of whites in 1987 and 1988 argued that whites and Africans did not have enough common values to create a future democratic South Africa.[53]

A relationship – i.e. both structures and cultures – of "masters and servants", "maids and madams", "owners and slaves" or whites and blacks developed in South Africa. This limited blacks' possibilities for "escape" or "exit", because it was hard to avoid the "grand apartheid" machinery and they could hardly become more marginalised than they already were. Few Africans gave it *active* support and loyalty. It was only amongst the white electorate that its strength could be measured in terms of legitimacy and support. In practice that left many with two options, either to "imitate" – i.e. be loyal and quiet – or to protest. The massive pressure of apartheid ideology must have made it easy to internalise inferiority complexes, a loss of human dignity and self-respect. The dislocation of millions of people

[53] In 1990, however, 60 per cent of whites believed that enough common values existed (de Kock 1996:40).

under the Group Areas Act reinforced the break-up of traditional family values and the weakening of the social fabric (du Toit 1996). By 1976, one in every six coloureds and one in every four members of the Indian population had been subjected to relocation (ibid).

There were, however, those who minimalised the physical and psychological damage of apartheid in ways other than by "pulling away". The internalisation of apartheid ideology would depend upon the presence of institutions in people's environments which carried forward other value systems.

Ubuntu values and traditional African culture[54]

Little has been written about traditional African value systems.[55] "Popular knowledge" indicates, however, that there is more than one value system. African value systems differ with language, traditions and region while simultaneously expressing similar norms concerning, for example, traditional family values and to some extent values concerning authority promoted by the family and close networks associated with the home sphere.

Despite the extraordinary diversity of African polities prior to the imposition of colonial rule and apartheid, several democratic strands were discernible. The first was the principle of public involvement in decision-making. Other principles include the importance of the community over the individual, obedience to elders and mutual responsibility contained in the concept of kinship (Chazan 1994). Simultaneously, Tswanas and Zulus, for example, represent different traditions. The political traditions of the Tswana put a premium on compromise, while amongst the Zulus authority was vested in paternalistic and personalised rule (Chazan

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[54] While, the following attempts to pinpoint some key concepts of traditional African value systems, it should be recognised that other groups in South Africa will also carry their own traditional "family" values. Simultaneously, the description below will be tentative in that little, or nothing, has been written about this and therefore we will have to base it upon "popular knowledge" and the few written texts to be found, such as Chazan's article (1994), which focusses upon the whole African continent as a wholemore.

[55] The apartheid universities did some anthropological studies of the "primitives" which are of little value today.

ibid:63).[56] In these circumstances, Chazan (ibid) argues, the organisation of formal opposition or of competing interests was either circumscribed or considered to be subversive.

There is an old African proverb that says, "one finger cannot pick up a grain". It suggests that one has to work collectively with others in order to gain strength and be able to achieve anything. Another concept which guides the mindsets of Africans is the spirit of Ubuntu.[57] The proverb "Umuntu ungumuntu ngabanye abantu", which means "a person is a person by means of other people" (or because of other people), is a metaphor for the significance of group solidarity and collective unity.[58] It suggests that one's humanity depends upon recognising the humanity of others and on its being recognised by others. It suggests the importance of collective and common problem-solving as opposed to individualism and it suggests national identity rather than sub-national workerist or ethnic loyalty. It expresses the notion of co-operation and harmony between individual members of society. Likewise, Tswana people say: "Siblings share the herds of locusts". Solidarity should, in other words, not be forgotten. This is not to suggest that "ubuntu" alone will guide individual action, but it serves to point out that economic rationality alone may inadequately account for individual involvement in collective action.

Traditional values seem to some extent to be breaking up in the face of the industrialisation, urbanisation and township culture of the 70s. This is illustrated by the fact that traditions like circumcision (into adulthood), "lobola"[59] etc. are now being adapted and moderated to be compatible with a modern, urban environment.[60]

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[56] The "Induna system", a hierarchy of authority organised under the chiefs, is still maintained today. It is argued to be traditional and pre-democratic. The Zulu speakers in Gauteng, who accept the authority of chiefs in their area of origin in KwaZulu-Natal, are organised into an interconnected system of Indunas, which is controlled from that province (White 1995). Some of these Indunas are, however, now elected rather than appointed.

[57] A Xhosa/Zulu word which means "personhood". It is a metaphor which describes the significance of group solidarity and collective unity. See (Mbigi and Maree 1995.)

[58] Quoted in Wilson and Ramphele 1989.

[59] "Lobola" was traditionally paid by the groom's family in order for future children to take over their father's surname. Today, lobola is paid upon marriage with no reference to children.

Industrialised society

Before the discovery of minerals at the end of the last century, the vast majority of South Africans depended upon the land for a living. This was changed initially by mining and later more dramatically by the industrialisation and urbanisation which took place in the 60s and 70s. These processes changed the sources of subsistence, places of residence and family life of all those who had to leave their traditional rural areas in order to find work in metropolitan areas. In most cases, the men who came into the rapidly expanding manufacturing sector were initially forced to live in hostels or informal areas (squatter camps) and had to leave their wives, parents and children at home in the rural areas. Millions poured into the townships, grouped like satellites around the segregated industrial cities. Millions more, who remained in the rural areas, depended on the wages of migrant workers to survive. Furthermore, those moving to the towns suddenly now came into contact with a vibrant "workers collective" in the workplace. To have a factory consciousness is, in Benyon's (1973) words, to have an understanding of how you are exploited in the factory and how you can best combat management:

> "A factory consciousness understands class relationships in terms of their direct manifestation of conflict between the bosses and the workers within the factory. It is rooted in the workplace where struggles are fought over the control of the job and the rights of managers and workers. ... In its least developed form it is revealed in sporadic bloody-mindedness and malingering - the fuck-em attitude that most managers are familiar with and find so distasteful".

Rapid industrial modernisation was already a socially disruptive process because of the disruption of family and communal life that it entailed. In addition, the working class in South Africa was a racially divided working class created on the basis of "racial capitalism", black migrant labour, the pass and the contract and compound systems, which were developed to

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[60] Other traditions, like the practice of traditional healing through herbalist and traditional diviners, have not only persisted despite modernisation, industrialisation and urbanisation, but also seems to have flourished in the modern, urban setting (du Toit 1995).

control labour and keep it cheap (Callinicos 1987). The working-class consciousness which evolved on this basis amongst blacks was therefore a consciousness closely connected to "being black".

Luli Callinicos (1987) records how there was a growing awareness of collective strength and *organised resistance* in the 1910s and 20s, with the Congress leader Saul Msane pointing out[61]:

> "The masses in the native population are beginning to realise that they are an indispensable factor in the natural and social fabric of South Africa. They are beginning to see that the whole industrial system in this land is based and must be based on their willing co-operation".

Rapid growth in the manufacturing industries and changes in the labour process in the factories in the 60s and 70s led to the development of a whole new working class. New machinery was introduced and jobs were split up into smaller tasks. Craft workers were de-skilled as a result and black, semi-skilled workers took over large parts of the production process.

The struggle of workers against their employers for better wages and working conditions became a countrywide struggle, although not yet a political struggle. For some, it never became a political struggle.

The culture of opposition

According to Hirschman (1970), the *voice* option of behaviour is activated only when the *exit option* is unavailable. I would nevertheless argue, on the basis of people's cultures and identities, that *voice* may be a rational option, even when the *exit* option is available.

Opposition, or rather the "struggle", was an activity whose sole purpose was to overthrow the apartheid regime. Yet the forms or expression of the struggle changed from "Africa-Mayibuye – Freedom in our Lifetime!" to "Amandla – Ngawethu – Power to the People!" as the struggle began to present the possibility of the defeat of the apartheid regime.[62] Frost (1996:19) highlights certain features of it which may be

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[61] Originally quoted by P. Bonner "The Transvaal Native Congress, 1917–1920". in Marks and Rathborne *Industrialisation and Social Change in South Africa*. (p. 298) found in Callinicos 1987:85).

important in order to understand subsequent developments. He also describes the cultural impact it had in leaving people with a specific language and definitions and therefore its potential impact upon attitudes and their expression. First of all, those involved in the struggle talked about it in military language, referring to its aim as the "defeat of the enemy". Second, strategies were articulated in terms of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. Third, those involved in the struggle found that it corresponded well with the bi-polarity, which dominated world politics. Fourth, the aim was not to gain concessions from the government – the aim was victory.

Orkin (1994) argues that South African civil society developed a counter-ideology to apartheid. Through a richly organised society and the development of the Black Consciousness Movement through the 70s and 80s, a collective, oppositional, black sub-culture developed, which, in the opinion of some academics, reinforced the original collective African decision-making model from earlier history. If this is valid, then we can expect the pre-industrial cleavages, first and foremost race, still to be important, however with the model which says that those who have taken part in electoral politics – i.e. Whites – are the most politically active and conscious now reversed. In fact, more attention needs to be given to the role of civil society and the emergence of sub-cultures, carried forward by institutions, in influencing the development of democratic practices and social actions, which may in turn affect the stability of democracy.

The new institutionalism argues that institutions expand individual choices by influencing the availability of information while simultaneously constraining individuals' scope of choice. Institutions constitute an intervening variable capable of influencing an individual's choices and actions but not determining them. Parts of the new institutionalism challenge the perception of order, rationality and the primacy of individual outcome orientation. Through politics and political actions, people develop themselves, their communities and the public good. In this sense, participation in civic life is the highest form of activity for a civilised person: participation is education, a process of discovery, the elaboration and expression of meaning and the establishment of conceptions of experience, values and the nature of existence (Pateman 1970, Lafferty 1985, March and Olsen 1984).

[62] "Amandla – Ngawethu!" became one of the principal battle-calls of the national liberation movement.

Taylor in *The Possibility of Co-operation* argues that small communities are more likely to be inclined to stimulate voluntary co-operation in the provision of public goods and in finding solutions to collective action problems via conditional co-operation and informal social sanctions, which help maintain solidarity. Elster argues that collective action problems arise because it is difficult to get people to co-operate for their mutual benefit (Elster 1989). Voluntary, spontaneous co-operation is facilitated by social capital – i.e. networks of civic engagement. To "solve" the problem is to achieve mutually beneficial co-operation. Decentralised solutions are more basic than centralised ones, since to ensure compliance with a central institution is in itself a collective action problem. Unions organised democratically, with separate local structures, local councils and frequent meetings designed to assist in developing central union policy, may well function as such "small communities" and "decentralised solutions" and may help to nurture a culture and norms of participation.

Bereyikian (1992) argues, on the other hand, that using such explanations will not explain how the "group pressure" and the norm of collective action developed in the first place – unless, of course, we accept that "there was already" a culture of collective action and collective choices in South Africa. If the "collective culture" and "ubuntu" have always existed and continue to do so, they may contradict the earlier mentioned subversive and subservient culture presumed to exist amongst blacks. One could simply maintain that the collective culture was present but that it was not expressed so strongly during the 80s because of severe sanctions and restrictions from the government. We could argue that the old traditional "ubuntu" and collectivism became "latent and inactive" owing to the pressures of apartheid and were remobilised by the unions in the late 80s. On the basis of the norms of collectivism and "ubuntu" amongst black South Africans, I would argue that individual engagement in collective action is consistent. However, in order to understand the differences between particular groups of workers, we need to look closer at the learning effect which takes place in organisations. The behaviourists' contention that we should study causal relations in social behaviour rather than the structure of beliefs may be exaggerated. We should probably study both.

2.5 Building the argument

Individual versus collective action

It is often assumed that collective action is the aggregation of individual action or that aggregated individual preferences are followed by collective outcomes. However, unions can behave differently as collectives to what the aggregation of individual preferences would indicate. Collective action becomes the aggregation of individual behaviour and the result of several individuals trying to accomplish their goals collectively rather than individually. However, problems in aggregating from micro-level observations to macro-level social outcomes, or from "micro-motives to macro-behaviour", when studying and testing empirical data has become apparent. Academics are familiar with systems that lead to aggregate results that the individual neither intends nor needs to be aware of, results that sometimes have no recognisable counterpart at the individual level (Schelling 1978).

To start with, let us look at micro-level political learning (through unions) and collective union action separately. The potential impact of unions upon political development is two-fold, but the two aspects are linked. First, unions influence public policy in their role as collective organisations and pressure groups. They also influence individual living conditions and economic development at large through their role as bargaining bodies and interest organisations in the labour market. On this basis, they may serve as *agents* for democratic change. Their collective strength and success in protecting members' interests serves as a point of departure for the second and main part of this study, namely, how unions function as forums for political learning, or as *laboratories* for democratic development. Although these dimensions of union strength are linked, we must keep in mind that they are not necessarily one and the same. On that basis, we must study, among other things, the internal decision-making procedures of the organisation in order to understand the relationship between individual and collective action and in order to develop some perspectives upon future directions. Elster argues that the notion of rationality can be extended from the individual to the collective (Elster 1983:2). At this level, rationality is either connected to collective decision-making or to the aggregate of individual decisions. We need to look closer at the *collective decision-making* of the unions in order to find out whether the collective serves as a likely aggregate of individual decisions, while keeping in mind that organisations also go through learning processes and internal dynamic changes.

The argument

There are two different theoretical approaches to the role of civil society in relation to political change. Migdal (1988), Olson (1965) and others will argue that strong, organised interest groups in civil society may hinder and undermine political change in a democratic, or state-building, direction. Others, like Putnam (1993) and Dahl (1971), argue on the other hand that a pluralist, strong civil society will nurture democracy and a stable political system.

Relations between the state and civil society as well as the potential role and strategies of trade unions are usually described in terms of corporatist, pluralist or socio-political trade-union perspectives. The different forms that this relationship assumes will be determined chiefly, but certainly not exclusively, by the strategies adopted by the state itself towards labour.

Corporatism may be looked upon as a system of interest and/or attitude representation – a model of institutional arrangements for linking the organised interests of civil society with state decision-making structures (Schmitter 1974). The so-called *state corporatism* and *societal corporatism* perspectives will to a large extent differ when it comes to the autonomy of the labour movement, but both will be built upon co-operation with state actors and bodies. Corporatism will carry with it a certain degree of centralisation, which makes it possible for organisations to formulate the general interests of their members and act collectively and strategically to advance them. The corporatist organisation will promote and express some sort of loyalty to the political system. Akwety (1994) argues, however, that even corporatist organisations may push for political change, *if* they sense a threat from the state to the cohesion of the organisation.

Pluralist organisational life, on the other hand, will be less concerned with politics and political change and instead concentrate more upon the socio-economic, sectoral and/or local demands of its members. Trade unions will, according to this perspective, be most concerned with the economic well-being of their members. Pluralist organisations *can* assume short-term political roles in the pursuit of long-term goals related to economic interests. Their independence from political bodies and focus upon economic demands will, however, characterise their strategies and goals.

The alternative *socio-political organisation* will, as a final alternative, focus on broad-based demands and far-reaching changes in politics. It will be concerned with political demands and political change and work in broad alliances with similar interest groups in civil society.

All these three perspectives describe the form of a potential relationship between the state and civil society, which may still turn out to be either damaging or constructive for democratic change, as mentioned initially. While all three of these perspectives and practices of organisational life will be present in South Africa simultaneously, they have been formed by different factors and will therefore have different implications for political learning and democratic practices.

Individual learning

In South Africa, "economic man" may argue that it was rational for some to follow an individualist approach, maximise their own economic resources and stay out of politics. To "sociological man", on the other hand, it may have been just as rational to act politically and collectively in order to uproot apartheid. However, this simplistic "typology" needs to be modified. The economic man, or individualist, may have found it just as rational to become politically active when he realised that apartheid was a barrier to further individual advancement. The difference between "economic man" and "political" or "sociological man" in this respect is thus one of different motivations, goals and ideal models of democracy, but not necessarily one of political activity or degree of participation.

Academics have long argued that the prospects for stable democratic government depend upon social and economic transformation. Wealth eases burdens, both individual and collective; education expands the number of professionals and the middle class, who are often perceived to be most sympathetic to democratic liberal ideals and the most sophisticated citizens. If this is so, then it will be the levels of education and income which determine the level of democratic culture.

Others emphasise the importance of learning in organisational life (Putnam 1993) and argue that people's democratic citizenship is formed by the type and degree of their community involvement and organisational learning. People focusing on unions as forums of individual political learning may be divided into three camps. First, there are those who look at unions as mobilisers of the working-class and stimulators of collective class-consciousness. The second group focusses on the importance of involvement in decision-making for democratic learning and activity in

other political arenas. Third, there are the "instrumentalists", who see unions basically as instruments for the workers' struggle for their economic interests. All three groups indirectly imply that organisational participation will lead to stronger commitments to the basic norms and values of the organisation.

The *instrumentalists* will argue that unions do not affect workers' attitudes to politics or that they do so only to a moderate degree. In their view, political learning will therefore simply create or reinforce workers' support for a (regulated/moderated) free market and for unions to be independent of politics.

According to *class-oriented approaches*, support for and identification with collective class interests will increase as workers become exposed to the practices of unionism. These studies generally underline a close relationship between unions and politics. Hyman (1971) divides socialist theorists who study union potential for social transformation into two categories. The pessimistic tradition argues that trade-union activity does not in itself facilitate the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society. The optimistic approach, on the other hand, discerns significant revolutionary potential in such activity. Engels said that what gave unions their importance was that they were the first attempt by workers to abolish competition among themselves. Marx argued that unions served to generate among workers a consciousness of class unity, transforming them from class "in itself" to a class "for itself".

In addition, unions may have central importance as learning areas for individual competence building. Lack of access to alternative interest organisations, owing to political restrictions, may influence members' perceptions of trade unions as a resource. For blacks, a lack of formal education and organisational experience may increase the importance of trade unions as areas of political learning. According to *participatory democrats*, participation in decision-making in working life will teach the individual worker the values and instruments of participation. Increased participation in decision-making gives individuals an increased feeling of personal and political efficacy (Almond & Verba 1965, Pateman 1970, Ambrecht 1975, Kohn 1980, Elden 1981, Greenberg 1986). Through "doing and reflection" specifically human traits are being realised (Becker 1971). Participation in union decision-making will teach the individual how decisions are made and how to influence them. New values and behaviour will follow (Pateman 1970, Colbjørnsen 1980, Lafferty 1985, Karasec 1978, Elden 1981). Participation in union decision-making will, following this argument, "spill over" into increased participation outside

work and unions too. Taking part in collective decision-making within the union movement will give the individual a better understanding of the interests of the wider community and increase his orientation towards the collective and his democratic consciousness.

To most participatory democrats, trade unions have been neglected as learning areas for democratic values and participation which, it is assumed, will spill over from work into politics. A few, however, have touched upon trade unions in connection with individual competence-building and democratic learning (Lipset, Trow and Coleman 1956, Colbjørnsen 1980, Fenwick & Olson 1986). Pateman's (1970) focus upon work as an organisational learning area was due to this being an area where the individual spends a relatively large amount of time and where decisions are made that are of huge importance to the individual. In this respect, too, trade unions are important, in particular trade unions organised according to democratic principles. International studies also indicate that trade unionists have a more positive attitude to participation in decision-making at the workplace than unorganised workers (Poole 1978, Fenwick & Olson 1986).

2.6   Focus and operationalisation of the study
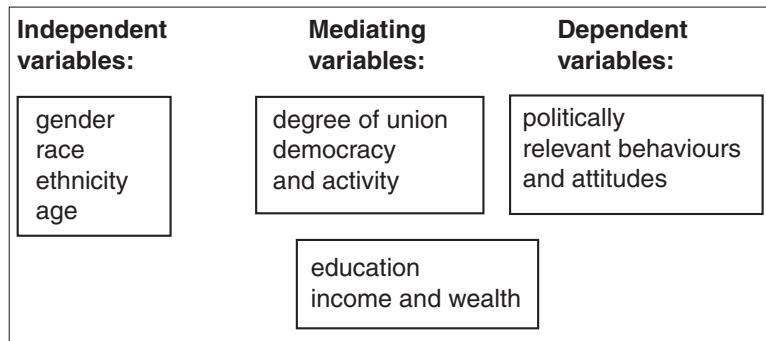
The focus of this study is upon the role of organised civil society, and of trade unions in particular, in the process of democratic consolidation in South Africa *and* upon South Africans' political values and priorities. The thesis is designed to test the validity of two lines of argument concerning the role of unions in the process of political change. I focus on the relationship between union indicators and a range of politically relevant types of behaviour and attitudes.

First, in contrast to the modernisation perspective, I suggest that union membership, and therefore exposure to union culture, will have a stronger effect upon individual political behaviour and attitudes than education and income. This implies that the longer workers have been members of the unions, the stronger the effect of union indicators will be upon relevant political attitudes and activities. Furthermore, I suggest that the more democratic the union organisation and the more workers take part in union activities, the more pronounced the observable effects on

individual behaviour and attitudes will be. Both lines of argument imply that union membership and degree of activity in the unions will mediate the political values and behaviour of South Africans.

The study design is as follows:

Figure 2.2 Study Design in Focus

Independent variables:	Mediating variables:	Dependent variables:
gender race ethnicity age	degree of union democracy and activity	politically relevant behaviours and attitudes
	education income and wealth	

Elaboration of our political democratic indicators

The above scheme is incomplete in several regards.[63] We still have to specify what we mean by political behaviour and attitudes. The continuity of the cultural premises embodied in apartheid, the "African cultural tradition" and the opposition culture, through the maintenance of a variety of institutional arrangements, yielded a particularly heterogeneous tradition of political culture on the eve of democracy. We focus on belief systems rather than ideologies. Converse (1964:207) defines a belief system as[64]:

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[63] We also need to specify what we mean by union- related political learning and factors indicative of such learning. Secondly, there is reason to believe that the effects of democratic union organisation and activities are mediated by the work people do and how the workplace is organised (see Chapters 11 and 12 for this). Appendix 3 is reserved for a more detailed elaboration of the political variables.

[64] Focussing upon belief systems rather than ideology has several advantages. First, ideology has been toused with several different interpretations, some of them contradictory. Furthermore, ideology is generally perceived as a set of prescriptive beliefs, including statements of instrumentral values relating to some ultimate value position (Knutsen 1983). A belief system, on the other hand, is more general than an ideology. While an ideology is a set of a belief system, a belief system is not necessarily an ideology. We adhere to "belief systems" because people's understanding of what is political or not may be varied and changing.

> "a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional inter-dependence".

There are four dimensions in the focus of this study, all of them important when it comes to political culture in a democratisation process. First, we look closer at democratic citizenship, implying democratic tolerance and civic competence. Second, and this is linked to the first dimension, we investigate the degree of political alienation in the population. Third, we assess the degree of class-consciousness and the collective versus the individual orientation. Fourth, we examine the degree and type of political activity.

Democratic citizenship

By democratic citizenship we imply a certain level of *knowledge about democracy* and its func-tioning as well as *specific attitudes to the democratic principles of equality, participation, majority voting, the rule of law and freedom of speech and association*. Let us first have a closer look at democratic knowledge. Democratic or political knowledge concerns knowledge about political institutions and political debates. Knowledge about politics, institutions, parties and politicians is the basis for whether people feel affected by politics and are hence potentially mobilisable for political participation.

Attitudes to democratic principles refer to the principles of equality, participation, majority voting, the rule of law and freedom of speech and association. There is general agreement that freedom and liberty are usually connected with a liberal form of democracy, while equality and participation are usually included in another, more participatory democracy model. People's preferences for specific democratic models will hence have implications for their preferences regarding interventions by the state, etc. Trust, or lack of trust, in other groups may underline support for democratic principles such as equality. Support and respect for the majority, even if the majority does not support one's own interests, are other factors that are indicative of democratic consciousness.

Secondly, the extent to which belief systems are bound together in a functionally interdependent prescriptive way (i.e. ideology) may be confused and unclear while also concealing the unknown factors which functionally bind attitudes together in what is, to us an, unfamiliar setting.

Alienation

Alienation is usually understood as a feeling of powerlessness. Such an understanding of alienation overlooks objective factors and in Greenberg's (1983) words fails to capture much of the richness and complexity of what goes on in the workplace. Alienation must in his view be seen broadly as being both objective and subjective in nature (Greenberg 1983). Objective alienation is defined by objective criteria. By subjective alienation we understand a conscious deprivation. In Marxism, alienation is a concrete social fact rooted in the relations of production and not a constant of the human condition. It is a condition of existence in which humans are caught in circumstances in which their activity does not use or develop the full range of human ability. Greenberg distinguishes between alienation from the product, from the process of production, from other workers and from the self. To be alienated means in all these cases to be (or feel oneself to be) without control. Being alienated from other workers means to be separated from other workers. Alienation from oneself implies being unable to act in ways that are rational, social, conscious and purposeful.

It thus follows that political alienation is also a feeling of being without control. It implies that the person is deprived of the opportunity to act in ways that are rational, social, conscious and purposeful in furthering his or her political interests. A feeling of not being informed about what is going on or an inability to follow political events may indicate objective political alienation. So may the feeling that politics is too complicated for the individual to be able to follow what is going on. Lack of trust in politicians and in the system is also an expression of alienation.

Class-consciousness

Class-consciousness is often presumed to be the real mobiliser for political action. The first step in the evolution of of class-consciousness is generally perceived to be a feeling of discontent with the existing system (Greenberg 1983). Mann (1973), however, says that class-consciousness initially concerns identification with a certain group or class and the interpretation of the world through the conceptual lens of that class. In his opinion, there are four main elements in the conception of class, of which this is the first (Mann 1973:13). Second comes class opposition – i.e. a perception that capitalism constitutes an enduring opponent. Third, class totality implies an acceptance of the two previous elements as defining the characteristics of one's own individual situation and of society. Fourth, and finally, is the

conception of an alternative society as a goal towards which one moves through the struggle with the opponent. True revolutionary consciousness is the combination of the four, he says, and obviously a rare occurrence.

Mann (1973:13) distinguishes between two strands of Marxism when it comes to conceptions of class-consciousness. One is the theory of the "new working class", which draws attention to the contradictions within classical Marxism concerning the nature of the workers' potential form of social organisation, their collective labour power. Is their power based upon the weight of numbers of a massive working class or does it emanate from the evolving nature of production? In the first case, workers are placed in a working-class position at work similar to their life outside work and are impelled to revolution by a sense of common exploitation and alienation. However, this theory, Mann claims, fails to account for the unexplained goal of the revolution: namely, socialism or communism. Why should the goal of the revolution be socialism or communism unless people have a drive towards collectivism? The progressive aspect of the means of production is the key to Marx's view of social change as a whole. The socialising factors for the working class are not only misery, degradation and exploitation but also the fact "that the centralisation of the means of production and socialisation of labour at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument" (Capital I, p.763, cited in Mann 1973:14). Mann argues that a more truly Marxian formulation might be that the socialistic nature of the proletarian revolution is guaranteed by workers' direct experience of the emerging necessity to organise production collectively and that their distinctive power is not weight of numbers but rather the actual exercise of collective co-ordination and control in advanced production before the revolution. We need, Mann argues, to give more weight to an interpretation of working-class consciousness in terms of solutions and new goals rather than in terms of class identity.

Political activities
Types of political action usually studied as components of political citizenship and democracy are: electoral activities, political party member-ship and contact with governments through party representatives and through the media. Referendums are used in some countries to measure support for specific issues. Opposition politics is under such circumstances regarded as peaceful protest marches, demonstrations, etc.

Political participation is usually defined as taking part or having a share with others in some political action (Parry 1972). However, others argue that for an act to be described as political participation there must be a more direct relationship between the act and the outcome: the political participant must be someone who has a reasonable expectation of influencing the policy decision or at least making him- or herself heard in the deliberations leading up to it (Parry 1972:3). Parry, on that basis, defines political participation as "taking part in the formulation, passage and implementation of public policies" (1972:5). This also requires us to look closer at the context and content of politics. Politics implies a public arena, and to open a hitherto private arena of decision-making to formal public participation is to politicise it (ibid).

Political activities in South Africa must be studied in terms of formal politics, or even more important for our purposes, opposition politics. The majority population was excluded from formal political channels and *had* to use opposition politics in order to open up political channels for formal legitimate participation. Millions therefore took part in activities directly aimed at overthrowing the apartheid regime. Types of political activities are usually divided by colour, owing to continuous political restrictions and states of emergencies. Whereas whites, coloureds and Asians had access to and took part in parliamentary elections,[65] Africans' political participation has mainly taken the form of stay-aways, boycotts and strikes aimed at bringing about the fall of the regime and the apartheid Parliament. Whereas writing articles to newspapers may be an expression of whites' political criticism, stay-aways and boycotts were definitely a part of the political opposition of blacks. Strikes and stay-aways are forms of political participation in South Africa because they had direct political goals and were staged in alliance with community organisations. A stay-away was most often a national political strike, including not only workers but also students, youth organisations, civics, etc. Strikes organised in the factory or within a sector, on the other hand, sometimes had specifically work-place related aims, like wage increases. Until 1994, work-place related issues in many cases went hand in hand with political issues. Finally, not only the types, but also the *degree, modes, intensity and quality of political participation* should be taken into account in our study of political participation and collective action in South Africa.

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[65]Although with veto -power to whites, see Chapter 3.

2.7 Methodology and problems of measurement

Methodology

In the first part of the study I rely mainly on informant interviews and on secondary sources. There is an emerging literature covering the period of States of Emergency in South Africa up until 1990 in general and the role of labour in particular. Adler et al. (1992) focus upon the role of unions in the transition away from white minority domination. They argue that it was the increasing mass character of internal resistance and particularly the unions' use of political strikes or "stay-aways" which was decisive in challenging the legitimacy of the regime.[66]

This part of the study will be based on a historical approach to critical changes in the pace and content of public policy, such as the recognition of black trade unions' bargaining rights in 1979, the abolition of the *Pass laws* in 1986 and of the *Separate Amenities Act* in 1990, and the abolition of the *Group Areas Act* and the suspension of the *Population Registration Act* in 1992. Against the background of labour's numerical and organisational strength as well as its relationship with employers, political actors and the state, we will draw some conclusions about its possible political role. The scope of the essay is to identify which factors hamper or promote union influence. We must also consider the economic role of labour in its ability to provide benefits for its members. The aim of the analysis is to trace the position, network and strategies of labour as a collective actor in relation to politics.

The analysis of South African workers' ideological and behavioural patterns, and the impact of unions in this regard, is based upon several sources. First, we have access to data from a survey conducted amongst COSATU shop stewards in 1991. Second, two Idasa[67] surveys were conducted, one in 1994 and another in 1995, focusing upon political attitudes amongst a national sample. Furthermore, we refer to the SALDRU/World Bank Poverty Study in 1993 and the October Household Surveys from 1994 and 1995 in order, *inter alia*, to cross-check some of our socio-economic indicators. Finally, we conducted our own interviews with a representative sample of 1,000 workers in the formal workforce in

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[66] Sitas (1991, 1992, 1993), Maree (1986, 1987, 1989), Webster (1985, 1989), and Von Holdt (1991, 1992, 1993) have documented the activities of labour in this period.
[67] Institute for a Democratic Alternative in South Africa.

Gauteng (Pretoria, Witwatersrand and the Vaal Triangle) around Johannesburg in 1994.[68] The survey is based upon a stratified random sample of black workers, with an additional small sample of white workers.[69] Although a national survey would have carried more weight, the sample size would have required unaffordable resources. I therefore decided to concentrate the sample in *one* province in order to be able to control for an extensive number of factors while maintaining large enough sub-groups for reliability.

Doing surveys with a relatively small selected sample intended to represent the whole labour force carries a number of risks. The sample may be unrepresentative because workers with certain characteristics have been over-represented in the survey compared to the proportion they constitute in the population at large. The reasons for this may be found in the drawing of the sample or in the fact that certain groups are not available or willing to be interviewed. Our survey was done as a step-by-step approach, involving three levels of sampling. The first sampling step was the selection of the townships in which the interviews were to be conducted. The next step was the selection of "types of settlements"" – i.e. formal or informal areas. Within each of the five sub-regions (Pretoria, Vaal, East Rand, West Rand and Central Johannesburg) and in both formal and informal areas, we selected one area at random. Each of the localities/settlements had a chance of being selected equal to the population in that area. The final sampling step was the selection of individuals.

On this basis, I present some multiple factor analysis and multiple classification analysis (MCA). Nevertheless, I seek to minimalise the intrusion of complicated statistical procedures, and usually rely upon such devices as tables and percentages. Such tests satisfy both the conventional tests of reliability *and* John Tuckey's "interocular traumatic test".[70] Furthermore, MCA, factor analysis and regression each set up fairly strict

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[68] A more detailed description of the survey, as well as sampling difficulties, is attached in Appendix 6.

[69] The formal workforce in this respect refers to everyone covered by the Labour Relations Act, including public employees. The formal workforce thereby excludes unemployed people and people working in the informal sector.

[70] Findings will pass this test if /when, they hit the researcher between the eyes (quoted in Putnam 1993)!

requirements concerning sampling procedure and the variables included in our analyses, which requires us to proceed with some caution with such methods.[71]

In order to generalise the results from our sample to the whole labour force using multivariate analysis we need to use a randomly selected sample in order to estimate standard deviations and margins of error. Our survey was done on the basis of a best possible sampling strategy in a problematic setting. Yet, it is always worth questioning the conditions under which the survey was conducted and the consequent quality of the sample and the reliability of the responses we received. First, some groups, such as the hostel dwellers, were not included in the sample, because it was impossible to get access to them for political reasons. Second, it may be that some of the respondents gave us "careful answers" as a security precaution. Finally, the sample was drawn in the townships. While this gives us a picture of urban township culture in South Africa, it tells us less about the total formal sector workforce in Gauteng and even less about South Africa as a whole. This will restrict our possibilities for generalisation. It also implies that we should proceed with caution with regard to our methodological instruments. We therefore rely to a large extent upon cross-tabulations in our discussion of this survey. MCA analysis will be used to control our results when we have more than three variables included in our models.

MCA analysis has the advantage of being able to analyse non-linear relations.[72] While regression analysis using dummy variables would be comparable, MCA has the advantage of being easy to interpret with its coefficients expressed as adjustments to the average (grand mean). The coefficients in regression analysis using dummy variables will in comparison be understood as deviations from a single class, which must be excluded from each set. In addition, we get coefficients for each of the nominal variables. The chief advantage of the MCA is, according to Andrews et al. (1973), its more convenient input arrangements and understandable output, which focuses upon sets of predictors and on the extent and direction of the adjustments made for inter-correlation among the sets of predictors. Therefore, when we want to know how well all our variables *together* explain variation in our politically relevant dependent

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[71] See Appendix 8.

[72] Furthermore, several of our independent variables are on a nominal level, which may not be analysed by regression analysis.

variables, or when we want to know how each predictor relates to our dependent variables *before* and *after* adjusting for the effects of our other predictors, we use MCA. On the other hand, when using MCA we also need to be aware of, and cautious about, interactions between the independent variables.

Measuring culture, alienation, competence and consciousness

Webster and Kuzwayo (1978:225) point out the limitations of surveys in studying consciousness: "there are problems in the extent to which asking people what they think outside of any concrete situation enables you to grasp what is actually possible in a dynamic situation of collective action". They refer to a study by Goldthorpe (1968), which concluded that workers at the Vauxhall factory had a "co-operative attitude to management", but only a few months afterwards they staged a strike that almost turned into a riot. Blackburn (1967) states on this basis that surveys only reflect actual consciousness rather than the more dynamic conception of potential consciousness. Mann (1973), on the other hand, expounds a "theory of dual consciousness" and argues that it is also possible to use surveys to assess latent consciousness. Webster and Kuzwayo (1978:225) state that it is impossible to predict behaviour through an attitudinal survey, but a carefully designed questionnaire can still elicit "latent" class-consciousness, which in certain situations may lead to collective action. Mann argues that latent consciousness can "explode" into action during specified revolutionary settings of transition and that this may occur swiftly and without prior warning (Mann 1973:45). Therefore, the evolution of class-consciousness is not necessarily a step-by step process. Consciousness is a process, a developing phenomenon, a process not of *being* but of *becoming*. Our aim in the following is to assess not only actual attitudes but also as far as possible the underlying dimensions of more lasting values, which can potentially reflect more latent consciousness.

Measuring attitudes, activities and culture in South Africa faces additional complicating factors. There is abundant evidence of intimidation and/or pressures in communities to support a party which has established control over the locality. On this basis, people's responses to political questions in surveys will be influenced by their concerns for safety.[73] Furthermore, there is abundant evidence of intimidation and suppression from the apartheid government and the security forces that would influence people's openness in a survey of this kind. Yet, while such concerns are hard to resolve, we should keep them in mind without

overestimating their importance. After all, the elections that followed soon after our survey in 1994 were highly and widely praised for taking place in an open and fair political climate.[74]

Measuring the "right" civic culture and its impact

The ideal or "right" civic culture is actually one in which there is not too much participation, for excessive participation would be both inefficient and pose a danger for political stability. If everyone were to participate as rational actors, the system would become overloaded. Passive, or rather, alienated citizens are therefore not necessarily a danger for democracy. It all depends on how many of them there are. But how many of them can there be before the stability of the system is put at risk?

We are not attempting here to arrive at a detailed prescription of the "right civic culture". We will instead concentrate upon studying the development of civic values and a communal citizenship in civil society – i.e. the *process* of learning and the role of civil society. Simultaneously, we assume at the point of departure that specific sets of democratic attitudes and behaviour will have a positive effect upon the stability of a democratic regime, without giving a detailed measurement of how much more or less is needed for the survival of democracy.

Clearly, any study of this kind, which attempts to analyse the process of democratisation, will need to avoid falling into the trap of wanting to draw up the causal explanations of and/or the necessary or sufficient conditions for a stable democracy. We rather want to focus upon factors which are likely to impede or enhance democracy.

The micro-to-macro problem which arises in trying to address the impact of individual attitudes and activities upon the social and political system has been called by sociologists the "transformation problem", by economists the "aggregation problem" and by political scientists "the problem of social choice" (Coleman 1986:1321). It refers to the process by

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[73] We anticipated, however, that the chances of respondents answering according to what they expected the interviewer would want, was somehow minimised by the fact that "foreigners" were conducting the survey,- foreigners whom it would be hard for respondents to "place" politically.

[74] Except for problems in Kwa-Zulu-Natal and in some areas in the Gauteng province, the elections were widely declared as free and fair. In Gauteng, the East Rand was declared as most problematic for election campaigners.

which individual choices become collective choices and dissatisfaction becomes revolution (ibid). One way of solving the micro-to-macro problem is, in Coleman's opinion, to see the factors influencing individual choices as reflecting different types of "relations" – religious attitudes and cleavages reflect, for example, religion and the Church as institutions, etc. However, this does not solve the problem of the interests and goals of actors possibly being contradictory, "free-rider problems" etc. Coleman states that we also have to take into account and devise models of the interdependence between individuals and others in the same context in order to analyse social outcomes (1986:1330). A model which links individual action to the behaviour of the social system might involve trust or social influences (ibid).

Problems connected with the study of change
One methodological problem that should be mentioned is the underlying assumption of a *process of change* in political values. The learning effect of trade-union participation is one which ideally can only be measured with longitudinal data – i.e. data charting change over time. In other words, assumptions about the learning effect of trade-union participation can be strengthened (or indeed weakened) if they are supported by longitudinal data, in particular panel data.

Doubts and ambiguity about the direction of causality are hard to resolve on the basis of cross-sectional analysis. One possible explanation of the differences in political values and degree of participation between organised and unorganised workers lies in pre-selection: i.e. it is precisely those workers with a high degree of political awareness and activity and specific values and priorities who are recruited into the trade-union movement and who are the most active. Do trade unionists become politicians or simply political men in the labour movement? "The denial of the primacy of work" refers to the same problem (Buroway 1979). Many argue that attitudes, beliefs and values are acquired in childhood and formed by school and the Church; attitudes and consciousness are external attributes that workers bring with them onto the factory shop floor and that shape both their relationship to work and their political stimuli. The pioneering studies in industrial sociology largely ignored the values or orientations that people brought with them into their work (Buroway 1979). They assumed, on the contrary, that industrial behaviour was independent of external factors. Buroway (1979) states that they did not examine why externally produced consciousness does not significantly

affect the labour process, they simply ignored it! Work deprivation, or deprivation and alienation within unions, may also be greatly outweighed by happiness experienced outside work. The existence of work or union deprivation could thereby be conceded but minimised. The survey set used in this thesis controls for background factors and hence repairs some of the damage of the studies described by Buroway as ignoring external factors. The problems of causal direction will, however, to some extent remain, and conclusions must be drawn tentatively on the basis of theory, logical assumptions and common sense. Connected with this problem of assessing causal direction is the problem of spuriosity – i.e. that both the dependent and independent variables in our models may be strengthened or caused by other background factors.

All in all, there are severe problems associated with measuring political culture only at one specific time – or in Parsons' terminology only at "fat moments". Instead of studying a process, ideally we study a "cross-section" of a situation. What in reality evolved over a period of time is subsequently described as a simultaneous occurrence. Heritage (1984:132)[75] interprets Parsons like this:

> "time is treated as irrelevant to the constitution of circumstances and the actions they 'contain'. Action is treated as occurring within the confines of a 'fat moment'".

At the same time, structuralist developmental theory is characterised by making *absolute* the cross-sectional perspective, which makes everything dependent on everything else at that particular moment in time. One implication to be drawn from this may be that one should be careful in assessing whether the process occurs in stages or as a continuity, whether attitudes and behaviour evolve over time or in specific "fat moments" or "mobilising moments" of intense political development.

Perhaps the best-known limitation of cross-sectional analysis is in fact that ageing and cohort effects are indistinguishable (Davies 1994). And political culture and degree and content of politicisation vary according to specific periods and issues. Specific individuals or issues may have a mobilising effect in one period while having no mobilising effect

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[75] Heritage (1984) *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Quoted in Grøgaard 1995.

whatsoever in other periods. We will have to keep in mind that politics changes at a much faster rate in countries in transition than in more stable and more predictable settings.

In spite of the problems connected with the study of learning processes using synchronous data, I will argue that the data presented in this essay will give a good *indication* of political learning and the various socialisation settings. The absence of longitudinal data and control for pre-selection can to a certain extent be compensated for by comparing workers who have been organised for a long time with those who have only recently become organised or who are unorganised. In that sense, historical and longitudinal information is incorporated into cross-sectional surveys. Comparisons of workers with different participation patterns in the unions can also provide valuable information. Retrospective questions can also be used in order to gather information about the dynamics of change.[76] There will also be other available studies at the time which cover some parts of the questions or problems described here. Comparing the characteristics of my sample with such studies will be fruitful. All in all, cross-sectional analyses are more often then not used in order to study political culture and learning. However, our conclusions need to carefully take these limitations of causal directions, spuriosity, etc. into account

The limitations of the study

This study will identify the political *role* of the unions and the probability of its political influence; it can be less certain, however, about their actual political *impact*. We can assume that politics changes because of pressure from civil society, but all we can do, even with detailed studies of the actual stages of political reform, is to assume that pressure from below was *one* of several factors necessary to bring about change. Furthermore, there were few thoroughgoing and regular internal evaluations of the union move-ment and political developments in the 70s and 80s, owing to the political restrictions at that time. In the absence of these, we will to some extent have to fall back on hindsight, taking actual outcomes as high ground from which to reflect on preceding developments.

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[76] Retrospective questions do, however, present a whole set of other problems, like bad memory, etc. especially in periods of intense, rapid change.

The survey we conducted in 1994 is limited to the economically active in the formal sectors in Gauteng. This limits the possibility of statistically generalising the findings to the national population. South African politics shows large variations among regions and localities. If we control for economic activity, religion, population groups, etc., however, the variances between Gauteng and the rest of the country will become smaller. The findings from Gauteng will give information about the connection between union activity and political learning in *one* region, which will be of great value as a basis for developing assumptions concerning similar groups of workers in similar sectors in other areas. Thirty per cent of the electorate is also concentrated in Gauteng, which makes the study interesting in itself. Gauteng was also the first region to experience many of the problems brought by industrialisation, urbanisation and mass migration, which many of the other provinces and metropolitan areas are experiencing now. However, the choice of Gauteng as the focus of our survey limits our new knowledge to African and white workers. The smaller groups, generally regarded as politically, socially and economically "in the middle", namely Indians and coloureds, are not represented. In spite of these limitations, when it comes to the composition of the population, Gauteng otherwise represents a good cross-section of ethnic groups. In fact, Johnson and Schlemmer (1996) argue that politics in South Africa cannot be properly understood without understanding the politics of Gauteng. Where possible, we will supply other survey information for comparison.

The relevance of the study

Lipset (1963) states that knowledge concerning the degree of legitimacy of political institutions is of key importance in any attempt to analyse the stability of these institutions when faced with a crisis of effectiveness.

This area of research is first and foremost characterised by a great shortage of literature. Few have focused on the importance of work-related institutions for nation-building and political democratisation. Even fewer have looked at the impact of political learning in this context. In an international perspective, quite a number of people have focused on the political impact of trade unions on collective class-consciousness, but relatively few have tested this empirically. Furthermore, only a small number of studies have touched upon the role of unions in building

individual competence and a democratic consciousness amongst their members. To my knowledge, no such deliberations have been undertaken regarding the political impact of trade unions in South Africa.

A survey was carried out in 1992 to record COSATU shop stewards' socio-economic background and priorities (Webster & Orkin 1992). The aim of this survey was to map their priorities regarding the new union-linked media and communications systems, but the questionnaire also covered certain political questions. While this survey certainly provided valuable information, it did not provide data suitable for doing an analysis of political learning in the union movement.

The aim of this essay is to obtain a better idea of the political values and participation of South Africans in general. It will focus particularly on black orientation and political involvement. Earlier studies have focussed on factors explaining white South Africans' political values, action and party preferences. However, no comprehensive study has been undertaken which focuses on the other population groups and which provides data that make it possible to compare population groups, social classes and genders. The impact of trade unions on individual political learning becomes particularly interesting in the light of the restrictions upon other alternative organisational learning contexts for blacks.

Knowledge about political resources and cleavages, and about the impact of trade unions on these factors, is of central importance to the development of the new South Africa. In addition, such information is of strategic importance for the labour movement in general and for COSATU in particular.

The study will give a picture of unionised as well as non-unionised workers and record the activities, attitudes and priorities of the shop floor as well as of shop stewards. It will also map differences between the old-guard members as opposed to the new generation of unionists. As such, the study will add valuable new information to the case study that COSATU commissioned in 1991. It will also provide new information regarding working conditions and the socio-economic background of members, which the labour movement needs. On this basis, the survey will provide labour in South Africa with valuable information for future planning and strategies in turbulent times.

The answers to the questions raised in this thesis will also indirectly indicate the relevance of Western theories of political change. It may prove a test of the applicability of theories on political socialisation and political change developed within a Western context to the African setting and to South Africa specifically.

3   The reality and legacy of apartheid

3.1   The politics of apartheid

Racism in South Africa was not invented by the National Party (NP), which came to power in 1948,[77] but already existed as part of the political and legal system. However, it was the NP government that gave racism the political and legal form of total segregation and "separate development" which we today know as apartheid.[78]

Apartheid had its origins in economic factors and Afrikaner nationalism. The mining sector, which developed during the early part of the century, had originally recruited its workers from amongst white Afrikaners. As expansion gave rise to a growing need for cheap labour during the 30s, however, their job protection came under continuous pressure from cheaper black labourers. At the end of the 30s, an estimated

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[77] During the first decades after the SA Union was established in 1910 a whole set of legislation restricting the free movement and rights of blacks was introduced. See Murray 1982 for details. *The Native Land Act* of 1913 set aside about 7 per cent of the country for exclusive black ownership, which basically prevented blacks from owning property in the remaining 93 per cent. *The Native Land Act* of 1936 extended the land of the "reserves" to 13 per cent. *The Natives (Urban Areas) Act* of 1923 required that white local authorities provided segregated living areas for Africans. *The Representation of Natives Act* of 1936 removed African voters from the parliamentary roll in the Cape Province and placed them on a separate roll from which they could elect two *white* representatives. Finally, *The Bantu Cons. Act* of 1945 and *The Bantu Law Amendments Act* made it compulsory for Africans to carry passes at all times. But pass laws aimed at regulating the movement of blacks had existed since 1760 (Chazan et al. 1992). An estimated 17.5 million black people were prosecuted under the Pass Laws between 1916 and 1981 (Mamdani 1996).

[78] We should not, however, underestimate, or overlook the support apartheid had amongst English- speaking whites (see, for example, Kotze and du Toit 1995).

300,000 whites, first and foremost Afrikaners, lived in extreme poverty. Economic growth and industrialisation turned the Afrikaner's position in the economy into a political weapon. The Afrikaner-dominated NP increasingly traded worker protection for political support[79] and became the stronghold of white Afrikaner politics in the 30s. Class interests were played down in favour of Boer nationalism as the mobilising basis for white workers.[80]

The tense relationship between Afrikaners and English-speaking whites had culminated at the turn of the century in the Boer War. Thousands of Afrikaners/Boers died in the battles, but what was harder for the Boers to accept was the deaths of thousands of women, children and elderly people in concentration camps set up by the British.[81] Boer nationalism developed against this background. Conflicts with English-speaking whites emerged from religious cleavages and language differences as well as from a large wealth gap. In 1910, the Afrikaans/English income per capita ratio stood at 1:3 (du Toit 1996:312).[82] Apartheid as it emerged through the 50s was aimed at levelling out these differences while simultaneously maintaining "white" as a determinant of privilege. Separate banks, insurance companies etc. as well as affirmative action programmes in the civil service[83] were some of the instruments used by

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[79] In fact, at that stage even the Communist Party used job protection as a slogan to recruit white workers. White workers went on strike, with the support of the Communist Party, in the 20s under the slogan: "Workers of the World, Unite for a White South Africa!"!

[80] According to Gilimoee and & Schlemmer (1989:43) the process of Afrikaner ethnic mobilisation from the 1930s until the 70s included deliberate attempts at polarisation, and the establishment of parallel and autonomous Afrikaner interest groups isolated from English- speaking whites and blacks. Others have shown how the Afrikaner establishment served effectively to institutionalise NP support through the control of the agencies through which Afrikaners were socialised (Slabbert 1975, Adam and Gilimoee 1979, Kotze and du Toit 1995)

[81] The British in the Boer War are presumed to have been the first to make use of concentration camps.

[82] By 1946, the income gap had been narrowed to 100:211, by 1960 to 100:/156 and by 1976 to: 100:/141 (ibid).

[83] The state was rapidly transformed into an Afrikaner ethnic corporate body and remained that way until the 70s and 80s at which time, the state and the civil service more resembled a technocratic state (Kotze and du Toit 1995).

Afrikaners to achieve more power and status in society.[84] The private sector, on the other hand, remained predominantly in white English-speaking hands.

The Population Registration Act laid the basis for population classification according to race and hence formed the basis for all other statutory discrimination. Population classification became a function of administrative decisions and formed the basis for the determination of rights and duties as well as for the allocation of privileges and resources. *The Land Act* and *The Group Areas Act* (36 of 1966) regulated residence, property and use of land and business premises in rural and urban areas respectively. Apartheid divided the population into four main categories, which were prescribed separate residential areas. About 3.5 million people were forced to leave their homes between 1960 and 1983 in order to be moved to the "right" area as stipulated by these laws (du Toit 1996:309). Furthermore, *The Separate Amenities Act* (49 of 1953) gave regions and localities the right to regulate access to facilities such as hotels, transport and restaurants according to race. Political, economic and social rights were linked to group affiliation and area of permanent residence rather than to citizenship.[85] In addition to these laws, thousands of other restrictions regulated apartheid segregation and discrimination.[86] Every

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[84] Two other powerful "institutions" should also be mentioned in this respect. One was the *Broderbond,* in which powerful Afrikaners took part in mapping out the political and economic future of South Africa. As such, the *Broderbond* operated, for a long time as the shadow cabinet. The second, was the Security Council, in which NP ministers, military leaders and police designed security measures, that would influence the lives of millions of blacks in the years to come. These included raids on the opposition both internally and in the neighbouring states, the operations of hit-squads, the calling of establishment of the states of emergency in the late 80s and the military and economic assistance to Inkatha.

[85] Indians and coloureds were characterised as "between the wire and the wall" in the sense that they were allocated more public resources (education, health and welfare) and privileges than Africans, but fewer than whites.

[86] *The Mixed Marriages Act* of 1949, which prohibited "racially mixed marriages", and *The Immorality Act* of from 1950, which outlawed sex across racial barriers, are other examples of the apartheid discrimination and segregation. It should also be mentioned that although everyone was registered by race in the Population Register, this classification did not determine their race for all purposes – it depended upon the legislation in question. A person could hence be white for some purposes, coloured for others and African for yet another purpose.

aspect of society carried the stamp of apartheid: the distribution of resources like education, infrastructure, health and social services varied according to residential areas, which, in turn, largely overlapped with the segregation of population groups.. According to Horrell (1979), there were 331 different enactments directing race relations. Gilimoee (1979) states that by 1978, there were 4,000 laws and 6,000 regulations affecting the private sector of the economy. "Separate development" called for the creation of national states ("Bantustans" or "homelands") through the 50s in which blacks would be able "to govern themselves". These were turned into four so-called "independent" states and another six "self-governing" areas during the 70s. Approximately 14 per cent of the land area hence remained set aside for about 85 per cent of the population.[87]

The state's attempt to shape labour and industrial relations was manifested in various forms of statutory and conventional racial segregation (Pretorius 1997:258). Two features of the industrial relations system as governed by *The Industrial Conciliation Act* of 1956 are particularly germane for our concerns in this thesis. The first is the exclusion, until 1979, of Africans from trade unions, while the right to join trade unions was granted to whites, Indians and coloureds. The second feature was the prohibition of all trade-union and employer organisations from involvement in party political activities. African workers' relations with employers were also governed by *The Native Labour Settlement of Disputes Act* of 1953. This limited workers' opportunities for dispute settlement to plant-level works committees, only twenty-four of which existed by 1973 (Maree 1985:286). In addition, there were several policies drawn up in order to give priority to whites, Indians and coloureds in the labour market, such as the coloured labour preference policy during the 60s (Humphries 1989).

The government made several attempts to "reform" apartheid during the 70s and 80s, but all were aimed at making apartheid more acceptable and bringing the opposition under control while maintaining white power and privilege.[88] New legislation extended bargaining rights

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[87] "Scheduled areas" had already been set aside for reserves under *The Native Land Act* (1913) and additional land was released through the 30s and later.

[88] This era of "reformed apartheid" was characterised by a gradual economic and social deracialisation of economic and social measures, as well as by attempts at political co-optation in order to blur the racial divisions and make apartheid more "acceptable" (see also Kotze and du Toit 1995).

and thereby the right to unionise to black workers in 1979. The Riekert Commission was established in order to control urban dwellers via access to jobs and housing. Furthermore, electoral reforms were introduced in 1983 which extended political rights to coloureds and Indians and opened up two new chambers in Parliament in order for them to "govern" their own affairs.[89] Finally, *The Black Local Authorities Act* was an attempt to cement the administrative and legal links between the state and the growing townships (Campbell 1987). Blacks were now, according to the regime, given political rights in their own "areas", but the Local Councils established for this purpose had neither power nor resources. The new "reforms" were widely regarded as attempts at co-option and as designed to distract attention from the struggle and were therefore generally boycotted.[90]

By the middle of the 80s, South Africa had become increasingly militarised.[91] "Reformed apartheid" in the 70s and early 80s was part and parcel of the increased military control of the townships, which later culminated in the counter-revolutionary "total strategy" offensive of the apartheid regime. The government attempted to legitimise the system by claiming that South Africa was facing a "Communist threat" and a "total onslaught" from the enemy, which required a "total strategy" from the government – i.e. a comprehensive strategy of political "reforms"

[89] From 1956 to 1968, coloureds could vote for special white parliamentary representatives in Parliament and until 1972 participated on a common roll in municipal elections. After 1983, Parliament consisted of three chambers: a House of Assembly (for whites), a House of Representatives (for coloureds) and a House of Delegates (for Indians). In Parliament a distinction was made between "own" and "general" affairs. "Own affairs" were matters that affected one specific population groups, while "general affairs" were all matters that were not "own affairs" – i.e. such as defence, foreign affairs, law and order, transport and the like. If disagreements occurred between the chambers of Parliament, the Presidents Council had the final say. Only 17 per cent of eligible Indian and Coloured voters actually cast ballots for these elections.

[90] See Mashabela 1988 for details of participation in the elections for Local Councils. In the PWV (Pretoria, Witwatersrand and Vereeningen), Councils were elected with less than 20 per cent of the electorate voting.

[91] The police nearly tripled in size from the 1960s to the 1990s in order to carry out "riot control" and enforcement of pass laws. The military displaced the police as the most powerful institution within the state under President Botha in the 80s. The military budget increased seventy-fold from 1960 to 1983 and the number of military personnel grew from 78, 000 to 494, 000 (Chazan et al. 1992).

combined with massive militarisation under a sophisticated National Security Management System. Tanks, "kasspirs" and security forces became a permanent phenomenon in the townships. The operation of death squads aimed at opposition forces were no longer extraordinary, neither were deaths in detention.[92] Successive states of emergency followed from 1985 to 1989, which allowed for the banning, deportation and detention of individuals and the banning and restriction of organisations deemed to be a threat to the state.[93]

The politics of black resistance

Blacks were explicitly excluded from the franchise from the early years of this century. The opposition was relatively weak and disorganised in the beginning, but in 1912, a small group from the African middle class established what was to become the African National Congress (ANC).[94] It was formed with the express aim of uniting "all the different tribes in South Africa, to demand on behalf of black South Africans equal rights and justice and to put forward the political demands of the people on all occasions" (Murray 1982:331). For the next forty years their opposition was sporadic and their political voice was expressed mainly in numerous petitions. However, nothing was achieved until the ANC resorted to civil disobedience in the 50s.[95] The Defiance Campaign of 1952, a nation-wide civil disobedience movement, made a strong impression on the government and led to more than 8,000 people going to jail for defying apartheid laws. More repressive laws followed.

[92] Sixty-eight political prisoners are estimated to have died in detentions between 1966 and 1988 (RRS 1991/92:492-494 and 1992/93: 27-28)

[93] Ninety-eight organisations were banned between 1950 and 1988 and 73, 000 individuals were detained between 1960 and 1988 (du Toit 1995:350). More than a quarter of these detainees were children under the age of sixteen (Chazan et al. 1992).

[94] It was established as the South African Natives' National Congress, and renamed the ANC in 1923.

[95] The brief description of political opposition in this section does not make justice to the struggle that took place in the first two decades of the century. We will return to the struggle of the 80s in later chapters; for more detail about the opposition in the early part of the century, see Lodge, 1991, et al.

But while blacks were united in the struggle against apartheid, they spoke with different and conflicting voices about strategies and ideology. Three main camps of opposition can be identified. The first and dominant group was the *Charterists,* who identified with the Freedom Charter. In 1955, the ANC and its white, Indian and coloured allies had convened a "congress of the people" in Kliptown outside Johannesburg at which the "Freedom Charter" was adopted and a statement of principles and policy concerning politics, economics, equality and freedom was made. The second group was the *Africanists,* who left the ANC in the late 50s (1959) in protest against co-operation with whites. The Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), whose Africanist philosophy precluded any form of collaboration with whites, advocated a sustained, disciplined non-violent campaign from the beginning (Lodge & Nasson 1991). The third and final group was the *Inkatha Freedom Party* (IFP). It was originally formed as a cultural association in Natal in 1928, but emerged in the mid-70s as a mass movement under Chief Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthulezi. The liberation movement in South Africa has been compared with liberation movements in other African countries (Chazan et al. 1992). It should be noted, however, that unlike many other liberation movements around Africa, the ANC and the Charterists were multi-racial movements. The Freedom Charter was drafted by a multi-racial coalition and it held out a vision of a *non-racial* democratic state.

Non-violent civil disobedience activities were effectively terminated by the police at Sharpeville in 1960 and the liberation parties ANC and PAC thereafter felt compelled to form underground military wings.[96] While the Charterists and Africanists were divided on the question of collaboration with whites, they both turned to violent military action from the 60s onwards. As a result, the ANC and the PAC were both banned in the early 60s but continued their operations in exile, while their newly established military wings, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and Poqo, moved into armed confrontation with the state.

[96] The ANC tried to put up the legal resistance after it was banned in 1960 by calling for a national convention, organised mass actions and a stay-away. When this failed, however, calls for armed struggle within the ANC became irresistible. Accordingly, in December 1961, Umkhonto we Sizwe ("Spear of the Nation") was thereby formed by the ANC and the South African Communist Party.

In the aftermath of the shootings at Sharpeville and the banning of the ANC and PAC, the state used considerably expanded resources to extinguish political resistance in the 60s (Webster & Holdt 1992). With the ANC and PAC in exile, jail or underground, a new generation of politicised black students gave birth to a new doctrine and organisation of resistance in the late 60s and early 70s under the leadership of Steve Biko[97] and the Black Consciousness Movement.[98] After an unprecedented rise in state repression during the 60s, in early 1973, it looked as if the resistance had been crushed. Biko had been killed while in detention, and all democratic organisations had been banned. But a series of strikes broke out in Durban, and students' protests followed. In 1976, the Soweto uprising, in which students organised protest marches and meetings,[99] spilled over into fighting and unrest, which spread to other townships, thus breaking a decade of black apathy. The events of the 80s had dramatic political consequences. Black economic power had increased in the 70s, and in the 80s new determination and tactics took hold (Lodge & Nasson 1991). Uprisings in the townships aimed at making them ungovernable were successful in several areas. Strikes, stay-aways, consumer boycotts and other forms of action swept the country. Despite several states of emergency, tens of thousands of arrests and detentions and thousands of deaths in political unrest, black political organisations emerged stronger than ever before.

Divisions in black politics have been as much about strategy as about principles. The Charterists regarded armed struggle as only one of many strategies to crush the apartheid regime. Mass actions, strikes and stay-aways, civil disobedience and sanctions were alternative routes. The Africanists, on the other hand, were more committed to armed struggle as *the* main route and less positive about the negotiations that were to start in

[97] Black students formed the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) with Biko as its president.
[98] See Sono 1993 for background on the BCM.
[99] The protest was organised against the introduction of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in African secondary schools.

the late 80s. Nevertheless, the Charterists and Africanists had more in common than their differences with Inkatha. While the ANC and PAC were committed to opposition and resistance, Inkatha was at the other end of the ideological and strategic spectrum. Their strategy was, at least formally,[100] one of non-violent disobedience and negotiations with the apartheid government, while in the short term they also accepted their homeland status and therefore separate development policies.[101] Further-more, while the Charterists and the Africanists supported socialist, or social democratic, economic strategies, Inkatha was a firm believer in a free market economy.

At the beginning of the 90s the main actors on the South African political map were the Charterists, embracing an alliance of the ANC, the South African Communist Party (SACP), the community organisations united in the SA National Civics Organisations (SANCO) and the trade-union federation COSATU. In addition, the Africanists included the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and the PAC. The domain of Inkatha was still mainly restricted to Natal.[102] Table 3.1 (see next page) indicates party support levels between 1992 and 1994.[103]

[100] The figures for October 1993 and 1st February 1994 results include all the former independent homelands whereas earlier results excluded Bophuthatswana.
[101] Support for the Freedom Front, which did not exist in 1992 and 1993, was estimated by combining all respondents supporting right-wing parties.
[102] In other parts of the country, Inkatha supporters were mainly found amongst migrant workers living in hostels as, for example, on the East Rand in the PWV (later Gauteng).
[103] The reader should, however, be reminded that estimated party support in SA before 1994 must be interpreted cautiously because of people's fears of admitting that they supported any "banned" parties. Furthermore, political discrimination was also severe in certain areas, which implied that people may have been cautious about revealing their own party allegiance.

Table 3.1   Party Support (1992-94 in percentages) (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:74)

	Oct. 1992	Feb. 1993	April 1993	July 1993	Oct. 1993[104]	Feb. 1994	Elections 1994
* ANC	53	55	62	62	70	69	63
* NP	28	25	18	17	16	17	20
* IFP	13	11	11	10	5	7	11
* Rightwing (FF)[105]	4	6	7	4	5	4	2
* DP	1	2	1	2	2	1	2
* PAC	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
* Other	0	0	0	3	0	1	1

The years of negotiation

1990 saw the beginning of political change in South Africa, with the unbanning of the ANC, PAC, AZAPO and the SACP and the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. February 2 1990[106] in this respect marks a shift in the political climate. Multi-party talks between the NP regime and the main challenger, the ANC, as well as with a host of smaller parties and groups started in 1990 and initially had the character of "talks about talks".[107] The next phase started with the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in 1991.[108] By then, *The Population Registration Act* had been scrapped. The next plenary session, known as

[104] There has been considerable evidence, however, of the military involvement of Inkatha's supporters (some of whom were linked with the white security forces) in attacks on ANC supporters.

[105] Buthulezi accepted the homeland status of KwaZulu, but maintained that its' status should remain a "dependent homeland", – not a "self-governing state".

[106] President de Klerk opened the Parliament on the 2nd of February 2 1990 with announcements of the political reforms.

[107] The first phase of negotiations was described as "talks about talks": bringing the political exiles home, negotiating the release of political prisoners, legalising the previously banned parties and all in all creating the preconditions for further political negotiations.

[108] With five working groups concentrating upon 1) how to establish a free political climate; 2) setting new constitutional principles and a constitution-making body; 3) transitional government; 4) reincorporation of the independent homelands and 5) time frames for the transitional process.

CODESA II, broke down on the issue of what percentage of votes would be required to ratify the final constitution. The ANC suspended its involvement in the negotiations after the Boipatong Massacre (June 1992).[109] Continuing mass actions by the opposition led, half a year later, to new talks, which were now renamed the Multi-Party Negotiating Forum.[110] The main conflicts in the talks were connected to minority rights or protection with controversies over federalism, the establishment of a separate "white homeland" (*Volkstat*), the length of the interim period, economic "guarantees", etc. The talks finally reached a conclusion towards the end of 1993 with the establishment of a new multi-party council, the Transitional Executive Council, to oversee the work of the NP government in the period leading up to the elections. Finally, the Interim Constitution was signed at the end of 1993 and paved the way for the elections.

Splits caused by apartheid, uneven distribution of resources and ideological cleavages increased the number of conflicts threatening political stability and democratic progress in the run-up to the elections. The threats to the new democracy reached a climax with a wave of bomb explosions in the weeks leading up to the elections.[111] Conservative white organisations generally refused to take part in the talks,[112] but splinter groups finally decided to contest the elections on a *Volkstat* platform under the auspices of the Freedom Front. The IFP also joined in at the last minute, following a promise of increased independence and power for the Zulu king, federalism etc. On the Left, there were also some smaller groups

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[109] ANC squatters were murdered by IFP- dominated hostel dwellers,- allegedly with support from the police (Frost 1996).

[110] For more detailed records of the negotiations process, and its controversies and compromises, see Tjønneland (1994) and Friedman (1993).

[111] Violence was in many cases orchestrated or arranged by the security forces or "third force activities".

[112] The Freedom Alliance brought together the two main white right-wing groups; the Afrikaner Volksfront (which was an umbrella organisation for several Afrikaner groups) and the Conservative Party as well as three conservative African groups represented by the homeland governments of Ciskei and Bophuthatswana and the Inkataha Freedom Party.

who refused to take part in the talks. The most important of these was the PAC which, though it did not take part in the Transitional Executive Council, in the end decided to stand for the elections.[113]

The April 1994 elections finally buried apartheid and laid the basis for a non-racial democracy.[114] All in all, nineteen parties contested the national elections, with the number of provincial elections varying between seven and fourteen. The ANC won 63 per cent of the votes for the national assembly and seven out of the nine provinces. The NP won 20 per cent of the national vote and the province of Western Cape, while the IFP won 11 per cent of the national vote and the province KwaZulu-Natal.

3.2 Factors influencing democratisation and democratic consolidation[115]

People all over the world have questioned what factors led to the democratic changes in South Africa as well as the capacity of the new democracy to manage the daunting challenges ahead. Przeworski et al. (1996:39) ask:

"If a country, any randomly selected country, is to have a democratic regime *next* year, what conditions should be present in that country and around the world *this* year?"

Their answer is: democracy, affluence, growth with moderate inflation, declining inequality, a favourable international climate and parliamentary institutions![116] Others have come up with other answers. Let us systematise these factors according to scholarly focus upon structural, economic, cultural and institutional explanations.

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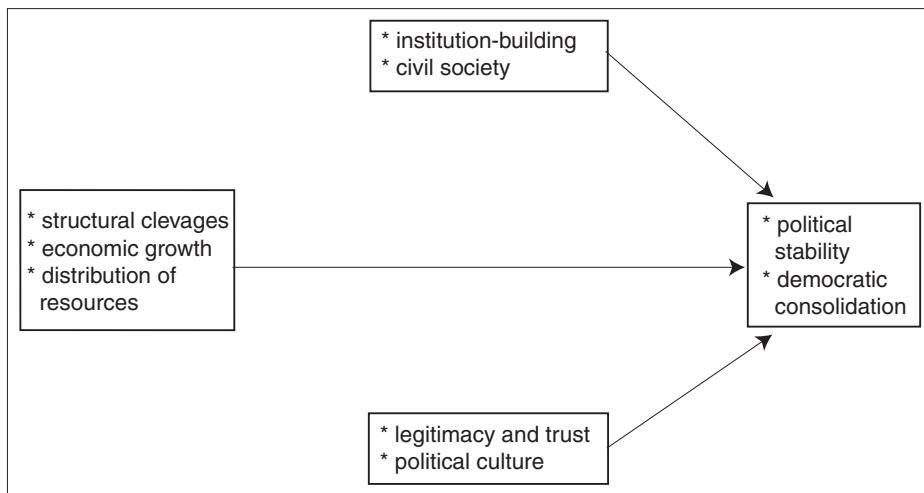
[113] AZAPO, (Azanian People's Organisation) which had played an important role in the revival of the Black Consciousness Movement through the 70s, decided to boycott the elections as well.

[114] The core of the Interim Constitution was the provision for a Government of National Unity (GNU) in which all parties holding 5 per cent of the national vote were entitled to a proportionate number of ministerial portfolios.

[115] See Appendix 1 for more background on South Africa and further details on the variables mentioned in this chapter.

[116] They count instances of death and survival of political regimes in 135 countries observed annually between 1950 and 1990.

Figure 3.1 Factors of Importance for the Consolidation of Democracy

Two roads to democracy have been identified (Hadenius 1991, Sartori 1976, et al.): one is gradual change within the framework of existing one-party rule so that the competitive elements become increasingly accentuated. The alternative is a more rapid dismantling of one-party rule, either in institutionalised forms and through negotiations under the government in office or through an overthrow of the government.[117] However, various factors help explain the change to multi-party systems and democracy and why change takes one form or another.[118] From the realities of "hard apartheid" between the 60s and beginning of the 80s, political developments had finally taken a turn for the better from the mid-80s. The basis for and causes of the final turn-around must, however, be sought years back. In fact, internal resistance and external pressure had created conditions for a gradual lifting of apartheid laws and not for a complete turn-around in 1990[119] or 1994.

[117] The former will, according to Sartori (1976:274), be labelled "a continuous change" and the latter "a discontinuous change".

[118] Unfortunately, most of the literature has concentrated on explaining why the process of democratisation *begins* rather than why the process takes one specific *form*.

[119] When President de Klerk announced the unbanning of the ANC, SACP and PAC as well as the release of Mandela.

Economic conditions for democracy

Several scholars have turned to *economic factors* to explain and/or predict political change and democratisation. Within traditional development research, it was assumed that economic growth would more or less automatically be followed by political development. The complementary and reinforcing relationship between economic and political development has especially been argued by classical liberal scholars and the so-called modernisation school (Skålnes 1993). Lipset (1959) highlighted the link between high levels of economic development and the prevalence of democratic political systems in Europe, Latin America and in the English-speaking world. Fukuyama (1995) argues that the modernisation theory has also stood the test in Asia. Coleman (1960) says that there is a high correlation between economic development and political competitiveness. Huntington (1984) in fact stated that economic conditions in the sub-Sahara were too bad to expect democratic changes. However, some of the most rapidly developing countries in the world in terms of economic performance have remained highly undemocratic (Huntington 1984).

While no single transition to democracy can be explained by the level of economic development alone, the level of growth has a strong effect on the probability that democracy will survive once a democratic regime has been installed.[120] With annual per capita incomes of more than US$ 6,000, democracies are certain to survive, "come hell or high water" (Przeworski et al. 1996). Why are democracies more sustainable in more developed countries? Lipset (1981) suggests that the intensity of distribution conflicts is lower at higher income levels. Diamond argues that political actors in more developed countries are more likely to adopt a *superior institutional framework* (Przeworski et al. 1996). It has been argued that economic development measured in increased income per capita, industrialisation, urbanisation and general modernisation bring about a general transformation of society by resulting in greater literacy and a generally higher educational level among the masses of the population. Increased literacy and education, and thereby increased exposure to the media, political debate etc., are expected to promote openness and a deeper insight into political issues. Lipset (1981:31) notes:

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[120] There is, however, a level beyond which further development actually decreases the probability that democracy will survive (Huntington 1968, O'Donnell 1973).

"From Aristotle down to the present, men have argued that only in a wealthy society in which relatively few citizens lived at the level of real poverty could there be a situation in which the mass of the population intelligently participate in politics and develop the self-restraint necessary to avoid succumbing to the appeals of irresponsible demagogues".

Economic growth is also expected to have other positive effects (Hadenius 1992). Through increased prosperity, formerly oppressed and excluded groups will increase their competence and participation in organisational life and thereby acquire and reinforce their political resources. Further-more, migration and urbanisation, following from industrialisation and economic development, will make people break free of their earlier closed and traditional environments and thereby overcome earlier social, regional, ethnic or religious boundaries. Finally, as a result of economic progress, it will also be less difficult to satisfy different groups' demands on the public sector. The problem of distribution of income is thereby expected to become easier to resolve. High economic growth and income per capita have on this basis been found to correlate with democratic change and stability. Huntington (1984) refers to World Bank ratings of economic performance and democracy and argues that the correlation is factual and also plausible in that a wealthy economy will enhance literacy and education and thereby moderate social tensions and political conflicts. The integration of traditional societies into rationalised state structures enhances the development of market economies and new institutionalised forms of political participation (Skålnes 1993). Some claim that democracy cannot take root under severe economic strain or where poverty and in-equality are a dominant feature of social life!

Through industrialisation and increased prosperity, formerly oppressed groups will gain better access to political resources. Previously excluded groups can, through increased competence and organisation, acquire reinforced political resources and thereby promote democratic stability. Furthermore, the migration and urbanisation that follow from industrialisation and economic development will enable people to break free of their earlier traditional environments and thereby overcome earlier social, regional, ethnic and religious boundaries. Finally, as a result of economic progress, it will be easier to satisfy different groups' demands on the public sector. The intensity of demands on government has also been said to be reduced to the extent that resources are regulated by the open market (Schlemmer 1991:49).

South Africa, on the other hand, faces huge economic challenges posed by a need for fundamental restructuring of the whole economy. Economic growth is picking up, with about 3 per cent in 1996 but then only 1.7 per cent in 1997. Growth does not, however, seem to be accompanied by job creation. Some in fact argue that this is jobless growth or even growth with "job-losses" (Standing et al. 1996). About 30, 000 jobs were, for example, lost in the first quarter of 1996 and more than 300, 000 new job-seekers come onto the labour market every year.

Others focus on the political system as the underlying precondition for economic liberalisation and growth. Their assumption is that, to a certain extent, only strong authoritarian systems are sufficiently autonomous from civil society pressure groups and trade unions to implement the necessary economic reforms and create the conditions for economic growth. On this basis, authoritarianism also finds its defence and legitimacy. Given the many contradictory development patterns in movements towards democracy, or indeed towards authoritarianism, it is difficult to find empirical evidence to support assertions of a relationship between economic and political liberalisation (Przeworski & Limongi 1994). Przeworski et al. (1996:40) argue that dictatorships are no more likely to generate economic growth than democracies. Transitions to democracy are random with regard to the level of development and therefore the level of development alone cannot predict a transition to democracy in any given case (Przeworski et al. 1996).

Yet others state that the main trend in the last decade appears to be a twin process of political and economic liberalisation (Rakner 1993).[121] Authoritarian systems in some countries have created conditions for economic liberalisation, which, in turn, spark off political liberalisation (Rakner 1993). But the interconnection between economic development and type of government is still not clear. In fact, recent experience may indicate that it is rather economic *recession* which triggers off democratic change. Countries like Zambia, Namibia and Kenya have experienced democratic changes in periods of economic recession; and so has South Africa.

[121] Haggard and Kaufman 1994, Rakner 1993, Nelson 1994, and Maravall 1994 et al. discuss the relationship between economic reforms and political changes, the authoritarian "advantage", etc.

Although economic growth may easily benefit national consolidation, lack of economic growth will not necessarily hamper the process. The assumption that growth in itself will ultimately benefit everyone has been shown not to be the case. Growth must be seen in relation to the distribution of resources and efforts to change the economy. Economic restructuring in order to achieve growth may trigger uncertainty, pressures and tensions around distribution questions. Huntington (1968) claims that democracies (*and* dictatorships) become unstable when a country undergoes modernisation, which occurs at some intermediate level of development. O'Donnell (1973) likewise argues that democracies tend to die when a country exhausts "the easy stage of import substitution", again at some intermediate level. Przeworski et al. (1996:41) find, on the other hand, that there is *no* income level at which democracies become more fragile than they were when they were poorer. Still, more research needs to be done before conclusions can be drawn. It is, therefore, not necessarily the absence of economic growth or wealth which may produce political disorder but rather the efforts to achieve it. And it is not necessarily the level of economic growth or wealth alone but the way it is *distributed* which produces political disorder – or order!

Distribution of resources

The *distribution of socio-economic and political resources* has also been underlined as important for the process of political change. A highly uneven distribution of resources may create or enforce ideological cleavages and thereby affect political stability. Such explanations are used by scholars who focus on *structural cleavages* as the major mobiliser for political change. If structural cleavages like religion, ethnicity, language, socio-economic distribution of resources etc. overlap, the potential for instability and political change increases. Social cleavages are conducive to political instability, whether they are of an ethnic, religious, linguistic or economic nature. But why then did political change take so long in South Africa when the country is one of the world's top ten when it comes to differences between rich and poor – i.e. between whites and blacks?

South Africa inherits a sad legacy of apartheid. 18 million people are said to live below the poverty line (RRS 1993/94). Compared with countries with similar income levels, South Africa fares very poorly in most key social indicators like life expectancy, infant mortality, access to safe water and fertility. Many people are completely destitute and face life-

threatening malnutrition.[122] The child mortality rate is double what would be expected of a country with its income level (*Sunday Times,* 3 October 1993). The great inequalities during apartheid are mainly responsible for the poor present record of social achievements. Fifty-three per cent of children between two and five years of age suffer from stunting (low height for age) in comparison with 39 per cent in the whole of Africa (RRS 1993/ 94).

The degree of inequality in a country affects political stability and the political order by way of at least two intervening variables (Dahl 1971:81): the distribution of political resources and skills and the creation of resentment and frustration.[123] South Africa has one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world. The Gini-coefficient, which measures the degree of inequality, is much higher than in comparable countries and close to that of Brazil, which ranks top of the world league table for income inequality. Table 3.2 shows statistics comparing GNP per capita and income inequality.

Democracy is of little value to people who have no roof over their head or no food on their table. In other words, the content of democracy and what it can deliver determines its value to people and the extent to which they become committed to its goals. The more the distribution of social and economic resources overlaps, the higher the potential for political conflicts. The chances for a stable democracy are enhanced to the extent that groups and individuals have a number of *crosscutting*, politically relevant interests and affiliations. Democracy is perceived by many as an instrument for people to achieve access to resources. To others, democracy is rather dependent upon a fair distribution of such socio-economic resources if it is to nurture political stability and legitimacy. Formal democracy does not in itself ensure social justice and economic redistribution. At the same time, these factors may be necessary conditions to ensure *real* democracy and thus to sustain *formal* democracy in a long-

[122] An estimated 2.3 million suffer from malnutrition (*RDP report* to the United Nations Social Development Summit, Copenhagen, March 1995).
[123] Marx and his colleagues first focused on the distribution of resources as a factor of importance in nation-building processes. Later on, Przeworski et al. (1996) find that democracy is more likely to survive in countries where income inequality is declinesing over time.

term perspective. Highly uneven *distribution of resources* may create or enforce ideological cleavages and thereby affect political stability and democratic consolidation.

Table 3.2   Inequality: South Africa and Comparable Countries
(GNP per capita in USD 1992 and Gini coefficient)[124]

Country	Middle-Income Countries								Sub-Saharan Africa		
	Tunisia	Thai-land	Poland	Chile	South Africa	Brazil	Malay-sia	Vene-zuela	Kenya	Nigeria	Zam-bia
GNP per capita ($)	1,720	1,840	1,910	2,730	2,670	2,770	2,790	2,910	310	320	370
Gini Co-efficient	0.40	0.43	0.27	0.50	0.61	0.63	0.51	0.44	0.57	0.50	0.44

Social policy is thereby both a means to bring about profound social reform and an instrument to reduce conflicts and prevent social tension and unrest. Huntington (1984:199) argues that wealth tends to be more equally distributed in highly developed economies: "since democracy means in some measure majority rule, democracy is only possible if the majority is a relatively satisfied middle class, and not an impoverished majority facing an inordinately wealthy oligarchy".

From the 20s onwards, real per capita incomes of blacks grew steadily, and according to one calculation, more than doubled between 1920 and 1970 and quadrupled by 1980 (du Toit 1996:313).[125] Another estimate is that black real wages increased almost five-fold between 1920 and 1970 (du Toit 1996). The main explanation is to be found in the industrialisation of the 60s and 70s and the dropping of the statutory colour bar in the early 80s. African wages in manufacturing increased by 60 per cent between 1970 and 1982. Table 3.3 below shows the development in racial shares of total personal income from the mid-20s until 1980.

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[124] All Gini-coefficients are based on income except for those of Southern Africa, which are based on expenditure. A Gini of 0 signifies absolute equality and a Gini of 1 absolute centration. Source: *World Development Report 1994, World Bank and RDP 1995*.

[125] Du Toit (ibid) rightly points out that the homelands probably experienced real deprivation in the same period. There is, however, insufficient data from the homelands.

Table 3.3   Racial Shares of Total Personal Income (in percentages)
            (Lipton, M. 1986:408)

	1924/25	1946/47	1960	1970	1980
Whites	75	71	71	72	60
Africans	18	22	21	19	29
Coloureds	5	5	6	7	8
Indians	2	2	2	2	3

In spite of moderate relative improvements over the past thirty to forty years, in South Africa, "what you achieve" is still, to a large extent, decided by skin colour or rather by racial classification. The cumulative effect of apartheid still marks every aspect of society.

Blacks in urban areas were restricted to living in townships. Migrant workers were lodged in single-sex hostels, while the so-called formal townships regulated living conditions for the remainder of the urban population. There was a massive influx to the urban centres as the state lost control of the implementation of the influx regulations during the industrialisation process in the 50s and 60s. This was accompanied by a corresponding growth in "informal" settlements.[126] More recently it was estimated that 22 per cent of all South Africans live in shacks or traditional dwellings (Duncan 1995).[127]

Distribution of wealth is one of the most important sources of interest-conflicts in complex societies. There is a relationship between low per capita wealth and the precipitation of sufficient discontent to provide the social basis for political mobilisation. This does not mean that poverty in itself is the main cause of radicalism. Poverty is to some extent a relative concept and should be related to people's expectations and degree of discontent. Therefore, the *distribution* of wealth, income, etc. is an important indicator of people's discontent and degree of support for a political system. Nine million people live without access to any income in South Africa (RRS 1993/94).[128] Fallon and Lucas report (1998:15) that on average, whites earn more than five times the African wage and almost

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[126] The most typical forms of informal settlements are the backyard shack, garages or outbuildings either on the plotstands of registered tenants or as free-standing settlements within the formal townships or their buffer zones.

[127] On the basis of a World Bank/SALDRU survey 1994.
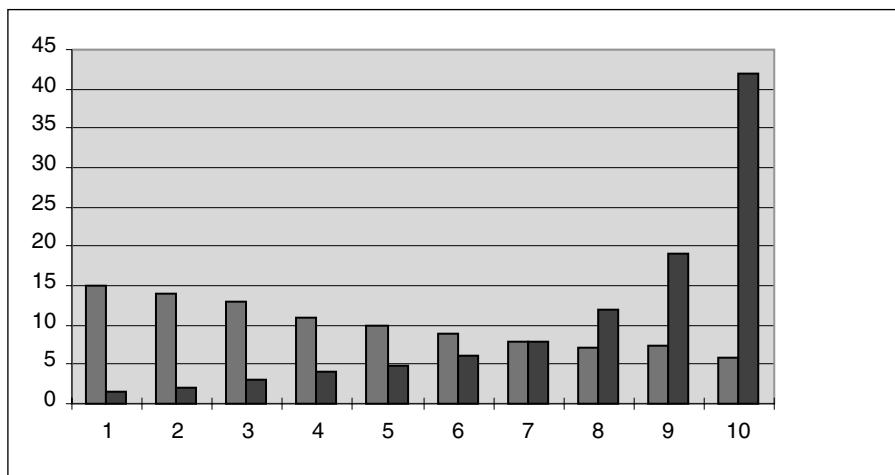
[128] The minimum subsistence level is calculated at about R300 per person per month and the household subsistence level at approx. R1,000 per month

three times that of other black groups.[129] The lowest 40 per cent of households (i.e. 53 per cent of the population) account for less than 10 per cent of consumption, while the top 10 per cent of households (5.8 per cent of population) account for more than 40 per cent.

In spite of relative improvements during the past thirty to forty years, the cumulative weight of apartheid still marks every aspect of society. Enormous differences in the *real* distribution of socio-economic resources remain. Distribution of resources like education, infrastructure, health and social services varies according to residential areas, which, in turn, largely overlap with the segregation of population groups. There are also differences in the distribution of resources between groups living in the ten traditional homelands and groups living in other parts of South Africa. Figure 3.2 shows inequalities in South Africa from a somewhat different perspective than the earlier reported income perspective. We report on population shares in relation to share of total expenditure. The lowest 40 per cent of households (the lowest four deciles combined), equivalent to 53 per cent of the population, account for less than 10 per cent of consumption, while the top 10 per cent of households, with only 5.8 per cent of the population, accounts for over 40 percent of consumption (RDP 1995).

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[129] Even after standardising for other relevant factors that determine earnings, among the least-educated groups, whites receive 118 per cent more than Africans, perhaps a higher purely racial differential than observed in any earnings study outside South Africa, and 25 percent more than other blacks (Fallon and Lucas, 1998:15).

Figure 3.2 Inequalities in Expenditure (RPD 1995:7)

Structural cleavages

People's opportunities in life and motivations are formed by where they come from. Although ethnic or racial issues have become a major issue in several African countries, South Africa was *the* country best known for racial cleavages enforced by apartheid. Whites compose about 15 per cent of the population, so-called coloureds less than 10 per cent and Indians less than 3 per cent. Table 3.4 shows the racial distribution of South Africa over the past twenty-five years.

Table 3.4 South African Population Statistics: Race (millions)[130]
(Race Relations Survey 1985/86; 91/92 & 94/95)

	Total	Blacks	Coloureds	Asians	Whites
1970	21.8	15.3	2.1	0.6	3.8
1985	29.5	21.2	2.8	0.8	4.6
1990	37.5	28.2	3.2	0.9	5.0
1995	40.7	31.1	3.5	1.0	5.7

Diversity in South Africa is based on race but also results from the various language-based ethnic communities. Zulu and Xhosa are the main African

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[130] The population statistics should be treated with some caution. Official statistics have excluded the so-called homelands and have also encountered sampling problems in the rural areas and in the informal areas in of the cities.

language groups.[131] The dominance of specific *language groups* in particular areas reflects the traditional distribution of the various African groups in different geographical areas but also the apartheid policy of designating areas of residence, "homelands" and "group areas" according to population groups and thereby ethnicity. However, while *language* itself was made a major issue of the apartheid regime, language as such has been only one of many objects for protest by the opposition. The struggle was more *against* Afrikaans as the language identified with oppression than *for* Xhosa versus Zulu or Tswana. Apart for Inkatha, none of the political parties or liberation forces mobilised on an ethnic or linguistic basis. Table 3.5 shows the ethnic communities/language groups.

Table 3.5   Language Groups in South Africa, 1993
             (Race Relations Survey 1994/95)

Language	Number	Proportion (%)
Zulu	9,106, 000	22.4
Xhosa	7,444, 000	18.3
Afrikaans	5,919, 000	14.5
North Sotho	3,704, 000	9.1
English	3,428, 000	8.4
Tswana	3,155, 000	7.7
South Sotho	2,593, 000	6.4
Tsonga	1,489, 000	3.7
Siswati	1,269, 000	3.1
Venda	683, 000	1.7
Ndebele	290, 000	0.7
Other	1,636, 000	4.0

The *gender structure* of the population reflects a strong numerical preponderance of men over women. The 1991 census shows a ratio of 111.9 men to 100 women. The participation of women in the formal economy has steadily increased. About 39 per cent of women participate in

[131] About 8.5 millions people are Zulu-speaking, according to the 1991 census. The census, however, excluded the so-called "independent" homelands, which implies that a large proportion of the Xhosa-speaking population living in Ciskei and Transkei are excluded. If these groups are included, then the Xhosa-speaking population will be almost as big as the number of Zulu-speaking population.

the formal economy (RRS 1993/94).[132] Although they represent an increasing proportion of the total workforce, women are underrepresented in sectors like mining, manufacturing etc. and in higher occupational groups. Only 13 per cent of managers are women, for instance (RRS 1992/93 and 93/94). Simultaneously, women are disproportionately represented among the poor.[133] Four out of five women in the rural areas have no income at all. And among those earning an income, women earn less than men. Table 3.6 shows income (net, after deductions) by gender.

Table 3.6   Earnings by Gender 1994 (The Women's Budget 1996)

	Formal sector Workers' net earnings		Informal sector, gross	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
R2,000 +	21%	25%	9%	57%
R 1,000-1,999	36%	32%	8%	17%
R 500 –999	24%	21%	20%	10%
R 0-499	20%	22%	64%	16%

Income differences between women and men are particularly stark with respect to casual or self-employed workers – i.e. the informal sector. The table above is, however, "race-blind". The gender effect is significantly different amongst blacks than amongst whites. Table 3.7 below breaks income down by gender and race.

[132] This may indicate an overrepresentation of women workers in the sample compared to data from the 1991 Census showing that women constitute approx. 39 per cent of the total workforce. However, official statistics are very unreliable. Furthermore, the number of women in the workforce has increased since 1991. The average annual increase of women in the formal economy is estimated at 4.1 per cent compared with 1.6 per cent for men.
[133] Their poverty share is 60 per cent, while they compriseing about 53 per cent of the population.

Table 3.7 Mean Earnings by Race and Gender (Rands)
(Women's Budget 1996:4)

Source	Gender	African	Coloured	Indian	White
Net	Women	1,045	1,112	1,489	2,107
Salary	Men	1,117	1,279	1,866	3,330
Gross	Women	601	535	5,728	5,335
Informal sector	Men	3,323	4,640	9,602	17,372

Income earners from the different race and gender groups are not distributed equally between wage and salary earners on the one hand and workers in the informal sector on the other hand. African women are the only group where more than one out of three income earners are employed in the informal sector. Furthermore, what becomes clear from the tables above is that while African women engaged in the informal sector are working in low-paid occupations such as domestic service, etc., the men working in this category are self-employed in highly paid professions.

Age is generally regarded as one important cleavage in politics. Internationally, youth have been found for example to be more active in politics and more post-materialist in their values in Western Europe (Inglehart 1977). Youth are generally assumed to have taken a disproportionate part in the political protest and violence in South Africa since the Soweto uprising in 1976. Mokwena (1991) argues, for example, that black youth feature most prominently as both perpetrators and victims of violence.[134] A substantial proportion of the South African population is under the age of thirty-five. Forty per cent of the population is under the age of fifteen.

Education is generally regarded as a basic requirement of democracy and is expected to create "modern man" – i.e. an informed participating citizen with a marked sense of personal efficacy (Inkeles & Smith 1974; Rowen 1995). There are two ways that education is expected to influence democracy (Rowen 1995). One is directly through the effect of an educated citizenry on political processes and institutions. The other is indirectly through increased wages. Rowen (1995:59) argues that a rule of thumb indicates that an additional year of schooling in a population improves the

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[134] He argues that this is the case for both political and criminal violence.

freedom rating of a country on average by 6.6 percentage points. According to apartheid ideology, blacks had to fill subordinate positions in society and therefore had no need for sophisticated learning. Minister Verwoerd said in 1953:

> "My department's policy is that Bantu education should stand with both feet in the reserves and have its roots in the spirit and being of Bantu society. There is no place for Bantu in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour .... What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics, when it can never use it in practice? That is quite absurd. Education must train people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere where they live".[135]

Bantu education hence created and perpetuated differences between blacks, whites, coloureds and Indians and thus reinforced the segregation of population groups. Sixty per cent of blacks under the age of thirty-five are said to be functionally illiterate (Chisholm 1991) compared with fewer than 2 per cent of whites. The quality of education, lack of school books etc. as well as the shortage of adequately qualified teachers and a stimulating learning environment at home are all factors that lead to high failure rates amongst black students. The government spent approximately five times more on white than on black pupils in 1990. The difference used to be higher. After 1995, however, spending became equal for all population groups. Furthermore, continuous school boycotts over the years under the banner of "liberty before education", also pushed thousands of black children out of the schools. The Bantu education introduced by the NP government effectively created a population with serious educational disadvantages and a dire shortage of skilled man-power.

Religious and ethnic cleavages are generally adjudged to be most troublesome for the survival of democracy since these are characterised by more of a dichotomy and are of more emotional significance for most people (Hadenius 1992). Religion, especially Protestantism, is assumed to be a major source of stability and democracy (Huntington 1984). Lipset (1963) points out that religion, particularly in the form of sects, serves as a functional alternative to political extremism. The very religious have been

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[135] Quoted in Mbigi, L. and J. Maree 1995.

shown to be the most intolerant politically (Lipset 1963:23). However, although there are clear indications that there is a relationship between religion and people's political affiliations, the direction and strength of this relationship is far from clear. And religion is an even less predictable factor when it comes to its effect upon political values in South Africa than elsewhere and no religious group is dominant.

The overlap between the different cleavages must also be taken into account. The situation is most serious when the various dividing lines coincide and thereby reinforce one another (Hadenius 1992). While we find ethnic and language divisions in South Africa, these only overlap to a limited extent. Lijphart argues that the problem consists not in the degree of homogeneity in the population but in the size ratio of the different segments. It is deemed to be easier to bridge the gap between them if the groups are matched, preferably three to four equally (Hadenius 1992). The segmentation in South Africa is in this respect more or less equal and no specific group of Africans, for example, dominates numerically over other African groups.

Institution-building and political pluralism

The need for *institution-building* has been emphasised in certain countries for new democratic systems to consolidate and stabilise. Recent research underlines the need for institutional development in nation-building processes (Huntington 1968, Almond & Verba 1963, Østerud 1978). Legitimate national institutions may contribute to the development of a national community and identity (Finer 1962). Integration of social classes and groups is essential in a nation-building process. Lack of integration may be a sign of cultural and political pluralism, which is regarded as an attribute of most West European systems. However, if diverse interests are in conflict, interests and cleavages overlap and there is a far stronger sense of identity and solidarity with local groups than with the state, then common institutions which cut across the various groups' structural interests may become essential for a regime to remain stable. Where society is marked by strong cleavages, the development of national institutions that can establish connections beyond local solidarity may be of great significance. The intensity of demands on government may also be reduced by the decentralisation of authority to a variety of lower-level structures (Schlemmer 1991:50). Some degree of demands on government is, however, also healthy for political stability. It helps push governments to respond to and anticipate public demands. Political scientists therefore

often see political pluralism, multiparty systems, party competition and the rotation of parties in power as a key test of democratic consolidation (Mattes et al. 1998).

Fundamental defects in political institutions may often create instability. If adequate and appropriate channels exist for interest articulation, political competition and conflict resolving, increased participation will stabilise rather than destabilise political systems (Finer 1962). If, on the other hand, political institutions are unable to handle increased participation and/or conflicts, the effect of increased participation may be the opposite. Institutionalisation of the political system therefore becomes a critical factor for political stability (Huntington 1968, Jackman 1978). Eckstein (1961) argues that democracy is more stable if the authority pattern in the government is "congruent" with the patterns in other institutions and associations in the country.

In 1987, South Africa had eleven presidents or prime ministers, fourteen ministers of finance, eleven ministers of the interior and eighteen ministers of health, all with their own administrations. Political suspicions and cleavages between political parties and interest groups tend in themselves to result in an array of institutions and bureaucratic structures. Old structures will have to be broken down and new efficient and representative structures will have to be built up in order for efficient rendering of services. Apartheid institutions, a potentially conservative civil service and "homeland" bureaucracies will have to be transformed and made into an egalitarian, efficient state apparatus which still allows for the regional variances, provided for by the federal system, in providing services and goods to the people. Unique to South Africa, post-1994, is the strong emphasis upon constitutional mechanisms – i.e. for getting the constitutional rules right – and the setting up of institutions for implementation of a large variety of constitutional provisions (Lane & Faure 1996)

Structural reforms are more sustainable and far-reaching when pursued through a democratic process. Successful reforms require the support of political coalitions and in particular unions, which can mobilise support for and neutralise resistance to economic reforms. Tripartite negotiations have been important in reducing social tensions and easing the pain of economic and social transformation in several countries. Furthermore, democratic stability and legitimacy for institutions tend in themselves to be enhanced by people having their representatives present in the process of decision-making. The South African Reconstruction and Development Programme, which is now government policy, points out the

vital need for the participation of a vibrant civil society in the transition process ahead. The large potential of social and demographic factors generating or reinforcing cleavages in South Africa make broad-based representative mechanisms all the more important.[136]

3.3   Explaining and challenging democratisation

If one is to follow the assumptions about the effects of economic growth as a trigger for democratic change, South Africa would not have been expected to become democratic until its citizens had an income of US$ 2,000 per capita. The World Bank has rated South Africa as amongst the upper middle-income group countries. In 1993, South Africa had a GDP per capita of US$ 2,900. But South Africa's huge inequalities give rise to a distorted picture. Other countries have experienced economic recessions in periods of democratic change, and South Africa is doing so too. Until 1994, there was zero or negative growth. Population growth has been higher than economic growth most of the time since 1980.

Others turn to external factors like the fall of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe or other kinds of "spill-over" from changes in the international community to explain processes of democratisation in the developing world. An increasingly interdependent world makes what happens in one country affect other countries. Diffusion of democratic values and practices through international trade, multinational companies, etc. has also been emphasised as promoting the "third wave" of democracy.[137] Still others focus on external pressure from the international community, through sanctions in the case of South Africa, or through pressures for political change resulting from the structural adjustment programmes imposed by the IMF or World Bank. Democratisation is then seen as a result of diffusion rather than development (Huntington 1984). O'Donnell et al. (1986) argue that all transitions from authoritarian rule that have occurred in the last twenty years are part of the same process.

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[136] For this reason, the issue of federalism has also generated large controversies in South Africa. The final Constitution leaves some exclusive competencies for the regions.

[137] See, for example, Deutch and Foltz (1966) and Almond and Coleman (1960) on the impact of internationalisation and modernisation on nationbuilding.

The transition away from authoritarian rule in South Africa was a negotiated transition and the result was a negotiated political settlement. The "Groote Schuur Minute" (May 1990) bound the government and ANC to resolve "the existing climate of violence" and to pursue peaceful courses of action. In practice, a cease-fire was declared and the ANC agreed to a conditional suspension of the armed struggle. The political talks started on the basis of the regime's acknowledgement that it was no longer able to govern and a similar acknowledgement on the part of the liberation forces, most particularly the ANC, that they were not able to seize power by military means. Years of armed struggle and "guerrilla warfare" had not proved successful in weakening the white-ruled state. In fact, the ANC had been pushed further and further away from the boundaries it sought to penetrate. The political, physical and economic costs of hosting ANC bases was becoming unsustainable for neighbouring states (Friedman 1993). The NP, for its part, saw that there was no other option than to start talking to "the enemy". In January 1990, President de Klerk summoned the chiefs of the South African Police and advised them that it was his intention to "remove the police away from the political battlefield. We will not use you any longer as instruments to attain political goals" (Haysom 1992).

The process of democratic change in South Africa was given its momentum by a *combination* of the factors outlined above. Economic and financial sanctions had contributed to a weakening of the South African economy. Throughout its history, South Africa has demonstrated a high level of dependency on the global economy and upon a constant inflow of foreign capital. When South Africa needed its loans renewed, some apartheid laws were often lifted.[138] However, sanctions were far better suited to force an adversary to the bargaining table than to its knees

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[138] The effect of financial sanctions upon the SA economic scene can be illustrated with the events of 1985 and President P. W. Botha's "Rubicon speech". President Botha had originally drafted a speech, which called for such radical steps, as the abolition of the Group Areas Act, to be taken. However, on the basis of strong resistance from the leader of the conservative Transvaal National Party, Botha scrapped his speech and instead delivered a bitter chauvinist tirade (Johnson and Schlemmer 1996:3). This led to shock waves in the financial markets, and major Western banks, led by Chase Manhattan Bank, called in their loans. South Africa could not pay, a tough new repayment schedule had to be devised and the Rand collapsed, bankrupting those who had borrowed abroad and leading to high, persistent inflation.

(Friedman 1993). Most importantly, escalating mass actions, organised revolt in the black townships and a generally high level of crime and violence made the government realise that apartheid had failed and that blacks could no longer be denied a say in government. International support for the liberation struggle provided a moral boost for the internal struggle as well as providing the funding for the liberation forces to keep up the struggle. Grassroots resistance organisations had emerged in the townships and industrial areas. Student protests and industrial action from the mid-80s onwards triggered a new wave of turmoil, the aim of which was to make the country ungovernable. Economic developments had led to changes in the composition, skills, stability and social weight of the working class and therefore provided the struggle with a potential power base.

In the 70s, the costs of white supremacy began to outweigh the benefits. Sanctions and a shortage of skills limited competitive advantage abroad, while low wages limited the expansion of the domestic market. Economic growth was low or null. The costs of ruling by force were becoming unsustainable for the government in the long term. The international dimension was a crucial element in the discourse for both the NP government and the ANC in the late 80s. The ANC lost international economic and political support through the collapse of the Communist countries. The NP government, for its part, became less afraid of "a Communist threat" from the liberation forces. Furthermore, the apartheid state was also weakened from within. Corruption and abuse of public funds were, for example, becoming widespread (du Toit 1995).

Finally, the beginning of the negotiation process did not signal a surrender of power for the NP. Opinion polls indicated that de Klerk and the NP had managed to attain an astonishing degree of support amongst blacks (Mattes 1994). The NP was beginning to see the possibility of organisational survival and political influence, even electoral success, within a new democratic dispensation. At the point of departure, it hoped for minority rights and/or power sharing. Mattes (1994) argues against Schmitter and O'Donnell's view of a general pattern whereby high levels of uncertainty about the electoral outcome of the various parties will hasten the movement towards democracy. Reformist regimes will, according to this argument, move quickly towards elections in order to channel popular support. The NP government, however, seems to have concluded that it was in its interest to prolong the transition process in the hope of increasing its own electoral support, building alliances and increasing black disillusionment with the ANC. Furthermore, February 2 1990 had

set in motion a whole set of dynamics that the NP government had not reckoned with. As such it brought all kinds of new insecurities and internal political cleavages that it took time to bridge (Johnson and Schlemmer 1996). For these reasons, it took four years to conclude the transition process.[139] Przeworksi et al. (1986:66 & 80) argue that democracy can be established only if institutions exist that will make it unlikely that the competitive political process will result in outcomes highly adverse to anyone's interests given the distribution of economic, ideological, organisational and other resources. But this is exactly what happened, although the NP had not initially expected it to. Why did the ANC choose the electoral uncertainty of multi-party democracy while its fellow liberation organisations, AZAPO and the PAC, remained committed to revolutionary liberation? The loss of Soviet military support and the collapse of the one-party model throughout Eastern Europe had a major influence on ANC thinking (Mattes 1994). What was known about popular support indicated that the ANC would win by far the largest share of the vote in the elections.

An in-depth analysis of all the factors which brought the key players to the negotiating table is beyond the scope of this chapter and thesis. Furthermore, such analyses tend to become complicated by measurement problems and the *interlinkage* of several factors that played a role. The democratic turn-around in South Africa was ultimately an outcome of actions by the political party elite and leaders. At the same time, their actions resulted from activity and struggle on the ground. The 70s and 80s had seen a massive industrialisation and urbanisation process in South Africa, which formed the basis for a huge growth in voluntary organisations and black trade unions in particular. The 80s had seen the growth of organised civil society, which carried the anti-apartheid movement forward. The strength of civil society, or voluntary associations, is one factor which distinguishes South Africa from other countries on the continent. Economic and redistribution needs were addressed by organisations built on democratic structures. This resurgence of civil society came about on the basis of economic growth, industrialisation and

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[139] At which stage, the NP had also made some transitional arrangements to secure its own interests. It had originally hoped for minority veto rights on key issues in Parliament through the new Constitution, but did not succeed in obtaining these. Yet, it *did* succeed in establishing a Government of National Unity as a transitional arrangement up until the next elections in 1999.

urbanisation. Economic developments created a semi-skilled and skilled black labour force, which in turn formed the backbone of the union movement. Urbanisation and industrialisation created an easily mobilised group of people ready to find other means to promote their new interests than in the rural areas: civics, community organisations and *stokvels* were only a few of the kind of organisations that people flocked to. Cracks occurred in the political system owing to economic factors and a crisis of legitimacy of the regime. Small, but significant cracks were opened in the political system through sanctions, etc. while social movements moved in to fill these cracks and opposition leaders gave content and direction to the struggle. A low-intensity civil war had broken out in the black townships, which became "no-go areas" for the security forces.

The above has been a fairly brief description of the political process and a relatively superficial explanation of the causes of the political process. We can, of course, argue with Almond and Powell (1960) that the political changes were a functional response to the inability of the existing system to cope any longer with the challenges posed by economic developments and external sanctions as well as to the internal lack of authority and increasing mobilisation. Or we can argue with Dahl's (1971:15) three axioms that: (i) the costs for the regime of tolerating the opposition decreased; (ii) the costs of suppressing the opposition increased and (iii) the costs of suppression exceeded the costs of tolerance. Both theories seem to present credible explanations as to why the reform process started. In order to explain the nature and dynamics of the "threat" that public protest or opposition posed to the system, however, we need to "flesh out the argument". Before we come to that, however, let us briefly consider the factors needed for democratic *consolidation*.

Bollen (1990) argues that the tendency of some people to combine the definition of democracy with democratic stability – i.e. years of democracy or democratic experience – is invalid. One problem with this is that democracy and stability do not have identical causes and consequences. *Stability* has been argued to be promoted by economic development and a fair distribution of resources, by the building of national unity and democratic tolerance as well as by institution-building and the fulfilment of specific conditions in civil society. *Instability,* on the other hand, is a consequence of fragmentation and structural cleavages.

Hadenius (1992) tested out the correlation between the various structural cleavages and democracy in 132 Third World countries around the world. Amongst the structural cleavages, he finds the strongest negative link between democracy and linguistic fragmentation. He finds, in

general, that the usual idea that cleavages in the population constitute a complicating circumstance for democracy is confirmed (Hadenius 1992:144). Otherwise, commodity concentration and trade, especially with the USA, was found to be of importance for democracy. The former in a negative direction, the latter in a positive one.

The structural cleavages in South Africa which seem to be of most importance are racial, and to some extent linguistic. Hadenius (1992) finds less connection between religion and democracy in Southern Africa than elsewhere, which he explains by the fact that the major religions penetrated sub-Saharan Africa far later and to a lesser extent than elsewhere. Racial and population groups overlapping with language seem, on the other hand, to be cleavages of more importance to democracy. Blacks and whites have different interests to administer and promote. Their living conditions differ in terms of income, wealth and status. Ethnic cleavages between various black groups may, on the other hand, seem to be of less importance in forming interests and attitudes. In only *one* region, namely KwaZulu-Natal, has there been fighting associated with ethnic conflicts. However, the conflicts in KwaZulu-Natal are most strongly connected with internal? politics. The fights are between ANC and Inkatha amongst Zulus rather than between Zulus and other groups.

An extremely high correlation between such factors as income, religion and education on the one hand and democracy on the other should, according to Lipset (1963), not be anticipated. First, a political form may persist under conditions normally adverse to the *emergence* of that form. Or a political form may develop because of a combination of unique historical factors, even though the society's major characteristics favour another form. However, although the existence of certain factors conducive to democracy may indicate the likelihood of it surviving at critical points in history, structural factors are not alone in determining democratic futures. While the external constraints of politics, such as low economic growth, commodity concentration, etc. may be indicative of stability, importance must also be attached to the conduct of the actors involved. Lijphart (Hadenius 1992) has maintained such an "anti-deterministic" view. He argues the significance of political leadership, saying that democracies can evolve and survive, even under external constraints, if the political elite strives to achieve this goal by aiming for compromises and reconciliation.

Przeworski (1986) states, on the other hand, that whereas legitimacy may be an additional reason for or signal of regime collapse, it is not a sufficient explanation. He emphasises instead that what matters for the

stability of a regime is not its legitimacy, but rather the presence or absence of preferable alternatives (Przeworski 1986). Societies that lack autonomous intermediate groups are much more likely to be dominated by an authoritarian or totalitarian dictatorship (Huntington 1984, Dahl 1982).

Hadenius concludes his study by saying that no single explanatory factor runs like a *leitmotif* through the material. Several attributes of different kinds stand out as important in various regions. Furthermore, they are able to explain only some 60 per cent of the variation concerning the level of democracy. One of the factors not included in his study is the existence and strength of civil society and voluntary organisations.

The issue of which factors are *most* decisive for political change and for the stability of democracy remains unresolved. There is disagreement as to the causes of political change and political instability. There is also disagreement as to whether systematic explanations can be found. Furthermore, the causal relationship between the factors mentioned here on the one hand and democracy on the other hand may actually be circular. The "good" circle implies, for example, a developmental process in which distribution of socio-economic resources acts as a mobilising force for change in the political system, which then in turn contributes to changing the distribution of resources and to the achievement of political stability. A "bad" circle, on the other hand, is one in which economic factors contribute to political instability and change, and then political instability contributes to further economic deterioration. Whereas some put an emphasis upon economic conditions for democracy, others focus upon political development as a precondition for economic growth (Pye 1960).

Factors explaining political change and the consolidation of democracy may also vary in their impact and importance. Economic or cultural factors may, for instance, be necessary conditions, but political change may still occur only when the right international or external factors are present. Economic variables may serve as a good indicator of where political development is most *likely* to occur. As countries develop economically, they move into a phase of transition or choice where traditional forms of rule become increasingly difficult to maintain and new types of political institutions are required to aggregate the demands of an increasingly complex society and to implement public policies in such a society (Huntington 1984:201).

It is sometimes argued that the absence of democratic traditions impedes the consolidation of new democratic institutions and that, conversely, democracies are more stable in countries that have enjoyed

democracy in the past (Przeworski 1996). On this basis, hopes seem bleak for a country in which groups have never experienced political democracy before and in which there are no signs that social inequalities are being drastically reduced. Clearly, we may in 1998 state that the likelihood of a democracy increases with the period that it has lasted already. It then becomes even more important, however, to see what learning grounds and laboratories for democracy that existed in the past can *today* lay the ground for democratic consolidation.

II   CIVIC VIRTUE AND COMMUNITY

4   A civic culture

The differing perspectives concerning the preconditions for democratic change have mainly focused on factors driven by the *elite* and by pacts between elites, rather than by popular mass-based initiatives. It is the elites and pacts between elites that will interpret and determine when and whether political liberalisation (as carried forward by the factors mentioned above) occurs and set the parameters for the extent of political reforms. Our focus, however, is upon the ordinary man and woman and the cultures and attitudes they bring into the political arena.

Street (1993:95) states that there is a tendency within political science to treat political culture like a familiar piece of furniture: "everyone is vaguely aware of its existence, but only rarely do they comment upon it and few bother to ask how it came to be there in the first place". We need to identify what we mean by political culture and its importance for democratisation and nation-building.

4.1   The history of the political culture concept.

There is nothing new in people underlining the importance of political culture for political stability. Aristotle and Plato did so. Machiavelli and several of his contemporaries also concluded that whether free institutions succeeded or not depended on the character of citizens, or their "civic virtue" (Putnam 1993).[140] Political culture is not a theory in itself but refers to a set of variables which may be used in the construction of theories

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[140] Putnam (1993:87) argues that these "republicans" were later vanquished by the liberalists Hobbes, Locke and their successors. Whereas the republicans stressed community and the obligations of citizenship, liberals emphasised individualism and individual rights.

(Almond 1980).[141] Toqueville made political culture the central idea of his *Democracy in America*:

> "In order that society should exist, and a fortiori, that a society should prosper, it is necessary that the minds of all citizens should be rallied and held together by certain predominant ideas; and this cannot be the case unless each of them sometimes draws his opinion from the common source and consents to accept certain matters of belief already formed" (Street 1993:95).

As political culture research developed in the post-war period,[142] there were, however, differences of opinion as to the definition and specification of the content of political culture, controversy over the analytic separation of political culture from political structure and behaviour, and debate over its causal propensities (Almond 1980:26). Almond and Powell (1966:23) understand political culture as:

> "attitudes, beliefs, values and skills which are current in an entire population as well as those special propensities and patterns which may be found within separate parts of the population"

Verba (1965:513) describes political culture as "the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols and values which define the situation in which political action takes place".[143] Special regional, language or ethnic groups may have special propensities or tendencies, which are then referred to as subcultures.

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[141] We will not here go into the extensive number of contributions to the political culture literature. According to Almond (1994) there were three phases in the history of political culture studies.

[142] G. Almond's (1956) used the term "political culture" for the first time in modern political science in his article *Comparative Political Systems* (1956). Almond and Pye and their committee at Princeton (*Committee of Princeton Studies in Political Development*) developed it further. The *Civic Culture* by Almond and Verba (1963) is generally now regarded as the classic study in this area, although other scholars from the Princeton environment also contributed to this field of study:; Almond and Coleman (1960); Almond and Powell (1966); and Pye and Verba (1965).

[143] Beers (1974) argues, likewise, that political culture orients a people toward a polity and its processes, providing it with a system of beliefs, a way of evaluating its operations, and a set of expressive symbols. Barnes (1986), on the other hand, argues that a culture is a set of beliefs and attitudes developed in the course of a group's efforts to cope with external adaptation.

Dahl (1966), furthermore, discusses several types of political orientation that have a bearing on patterns of political partisanship: orientation towards the political system as a whole (which affects the extent and distribution of loyalty); attitudes towards co-operation and individuality and towards other people (which affects the formation of political groups and their interaction); and orientations towards problem-solving (which affects the interaction of political parties).

Almond and Verba defined political culture in relation to the cultural propensities assumed to be closely linked with democratic stability. Consequently they stressed political knowledge and skills, feelings about and evaluations of the polity and politics and attitudes towards the self as a participant and towards parties, bureaucracies and the like. They defined political culture as consisting of:

> "cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientations to political phenomena, distributed in national populations or in sub-groups"
> (Almond & Verba 1963).

The term "political culture" thus refers to specific political orientations, attitudes towards the political system and its various components, and attitudes towards the role of the self in the system (Almond & Verba 1980:12).[144] It is therefore a set of attitudes, a psychological orientation towards a specific set of objects and processes – i.e. the polity. The political culture of a nation is therefore the distribution of patterns of orientation towards political objects among the members of that nation (Almond & Verba 1980:13).

At a later stage (1980) they elaborate on the content of culture. They argue that an analysis of a nation's political culture must address both its substantive content and the different kinds of orientations as well as the systemic relationship between the two. The substantive content of political culture may be broken down into system culture, process culture and policy culture. *System culture* relates to attitudes towards the national community and authorities (and includes such things as legitimacy, national identity etc.); *process culture* is concerned with attitudes to the self

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[144] Pye (1966) also defines political culture as including a sense of national identity, attitudes towards oneself as a participant and one's fellow citizens, attitudes and expectations regarding government output and performance, and knowledge about and attitudes towards the political processes of decision-making.

in politics and towards other political actors; and *policy culture* concerns the way preferences regarding the output and outcomes of politics are distributed. Orientations towards each of these areas of political culture may be cognitive (consisting of beliefs, information and analysis), affective (consisting of feelings and attachments) or evaluative (consisting of moral judgements).[145] Converse (1964), for his part, argues that the political cultures of nations and groups may be distinguished and compared according to their internal constraint or consistency.[146]

Inglehart (1990:15) argues that there is little doubt that studies of political culture have made a major contribution to political science, for it has become increasingly evident that previous models of rational choice theory were inadequate in explaining political change and left unexplored the links that culture has with both politics and economics. In Catholic societies the Church plays a major role, and in the Islamic world Muslim fundamentalism has become a major political factor. Even in advanced industrial societies, he argues, religious and ideological cleavages outweigh social class and economic factors in influencing electoral behaviour.

Types of cultures

Almond and Verba (1980) distinguish between political culture and non-political attitudes and development patterns in order to ascertain a relationship between them.[147] Although all cultures are systemically mixed, they believe that we can distinguish between the *parochial* political culture, the *subject* political culture and the *participant* political culture. What characterises each of these cultures is the degree of knowledge about and participation in political processes.

They (ibid) refer to the political cultures of African tribal societies and autonomous local communities, as identified by Coleman (1960), as *parochial political cultures*. These societies have no specialised political

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[145] Cognitive orientations refer to "knowledge of and belief about the political system", affective orientations refer to "feelings about the political system" and evaluative orientations to judgements and opinions that involve a "combination of value standards ... with and information and feelings" (1963:15).
[146] Converse (1964:297) defines a belief system as a: "configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependency".
[147] Although they admit that the boundary between them is not as sharp as their terminology may suggest.

roles: the headman, chief, or his equivalent plays a mixture of political, economic and religious roles and the political is impossible to separate from the rest. A parochial orientation also implies the absence of expectations of change initiated by the system as well as a lack of general knowledge about the political system. Almond and Verba cite as an example the remote tribesmen in Nigeria or Ghana who are only vaguely aware of the existence of a central political regime.[148]

The *subject political culture* is characterised by a strong orientation towards a differentiated political system and towards the output aspects of that system, while orientation towards the specifically input aspects of the system and towards the self as an active participant are close to zero (Almond & Verba 1980:17). The individual is aware of an authority that has been assigned a specifically political role, either dislikes it or takes pride in it and either finds it legitimate or not. The relationship is, however, an essentially passive one. Subject orientation in a country which has developed democratic institutions is likely to be affective and normative rather than cognitive.

A *participant political culture* is one in which the members of society tend to be explicitly oriented to the system as a whole and to both the political and administrative structures and processes. Moreover, they see the self as taking an active role in the polity. In the participatory culture, individuals are oriented towards and participate in the political-adminis-trative system as a unity. Moreover, their orientation and participation concerns both the input and the output aspects of the political system. The participatory culture is an ideal type, for it is rational and built upon a clear goal-oriented strategy of rationality (Selle & Berntzen 1991).

We may speak of a participatory culture when cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations towards the relevant political objects coincide almost totally (Almond and Verba 1980:20-21). The parochial, subject and participant cultures will be most congruent with, respectively, a traditional political structure, a centralised authoritarian structure and a democratic political structure. Congruence between culture and structure can be measured on a scale as set out in table 4.1. The congruence between

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[148] One does not have to go further away than to Italy, however, to find the same parochial lack of knowledge about the polity. People in Carlo Levi's novel Sciascia's bibliography *Cristo si e fermato a Eboli* (written about the southern Italian village to which he was exiled under the fascist regime1944) ask: "the state,- who is that?" ("Lo Stato, qui è?").

structure and culture is strong when the frequency of positive orientations approach unity (+); the congruence is weak when the political structure is cognised but the frequency of positive feeling and evaluation approaches indifference or zero. Incongruence between political culture and structure begins when the indifference point is passed and negative affect and evaluation grow in frequency (-).

Table 4.1:   Congruence between Political Culture and Structure
(Almond & Verba 1980:21).[149]

	Allegiance	Apathy	Alienation
Cognitive orientations	x	x	x
Affective orientations	x	0	-
Evaluative orientations	x	0	-

Almond and Verba argue that one can also use this scale as one of stability/instability. An allegiant situation is one in which attitudes and institutions, culture and structures match. But as we move towards the third column – attitudes of alienation tend to reject political institutions or structures.

The three forms of political culture mentioned above are "pure" forms of political culture. There are, however, also three systemically mixed cultures as mentioned by Almond and Verba: the parochial-subject, in which a substantial proportion of the population has rejected the exclusive claims of tribal, village or feudal authority and instead feels allegiance towards a more complex political system and government. In the mixed subject-participant culture, a substantial proportion of the population has acquired a specialised input orientation and an activist orientation towards the self, while most of the remaining population continues to be oriented towards an authoritarian system. The parochial-participant culture describes, in Almond and Verba's opinion, the contemporary problem of cultural development in many of the newly emerging nations in the 80s. In most of these countries, the culture is mainly parochial, but the new structural norms introduced are usually

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[149] x = : high frequency of awareness, positive feeling towards or of evaluation oftoward political objects. - = : high frequency of negative feelings or awareness. 0 = : high frequency of indifference

participatory. Such mixed cultures contain subcultures that are often in conflict with one another (irrespective of whether the cleavages are vertical or horizontal).

4.2 The civic culture, civic virtue and communitarian citizenship

The *civic culture* is a mixture of the above-mentioned political cultures. It embraces a rational activist view of citizens: they are active and involved; and they are rational and guided by reason, well informed and make decisions on the basis of careful cost-benefit analysis. The civic culture individual not only contributes actively to political input but is also has a positive attitude to the input *structures* and *processes*. Individuals become participants, but they do not give up their subject or parochial orientations. In a sense the subject and parochial cultures manage and keep the participant culture under control. Participation thus becomes "milder". Non-political attitudes, such as trust in others and general social participation, are also included in the civic culture (Almond and Verba 1980):

> "The maintenance of the more traditional attitudes and their fusion with the participant orientations lead to a balanced political culture in which political activity, involvement and rationality exist, but are balanced by passivity, traditions, and a commitment to parochial values".

The civic culture builds on a model of successful democracy that required that all citizens be involved and active in politics. However, too much participation may be critical for the stability of the system. Furthermore, it is not only the degree of participation, but also the *kind* of participation that matters. Participation must be informed, analytical, and rational. The *rational-activist model* of democratic citizenship was, however, not the only component of a civic culture and could not logically sustain a *stable* democracy: "only when combined in some sense with its opposites of passivity, trust, and deference to authority and competence was a viable, stable democracy possible" (Almond 1980:16).

Almond and Verba conceived their civic culture study in the aftermath of World War II on the basis of experiences of unstable political regimes in Europe before and during the war. Yet they say that civic culture is not a modern culture but one that combines modernity with tradition. They take Britain as a point of departure and argue that the development of civic culture in Britain must be understood as a series of encounters between modernisation and traditionalism. A first step towards secularisation was the separation from the Church of Rome and the beginning of tolerance of religious diversity; the next step was the emergence of a thriving and self-confident merchant class. On this basis, a pluralistic culture developed which was based on communication and persuasion, consensus and diversity, a culture that permitted change, but also moderated it. The civic culture proposes a "balanced disparity": a kind of moderate political participation which accords discretion to political leaders and government officials; a kind of political involvement which is neither fully pragmatic nor simply passionate; and a form of partisanship which is dynamic yet contained within overarching norms of a common civic unity.

Others have proposed similar cultural sets that are necessary for effective and stable democratic governments. While the liberal democratic ideal proposes a citizenry which limits its activities to electoral duties,[150] proponents of other traditions perceive a far more active citizenship.

Conover and Searing (1994) argue for a "communitarian citizenship", at the heart of which is people's active participation in public affairs – i.e. an essentially active citizenry.[151] Politics is, in this view, a fundamentally public activity in which people involve themselves in pursuit of the collective good. Citizens are expected to participate in politics both for their own good and for the good of the community.

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[150] And only mobilise when, or if, their civil rights are threatened. This view of citizenship has also been referred to as "a contractual citizenship" and is usually identified with the ideas of Hobbes, Locke and their liberal successors. John Rawls has forged its contemporary interpretations (Conover and Searing 1994:35). This vision of citizenship places minimal demands on the public. Citizens are bound together by a "social contract" rather than as friends, neighbours or colleagues united by common activities, and political participation is essentially a private, instrumental activity to further individual self-interests.

[151] This communal view of citizenship originated with Aristotle and found its modern voice in eighteenth-century theorists such as Rousseau (Conover & Searing 1994:35).

However, a communal citizenship depends not only upon the degree of participation but also on the degree of public-spiritedness with which citizens participate. A civic community is bound together by horizontal relations of reciprocity and co-operation rather than hierarchical or vertical relations of authority and dependency (Putnam 1993:88).[152] Citizenship is grounded in relationships between friends, neighbours, colleagues and fellow members of organisations who are bound together by common activities (Barber 1984). Furthermore, virtuous citizens in a civic community are trustful, helpful and co-operative. Almond and Verba (1980) conclude that interpersonal trust is a prerequisite for the formation of secondary associations. Toqueville's civic community is similarly marked by an active, public-spirited citizenry, by egalitarian political relations and by a social fabric of trust and co-operation.

Skinner (1984) also argues that a steady recognition and pursuit of the public good at the expense of all purely individual and private ends seem close to the core meaning of civic virtue. However, citizens in the civic community cannot be expected to be altruists. As pointed out by Putnam (1993:88), no successful society can renounce the powerful motivation of self-interest. Nevertheless, in a civic community citizens pursue "enlightened" self-interests defined in the broader context of public needs, self-interests that are "alive to the interests of others".[153]

The key words of communal citizenship are loyalty, equality, participation, tolerance and self-development; while a contractual, liberal citizenship will be characterised by individuality, rights, freedom and liberty.

Furthermore, a stable democracy needs not only a civil citizenship but also depends on legitimation for its system and procedures and people's expectations about the effectiveness of the regime. Dahl (1971) notes that the greater the belief within a given country in the legitimacy of its institutions, the greater the chances for polyarchy.

[152] A political society can not forgo the advantages of division of labour or the need for political leadership, but leaders must show responsibility for their citizens and advance the norms of co-operation and self-government (Putnam 1993).
[153] Toqueville quoted in Putnam (1993:88).

4.3   Political culture and democracy in South Africa

Political participation and influence are closely connected with political resources. Hernes and Martinussen (1980) suggest that the following are necessary conditions for political participation and influence: an understanding of the relationship between living conditions and political decisions; political knowledge and political interest; and confidence in one's own personal capacity to influence one's living conditions generally and in particular through political action. Political resources are factors which promote these conditions and thereby enhance political participation and influence. We will, in the following, report on some of the existing surveys covering culture and attitudes in South Africa (conducted under apartheid and in the post-apartheid democratic setting).[154]

Political competence
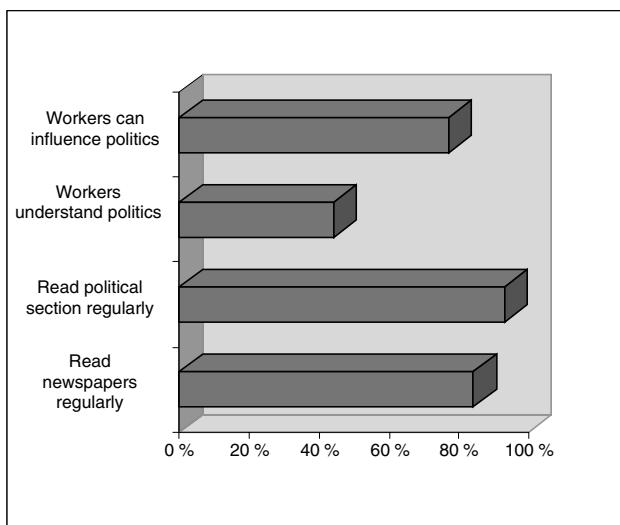
People's ability and capacity to advance their own interests determines the quality of the democratic system. Citizens differ in the extent to which they believe they can participate in political decisions, in what we may call their subjective competence as citizens. The self-confident citizen is likely to be more receptive to political communication, more knowledgeable, and have a stronger belief in his or her own abilities and competence to act. The self-confident citizen seems to be the democratic citizen. He or she believes that it is important to take an active part in politics.

What standards must citizens meet to be considered politically competent? It seems reasonable, Dahl (1992) argues, to expect people to be aware of what they want the government to achieve and be predisposed to act in ways to bring it about. In the classical sense, one would expect the democratic citizen to seek the good of the community at large. A more modern, narrower individualistic view will expect the individual to be well

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[154]   Simultaneously, we must keep in mind that the reliability of the responses to some of the political questions, such as those concerning party support, in the apartheid period will be limited because of people's fears of admitting support for the banned parties. With just a limited number of surveys reporting on politics, we have to choose from a wide variety of sources , which differ in their focus upon politics and in their samples. Most of the surveys reported from are from the 1990s, because of the previous restrictions upon such political research and reporting.

informed and active in the process of pursuing his own interests. This individualistic approach, however, reduces citizenship to a question of knowledge by assuming that if people know their own good they will have an incentive to seek it and act accordingly. The politically competent citizen is highly concerned with public affairs and political life, well informed and involved in discussions and activities to influence political decisions in order to foster the welfare of the community as well as to protect his own interests (ibid).

Figure 4.1   Competence and Confidence amongst COSATU Shop Stewards
1991[155](no. 863)

The extent to which people have the interest, knowledge and capacity for political participation and influence is a measure of individual political wealth. Individual ability and the will to engage in political activities have two components: the extent to which people have a general understanding of the relationship between their own welfare and political decisions; and more specific political knowledge, interest and confidence.

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[155] They were asked: 1) "How regularly do you read your newspaper?" 2) "Do you make sure to read about political affairs in the newspapers?" 3) "Do you agree that politics is too complicated for workers to understand what is going on? ?" 3) "Do you agree in that workers cannot really influence the political system?" Some of the answers were "turned around" in the figure to reflect positive response.

Political competence refers to specific political knowledge, interest and confidence in one's own capacity to influence politics. Political alienation on the other hand, implies being, or perceiving oneself to be, without control. Alienation, therefore, indicates that a person does not have the opportunity to act in ways that are rational, social, conscious and purposeful in furthering his or her political interests. People's feeling of not being informed about what is going on, their inability to follow political events or to influence political decisions indicate political alienation.

Walzer (1980) argues that interest in public issues and devotion to public causes are key signs of civic virtue. Pityana and Orkin (1992) reported on the basis of a survey amongst COSATU shop stewards in 1991 that there seem to be relatively low levels of confidence in workers' knowledge about politics amongst shop stewards (Figure 4.1).
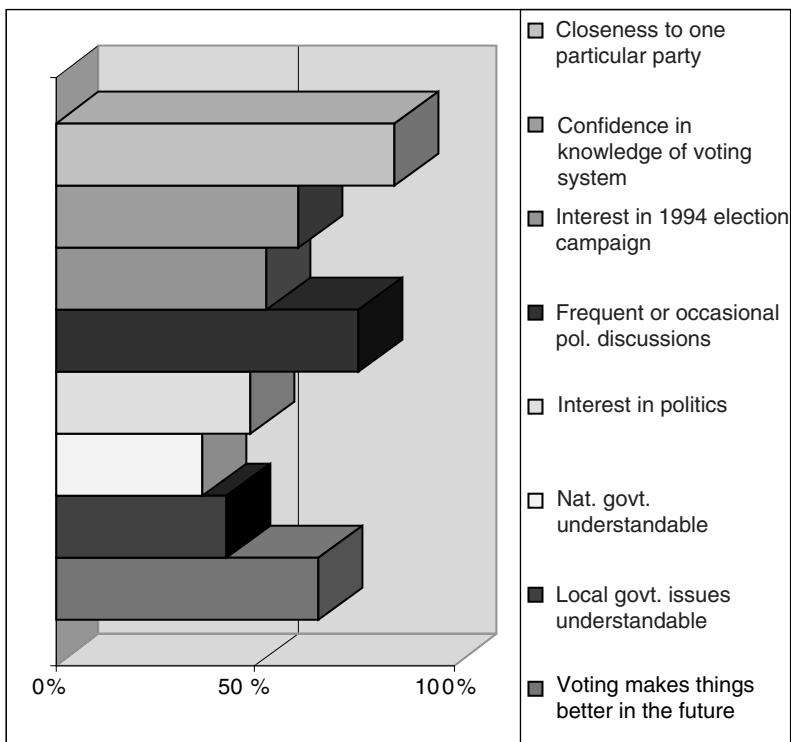
Still, almost all shop stewards read newspapers everyday or every second day. Furthermore, they made sure to read the political section and truly believed that workers could influence politics. In other words, although they doubted the individual capacity of the workers to understand politics, they still believed in their collective capacity to *change* politics! A survey of COSATU workers' attitudes to and expectations of politics conducted around the first elections in 1994 (Ginsburg & Webster 1995) showed relatively little knowledge of key labour market and political institutions among workers. Seventy-five per cent of COSATU workers did not know what the *National Manpower Commission* (NMC) was,[156] around 80 per cent had no knowledge of the *National Economic Forum*,[157] and most respondents had not even heard of the *Reconstruction and Development Programme*, which formed the basis for the ANC's election programme.[158]

[156] The National Manpower Commission represented state, unions and employers (the last two included after the *Laboria Minutes* in 1990) as a statutory body negotiating labour market policies and legislation.

[157] The National Economic Forum was established in 1992 as a tripartite forum to negotiate economic policy. The NMC and the NEF were merged into the *National, Economic, Development and Labour Council* in early 1995.

[158] This lack of knowledge is reflected in the national survey conducted amongst approx. 4,000 people by the Institute for Multi-Party Democracy in September 1994 (Johnson 1996:359). Of all Africans, 41 per cent said they were not familiar with the RDP. Amongst ANC supporters, nearly two thirds said they were either not very familiar, or not at all familiar, with the RDP.

Figure 4.2 Political Competence and Confidence in a National Sample.
(IDASA 1995)[159] (own analyses)

☐	Closeness to one particular party
☐	Confidence in knowledge of voting system
☐	Interest in 1994 election campaign
■	Frequent or occasional pol. discussions
☐	Interest in politics
☐	Nat. govt. understandable
■	Local govt. issues understandable
☐	Voting makes things better in the future

However, in contrast to the perhaps patronising perceptions of shop
stewards about "ordinary workers" and the generally low level of know-
ledge amongst shop stewards about specific political institutions, Johnson
and Schlemmer (1996) argue that there is a high level of politicisation in
society at large. Figure 4.2 portrays the degree to which people feel that
they have the capacity and confidence to participate in politics. Seventy-
nine per cent of all respondents in their nation-wide survey consider
themselves supporters of a political party and 13 per cent look upon
themselves as party *activists*. In a similar survey, IDASA investigated
participation and competence before the local elections. Mattes (1995:51)
reports that 61 per cent of the population is familiar with the Left-Right
spectrum and are able to locate themselves on it.

[159] In comparison, 75 per cent of British citizens thought politics was so
complicated that people like them could not really understand (Marsh 1975).

Compared with most countries, there is an astonishing degree of political confidence amongst South Africans. Expectations of a politically alienated citizenry on the basis of the previous lack of experience in formal politics have failed to be confirmed. Large majorities believe that the way they vote can make things better in the future, that they understand the electoral system and that they feel particularly close to one party. While Africans are more confident (70%) than whites (48%) that their vote makes a difference to the future, whites (73%) are more inclined to say that which party governs makes a difference (Africans 64%). Most South Africans do not believe that politics is too complicated for people like them to understand. About 40 per cent of South Africans believe that they have a fairly or pretty good understanding of what goes on in national, provincial or local government.[160]

Political participation

A traditional Western academic approach to the concept of participation argues that the combination of low participation and low trust defines the politically alienated, whereas high trust in the political system and a high degree of participation defines citizens as the political elite or as the politically most resourceful. In South Africa, however, stepping stones towards the development of a political consciousness and political activities must be looked upon from a different perspective. Distrust, as opposed to trust, in the apartheid political system functioned for a long

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[160] Author's own analysis and ref. to POS Report no. 6, March 1996. The IDASA 1995 Local Government Elections Survey of 2,600 South Africans form the data basis. People were asked what they thought about the following: 1) "Some people say that no matter how they vote, it won't make things better in the future. Others say that the way they vote could make things better in the future". 2) "Some people say that what goes on in government is so complicated that people like themselves can't really understand what's going on. Others say that they have a pretty good understanding of what goes on" 3) "Would you say that you follow what goes on in government and public affairs?" 4) "When you get together with friends or family, would you say that you discuss political matters?" 5) "Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you?" 6) "Do you feel that you understand the voting system for local elections?" 7) "Regardless of how you voted on election Day (in April), was there one particular party which you felt especially close to?"

time as a mechanism for bringing about black political participation and power. Feelings of mistrust towards politicians and the political system are hence not necessarily an expression of political alienation.

When democracy is rule by the people, political participation certainly is the key concept of a democratic system. However, no country in the world can show that all its citizens actually take part in the political process of voting or express their political priorities and beliefs in other ways. The degree of political involvement varies with the degree of political apathy and alienation in the population. Some will also say that a high degree of political activity in the population is not necessarily an indicator of a successful democracy, nor a desirable basis for a system of governance. The widely accepted theory of democracy is one in which the concept of participation has only the most minimal role (Pateman 1970). While the classical liberal theory of constitutional, representative democracy of J. A. Schumpeter carries a conception of restricted popular participation, the classical theory of participatory democracy of, for example, J. S. Mill and J. J. Rousseau underlines the need for broad popular involvement in political decision-making. But in fact, several people pinpoint the dangers involved in wide popular participation in politics. Lipset (1963:14) argues, for instance, that the belief that a very high level of participation is always good for democracy is not valid:

> "an increase in the level of participation may reflect the decline of social cohesion and the breakdown of the democratic system; whereas a stable democracy may rest on the general belief that the outcome of an election will not make too great a difference in society".

Others maintain, however, that participation is desirable and that low levels of participation by the citizens are an indicator of low legitimacy of the system and may carry the danger of people expressing their political frustrations through other, more disruptive channels. High levels of participation are, according to Rousseau (1968), important for people to protect their own private interests and ensure a good government. Participation ensures that all men or groups are equally dependent upon each other and equally subject to the law. Furthermore, participation increases the feeling among individual citizens that they belong to the community (Rousseau 1968).

While white South Africans are generally perceived to be less politically active – electoral participation, for example, was never more than about 30 per cent – blacks have usually been regarded as more active. Participation in the 1994 democratic elections has been estimated at between 85 and 90 per cent.[161] The findings of Charney (1995) confirm people's eager support for popular involvement in politics, be it individual or collective.

Why then did participation in the 1995 local elections fall to below 40 per cent? According to pre-election surveys, more than 80 per cent reported in advance of the elections that they intended to vote and 71 per cent argued that voting in local government elections was important (IDASA 1995). Clearly one reason may lie in the complicated procedure of having to register for the elections first (before a certain deadline). Others have interpreted it as a protest, a "stay-away" vote of dissatisfied people.[162] IDASA argues, on the other hand, that the 1995 local elections were not a referendum on people's satisfaction with the direction of South Africa's new democracy but rather that it was in fact the lack of knowledge and interest in the electoral process which explains the low turn-out. In general, however, the data concerning competence and confidence amongst South Africans suggest that people may be easily mobilised for issues they think are important.

The *issues and type of political activity* that people engage in is clearly important for political stability. Types of South African political activities are usually divided by skin colour, owing to apartheid, continuous political restrictions and states of emergencies. Whereas whites, coloureds and Asians had access to and took part in Parliamentary elections,[163] political participation by Africans mainly took the form of stay-aways, boycotts and strikes in order to bring about the downfall of the apartheid regime. The stay-away emerged as a specific tactic of black resistance to apartheid as early as 1949, when the ANC adopted a

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[161] There is, however, some uncertainty about these figures owing to the lack of reliable data sources for estimating the size of the total population. The critiques of the CSS Census 1996, imply, for example that either 94 percent of the population took part in the 1994 elections, or that the Census has underestimated the population.

[162] Lawrence Schlemmer in *Financial Mail*, 17 November 1995:47.

[163] Coloureds and Asians had the right to vote for separate chambers in Parliament from 1985. Most, however, boycotted the elections.

Programme of Action aimed at non-collaboration, a non-violent disobedience campaign and a general withdrawal of labour (Adler et al. 1992).

We often hear of the South African workers at the forefront of the struggle. Adler et al. (1992) cite the fact that 800,000 workers stayed away from work in November 1986, an action that marked the beginning of the united mass actions carried out jointly by unions, students and community organisations. Thereafter, several stay-aways were to be organised, with increasing numbers of workers and students attending. In 1988, the first successful three-day stay-away was organised, with 3 million workers participating. Others were to follow. We will return to this in later chapters.

National identity

A vital component of any transition process towards democracy is the establishment of a national identity. The links between diverse population groups must become sufficiently strong to put the legitimacy of the state beyond question. Nationalism entails the sharing of a particular political identity which is represented and expressed. In political usage it carries both positive and negative connotations and there is a lot of confusion about its precise meaning. It will suffice to say here that when we refer to nationalism, or national identity, we mean the sharing of a sense of subjective belonging to a nation.

During the days of "hard apartheid" no contact was allowed across race barriers. Thousands of people applied to be reclassified from one race to another each year. Blacks were defined as belonging to separate nations with identities, loyalties and languages fundamentally different from those of whites. The legacy of apartheid is likely to contribute to racial tensions and intolerance in the new South Africa too. Moreover, dismantling the old apartheid segregation may also initially stimulate ethnic conflict in that it deregulates competition between groups. Greater resources for the most disadvantaged racial groups in the population may spark off racial confrontation and protests from rival groups who feel negatively affected by the competition for markets, customers and/or jobs.

The 90s witnessed a large and increasing number of political murders and violence in South Africa. There are strong frictions based on political conflicts, ethnic and regional differences, gender, social hierarchies and competition for scarce resources. Splits caused by apartheid, the uneven distribution of resources and ideological cleavages increase the

number of conflicts threatening political stability and democratic progress. The violence that has torn apart Gauteng since 1990 has predominantly been portrayed as ANC-Inkatha violence and often been labelled ethnic, "black against black" or tribal violence. History shows us astonishing racial divisions and a population lacking any basic agreement about which symbols, languages, role models, etc. should represent their identity (James 1989).
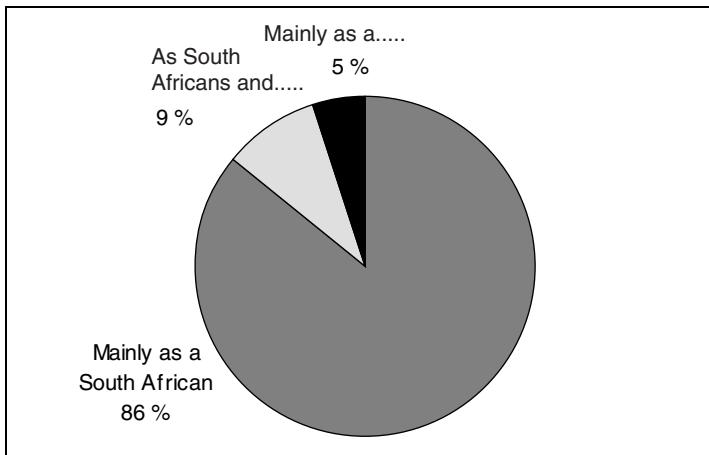
A critical factor in the nation-building process is people's degree of identification with local groups, race or ethnic groups which may draw loyalty away from "the nation" and the state. Most South Africans (79 per cent) see their culture and language as important to them (Mattes 1995:43). Mattes (ibid) reports on the basis of a nation-wide survey in 1994 that 64 per cent of the population seem to consider themselves as belonging to a distinctive community as opposed to having a more national, secular identity.[164] At the same time, there is a very strong and very high level of identification with the political community known as South Africa: an astounding 95 per cent said that they were either proud, or very proud, to be called South Africans (Mattes & Thiel 1998).[165] Figure 4.3 below indicates how *workers* see themselves.

COSATU workers seem to see themselves primarily as South Africans and only secondarily as part of an ethnic group and as workers (ibid:55). Additional evidence of this was provided by workers' responses to the question of whether a party that had won working-class support in the elections should represent only workers or take cognisance of other interests as well. An overwhelming number of workers showed a deep-seated commitment to the broad nation-building process of the Tripartite Alliance.

[164] The question was, however, phrased in a way that may have influenced the answers: "In terms of culture, history and language, do you consider you belong to a distinctive community (with its own distinctive culture and history)?"
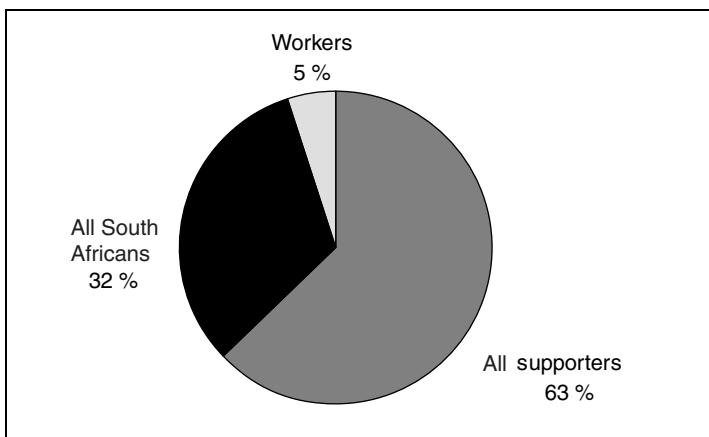
[165] They explain the potentially contradictory results between group identification and national identity by arguing that in other divided societies people reject a political identity *imposed* on them by authoritarian means, while in South Africa millions claim an identity that was previously *denied* to them by authoritarian means (1998:98).

Figure 4.3.   Identity of COSATU Shop Stewards
              (CASE/COSATU data 1991)

While a majority of those interviewed felt that a mainly worker-based
political party should represent the interests of more than just the working
class, workers were considerably divided on the question of whether
workers can rely upon political parties to represent their interests. Half the
workers interviewed by Ginsburg and Webster agree that workers cannot
rely upon political parties to protect their interests.

Figure 4.4.   "If the Majority of a Party's Supporters are Workers, It Must
              Represent": (Ginsburg & Webster 1995:56).

The Case survey of COSATU shop stewards conducted in 1991 suggests that national identity is even higher amongst this group than amongst ordinary workers. Eighty-six per cent of shop stewards identified themselves as primarily South African (Pityana & Orkin 1992). Nine per cent see themselves as both South African and as members of an ethnic or racial group, and only 5 per cent identify themselves primarily in terms of their own ethnic or racial group.[166]

Democratic consciousness

Democratic consciousness and tolerance seem to be one of the most critical components in a nation-building process, especially in countries which have been riven by socio-economic, religious and/or racial cleavages. By democratic citizenship (consciousness and tolerance) we imply acceptance for and belief in democratic participation, principles and institutions in a broad perspective, a degree of public consciousness, and trust and confidence in other population groups as well as a common approach to problem-solving. Schumpeter (1942) likewise argues that the success of the democratic method relies *inter alia* upon "democratic self-control" – which suggests that governments, parliaments and oppositions as well as individual voters respect the division of political power – and upon tolerance of differences of opinion.[167]

The quality of communal citizenship and therefore strong democracy (Barber 1984) depends not only upon the act of participation but, as stated above, also upon the public-spiritedness with which this participation is conducted (Conover & Searing 1994). Political participation is determined by the breadth and depth of people's activities. Pateman (1970) uses the term public-spiritedness in order to describe people's loyalty to the collective. Almond and Verba (1963) focused on a civic culture which had much in common with the public-spiritedness of Conover and Searing (1994) and Pateman (1970) et al. Pateman backs up her argument with a defence of the participation described by Rousseau (1968), Cole (1919,

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[166] This survey suggests that the largest concentration of those seeing themselves in terms of race, are is found in Natal and Western Cape.
[167] The other conditions are that: democratic politics requires skilled professional politicians, that the scope of government must be limited and that there must be a professional bureaucracy to provide continuity and expertise to the legislative and administrative process (1942).

1920) and others. Their perception of "public-spiritedness" entails a greater understanding of and responsibility towards the interests of the community or collective at the cost of individual gains and a greater tolerance for other people's viewpoints. "Public-spiritedness" has sometimes been mistakenly taken to imply socialist values (Greenberg 1980, 1983). While certain values associated with public-spiritedness also form part of socialist ideology,[168] they are not one and the same.

Political discrimination by the apartheid regime and clear preferences and benefits for certain parties are likely to have contributed to political tensions and intolerance. Half of the blacks and one third of the whites in Gauteng have, for example, been reported to say that members of their most disliked party should not be allowed to live in their neighbourhood. One out of five blacks revealed pressure to vote for a party that he or she did not support (Schlemmer, HSRC 1994).

The views of activists and leaders are likely to be more crucial than those of other people. For those who expect elite attitudes to be more democratic than those of the masses and who believe that elite attitudes carry specific importance in the transition process, it is worth noting that the attitudes of leaders in South Africa may not be particularly democratic. A research report released in early 1993 by Stellenbosch academics stated that intolerance amongst political leaders was disturbingly high.[169] Furthermore, according to Kotze and du Toit (1995), civil society leaders are as divided in terms of attitudes and levels of tolerance as their respective constituencies. The following quotations from political leaders are taken from the daily newspapers in the period leading up to the 1994 elections (Schlemmer & Hirschfeld 1994:12-13).

"Defend yourselves and carry firearms, even if unlicensed ...."
(Harry Gwala, ANC)

"The proposals at the World Trade Centre that .... (they) ... want me to accept are proposals that will thrust this country into civil war"
(Chief Buthulezi, IFP)

[168] For example, positive attitudes to worker participation, regulation and to redistribution as opposed to competition, economic growth and free markets, etc.
[169] Research report from Stellenbosch University Centre for International and Comparative Politics. *Weekend Argus,* January 23/24 1993.

"If the government capitulates, (to communists) we will take South Africa by violence."   (Eugene Terreblanche, AWB)

"If we are pushed to the wall, there is no doubt that the white Afrikaner people will take up arms"   (Constand Viljoen, AVF)

"Kill the farmer, kill the Boer. Shoot to kill, shoot the Boer."
                                                    (Peter Mokaba, ANC)

"Even if we lose 5 million (people) out of 30 million, we must make sure that the other 25 million will be free. Then it is a sacrifice worth making."   (the late Sabelo Phama, APLA)

On the basis of the attitudes of its leaders, South Africa may certainly look as if it faces a bleak future.
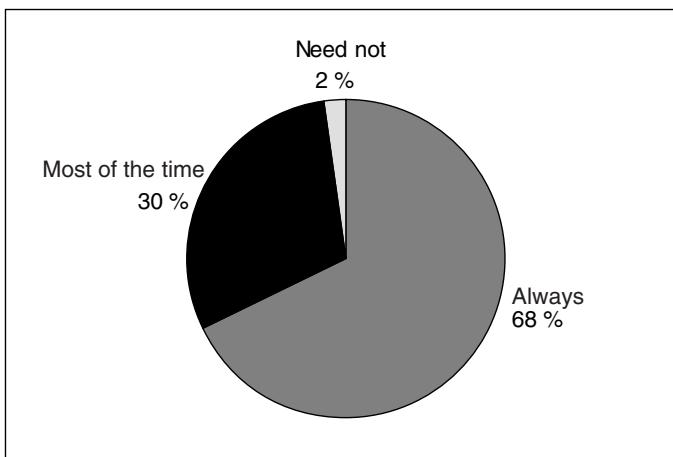
At the same time, people display considerable trust and confidence in the government.[170] Fifty-four per cent of those questioned in a 1994 national survey (Sept. 1994) display "a great deal of confidence" in the government's ability to care and cater for the majority of the population, while another 34 per cent say they have "some confidence" (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:357).[171]

[170] They do not, however, display the same trust towards members of Parliament. Fully 45 per cent said they thought MPs did not know what voters' priorities were (Johnson and Schlemmer 1996:368).

[171] There are a vast number of studies indicating athe comparatively low level of trust in politicians and parties in Europe, signs of a crisis of confidence and what has been described as a "crisis of governability" of Western European democracies. Marsh reported in 1974 that a majority (60 per cent) of the British did not trust politicians to speak the truth. Half the electorate in Oslo, Norway, does likewise not trust any of the promises made by politicians (Hagen et al. 1995). Studies of countries in similar transitions as South Africa indicate low levels of trust in the political authorities. In Estonia, more than half the population, expressed the opinion that the authorities often conceal essential information or are incapable of doing their jobs (Grøgaard 1996). In Lithuania, the average citizen feels alienated from the political system and has little trust in the efficiency and moral norms of the politicians (Knudsen 1996) and in Latvia the majority of the population likewise believes that government withholds information, is inefficient and accepts bribes (Aasland 1996)

On the basis of a survey amongst COSATU organised workers, Ginsburg and Webster (1995:44) indicate that 68 per cent of COSATU workers believe that political parties have a duty to report back to their supporters when making decisions on all issues. White (1995:47) finds that people are generally keen to hold leaders or holders of office in voluntary associations at the local level accountable,[172] whether by instituting strict internal controls designed to ensure accountability or by developing their own model of organisation, which does not directly challenge the civic leadership but attempts to ensure that the local elite is accountable to its constituency.

Figure 4.5   "When Making Decisions, Political Parties Must Report Back"
              (Ginsburg & Webster 1995:45) (n. 643)

Other studies also confirm that leaders who seek to establish clientelist relationships with voters are likely to meet significant resistance. Charney (1995) reports that new voters show a strong propensity to subject their representatives to critical scrutiny. In a pre-election survey, 23 per cent of first-time prospective voters listed accountability as the most desirable characteristic of a democratic government (Schlemmer & Hirschfeld 1994).

The vast majority of COSATU workers are also reported to hold the view that if political parties stray from their mandates, they should be subject to immediate recall by the people who elected them (ibid).

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[172] Although they were, in several cases, actually not even elected.

Simultaneously, they seem to have a high level of trust in the Tripartite Alliance leadership (ibid:72). Whites, on the other hand, had little confidence in the ANC. Eighty-three per cent and 80 per cent of white respondents in 1992 and 1993 respectively[173] did not trust the ANC and were not at all sure that their pensions would be safe under a new government (de Kock 1996:44). Around 80 per cent of whites considered emigrating between 1991 and 1993 (ibid:46). Whites' sense of insecurity grew steadily in the decade up until the elections and their dissatisfaction with the political situation also increased.[174]

Around half of the African respondents in similar opinion polls indicated that they thought whites and Africans shared enough common values to create a future democratic South Africa. But close to half (45%) of the COSATU shop stewards argued in 1991 that blacks and whites would never really trust each other (Pityana & Orkin 1992). On the basis of a country-wide survey of both blacks and whites, Markinor released survey results in 1994 which indicated that blacks were twice as optimistic as whites about the year ahead (Schlemmer & Hirschfeld 1994:50).[175] Some commentators felt that political intolerance was widespread in South Africa. Table 4.2 reports on political tolerance on the basis of two surveys conducted in late 1990 and early 1994.[176]

Table 4.2   Respondents Believing That It Is Right or Wrong to Prevent Less Popular Parties Holding Meetings in the Local Area, by Race (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:259)

	Africans	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
Right	15	11	3	20
Uncertain	5	5	19	7
Wrong	79	81	77	69

[173] Nation-wide omnibus surveys.

[174] They realised, however, that the political situation had to change and despite extreme mistrust of the ANC supported the idea that Africans had to become involved in political decision-making.

[175] More than 60 per cent of blacks compared with only 30 per cent of whites were confident about the future (*Business Day*, 7 January 1994)

[176] By the opinion survey centre of the Human Science Research Centre (MarkData).

James and Caliguire (1996) similarly report that 60 per cent of respondents in a national survey prefer not to allow a member of the political party they most oppose to engage in political activities.[177] Johnson and Schlemmer (1996:260) argue, however, that people seem to differ in their responses on political tolerance. At one level, they dislike seeing a party they oppose coming into their neighbourhood because they believe it will lead to violence and conflicts (a belief based on their experience up to 1994). At a more theoretical level, however, they express a liberal, tolerant approach to opposing parties and differing points of view.

New issues and system legitimacy

According to Diamond et al. (1986), democracy is unique because its stability depends upon the consent of a majority of those governed. Regimes that lack legitimacy depend more upon current performance and are vulnerable to collapse in periods of economic and social distress (Lipset 1981, Rakner 1992).[178] Lipset (1963) argues that the stability of any democracy depends upon the effectiveness and legitimacy of its political system. Effectiveness, in this context, means actual performance, the degree to which the system satisfies basic needs as seen by the majority population and powerful groups within it. Legitimacy involves the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society (Lipset 1963:64). Diamond et al. (1986) state that one of the main reasons for the instability of political regimes in the Third World is the combination of low legitimacy and low effectiveness.

Individuals or groups regard the system as legitimate or illegitimate according to the way and degree to which its values fit in with their own and according to the degree to which they feel that the system can actually deliver and perform in a long-term perspective. Legitimacy is commonly understood as the justification of power or the consent of the population for central political institutions, norms and rules (Rakner 1992). Legitimacy is connected to the performance of a regime and especially

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[177] Ranging from staging a public protest to holding a meeting in their neighbourhood.

[178] This reflects to some extent the general political and academic worries and warnings of a "legitimisation crisis", "crisis of confidence" and "government overload" which swept over Europe in the 60s and 70s.

to whether people feel that their needs are met in an efficient way. The more efficient a regime is in terms of economic development, political order, freedom, the administration of justice and the regulation of conflict, the more effective it is also likely to be in responding to crises and challenges (Rakner 1992). The argument is simple: if a regime lacks legitimacy amongst the population, or amongst broad strata of the population, the chances of instability, coups, revolutions or simply bad performance increase.

Johnson and Schlemmer (1996:255-256) report on the basis of two large surveys conducted in Gauteng in 1993 and 1994 that socio-economic interests – i.e. living conditions, jobs, etc. were not very frequently cited as the major reasons for people supporting a party. Law and order, the charisma of a party and its leaders, ethnic and group protection and moral standards were all rated more highly. Table 4.3 shows people's main reasons for giving a party support.

Table 4.3   Major Reason for Supporting a Party, 1993 (no. 2328)
(in percentages)(Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:255)
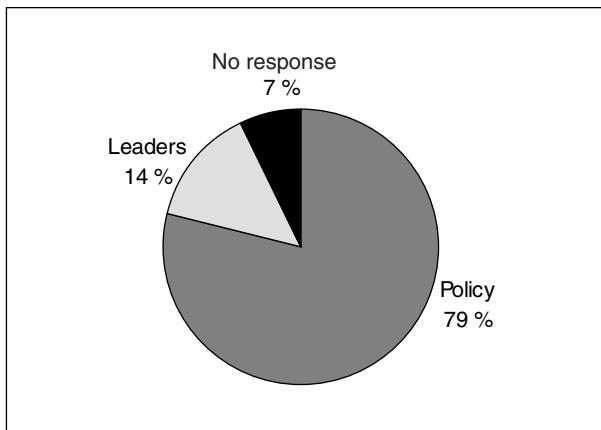
	Africans	Coloureds	Indian	Whites
Protects my language and culture	21	10	19	43
Party has great and inspiring leader	32	15	31	13
Supports religious teaching and morality	12	19	9	22
Tough and strong in order to restore law and order	21	38	27	13
Will work to improve living conditions and jobs	4	11	4	2
Uncertain/Don't know	9	8	10	7

The working class may, however, be more politicised and aware of social and economic issues. Most respondents in Ginsburg and Webster's survey of COSATU workers indicate (Figure 4.6) that they would vote for a political party because of its policies rather than because of its leadership (1995:47).

Research from newly democratised countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa shows that the issue of distribution is politically most sensitive when it concerns not the poorest of the poor, but low- and middle-income workers and employees (Haggard & Kaufmann 1994). While meeting the desperate needs of the destitute should be the priority of governments,

blue-collar and middle-class groups may be unlikely to continue supporting anti-poverty measures if they themselves have nothing to gain or if they stand to lose by them. Downward mobility of individuals within these groups may give a powerful impetus to anti-democratic forces (Haggard & Kaufman 1994).

Figure 4.6. "When Choosing to Vote for a Political Party, the Most Important Thing Is": (Ginsburg & Webster 1995:46)

The focus of political culture and legitimacy is not only upon political institutions and input to the political system – i.e. whether the system is representative. The output of the political system – i.e. whether the political system is delivering and distributing the goods and services people expect to the extent and in the form they expect – also deserves attention when it comes to peoples' perceptions of whether political institutions are legitimate. Lipset (1963:65) argues that a crisis of legitimacy is a crisis of *change*, which occurs if the status of major conservative institutions is threatened and/or if all the major groups in a society do not have access to the political system during a period of transition. Effectiveness and legitimacy must be seen in connection with one other. A political system can be effective without being legitimate and it can be legitimate without being effective. However, for a democracy to remain stable in a long-term perspective, it must be both effective *and* legitimate.

More than half the South African population (56 per cent) reported that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their quality of life in

late 1993 (RDP 1995).[179] People's greatest concern is with jobs, housing and schools.[180] Establishing control over the economy by regulation and targeted interventions, affirmative action and redistribution to address inequity – these are the essential components of the nation-building process and of the government's RDP. Attitudes to questions such as redistribution and equality therefore become crucial in the transition process.

Material frustrations and high expectations were reflected in a 1991/92 nation-wide survey in which 81 per cent of Africans said that "the main task of a new government is to make sure that people like me can live like most whites" and 67 per cent agreed that "African people cannot be blamed for stealing because whites have been selfish" (Schlemmer & Hirschfeld 1994:49). In 1993, an overwhelming majority had optimistic expectations regarding various aspects of a future democratic South Africa. Table 4.4 indicates expectations about the future amongst different race groups in a 1993 Gauteng survey.

Table 4.4   Expectations about the Future among Different Race Groups, 1993
            Survey (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:270)

Percentages expecting:	Africans	Coloureds	Indians	Whites
* Improvement in personal wealth	45	14	6	4
* Influence and security for own group	71	23	17	11
* Less violence	51	22	13	16
* Freedom to criticise new government	72	45	39	34
* Improved race relations	65	31	38	27
* More employment	65	51	27	20
* Impartial treatment of supporters of other parties	81	64	46	28
* Non-discrimination against minorities	84	63	45	20

[179] Möller (1988) reported that only 32 per cent of Africans were satisfied with their overall life situation.
[180] It is interesting to note that both the richest and the poorest quintiles name jobs as the item the government can help most with in order to improve their quality of life.

Ginsburg and Webster (1995) report that in 1994 between 72 and 90 per cent of COSATU workers thought the new government would improve their living conditions over the next five years.

With a lack of delivery, however, the honeymoon period of the government is coming to an end. In September 1994, a staggering 82 percent believed that things were going in the right direction, but by the end of 1994, this euphoria was on the wane (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:354). No less than 46 per cent now thought that the government had performed "not as well as expected". A majority of lower professionals and blue-collar workers expressed an early degree of dissatisfaction and disaffection.
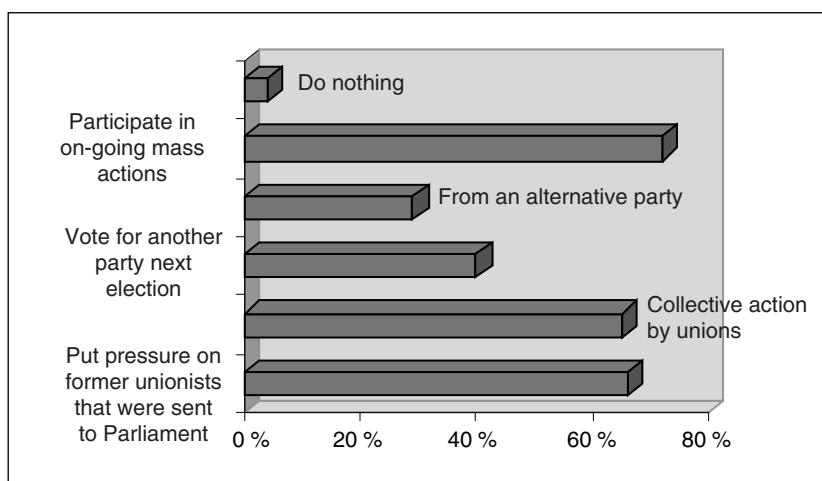
So what will they do if their expectations are not met? In April 1993, 20 per cent of black voters were reported to have said that they would engage in violent action or armed struggle, while another 7 per cent would stage peaceful mass actions (Schlemmer & Hirschfeld 1994:53). Half the sample (50 per cent) would, however, accept the situation (ibid). Ginsburg and Webster (1995) report that workers in their survey indicated that if their expectations were not met, they would readily engage in mass actions. Figure 4.7 shows how they said they would respond if the government failed to deliver.

In two nation-wide surveys in September and December 1994 voters were asked how they would respond to delays in the delivery of change and reforms. Their responses indicate a change of views during this period (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:356). In the September survey, African voters almost wholly refused to use negative terms to describe their reactions. Rather, they used words such as being "hopeful", "patient" or "satisfied".[181] In the December study, on the other hand, 46 per cent of Africans replied "immediately" when asked when they expected to receive benefits that they felt should be delivered by the government. When asked what they thought would be the main reasons for changes not materialising, roughly a quarter said that failures would be due to such factors as government neglect, ignorance of popular needs or unwillingness to assist ordinary people (ibid:357). This indicates that increasing dissatisfaction goes together with huge expectations of the government regarding the provision of jobs, benefits, improved living conditions, etc. In fact, many expect the state to fix everything – *all* social and economic responsibility is attributed to the state and the government. At the same

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[181] Only 6 per cent said they would be angry, impatient, frustrated or discouraged.

time, the findings of studies done by the *Centre for Policy Studies* (Charney 1995) show a key awareness of the constraints on government among the African public as well as a striking political sophistication. Their expectations of the new government are generally realistic and rational. Furthermore, people are prepared to accept less for themselves if this means that benefits are spread more widely and equally. Although there is significant disappointment with the rate and extent of social change, this is counter-balanced by patience, hope and acceptance of the new regime's legitimacy.

Figure 4.7   "If the Government Fails to Deliver Benefits, Workers Will:"
             (Ginsburg & Webster 1995:74).

IDASA surveys (1995) confirm that although there is disappointment and disillusionment with the institutions and processes of democracy amongst people, this should not be overestimated. On specific issues, like improvements of one's own group's conditions or of the economic conditions of one's local community, only a small minority of around 20 per cent believes that the government has done a good job. When we move from specifics to more general support for institutions and processes, however, people generally show a high level of support for and trust in democracy. A majority also approves of the performance of the government and Parliament (POS Report, no. 6, 1996). This long-term

commitment to, and more general support for, democratic institutions are amongst the most critical factors in a transition process marked by social and economic compromises.

In conclusion, it is exactly this degree of democratic consciousness which characterises South African political culture. Almost half the citizenry feel that they are able to influence national Parliament and the making of laws.[182] Most people are satisfied with democracy and believe that conditions have improved at least in some areas. At the same time, racial variations mark these attitudes and political culture in general. Cultural pluralism, extending well beyond the black/white distinction is a prominent feature of South Africa (du Toit 1996:9). In fact, Charney (1995:35) makes the point that:

> "If pluralism is the stuff of which democracy is made, ... black South Africa has a plentiful supply".

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[182] IDASA concludes on this basis, that citizens feel that they don't make a difference (Opinion Poll Vol. 2, Issue 1). It remains to be said, however, that the percentage of citizens who believe they can influence national legislation in most European countries is far lower.

5 Civil society

The concept of civil society first emerged during the last century in order to describe a "civilised" society. It was seen as a version of liberal democracy, marking the realm outside the state that provided for the rights of individuals, particularly the right to own private property, while recognising competing spheres of interest, particularly in the economic sector. The term civil society has thus come to be used loosely by some as a synonym for the liberal democratic society of Western Europe and the United States (Shils 1991). Our intention here, however, is to leave aside this ideological "baggage" in order to more fruitfully analyse the relationship between civil society and democratisation processes in the non-Western world. While civil society will certainly influence social norms and values, the direction and content of these values is best understood if we look at the relationship between the state and civil society in the country in question as well as the organisational characteristics of civil society itself.

5.1 Defining civil society

There was an underlying assumption in early development research that the state was the main agent of social change and the fulfiller of socio-economic aspirations (Azarya 1988).[183] Later, the state came to be seen as an arena of struggle between different groups fighting for control over its resources. Whether the sources of conflict were identified as class differences by the Marxists or as primordial ethno-cultural differences by pluralists, all regarded the *state* as the main channel of resource control.

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[183] The focus of modernisation theory, for instance, was upon the formation of central institutions and their ability to transform civil society.

Civil society is usually referred to as the network of organisations and voluntary associations existing outside the realm of the state. Whereas the state is understood to be regulated by politics and the constraints of the people, civil society is regulated by the market, privately controlled and/or voluntarily organised. Civil society is the link and the "mediator" between the family and the state (Rakner 1992). It refers to the space in which citizens can initiate independent action to uphold civil liberties, freedom, justice, etc. Toqueville's civil society is "a plurality of interacting, self-organised and constantly vigilant civil associations" whose functions are to advocate basic rights, to advance popular claims and to educate citizens in the democratic arts of tolerance and accommodation (Keane 1988, Rakner 1992).

Others, like Hegel, stressed that civil society was not a harmonious, homogenous actor, but rather divided by the private interests of social classes that were in competition and conflict with one another (Keane 1988). Civil society is the intermediate stage between the state and the family that enables the protection of private interests. Marx and Engels see civil society as the product of historical exploitation and of the division of labour and property relations under capitalism.[184] They underline the role of the state as the political superstructure, while civil society is equal to the socio-economic base as the determinant of the whole society (Shils 1991). Civil society is thus a "bourgeois capitalist society". It has nothing to do, in their opinion, with ideological collectives or moral sentiments but concerns the economic and commercial aspects of society. According to Gramsci, however, who developed the Marxist perspective further, civil society promotes ethical values among the population through the exercise of ideological and cultural hegemony. None of the above see civil society as a source of opposition to the state. By contrast, more recent sociological studies have increasingly turned towards the concept of civil society as a basis for discussing issues of social transformation and citizenship. However, while proceeding from Habermas' (1989) view of civil society as the realm of discourse, they reject his assumption of a single, public sphere grounded in rational discourse. They argue instead that civil society consists of multiple, frequently non-rational and often contestatory public spheres. These public spheres support many communities of discourse.

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[184] Civility was thus also seen as an extension of capitalism.

Narrowing the definition

Some writers conceive civil society as all non-state groups and activities, others are more restrictive and exclude political parties, associations that are completely "inward-looking" or based on such things as tribal or ethnic affiliation and illiberal groups and organisations whose internal practices are undemocratic (Fish 1994).[185]

Our focus is upon what Dahl sees as one of the crucial components of a pluralist society, namely the existence of independent voluntary organisations operating relatively autonomously from state structures.[186] These organisations should also have been established by local groups themselves and not "implanted" from the outside.[187] Civil society also comprises "social movements" – i.e. several social actors, be they individuals or informal groups and/or organisations, who come to elaborate, through joint action or communication, a shared definition of being part of the same side in a social conflict (Diani 1992:2). The role of civil society in the process of democratisation and particularly of an organised, independent civil society in the functioning of democracy has been underlined by scholars like Dahl (1982). Dahl (1982:1) states that:

> "independent organisations are necessary to the functioning of the democratic process itself, to minimising government coercion, to political liberty, and to human liberty".

Yet, several problems arise in discussions of the role of civil society. While many say that civil society needs to be independent in order to perform a constructive role for democracy, in many countries the dividing line between the expectations and obligations of the state and those of civil society is a thin one. While many have argued that political parties cannot be included in a definition of civil society, it does in many cases perform political functions and play the role of political parties, especially in authoritarian states. And while many argue that civil society must cut across social boundaries, civil society is often founded and mobilised *on the basis of* compelling social interests. The form that civil society assumes and

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[185] This narrower definition excludes groups that do not contribute to democracy and that will hinder the development of democratic practices and values.

[186] His other crucial component is simply the polyarchic formal democracy.

[187] The latter type of organisations will, in Esman and Upphoff's (1984) opinion, also have a high failure rate.

the way all these dilemmas about its role are ultimately resolved will depend upon the wider political setting (Foley & Edwards 1996), on a country's organisational characteristics and on the kind of "social capital" that each country has. We will come back to this later, but first we need to briefly draw some distinctions.

While civil society was regarded as the source of the social upheavals in, for instance, Eastern Europe in the late 80s, talk of civil society is hardly to be heard in the streets of Russia in the mid-90s (Smolar 1996). It is therefore important to distinguish between civil society on the one hand and social movements and social action on the other hand. Our concern here is with a civil society conceived as the realm of *organised* social life. It is distinct from society in general in that it involves citizens acting *collectively* in public life in order to express their interests, ideas, etc. (Diamond 1994). Some sort of regulated, time-enduring interaction between the collective actors is involved in order to separate it from issue-oriented, time-limited social movements. Furthermore, we do not associate civil society with a moral political component in the way that liberal democracy stands for private property and free market forces. Therefore, our sense of civil society is close to Gramsci's the definition – i.e. the domain of non-state activities occupied by trade unions, the Church, youth organisations, etc. However, we propose a "neutral" definition of civil society, which does not pre-empt a discussion of state-society relations. Stepan (1988:3-4) and Bratton (1989:417) use the following definition of civil society, which we will take as a point of departure:

> "Civil society is an arena where manifold social movements...and civic organisations from all classes... attempt to constitute themselves in an ensemble of arrangements so that they can express themselves and advance their interests".

Civil society encompasses a vast array of formal and informal organisations.[188] These include groups with the following orientations: economic (productive and commercial); cultural (religious, ethnic, communal); informational and educational; interest-based (whether these interests are those of workers, pensioners, consumers or others); developmental; issue-

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[188] I have relied heavily upon Diamond (1994:6) in the following identification of civil society.

related (women's rights, environmental reforms, etc.); as well as civic organisations (which seek to improve the political system). It is, however, in Diamond's opinion, distinct from the political society, the party system and so on. The organisational, institutional aspect is one of the components of civil society. Civil society is concerned with public rather than private ends; it relates to the state, but is not aiming to win formal power or office for itself and it encompasses pluralism and diversity.

We define civil society with Dahl (ibid) as the plurality of interest organisations and voluntary associations. Following from this, let us quote Dahl's views about civil society:

> "Independent organisations are highly desirable in a democracy, at least in a large-scale democracy. Whenever democratic processes are employed on a scale as large as a nation-state, autonomous organisations are bound to come into existence. They are more however, than a direct consequence of democratising the government of the nation-state. They are also necessary to the functioning of the democratic process itself, to minimising government coercion, to political liberty, and to human well-being" (1982:1).

Civil society and the state

While some will underline the independent role of civil society, others emphasise that civil society is indistinguishable from the state (Keane 1988) or that civil society is the defence against the state and political abuse (Toqueville 1969).[189]

Civil society is increasingly recognised as independent of the state and its interests are seen as not necessarily overlapping with those of the state or represented in the state apparatus. Nevertheless, civil society is not totally separate from the state. The state and civil society each lay down rules and institutional demarcations for each other's activities. The state in most countries limits the activities of civil society by means of laws and regulations. While the scope for the activities of civil society in most

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[189] Putnam (1995:65) makes the interesting point, that although the United States has played a central role in systematic studies of the links between democracy and civil society ever since the publication of Toqueville's *Democracy in America,* there is striking evidence that the vibrancy of American civil society has notably declined over the past several decades.

societies remains wide, it is usually narrower under authoritarian systems. Civil society activities are generally based on the choice, calculations and ideologies of individuals and collectives in civil society itself and not directed by the state. Thus, in authoritarian systems such activities challenge state institutions and decisions in a more comprehensive and more vigorous way than state regulation permits. Civil society is then not just independent of the state but also stands in opposition to it.

The relationship between the state and civil society has become a much debated area. The discourse focuses not only on the demarcation of responsibilities and activities between them but also on the extent to which civil society has the interest, ability and resources to function independently and/or to challenge state authority. The most important democratic function of civil society is to "provide the basis for the limitation of state power, hence for the control of the state by society, and hence for democratic political institutions as the most effective means of exercising that control" (Huntington 1984, Diamond 1994). Civil society is a vital instrument for containing the power of governments, checking their potential abuses and violations of the law and subjecting them to public scrutiny. However, civil society not only restricts state power but also legitimises state authority when that authority is based upon the rule of law.

The state will often try to incorporate segments, sectors or parts of society into state structures. *Incorporation* refers to a process whereby large segments of the population associate with the state and take part in the activities of the state in order to gain access to part of its resources. *Disengagement,* on the other hand, is a process whereby people seek to organise themselves beyond the reach of the state (Chazan 1983, 1988). It is the construction of juridical, economic and cultural systems parallel to, and in competition with, those of the state (du Toit 1995). As a result, the state loses legitimacy and support, and a subsistence economy and parallel markets develop (Azarya 1988; Chazan 1983, 1988). Disengagement is a type of exit option or withdrawal (Akwetey 1994). The state will need to build legitimacy amongst civil society actors, and civil society has therefore often been perceived as functioning as a controller of state activities. Civil society, in Chabal's (1986:15) words, becomes "political in the process of its detachment from and reaction to the state".

Putnam (1993) points out that strong interest organisations are a prerequisite for a strong democratic state.[190] Intermediate organisations are crucial complements to political parties because they are more responsive to the inherent diversity of social interests. Migdal (1988), on the other hand, argues that strong social institutions will easily undermine state capacity and pose the most severe obstacles to state-builders. Du Toit (1995:25) argues accordingly that:

> "The challenge to state predominance is found in strong societies which exhibit a fragmented pattern of social control, the result of a range of social organisations which deploy incongruent sets of rules through incompatible social structures. Strong, well organised and exuberant society impedes the effectiveness of government".

Likewise, Mancur Olson in his *Rise and Decline of Nations* argues that interest groups have no incentive to work towards the common good of society and every incentive to engage in costly and disturbing collective action in pursuit of members' interests. A dense web of associations will therefore pose a threat to the smooth and equitable functioning of modern states and markets alike. There is a difference, however, between the functioning and characteristics of civil society in Western post-industrial democratic societies and civil society in post-colonial authoritarian societies outside the Western world. In the post-industrial society, economically and socially powerful groups have access to the state and are able to influence its decisions. The two spheres are interdependent in a situation of "balanced opposition". Civil society shows discipline and responsibility towards the nation, and the state is responsive to the demands of civil society. In the post-colonial authoritarian state, on the other hand, there is no "balance" between the two spheres. Political developments did not take place in the form of alliances between parties and civil society organisations. Class and occupational interests did not lay the basis for political cleavages and party patterns. Economic problems, underdevelopment and the characteristics of the state as such have been credited with causing the "structural imbalance" between civil society and the state in such settings and causing the state to adopt a strategy to incorporate civil society into state structures.

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[190] Putnam develops his argument on the basis of a comparison of the developments in southern and northern Italy.

Gramsci (1971) perceived the state and civil society as in permanent, or intrinsic tension with one another. The intensity of this tension differs, however, from one setting to another. While Western countries have established some sort of equilibrium or balance between the interests and responsibilities of the state and civil society, Gramsci's argument holds truer for countries undergoing political transition. In transitional settings or less stable countries, the relationship between the state and civil society is unbalanced and less predictable.

Conflicting interests in civil society have been emphasised in general. Structural cleavages in society like ethnicity, religion, language, socio-economic distribution, etc. may be of importance when it comes to groups' incorporation in or disengagement from state structures and the relation-ship between the state and civil society. This is especially true if structural cleavages overlap with the relationship between the state and civil society – if, for example, only certain groups are represented in the state or in organised parts of civil society. In such cases of sectoral overlaps of interest groups between civil society organisations, or between civil society and the state, strong social institutions can weaken the state. If, on the other hand, civil society organisations cut across ethnic, religious and other cleavages, these organisations can serve as a stabilising, constructive element for state authority. In Walzer's (1991:300) words:

> "In states dominated by a single nation, the multiplicity of the groups pluralises nationalist policies and culture; in states with more than one nation, the density of the networks prevents radical polarisation".

Diamond (1994) argues that even in controlled and negotiated transitions, the stimulus for democratisation, and particularly the pressure to complete the process have come from the "resurrection of civil society". He gives South Korea, Taiwan, Chile, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Nigeria, South Africa and Benin as examples of countries in which extensive mobilisation of civil society was a crucial source of pressure for democratic change (1994:5).

Foley and Edwards (1996:39) argue, however, that there is no reason why the "counterweight" of civil society should not become a burden to a democratic as well as to an authoritarian state. Likewise, we can say that there is neither in principle, nor in practice, any reason why civil society should not become a supporter of authoritarian as well as of democratic rule. When does social pluralism predict civil society and when

does it predict civil war (du Toit 1995)? When does civil society lay the ground for democratic stability and when does it cause anarchy or support authoritarian systems?

The current optimistic praise of civil society stems to a large extent from the prominent role civil society has played in several processes of democratic transition in the past decade. Prior to that, however, civil society, or the weakness of civil society, was used to explain much of the authoritarian situation on the African continent (Nordlund 1996). Weakness does not, however, only imply the lack of civil society organisations but may also indicate existent, but inefficient and unrepresentative institutions.

The structure and type of organisations will make a difference. Broadly speaking, we will assume at this stage that organisations whose goals and leaders are committed to democracy will tend to play a constructive role in the democratisation process. Furthermore, Putnam's (1993) argument, as reported above, concerns not only the existence of civil society organisations but also the history and *density* of organisations.[191] Du Toit (1995), basing his argument on Chazan's work in Africa, which we will turn to below, states that those organisations which can serve as basic building blocks for civil society pursue limited, partial, and modest objectives and have clearly defined operating procedures and a distinct organisational profile. The latter include "participatory structures, autonomous resources, technical expertise, and a discrete constituency (in size), and tend to have a younger, relatively well-educated leadership core" (Chazan 1992:289, du Toit 1995:33).

5.2   Civil society in Africa

Many have underlined the need for a vibrant civil society in newly established African democracies in order to uphold respect for human rights etc. Others point out the problems in transposing the raw notion of

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[191] In Putnam's (ibid) opinion, it does no't make much difference to democratic stability, whether organisations are interest groups, sports groups or charity organisations.

civil society in the West wholesale to African circumstances (Drah 1995).[192] Rakner (1992) points out the huge problems in identifying the role and actors of civil society in Africa. Chazan (1982) distinguishes between two main types of non-formal participation: voluntary associations such as trade unions, students' groups, women's associations, etc; and primary associations, such as ethnic associations, traditional political units and kinship associations. Civil society – i.e. voluntary associations – has in Africa to a large extent been incorporated into the state. At the same time, ethnicity and kinship – i.e. primary associations – have become a basis for a patron-client relationship in which certain groups get access to governmental offices and resources. In other words, primary associations have become decisive for the allocation of resources.

Bratton (1989) argues that at first glance, African societies today seem to possess few intermediate associations between the family (including ethnicity) and the state. Those civic structures that *do* exist are usually small in scale and local in orientation. In this Lilliputian environment, even a weak state can seem strong, he argues. Still, Bratton (ibid:411) goes on to say that far more research attention should be devoted to association life in Africa:

> "Far from being stunted in sub-Saharan Africa, it is often vibrant. While many pre-colonial cultures in Africa may have lacked states, they certainly did not lack civil societies, in the broad sense of a bevy of institutions for protecting collective interests".

He mentions the granting of allegiance to traditional institutions such as clan, age-set and brotherhood, which served as a basis for voluntary associations during colonialism. He mentions ethnic welfare associations, prophetic movements, agricultural work parties and the like, which were updated expressions of more informal solidarity in the past, or new organisations, which evolved around new class identities and occupations, like labour unions, peasant movements or professional associations. Indeed, many of these organisations were the building blocks of federated nationalist political parties (Bratton ibid). Chazan et al. (1992:73) similarly argue that a medley of organisations, networks, groupings, associations and movements have evolved over the centuries in response to changing circumstances. In their opinion, the culture of group action was deeply

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[192] Especially problematic for them is the general exclusion of ethnic associations from the definition of civil society (see Drah 1995, and Mamdani 1993).

embedded in pre-colonial Africa (ibid). Others have highlighted the role civil society has played in the democratic transformation in Africa in the past decade. Rakner (1992), Akwetey (1995), du Toit (1995) and Nordlund (1996) all point out the role of civil society in pushing for democratic change in countries such as Ghana, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Drah (1995) also points out the extensive networks of association life in Western Africa.

The colonial powers attempted in several places to co-opt civil society,[193] just as the post-colonial states tried to do later, although with different motivations. Yet, in several countries the state could not fill all the available political space with organisations of its own making, and civil society did not disengage in the destructive way described above.[194] Thus, voluntary associations proved too strong in many places to be subordinated and survived as an alternative institutional framework to officialdom.[195] The restrictions placed on formal political life by the colonial authorities meant, for example, that voluntary organisations and social and economic groups also became political frameworks in which anti-colonial ideas were articulated and leaders schooled (Chazan et al. 1992:75). Almost every nationalist leader started his political career in a voluntary or economic organisation and these early organisations became the cornerstones of party structures and political movements (ibid).

> "Associational life took different forms in different countries, but everywhere it provided ordinary Africans with an outlet for the political urge to combine in pursuit of common goals"
>
> (Bratton 1989:412).

However, Chazan (1992) argues that there is no axiomatic connection between the expansion of the voluntary sector and the consolidation of civil society in Africa. In many countries there were attempts (often successful) to incorporate civil society in the affairs of the state. Alternatively, civil society *disengaged* from the state in a way which may

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[193] Mamdani (1996) hence argues that civil society created under colonial rule supported authoritarian and racist systems and values.

[194] Which may also be more appropriate to the reactions of the individuals than of collectives.

[195] Bratton mentions examples such as the churches in Kenya and Burundi; Islamic brotherhoods in Senegal and Sudan; lawyers' and journalists' associations in Ghana and Nigeria; farmers' organisations in Zimbabwe and Kenya and the mineworkers unions in Zambia and South Africa.

not be at all constructive for democratic processes. Azarya and Chazan (1987) point out, for example, that civil society in Ghana disengaged from the state by engaging in practices involving corruption, smuggling and theft. The effect in Ghana, they argue (ibid:126), has been to make "virtually everyone into a speculator, cheat, corrupter, or lawbreaker".

While several people have outlined the role of civil society in the process of African democratisation, many are also sceptical about the role it can play in the phase of consolidating democracy. Gyamah-Boadi (1996) argues, for example, that civil society remains too weak to be democracy's mainstay in Africa. This is the case, in his opinion, in countries like Nigeria and Zaire, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and Zambia. In nearly all cases, the ability of civil society to help anchor democratic governance and put it beyond reversal thus remains in serious doubt. First, he argues that civil society has failed to transcend ethno-regional, religious and other cleavages in any lasting way. Second, he argues that civil society functions as an obstacle to economic reforms and liberalisation and therefore constitutes an indirect stumbling block to democracy. The picture reveals an absence of decisive social coalitions in favour of economic reforms and a production-oriented political economy (Gyamah-Boadi 1996:122). He (ibid) goes on to argue that on the surface most African countries contain enough associations to constitute a putative civil society. Yet, a closer look at these groups reveals serious deficiencies that sap their efficiency as democratic agents. Trade unions and student organisations are highly vulnerable to state repression and co-option. Trade unions, he argues for example, are dependent on government for all or most of their funds, and since their members are recruited mostly from the public sector, African trade unions cannot afford to engage in prolonged anti-government protests or pro-democratic activism. Furthermore, decades of authoritarian rule have left behind a culture of incivility in politics. He goes on to argue that many civil society organisations suffer from low levels of institutional development. Developments in South Africa provide a good illustration of this problem, he argues. The civics associations, which were so vital in the struggle against apartheid, are currently undergoing a post-apartheid crisis. In his opinion, some of African civil society's weakness is internal. Associational life is dominated by traditional, ascriptive and kin-based groups, which include clans, tribes and ethno-regional formations. Moreover, core social groups tend towards parochialism. When they do engage in politics, it is typically out of a narrow concern with how the state can serve their own interests.

5.3   Civil society in South Africa

A new wave of black opposition to apartheid swept South Africa during the 70s with a general growth of organised black civil society. Students inspired by black consciousness revolted in the mid 70s, youth movements grew increasingly stronger, and firm alliances emerged between student organisations and black trade unions. Civics began to form in the townships in opposition to the official community councils, with further new alliances being forged between civics, unions and student organisations. Civics and residence committees were part and parcel of the struggle against apartheid through, for example, consumer and rent boycotts. Most of these voluntary organisations were highly political in both their norms and strategies.

The *Churches* remain the most important organisations in the lives of South Africans of all races. By almost two to one, people are said to rank their Church ahead of any political party as the institution with which they identify most closely (James & Caliguire 1996). The African independent Churches as a movement were from the very beginning built upon a strong sense of black identity and a struggle for justice and the dignity of the black man. Most of the independent Churches are not politically active, but they have not been insensitive to injustices, which in turn may have affected the politics of the individual. The Church, and especially those Churches affiliated to the South African Council of Churches, started campaigning strongly for sanctions and disinvestment through the 80s. The Church took a firm stand, both nationally and internationally, which may be best expressed by the British Council of Churches (quoted in Southall 1995):

> "The crisis that has overtaken South Africa in this year (1986) signals the beginning of a day of judgement.... The case stands, events take over from decisions already made. There are no more choices, but the secrets of all hearts are revealed through the inescapable question: Whose side are you on? That is the 'trial by ordeal' that we ask in the Lord's Prayer may never come. But come we must, once in a while, just as Jesus had to".

Christian Churches found that they could not administer the spiritual needs of the people without paying attention to their social needs. In spite of the Dutch Reformed Church playing an important role in "justifying" apartheid, the multi-racial Churches became an important centre of opposition to apartheid.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) have together with the Churches, unions, etc. created and filled the outlines of civil society. NGOs and CBOs were originally established in opposition to apartheid and proliferated with the support of international funding. The NGO and CBO sector developed quickly through the late 80s and early 90s. Foreign governments wanting to support the democratic opposition in South Africa could not give money directly to these forces and instead gave it to the NGOs and CBOs. Immediately after the 1994 elections, the sector was probably at its peak with about 54,000 NGOs of which 20,000 were development-oriented (James & Caliguire 1996).

Throughout the 80s, popular demands and socio-economic grievances at the local level led to rapid polarisation and politicisation of conflicts over the distribution of scarce resources in the absence of legitimate institutional channels. *Civics and residence committees*[196] emerged in the 80s as a reaction to the inactive, corrupt or inefficient local councils in black areas. Residence committees were to be found in formal as well as informal areas. In informal areas, they were, for example, formed by immigrants from the "homelands" and engaged in regulating social and political conduct, raising levies/dues from shack-holders, executing policing and "judicial" functions and controlling access to the community (du Toit 1995:369). Hostels for single male migrants also often had intricate structures of residence committees regulating survival strategies for their people.

The emergence of civics can be traced back to the establishment of non-partisan popular organisations representing ordinary people on matters that directly affected their daily lives in the late 70s, like housing, water, etc. Strictly speaking, the civics were social movements. However, the collapse of black local authorities as well as political unrest in the townships in the mid-80s drew the civics right into the political maelstrom. And the revival of township protest gave them a renewed role and led to

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[196] Civics were usually ANC dominated, while residence committees were largely dominated by Inkatha.

their being subjected to heavy state repression. They adopted political agendas in addition to their social and economic one, focusing on rents, housing, transport and other services, at the risk of alienating their supporters. By 1990, an estimated 2,000 civics were in operation across the country (Murray 1994).[197] For the most part, civics functioned as "single-issue" protest organisations, but several provided a whole range of administrative, representative, decision-making, policing and judicial functions (Murray 1994). Their strength lay in their ability to mobilise local constituencies over socio-economic demands and to link them to a wider national struggle against apartheid and white minority rule (Seekings 1992, Murray 1994). By affiliating themselves with the United Democratic Front (UDF), they also acquired a national voice. With the disbanding of the UDF in 1990, civics formed the National Interim Civic Committee while embarking on a strategy of reorganising the whole civics movement, with the aim of bringing local civics together into regional federations with a national umbrella body. This work culminated with the establishment of the South African National Civics Organisation (SANCO) in 1992 in alliance with the ANC.

Civics and residence committees were part and parcel of the struggle against apartheid, through, for example, consumer and rent boycotts. Bratton (1989) argues that the civics were the most active components of the UDF. Although, he also underplays the role of the Church as well as of the unions and above all of youth organisations, there is no doubt that the civics were highly active in the 80s. As indicated, however, unions and students' organisations successfully mobilised for stay-aways and strikes.

Youth and students' organisations were established during the 70s. Steve Biko had founded the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in 1969, a loosely structured culturally based movement inspired by a mix of black liberation theology, PAC policy and American black power ideas (Orkin 1994:3). School enrolments had soared through the late 60s and early 70s, as the state recognised the demand for skills in a growing manufacturing sector. But from the mid-70s, recession set in and disaffection rose among the rising number of relatively educated unemployed youth (ibid). The 1976 Soweto revolt under the leadership of the Soweto Students Representative Council erupted as a protest against the segregated and inferior school system and against Afrikaans as the

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[197] It is not possible to find data establishing how many people they would represent.

medium of teaching. The BCM was banned in 1977, but students found new organisations and means of expression. Students regrouped into the militant Congress of South African Students (COSAS). The conventional wisdom that youth took a disproportionate part in the political protest in the mid-70s and early 80s is shown to be correct, but is inaccurate for the late 80s and early 90s (de Kock 1994).

Millions of people also form part of *"stokvels"*. *Stokvel* is used broadly to refer to numerous categories of coops or savings clubs operating in different ways and with different aims and functions. About a third of these existing "mutual aid societies" are burial societies, whose main purpose is to provide financial assistance for the high costs of funerals for family members of the *stokvel* participants (Lukhele 1990). Others are savings organisations, function as banks lending out money, or aim to provide financial benefits for specific groups like children, old people, taxi drivers or others.

Churches, unions, civics and *stokvels* may function well as areas for political empowerment and thereby reduce individual political poverty. However, while the Church, unions and civics may also function as an organisational back-up in order to advance the individual's political influence, the *stokvel* is less political. The Churches, unions and civics are all organised at the national level and the unions and civics aim directly at political influence. *Stokvels*, on the other hand, have less of a national institutional apparatus and less political vision and aims.

Stokvels still seem to function as an economic and political resource for the individual. Mutual financial assistance is the main purpose of the *stokvels*, but they also have a social function. They are also often administered and controlled jointly. Millions of people are thus exposed to democratic learning through their *stokvels*. Members discuss how much money has come in, how it has been spent and how to make the society a general success. *Stokvels* also seem to function as information networks for consumer affairs. There is a significant tendency for *stokvel* participants to take an active part in consumer boycotts.[198] Although the *stokvels*'

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[198] It should, however, be noted that there are several kinds of *stokvels* and burial societies. Some function as democratic learning grounds, arenas for discussion and information dissemination. Some cross boundaries of neighbourhood, place of origin, ethnic group, etc. Others, however, only come into being when somebody dies and are only neighbourhood-based.

stronghold is at the local level, they have enormous *potential* for organised political and economic influence. It has been estimated that they generate more than R200 million per month around the country (Lukhele 1990).

Major trials of strength between popular forces and the state followed in the urban areas in 1980, 1984, 1985 and 1986. As the different forms of struggle, in the workplace and the community, in urban and rural areas, became progressively interlined, South Africa lurched from protest politics to an era of militant strife (Southall 1995). Central to the reassertion of popular challenge was the UDF. The UDF was launched in 1983 to fight the new constitution devised to divide coloureds and Indians from the African majority by incorporating them into a new, segregated, tri-cameral parliament in which the ruling NP retained ultimate power. Forged from diverse communities and worker and township organisations, the UDF came more directly to represent a revival of the democratic, non-racial, historically dominant Congress tradition of opposition to white supremacy (Southall 1995). The UDF functioned as a loose umbrella organisation for hundreds of anti-apartheid groupings. It was an alliance of more than 700 affiliates representing nearly 3 million people of all races (Campbell 1987:143; Chazan et al. 1992:433), making it the largest single opposition force since the break-down in the 50s, and possibly the largest opposition force ever. The release of Nelson Mandela became a principal demand of the UDF and other opposition organisations, while the open display of ANC colours and those of its associate, the SA Communist Party, at mass gatherings provided evidence of the growing extent of its popular support. By the mid-80s, the ANC's emphasis upon *propaganda* had begun to go hand in hand with township violence against apartheid authority. Table 5.1 displays the composition of the UDF in its early days and the interest groups committed to socio-political community struggle.

Table 5.1 Early UDF Affiliates (Lodge 1991:51)

	Transvaal	Western Cape	Natal	Other	Total
Student	11	23	9	4	47
Youth	14	270	15	14	313
Worker	8	2	4	4	18
Civic	29	27	24	2	82
Women	7	20	3	2	32
Religious	2	4	5	6	17
Political	5	9	10	0	24
Other	17	3	7	5	32
Total	93	358	77	37	565

The UDF did not set out to replace any of the banned liberation movements, but in the process of struggle, the front began to achieve a dynamic of its own. Through legal, political and industrial struggle, the UDF was acting as a school for a new generation of people who were not afraid to confront the casspirs, guns and "sjamboeks" of the SA Defence Force (Campbell 1987:143). Many of these organisations had come into being in the late 70s or early 80s in order to confront the state on issues such as rents, bus fares etc. Unions and workers' organisations were not dominant and it was still early history for the union movement as we see it today.

Civil society activities
Civil society expanded in a new wave of mobilisation through the 80s of which just a few activities should be mentioned briefly.

The rent and service-charge boycott of the Black Local Authorities started in 1984 and had spread to fifty-three townships by 1986 (du Toit 1995).[199] Another crucial challenge to the state was posed by the so-called "People's Courts" erected as institutions to enact informal justice within the black townships (Lodge 1991). They were parallel and antagonistic to the state. By 1985, more than 400 of these courts are estimated to have been operating (Seekings 1989).

The 1989 *Defiance Campaign* targeted segregated hospitals, beaches and buses. In du Toit's (1995) opinion, the gradual but persistent civil disobedience of thousands of ordinary black South Africans who just simply stopped following apartheid laws in an attempt to devise workable survival strategies for themselves assumed major importance. "From ungovernability to people's power!" and "Build organisations of people's power!" became the rallying cries. Pockets of rudimentary alternative governance began to fill the vacuum left by the destruction of apartheid rule (*The Shopsteward* 1995). Altogether the civil society organisations functioned as a critical opposition to the apartheid government. They were independent from politics but not distinct from political society.

The extent to which people themselves directly have the interest, knowledge and capacity for political participation and influence is a measure of *individual political poverty or power. Institutional political*

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[199] It was most wide-spread in Transvaal, where only 33 per cent of dues could be collected (ibid p.360).

poverty or power, on the other hand, is a measure of people's access to organisations which can efficiently protect their interests vis-à-vis the public authorities. Membership in political organisations or in organised sections of civil society can thus function as a political resource for many people. As will be seen from Table 5.2, Africans definitely had the institutional power to protect their interests. Minority groups are less likely to belong to any organisation. Table 5.2 portrays the results of civil society engagement surveyed in a nation-wide sample amongst all population groups at the beginning of the 90s.[200]

Table 5.2   Civil Society Participation (in percentages) (Orkin 1994:14).

Membership	African	Coloured and Indian	white
No organisation	45	65	69
Church and/or union only	41	33	29
Political, plus others	14	1	2
Total	100	99	100

People are generally active in civil society organisations. It should also be noted that the table above does not include participation in residence committees, street committees, *stokvels*, etc. which would make the degree of activity in civil society even higher, especially amongst Africans. Case studies in townships outside Johannesburg confirm that people do have access to voluntary associations at the local level (White 1995). Burial societies, civics and residence committees, hostel residence associations etc. all formed bodies of interest representation. These organisations have constitutions or a set of rules of conduct accepted by their members, hold meetings regularly and have elected office-holders who can be removed from office (ibid:42).[201] In addition to these organisational activities come the more "ad-hoc" engagement of people in people's courts, etc.[202]
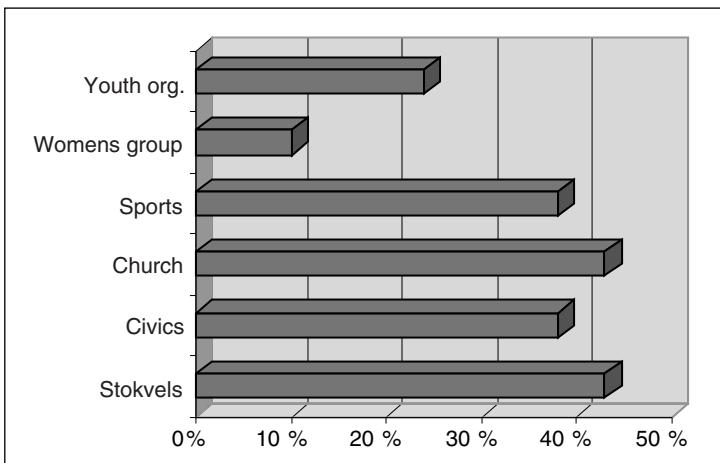
[200] There were 2,224 respondents (see Orkin 1994:7)

[201] It should be noted, however, that this study indicates that except for the burial society, which is absolutely pervasive, only a minority of people seems to be members of anything else (White 1995:43). Other studies indicate that organisational participation is far more common.

[202] Self-defence units, which were formed in the townships through the 80s, should also be mentioned, although over time, some of these units started performing less than democratic tasks.

So to what extent do workers take part in organisational activities? Figure 5.1 portrays civil society activities amongst COSATU members, who are generally regarded as militant activists. Nearly half the shop stewards take part in *stokvels*, civics or sports organisations and/or are in the Church.

Figure 5.1   Civil Society Activities amongst COSATU Shop Stewards
(CASE / COSATU 1991)

In South Africa the organisational rate amongst blacks is exceptionally high. In addition to an organisational rate in unions of about 40 per cent of the formal workforce, we find a proliferation of organisations like sports organisations, women's groups, *stokvels*, youth organisations, civics, etc. Less than 15 per cent are completely unorganised. Most take part in more than two organisations. Several of these organisations are democratically organised, meaning they have internal systems of collective decision-making and mandating, and accountability and recall possibilities. It should become clear in the following that the argument about the weakness of civil society as suggested by Gyamah-Boadi (1996) may be exaggerated and that civil society still has a lot to offer in the case of South Africa.

5.4 The integration of civil society and civil culture

The democratic laboratory of civil society

The new international emphasis of the 90s upon the role of civil society is in fact in one sense a continuation of the pluralist theory of the pre-war period in Europe. And in its stress on the development of skilled elites and sub-elites, and on the idea that integrating individuals into social structures mitigates the consequences of alienation and antagonism, pluralist theory had much in common with the mixed-government/civic culture theory of democratic stability (Almond 1980). Toqueville (1969) had already attributed the success and stability of American democracy to the prevalence of voluntary organisations and to the co-operative creativity of the Americans. The role of interest groups, pluralists argued, was essential in articulating the needs and interests of different social groups; the affiliation of individuals with a variety of interest groups tended to reduce the intensity of those interests; and the emergence of a skilled interest-group elite helped to mitigate the consequences of mass society. Civility was expected to follow the emergence of organised civil society.

Some of the important roles of organised civil society in the process of democratisation are, as summarised by Diamond (1990), to foster democratic values, provide a democratic experience and recruit democratic leaders in addition to constituting an alternative channel for articulating interests. A rich organisational life supplements the role of political parties in stimulating political participation, increasing the political efficacy and skill of democratic citizens and promoting an appreciation of the obligations and rights of citizens. Furthermore, organised civil society can help members disseminate information, thus aiding citizens in the pursuit and defence of their interests and values. Linked to this is Diamond's other function of civil society, namely as an arena for the development of democratic attributes such as tolerance, moderation, willingness to compromise and respect for different view-points and majority rule. This whole argument can be traced back to Toqueville's original study of voluntary associations as the pillar of democratic culture in America, the effect of Pateman's participatory democracy upon people's political participation, public-spiritedness, etc. Involving people in the decision-making process is, in essence, one way of making people more committed to the goals and ideals of democracy. Widespread participation in legitimate channels and decision-making prevents people from becoming alienated from democracy and from becoming easy targets for undemocratic forces. A wide range of evidence has been unearthed for

the proposition that the quality of public life and the performance of social institutions are indeed powerfully influenced by norms and networks of civic engagement (Putnam 1995). Putnam (ibid:66) reports that researchers in such fields as education, control of crime and drug-abuse, unemployment, urban poverty, etc. discover that successful outcomes are more likely in engaged communities. A dense network of secondary associations both embodies and contributes, in Putnam's opinion, to effective social collaboration. Members of associations display more political sophistication, social trust, political participation and "subjective civic competence" (Almond & Verba 1963). In fact, a reanalysis of the data from *The Civic Culture* suggested that organisational involvement was the most powerful indicator of all the variables associated with participation and civic competence (Almond 1980, Nie 1969). Coleman (1988) believes these phenomena rest on a foundation of *social capital*, which refers to features of social organisations such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefits. In this sense, social capital is the only form of capital whose supply increases rather than decreases with use (ibid). In Putnam's words:

> "Dense networks of interaction probably broaden the participants' sense of self, developing the 'I' into the 'we', or (in the language of rational-choice theorists) enhancing the participants' 'taste' for collective benefits".

Another democratic function of civil society is to create alternative channels (other than parties) for interest articulation and aggregation and representation of interests. This is particularly important in order to give previously excluded groups access to political power. Pluralism allows citizens exposed to pressures from different and conflicting groups to choose among a whole range of possible allegiances, of which ethnicity is only one, thereby moderating the conflict potential of individual cleavages.

Furthermore, a richly pluralistic civil society will, in Diamond's opinion, tend to generate a wide range of interests that may cut across and thus mitigate the principal lines of political conflict. Class-based organisations, issue-oriented movements, etc. may cut across already existing cleavages like race, tradition, gender and religion and thus create new national identities and "modern citizenship". Putnam (1993:90) supports this by stating that the attitudes of individuals who belong to groups with diverse goals and members that cut across traditional social boundaries will tend to be moderated as a result of group interaction and

the diverse influences on them. Civil society can help democracy by recruiting and training new political leaders and an elite. Related to the training element of both leaders and the grass-roots are specific programmes that go beyond membership and embrace the larger society, like election monitoring, voters' information programmes, etc.

Finally, civil society can help new democracies reach consensus about economic and social restructuring. Structural economic reforms are, for example, more sustainable when they are pursued through the democratic process (Diamond 1994:10). And finally, "by enhancing the accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, effectiveness and hence legitimacy of the political system, a vigorous civil society gives citizens respect for the state and positive engagement with it". "Social capital" fosters sturdy norms of reciprocity and encourages the emergence of social trust (Coleman 1988). Such networks, in Putnam's words, "reduce incentives for opportunism, facilitate co-ordination and communications and hence allow dilemmas of collective action to be resolved" (1995:67).

Democratic instability and collapse is said to result from "mass society". Mass society is in turn argued to be a by-product of the processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and democratisation, resulting in the destruction of social ties and organisation in which the anomic masses become susceptible to demagogic leadership and authoritarian movements (Almond 1980:20). But in those countries in which social and economic organisation remained vigorous despite industrialisation and urbanisation there were defences against the disintegration and anonymity brought about by the forces of modernisation. Diamond states, however, that in order for civil society to play a constructive role in processes of democratic consolidation, it should be as pluralistic as possible without becoming fragmented, and it will serve democracy best when it is dense, affording individual opportunities to participate in multiple levels of society.

Legitimacy and popular control in democracies relate not only to the input of the political system, but also to the output – i.e. the executive arm and central bureaucracies of politics. Strong, independent bureaucracies tend to lead to a distorted distribution of power between the state and the bureaucracies on the one hand and the people on the other. In order to enhance legitimacy for political decisions and their implementation, broad representation by and consultation with interest groups in civil society must be promoted. Cultural and ethnic diversity can be combined with constitutional democracy through the formal and informal structures of power-sharing to replace winner-takes-all policies.

Reinforcing civility

Africa's most common problem is, in Chege's (1995) opinion, the lack of consensus on the fundamental content of democracy and the inviolability of the most basic state institutions. Democratic activists should first and foremost cultivate a constituency that supports the content and goals of liberal governance and affirms the social benefits of following its rules. With specific reference to the challenge of crafting democracies in Africa, two of the most relevant attributes of African civil society, he argues, are the salience of ethnic identity and the paucity of the "civic spirit", which Putnam identified as the key to making democracy work in Northern Italy (Chege 1995). The links between civil society institutions and processes on the one hand and the development of civic spirit, communal citizenship and civic culture on the other hand are, however, seldom explored in depth.

Political values and attitudes are connected to and consistent with political activities. *How* they are connected is, however, another question and subject to far more controversy. Street (1993) discusses "what comes first": attitudes or behaviour, in his critique of Almond and Verba's *Civic Culture* study. In his review of the "rediscovered" and more recent version of political culture, he highlights Topf's (1989) characterisation of political culture as the most fully revised version. Topf sees political culture as consisting of attitudes or stances which people adopt in order to make sense of politics. Political culture becomes something *lived* and not just *held* (Street 1993:103). Topf proposes seeing political attitudes as an expression of values rather than Almond and Verba's instrumental patterns of orientation, which are exclusively concerned with attempts to change government policy.[203] Street proceeds to the more general studies of culture that regard the concept as expressive and constitutive rather than instrumental. He suggests that political culture refers to more than the attitude people hold to politicians and political institutions. It is made up of a complex of feelings and images, deriving from home and work, from manifestos and political culture (Street 1993:113). Culture forms activities, which in turn are formed by it in a complex *dynamic* process. It is, in other words, not a *static* phenomenon.

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[203] It should be noted that this is Topf's interpretation of Almond and Verba's concept of political attitudes. It seems to me, however, that Almond and Verba go further, in seeing culture as *both* enabling and shaping political action, than what Topf and Street acknowledge.

Willis (1990) suggests looking at culture from the perspective of a "symbolic creativity" in which people use existing cultural resources to engage in the formation and reproduction of individual and collective identities. Available cultural resources can, however, lead to competing interpretations and meanings. In its full extreme, Street (1993) suggests a general theory of political culture in which preferences are learned rather than assumed.[204]

There seems to be agreement that we have to develop a fuller notion of a political culture which encompasses a wider range of social spheres and states of mind and which sees culture as a discourse that people interpret and use. Cultures cannot be taken for granted as a point of departure and do not follow automatically from material conditions or from the functioning, efficiency, etc. of political state institutions. We need to look closer at how cultures are *formed*. Political culture is formed in a complex relationship between people's own conditions and experiences at the micro-level, the operation of meso-level institutions in challenging and interpreting people's own experiences as well as mobilising them, and finally the way macro-politics functions. Second, we have to look closer at the interplay and interdependence of culture, attitudes and actions. At the point of departure, individual political values and political culture in their collective expression are more enduring and difficult to change than attitudes and preferred means of action.[205] However, we also have to accept that concepts such as values and cultures are shaped in different forms and ways, at different speeds and with different socialising agents in diverse settings.

All ideas of communities are, as pointed out by Laclau (1994) and Bowman (1994), "imaginary" products in so far as community always exists as an imaginary group of which one perceives oneself as a member. Laclau (1994:2) points out that if social agents were to have an already defined location in the social structure, the problem of identity would

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[204] This position is adopted by Wildavsky, who looks at culture as a means to create preferences. This does not mean that only attitudes (deriving from more well-founded culture) and action can be changed and influenced. Also culture and ideologies can change, although it is generally perceived to be a longer- term process requiring a more thorough and in-depth learning. Ref. in Selle & Berntzen 1991.

[205] On the basis that values determine attitudes and preferences. There may, however, be more than one set of alternative actions and attitudes based on the same values.

never arise, or at most it would be seen as a matter of people *discovering or recognising* their identity, not of constructing it. He argues, however, that social conflicts have to be considered both in terms of the contradictory locations and claims of social classes, *and* of the destruction of social identities that these conflicts bring about. All societies entail social conflicts and all social conflicts entail destruction of social identities. It follows from this that identity is *constructed* rather than recognised or discovered. Why should this be important in this context?

Social conflict reached a peak in South Africa during the days of "grand apartheid" and the states of emergency. This was the period when social unrest may have been at its lowest (60s and 70s) because of state restrictions and suppression, but simultaneously the period when blacks in general were forced by the regime to recognise themselves in terms of their blackness and consequently as "of less value". In order to destroy old social locations, claims and identities and construct *new* identities, radical institutions are needed which challenge the old order and the culture transmitted by it. Laclau (1994:4) argues that all political identities require the *visibility* of the acts of identification and of institutionalisation and that this visibility is only obtained if oppositional forms of (social) institution are possible and this possibility is revealed when those forms are actually postulated and fought for in the historical arena. We therefore accept the possibility that action and attitudes/values are not only connected in a dynamic learning process but that learning can occur in radical jumps when an oppositional, visible civil society challenges the old order. Learning through opposition institutions can also become more radical in periods or situations when the destruction of old identities has already occurred. Bull argues, for example, that the reason why the Norwegian working class was far more radical than their Swedish and Danish comrades was that they had already experienced a radical destruction of old identities through industrialisation and urbanisation (Lafferty 1971).

We assume at the point of departure that civility – i.e. political participation and civil democratic culture – is based to a large extent upon political competence and affect. Competence will, however, in Rokkan's (1987) opinion, in itself rarely bring about a high level of political participation, politics is a matter of sentiments, of concern and of indignation. Civil society organisations may help to foster and deepen feelings of opposition or protest, but the pre-eminent bodies for channelling of sentiments about community matters are, in Rokkan's opinion, the political parties. He furthermore argues that analyses of the conditions for high levels of political participation must go beyond the

study of individual competence to a study of the character of *political conflicts* in the citizen's community and how much emotion these conflicts arouse. Bell (1976) likewise argues that identities emerge and become defined in response to political developments. The level and degree of conflicts in a given society, as well as the organisations giving content and interpretation to such conflicts (whether they are political parties or civil society), will thus influence people's identity and political sentiments and therefore political culture in a broader sense.

But action and experience in democratic decision-making do not only influence values and norms. Some will emphasise that ideologies in themselves have a liberating effect (Geyer & Heinz 1992). Orkin (1992) argues that liberation ideology in South Africa had, through both its ideological impact and the organisations carrying it forward, an emancipatory effect. Few have perceived civil society as a liberating force. Some, however, like Hegel, argue that civil society was both conducive to the realisation of individual interests and (through corporations) formed individuals into super-individual collectives with their own collective self-consciousness and integrated them into a single, larger collective self-consciousness which was fully realised in the state. People first organise in order to improve their individual interests and thereafter, or through that process, internalise collective identities and norms. By participating in civil society, people learn not only the technical skills of participation and decision-making but also how to take responsibility and thus enter into collectives with a far more "public" spirit. Civility is the conduct of a person whose individual self-consciousness has been partly superseded by his collective self-consciousness, the society as a whole and the institutions of civil society being the referents of his collective self-consciousness (Shils 1991). Fukuyama (1995) argues likewise that what happens on the level of ideology will depend on developments at the level of civil society.

Our point is that culture and civil society, attitudes and activities are bound together in a dynamic learning process. We assume that civil society and organised civil society need legitimacy for their norms and values in order to survive. Civil society, however, contains no norms or interpretation from "outside" or "above", but acquires its content from "below", from society itself. Bayart (1986) maintains that civil society only exists in so far as there is an awareness of its existence and of its opposition to the state. The idea that civil society is formed "from below" also implies that civil society can contain far more radical potential in terms of challenges to state power and in terms of the ideal democratic model than liberal

perspectives perceive. The impact of civil society and organisational civil society upon politics cannot be fully understood without also analysing the culture which shapes them and carries them forward.

We need to have a complex approach to culture. Culture and subcultures are formed as a *dynamic relationship* between values and activities within networks and institutions. While people often assume that activities form attitudes or attitudes form activities, both democratic consciousness and organisational patterns may be reflections of historic cultures and traditions. If this is the case, we can argue that institutions in civil society teach people their skills in democratic participation and decision-making, while attitudes and democratic [word missing?] are similar for organised and unorganised people – i.e. for those people who are exposed to dense networks of civil society and those who are not. Alternatively, the density of civil society associations in society will in itself affect culture without people necessarily being exposed to them as members.

Civility in South Africa

In the South African setting, civil society organisations have to some extent functioned indirectly as political parties. The nature and extent of political conflicts have made civil society the carrier, interpreter and developer of political sentiment. Civil society organisations had the same effect as formally organised parties would have had in a democratic setting. Murray (1994:167) argues that the political opposition to minority rule was characterised by an anti-authoritarian and "anti-statist" orientation[206]:

> "An embryonic 'democratic ideology' evolved as a counterpoint to the exclusionary logic of what Angel Flisfisch - in another historical context - has called the 'Napoleonic conception' of politics, or one which routinely considers the state and government as holding the monopoly on political rationality*".*

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[206] He argues that this was largely embodied in the unions and civics. I would argue, however, that such orientations were just as much carried forward by segments of the church, youth and student organisations, etc. which are collectively referred to here as civil society.

By stressing the value of expressive and participatory forms of autonomous political action, this emergent democratic ideology, or counter-ideology to apartheid, found expression in a vibrant and vital civil society, as a terrain separate from the state and from production. Its basis was a collective spirit of decision-making and "ubuntu". The more recent point of departure for the apartheid generations was a conflict model of society. In their task of reorganising and democratising the social sphere, unions, civics and other organisations now aimed at making dormant, passive individuals into new popular subjects with a collective identity and oriented towards an alternative popular project.

The concepts of civil society, interest groups, and citizenship experienced a renaissance in South Africa in the 90s. Politicians and academics spoke eagerly about creating and maintaining a vibrant civil society, participatory democracy, political self-education and empowerment, etc. This echoes the old arguments of sections of the students' movement that went into the union movement with similar ideas in the 70s and is reflected in the aims and strategies of the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP specifically underlines the need for civil society, both individually and collectively, to engage in the transformation of South African social, economic and political affairs. The RDP sees the engagement of civil society as important for ensuring the quality and representativity of political outcomes as well as the quality of democracy as such:

> "The people shall govern. The RDP vision is one of democratising power. Democracy is intimately linked to reconstruction and development. We will not be able to unleash the resources, neglected skills and stunted potential of our country and its people while minority domination of the state and civil institutions persists. Without thoroughgoing democratisation, the whole effort to reconstruct and develop will lose momentum. Reconstruction and development require a population that is empowered through expanded rights, meaningful information and education, and an institutional network fostering representative, participatory direct democracy" (RDP 1994:120).

We may at this preliminary point suggest that South African culture to some extent has the characteristics of a *participant political culture;* one in which members of society tend to be explicitly oriented to the system as a whole, to both the political and administrative structures and processes,

and towards an activist role for the self in the polity. Individuals are oriented towards, and participate in, the political system as a unity, embracing both its input and output aspects.

Interpretations of interest group diversity have, however, differed. Swilling (1990) argues that anti-apartheid social institutions were fighting to establish a democratic South Africa and that the communities that stood on the losing side of apartheid policies for many years constituted *the* civil society of South Africa: "only this sector could be seen as the crucial repository of democratic ideals and a rallying point for democratic forces" (ibid:156). This proposition has, however, been strongly contested by others. Friedman argued that the resistance movement was basically partisan and focused on the local level (1991, Kotze & du Toit 1995). The main thrust of the critique was that people like Swilling failed to recognise the bifurcated nature of South African social pluralism (Kotze & du Toit 1995). Kotze and du Toit (1995) argue that civil society in South Africa is *divided* and support their thesis with the results of a survey amongst civil society leaders. Yet it should be noted that their sample does not only include people from civil society organisations but also respondents from the state bureaucracy, military, legislature, etc. Examining the respondents' sympathy for the state by party/movement, they find two opposing blocks, one centring on the apartheid state and the other on the anti-apartheid movement (1995:43-46). Furthermore, they find internal splits in the anti-apartheid movement between the Charterist camp and the Africanist camp. On the basis of the dividing lines in South African politics reported earlier in this thesis (see Chapter 3), this is, however, hardly surprising. Our focus in the following is upon black civil society and the grass-roots.

In a small-scale study of two townships outside Johannesburg, White (1995) finds that people express certain "civic-minded" expectations of the conduct of leaders and members, but there is not the dense web of clubs and societies that for Putnam would exemplify the civic-minded culture. She also finds that the voluntary associations emerging in the area arise in the main out of a need for collective economic support or to address pressing material or interest issues and are not devoted to non-material concerns. The evidence that people are actually willing to participate in parents' activities (which directly challenge the teachers'

union) or a crèche committee in order to bring facilities to shack settlements can also be seen as "civic-mindedness" and resistance to patronage.[207]

Communitarian citizenship and the foundations for a strong democracy seem to be present in South Africa, but unevenly distributed. Orkin (1994) did an in-depth study of democratic commitment, citizenship and organisational participation in civil society amongst youth in a national all-race sample survey in 1992. *Democratic commitment* is defined as adherence to a composite of three democratic values: non-racism, non-sexism and fair government. *Citizenship* is an index reflecting the extent and vigour of people's involvement in politics. Orkin finds that democratic commitment interacts with the "mix" of people's organisational involvement in civil society, their broad party-political orientation and the degree of people's involvement in politics – i.e. their citizenship. He argues that the more people take part in political life, the higher they score on democratic commitment whatever their civil society involvement. Amongst those who are less politically active, democratic commitment is highest amongst those with high civil society involvement.

Two questions emerge out of the above discussion concerning the relationship between political action on the one hand and political attitudes and values on the other hand. Several studies of political behaviour (in particular electoral behaviour) in Western democracies have concluded that ideological cleavages are now becoming increasingly important for people's voting as compared with structural cleavages.[208] These studies have mostly been quantitative studies of election results without the time-series and in-depth studies needed to see how people's ideological preferences and attitudes change over time and in response to experiences of political action. Do ideological cleavages in South Africa determine people's activity patterns? Or does political action, here mostly interpreted as civil society activities, determine people's attitudes to

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[207] whites (1995:44) questions, however, whether these associations will be as durable and resilient as their Italian counterparts (with reference to Putnam's study). It should be noted, however, as White herself does, that the study is too small in scale to be able to in order to answer the question whether expectations and behaviours generated at the level of the voluntary associations are transferred onto the political level

[208] In part because the structural, socio-economic conditions behind the ideological cleavages are becoming increasingly difficult to deduct, but also because the ideological cleavages in themselves are becoming more important.

democracy, national identity, government and political legitimacy, in sum political culture? Table 5.3 shows the civil society groups that people regard themselves as influenced by in framing their political activities and attitudes.

Table 5.3   Groups Influencing Voter Choice, November 1993
(Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:105)

Source of influence	Percentage influenced			
	African	Coloured	Indian	White
Their Church	25	29	11	9
Community elders	24	21	20	7
Trade unions	19	27	7	3
Employers	13	13	4	3
Traditional chiefs	17	–	–	–
Civic associations	27	–	–	–
Street committee	25	20	18	2
Spouse	25	31	25	10
Parents	24	29	20	10
Children	21	19	15	4
"Decide myself"[209]	57	56	75	72

A survey from Western Cape in 1994 portrays the racial differences in political information networks even more sharply. While coloureds and whites mainly get their information from the mass media, Africans in contrast get significant amounts of political information from community sources, such as political meetings, street committees, trade unions and civics organisations (Mattes 1995:114).[210]

Some have labelled the intermediate sphere between the state and society where ideas are exchanged and attitudes influenced the "third realm" (Huang 1993), the "political agora" (Nordlund 1996) or the "public sphere" (Habermas 1989). The public sphere is where society and the state interact. What is at issue, Calhoun (1993) argues, is the relationship

[209] This category was added spontaneously by respondents not choosing any of the other categories.
[210] The results were gathered by the "Launching Democracy Project, Institute of Multi-Party Democracy". 58 per cent said political meetings was were their most important source of political information, 48 per cent quoted civics, 37 per cent street committees and 35 per cent trade unions.

between patterns of social organisations and a certain kind of discourse and political participation, a public sphere in which rational-critical arguments rather than the status of actors are decisive. Civil society and the public sphere are hence, in Calhoun's opinion, not synonymous. The political role of civil society in authoritarian states has, in Bayart's (1986) opinion, to do with capturing a "public sphere".

While debates have started as to whether civil society can contribute constructively to democracy, and if so under what conditions, comparatively little attention has been turned towards what *kind* of civil society organisations are most constructive for democracy. We need, in other words, to investigate the characteristics, norms and organisational principles of civil society organisations when we assess their importance for democracy-building in society at large. If the norms and goals of organisations extend more broadly than their own members, there may be a tendency for strategies and learning potential also to extend to spheres outside the organisations. Our hypothesis is that if civil society organisations only focus upon the improvement of their own members' narrow socio-economic interests, political learning may be restricted to technical skills in decision-making and potentially collective organisational identity amongst their own members. If, however, organisations aim to improve the well-being of broader groups and society at large, members may have less of an organisational identity and be more oriented towards broader group or national interests and identities. Organisations may in the latter case potentially function as agents for mobilising and socialising non-members as well.[211] Identity formation takes place, in Habermas' (1989) opinion, entirely inside the private realm and outside public discourse. Calhoun (1993), however, argues that social movements have blurred the public/private distinction and engaged in identity formation/reformation throughout modernity. He distinguishes in this respect between on the one hand traditional labour movements, which represent settled interests, and on the other new social movements, which deliberately reflect identity politics.

No doubt the mechanisms through which civic engagement and social connectedness produce results, such as faster economic development and more effective governments, are multiple and complex (Putnam 1995).

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[211] This does not mean, however, that similar preferences held by and activities engaged in by unorganised and organised people are due to the organisations' own strategies. We will return to this later.

The forces of civil society which take the lead in the process of democracy will differ from one country to another. Social strata differ in their organisational capabilities owing to differences in size, goals and strategies as well as ideological orientations. In Western Europe, the bourgeoisie is widely regarded as the crucial social agent and source of formal democracy (Lipset 1980). However, the striving of the working class in developing countries should not be overlooked.

In order to analyse the potential impact of civil society on the political authorities we need to look closer at the internal norms, strategies, and decision-making procedures of organised civil society itself. On this basis, we will investigate the role of unions as *agents* and/or *laboratories* for political change in the following and remaining sections of this thesis. The approach we follow here is one which seeks to combine the cultural and the organisational aspects of civil society.

III UNIONS AS AGENTS FOR POLITICAL CHANGE

6   Unions and politics

At a certain point, virtually all processes of democratisation include a sharp increase in labour movement activity. But when and under what conditions do unions push for political change? What resources do they have at their disposal? What role can labour play as an agent for democracy in the process of transition from authoritarian rule? This chapter establishes the theoretical point of departure for the relationship between South African labour and politics.

6.1   The essence of unionism and state-union relationships

Some claim that a union movement is merely an institution for defending its members' economic interests. A narrow economic perspective of unionism looks at unions as a channel and administrative agency for worker protest (Lester 1958). Through collective bargaining, grievance procedures and a practical monopoly of strikes, unions have come to exercise a proprietary interest over labour protest. Unions are in one important respect service organisations, a means of providing restricted economic benefits. Workers join unions for economic reasons and their attitudes towards their unions are, in this view, instrumental. Unions are therefore to be regarded as primarily instrumental in that they are there to protect and improve the living standards of their members.[212] Unions bring together people with a common interest primarily in higher wages and improved working conditions. Viewing unions from a rational choice perspective, Olson (1965) states, however, that even this is not enough to organise workers, because it will be rational for workers to protect their

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[212] In this respect, the old craft unions were found at one end of the spectrum. The craft unions were so-called "closed" unions and concentrated on the benefits of their own members to the exclusion of others (Visser 1995).

individual economic interests from outside the unions while the unions as collective organisations provide for their basic needs. In most cases, he states, it is compulsory membership and coercive picket lines that are the source of union membership.

A broader perspective regards unions as basically political organisations whose aim is to challenge capitalist production and free market forces. Lester (1958) says that a labour union is a political organisation representing members' job interests and their viewpoints on political and social issues (Lester 1958). Higgins (1985) argues that unions are, by virtue of their very reason for existence, engaged in a political struggle, a central, strategic objective of which must be to defeat economic liberalism in the political arena and open up the possibility of displacing market determinations with political ones.

Both these views follow to some degree a rational choice perspective, which says that individuals join organisations for common individual, instrumental reasons. They differ in the amount of attention they pay to the broad issues or in the range of individual interests that members want to promote within or through organisations.[213] A rather different perspective is that people join organisations for less rational cultural or political motives. However, it seems reasonable to assume that such motives either *follow on* from or *supplement* the instrumental economic motives, since it is hard to imagine people joining interest organisations without wanting to promote the interests furthered by that organisation.

Definitions and understanding of union activities vary, but even more so the focus, goals and strategies of labour itself. Over time and across countries, unions give their members different incentives, rights and obligations. Unions are not static, either in their actions or in their goals. Although varying in content, the organisational consolidation of unionism has followed much the same path all over the world. The groups that succeeded in building unions did so because they were able to develop their organisations along the following four dimensions (Valenzuela 1992:55): (i) worker allegiance or obtaining the trust of the workforce; (ii) organisational linking, or developing a national network tying the unions to each other as well as to other organisations; (iii) plant-level penetration, or establishing a union presence within firms and engaging in a regular

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[213] The very fact that goals are common to a group means that no-one in the group is excluded from the benefits or satisfaction brought about by its achievement (Olson 1965:15).

process of collective bargaining; (iv) state recognition, or obtaining the tacit or explicit authorisation to build union organisations beyond the plant level as well as to speak for the interests of workers in negotiations with governments and legislatures over questions of social and economic policy.

Labour movements do not reproduce themselves but continuously have to be reproduced by organising new workers. Some say that it is the fight over "bread-and-butter" issues that maintains the unions (Mitchell 1971), while others maintain that unions attract new workers on the basis of their fight against capitalism and the fight for socialism. For Marx, unions were "schools for socialism" (see Munck 1988), for Perlman an institution for "...collective control of their employment opportunities, but hardly towards similar control of industry" (Perlman 1928: 243, Rakner 1992:34). Let us, for the time being, just look at unions as a collective unity of interests, workers' interests. However, it is important to keep both aspects in mind – both their day-to-day economic struggles and their tendency to use broader political responses to further their aspirations. At the same time, a union is not only a collectivity of interests. It is a social institution and learning environment. Unions constitute institutionalised norms and values, which we will return to later (Chapter 12).

State-labour relations

Interactions between organised labour and the state seem to be marked by two interrelated strategies which have sparked off political debates as well as forming the subject of academic studies (Regini 1992, Valenzuela 1992). One of these is the political strategy, through which the state and the unions try to obtain support from each other. The other strategy is the economic one, whereby unions seek to improve their members' material benefits – i.e. wages, employment, working conditions, etc. and the state tries to implement its economic model.

Union-state relationships have often been described in terms of pluralist or corporatist perspectives. More recent studies point out the impact upon public policies of "political unionism" or "social movement unionism". Within a *pluralist* perspective, trade unions, like other organised interests, are seen as autonomous groups competing for power,

benefits and resources for their members.[214] Pluralists argue that the distribution of power resources is relatively equal and assume equal opportunities for mobilising power. The fundamental basis of pluralist thought is that the development of industrial technology is the most important force for social change (Korpi 1983). The process of industrialisation generates an increasingly specialised and educated labour force, which dissolves the class structure and hence the class conflicts involved in the basic division of labour. In place of a few antagonistic classes, industrial society thus develops a multiplicity of cleavages and a pluralism of smaller, more narrowly focused interest groups. Union goals are primarily economic and autonomy from the state essential. Pluralists in fact emphasise the spontaneity, liberty and voluntary quality of private associations in contrast to the compulsory, coercive character of the state (Olson 1965:112). Pluralists recognise the need for unions to engage in political activities to press for democratisation under authoritarian rule or during regime transformation. However, this is a role limited to a short-term period of change in defence of long-term economic interests. They argue implicitly that a free-market or capitalist economy is better suited for workers and unions than a socialist system (Martin 1989, Rakner 1992).

Corporatist analyses arose as a challenge to the pluralists' account of political processes (Higgins 1985).[215] The idea was put forward of the benefits of government organised around representation and administration through industrial-occupational groups rather than through territorial divisions. Corporatists argue that unions are not autonomous but have tied their interests to the state. Schmitter (1979) outlined two subtypes of corporatism. *State corporatism* implies that the state through coercion and distribution of resources has managed to co-opt labour. In authoritarian regimes unions are often seen as part of the state rather than as separate and autonomous. State corporatism developed in Italy, Germany and Portugal during the 30s. Union movements have also often been seen as

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[214] Craft unions were by some portrayed as a typical example. Craft unions were often more economistic, with an emphasis upon economic, rather than political power. However, "business unionism" also evolved in other parts of the Western world in the 60s and 70s, and some were also argueing that the 80s and 90s would see a return to business unionism with deregulation and globalisation of production (Reghini 1997).

[215] Also referred to as "neo-corporatism" in the 70s with reference to the several social pacts (in countries such as Britain, Italy, etc.) that resembled the "traditional (Scandinavian) corporatist countries".

part and parcel of the state apparatus in communist Eastern Europe and in several African countries. Corporatist arrangements between unions and an authoritarian system can be seen as a brake on social change. *Societal corporatism* is on the other a pattern of co-existence between the state and organised parties in the labour market, where the state consults with and delegates responsibilities to the union movements in exchange for moderation and responsible actions. Societal corporatism developed gradually in several West European countries in the post-war period, reaching a peak in the 70s, leading to the coining of the term "the century of corporatism" (Schmitter 1974). It is, according to Schmitter (1979), a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a delib- erate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on the selection of their leaders and on the articulation of demands and support.

Panitch (1980) argues, in contrast to Schmitter, that corporatism is not a stable system. The neo-corporatist system of interest mediation is continuously destabilised by the market imbalance in what the different parties get out of the arrangements. Corporatism is, according to him, a state-induced system of collaboration, designed to contain the working class in the capitalist state (Panitch 1980, Przeworski 1986). Jessop (1979) argues likewise that corporatism is an unstable response to the weaknesses of the parliamentarian system in dealing with problems of economic growth.

Rothstein (1992) looks at corporatism on the basis of individualistic versus collectivist democratic principles. A "totalitarian" corporatist system, in his view, implies that the individual has political power only indirectly through his or her organisations rather than direct individual democratic rights. Thus, organisations are not private actors but rather the *link* between the state and the individual (Rothstein 1992:12). Political influence is built upon organisational resources in "societal corporatist systems" as well; individuals are given additional access to political channels and power through their membership and participation in organisations. The underlying democratic thought behind such a decision-making system is that interests that are particularly affected by decisions should have the possibility of voicing their opinion.

Political unionism has been referred to as a third route or form of unionism. The point of departure for the theories of political unionism or "labour movement theories" (Fulcher 1987) is that the relationship between the state and labour is not a question of co-option or collaboration, but rather a question of labour strategically using the political loopholes available to advance its own interests. They reject the idea that the state is controlled by capital and argue that labour movements can gain effective control of the state apparatus and use it to benefit labour (Fulcher 1987). Korpi (1983) introduced politics as an expression of "the democratic class struggle" where class, socio-economic cleavages and the distribution of power play a central role. His central theme is that the distribution of power resources in society – i.e. control over the means of production and over human capital – constitutes the political power of unions. Differences in power resources will shape the relationship between the state and the parties in the labour market, the institutional form given to conflicts and bargaining and finally give form to the gains labour makes from institutional participation. Higgins (1985:350) refers to "political unionism" as a tendency for some union movements to go beyond a narrow focus upon wages and conditions of work: "to generate goals that challenge the power of capital as it expresses itself in the market outcomes and public policy, and to actively pursue these goals in their own right outside (as well as inside) the industrial relations sphere, including in state bodies".

Whereas the pluralist, corporatist and political unionism perspectives have focused first and foremost on relations between unions and the state in the Western world, the idea of a socio-political trade-union movement emerged out of studies of unionism in developing countries and in authoritarian systems in particular.

The concept of a *socio-political unionism* emerged against the background of political developments in countries like Brazil, India, Poland and Zambia (Hyman 1971, Gorz 1973, Munck 1988, Lambert & Webster 1989, Webster 1989, Valenzuela 1989) in which unions took it upon themselves to wage a political struggle against the government. Such unions increasingly reach out to sectors outside the formal proletariat like community organisations, Church groups, women's organisations, etc. and there is a growing confluence of interests and a gradual overcoming of social and political barriers (Munck 1988). Furthermore, these unions adopt broad, national-level political responses; their role is opposition and they challenge not only politics and the market but the *institutions* of the political system as such. They link production to wider political issues (Lambert & Webster 1988). Some have labelled these unions "social

movement unions" because their constituencies reach far beyond the factory gate. However, establishing broad alliances and focusing on broad economic and political issues and interests will to some extent also characterise the corporatist and political unionism unions. The difference is that, unlike pluralist, corporatist and political unionism, the socio-political unions do not accept and function *within* or with the governing political and economic system but work on the basis of opposition to and rejection of the system. Furthermore, their alliances tend to be deeper and more enduring. Theoretically, social-movement unionism is perhaps best defined as an effort to raise the living standards of the *whole* working class rather than to protect individually defined interests.

What these perspectives on union activities have in common is that they are attempts to *describe* trade unionism in rather broad, general and ideal types rather than explain the goals, organisation and strategies of organised labour itself and its relationship to the state. These perspectives do not explain either the success of the respective strategies, other than indirectly by citing success as a determining factor for the routes taken by the actors. With the above-mentioned comments in mind, Table 6.1 summarises the differences between the various perspectives.

Table 6.1   Perspectives upon State-Labour Relations

	Pluralist	Corporatist	Socio-political unions
State-labour relations	Issue-oriented	Centralised	Antagonistic Confrontational
Structure of labour mov.	Decentralised Local power	Centralised	Democratic
Internal union structure	Decentralised	Centralised	Centralised and decentralised
Goals	Economic	Social/economic	Political and socio-economic
Strategies	Negotiations	Negotiations	Mass actions/ opposition

We must, however, consider additional factors in order to grasp the peculiarities of labour and its relation to politics as well as its potential impact upon political developments. What makes labour identify with

certain values and goals and why do labour norms, standards, goals and strategies differ from one country to another? For the time being, the focus is not so much upon explaining *why* unions choose different options in different countries. The fact is that goals and therefore strategies *do* vary. We want to find out how and to what extent union movements may *succeed* in their achievements and what resources they have at their disposal.

6.2 Unions and political change

Interest organisations may, and in actual fact do, influence politics but they seldom have a bearing on the formation of the political system as such. The rules of the political order and the resources of the political actors – i.e. the institutionalised political system – are usually given.

There is a division between those who discern significant potential in trade-union activity and those who argue that such activity does not in itself facilitate the transformation of societies (Lambert & Webster 1988). Views, opinions and perspectives differ on both the question of whether or not labour is able to *trigger* a process of political change and on the question of the role and strength of labour during transitions. Hyman (1971) refers to the former as the optimistic tradition and the latter as the pessimistic tradition.

Adherents of the pessimistic view contend that labour will not be able to influence the transitional process of political change. The political transition period may weaken unions in that political liberalisation creates new and competitive labour groups and leaders, which fragment the labour movement. "A strong labour movement is further impeded by organisational factors, since the solidarity, leadership and expertise required of a strong union movement was eliminated during the authoritarian period and only slowly reasserts itself during the transition" (Payne 1991). Labour movements are, in other words, generally weak in transitional periods because the period of authoritarian rule eroded their independent leadership and base of support. Payne (1991) goes on to argue that the Brazilian case suggests that labour movements behave similarly during political transitions and stable democratic periods. The constraints on their strategy choices and the outcomes of those strategies are similar. "Labour movements in stable democracies are generally more experienced than those in nations undergoing political transitions. Labour movements in transitions usually only minimise losses to the working class, rather than

maximise political gains". In fact, Berg and Butler (1964) strongly contradict what they label the conventional wisdom about the relationship between unions and politics in Africa. Whereas the conventional wisdom states that unions have been key elements in the struggle for independence in Africa, Berg and Butler state that African unions rarely became politically involved, were rarely instruments of political parties and after independence were quickly subdued by governing parties.

Some point out that the system itself may open up new possibilities for trade unions. Rothstein (1992) argues that there are possibilities for the actors to change the political system in specific periods characterised by economic and social contradictions, conflicts and crisis. In such "formative" periods, organised interests can change the preconditions for the political system. Such formative moments are characterised by new economic and social relations, which make the political institutions dysfunctional and hence unable to deal with the new challenges and crisis. O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) say that labour movements can play critical roles at key moments in the *uncertain* course of political change (my emphasis). Upsurges of mobilisation, or "resurrection of civil society" as they call it, often coincide with phases of crisis of authoritarian rule or of its liberalisation.

Valenzuela (1989), on the other hand, states that labour mobilisation will be higher during a crisis or liberalisation of an authoritarian regime. Given the previous restrictions on its actions, labour will take advantage of the political moment to seek redress. This will also accelerate the process of democratisation. Valenzuela states that the mobilisation of workers may permit a reversal of the democratisation process. The accumulated demands of workers may exceed the capacity of the economy or the good-will of employers (Valenzuela 1989:450). Valenzuela therefore adds that a combination of mobilisation and a willingness of unions to show restraints when the political agenda has shifted in favour of democratisation seems to be the ideal mix for labour to contribute to ensuring the success of democratisation (Valenzuela 1989:450). But while noting that labour movements have a significant input in democratic transitions, Valenzuela (1989:445) states that:

"No one suggests that labour movements, or other such organised interests, can themselves trigger a successful transition, not to speak of carrying it to a successful conclusion.. But occasionally, labour is drawn into formal or informal pacts, whose effects may be more important symbolically than in terms of their overt content, that may facilitate transition".

According to Munck (1988:106) the role of a trade union is essentially defensive, pursuing collectively, as an organisation of workers, the defence of their living standards and the improvement of working conditions. On this basis, unions will react politically in defence of their members' living standards if they are threatened. Przeworski (1989), on the other hand, finds that the impetus towards democratisation in countries like Poland originated from workers. Unions, he argues, became pilotedpoliticised? because autonomous organisations and improvements in? economic conditions were impossible without political liberties. They therefore give priority to political goals over economic interests. In fact, the greatest challenge to authoritarian role is, according to O'Donnell et al., likely on this basis to come from the new or revived identities and capabilities of the working class (O'Donnell, et al. 1986:52, Rakner 1992).

In broad terms, unions may affect political change and the form, stability and output of the resulting political system in two ways. The political power of unions depends upon their power in the market – i.e. their economic power and the extent to which they exert power over employers and economic investments and productivity. Unions can cause serious economic disturbances through labour actions like strikes and stay-aways. Simultaneously, negotiations about labour market issues open up regular and formal contacts with employers and the state. Their political power is, however, not only of an "indirect" nature. They will also have direct political power through direct participation in or opposition to the political system and political processes. Let us now turn to the political resources of the trade-union movement – i.e. the instruments it has at its disposal.

6.3   Resources for political power

The political power of labour depends upon several factors. *First*, the national setting or "framework": economic growth, the distribution of resources, supply and demand for labour, political culture, etc. *Second*, the decision-making structure of the political system and its norms and procedures for the preparation and implementation of decisions? has an effect upon organisational access and the degree of control over public policies. *Third*, the other actors and organisations, as well as the distribution of resources and power among them, is of importance for labour's control over state policies. *Fourth*, the union organisations' own

resources are of crucial importance for the political power of labour. Such political resources are union strength, union density, control of members, worker militancy, etc.

The national setting

In the Western world, trade unionism came to full fruition only after the completion of the Industrial Revolution and the whole range of interrelated socio-economic changes that accompanied industrialisation (Beling 1968:18). Huntington (1984) argues that industrialisation led to the creation of a wholly new political culture characterised by a multiplicity of competitive interest groups, cutting across personal ties and attitudes of restraint. The presence of such crosscutting affiliations, (s)he argues may have been critical to the preservation of a free trade- union movement in Europe since it was a major factor for social integration and helped foster the attitude that group differences should be worked out through a process of negotiations and compromise. Unions in Africa, on the other hand, preceded industrialisation and all the other social changes which, in the West, accompanied it.

For this reason, it has been questioned whether Western-style trade unionism "fits" into African culture (Beling 1968, Coleman & Rosberg 1964). The post-colonial African states have often tried to control and discipline the trade-union movement. Beling (1968:5) singles out three reasons for this: the primacy of economic development, the need to consolidate and stabilise political authority and the differing role trade unions are expected to play in the post-independence setting. The furthering of economic development is an overwhelmingly political task in Africa. With a shortage of markets, societies must depend upon state leadership and initiative in efforts to bring about rapid social and economic change. Central planning becomes a functional substitute for private capitalism, and state control of the union movement is therefore imperative. Labour's role in stabilising political authority is based upon the organisational weakness, limited penetration of society by political structures and fragility of formal institutions faced by many African countries after independence. The view that African unions must perform a substantially different and more varied role to that of their Western counterparts is widely held by their political leaders (Beling 1968:9): whereas Western unions perform an almost exclusively "consumptionist" function, seeking higher wages and working conditions for workers, unions in Africa must play more of a "productionist" role.

The authoritarian regime's traditional treatment of labour also affects the latter's role as well as the strategies and strength of labour during transitions. "Authoritarian regimes mould the kind of union movement that will be in place when the possibility of a transition to democracy arises" (Valenzuela 1989:457). "Mild and open" versus "harsh and closed" authoritarian systems refer to the degree to which the state has given labour space to operate in the field of industrial relations and the degree to which it gives political space and tolerates arenas for political action. The harsher the system, the more resentments and demands will have built up that are likely to generate militancy and strike waves (Valenzuela 1989).

Economic development and demand/supply of labour is another factor of importance for the political access and power of labour movements. Both Chazan (1988) and Diamond (1988) suggest that economic liberalisation will promote democratisation by promoting the growth of civil society organisations.[216] In Valenzuela's opinion (1989), an expansive economy with low unemployment will increase the strength of labour. The pessimistic view contends that economic problems and processes of industrial and economic reconstruction tend to fragment and divide the labour movement. The union movement will be increasingly heterogeneous, unions will follow sectoral interests and the labour movement will thus decline as a collective force in society. Olson (1965) argues that unless unions are "encompassing unions" and fight for the whole population as opposed to their narrow base of members, unions participating in national politics will create rigidity and deprive the market of the necessary flexibility, thus acting as a barrier to economic growth. Such a strategy may promote union interests in the short term while undermining them in the long term.

Other, more optimistic perspectives see the power of unions increasing in both the market and politics under conditions of economic stagnation or decline. Periods of industrial reconstruction will increase the awareness of both employers and the state of the need for union involvement. Corporatism, or institutional participation, is, for instance, seen in Western Europe as a policy response to the decline of a competitive economy (Cawson 1986) and as a contribution to economic stabilisation (Scott 1984). There is a strong correlation between a strong labour

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[216] Both arguements have been used to defend structural adjustment programmes in Africa.

movement and a large public sector, which in turn produces lower unemployment (Schmidt 1982). Union organisation explains a large number of income distribution measures (Stephens 1979). Korpi (1983) has pointed out the correlation between "working-class power resources" (level of union organisation and Left participation in government) and lower degrees of inequality in OECD countries.[217]

Developments in the labour market, such as variations in which skills are in demand or which sectors are driving the economy at a given time, will also carry implications for trade- union strength. Increased employment in manufacturing and manual labour has been viewed as particularly important for promoting union growth, interests and influence Many authors have assumed that the general course of the process of industrialisation determines the characteristics of workers' politics and labour relations (Valenzuela 1992:54).

Organisational access and inter-union rivalry

The structure of the political decision-making system and the norms for the preparation and implementation of political decision-making will, by implication, be important for the political access and power of labour. Regimes that are closed force oppositions to act in a way that oversteps the boundaries of the regime's legality (Valenzuela 1989). A closed political context may push opponents out into the streets and thus favour the development of a radical opposition which takes an insurrectionary path. The more openness and tolerance allowed by the regime, the higher the potential political influence of unions. However, there will always be the risk (especially in authoritarian systems) of "pseudo" participation – i.e. labour participating in institutions but stripped of decision-making power. The function of unions in such cases is to legitimise the actions of the state more than to be consulted or to influence decisions affecting their interests.

Political influence is an effect of degree and type of access to decision-making bodies. Alliances with political bodies constitute one channel for influence on politics. Valenzuela (1989) states that unions must be in alliance with a political party in a transformation process but points out the long-term dangers of being in government itself. The number and

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[217] Trade- union strength being correlated with lower degrees of inequality may probably best be understood as union strength promoting redistribution and a low degree of inequality in turn sustaining strong trade unionism.

quality of people the unions make available to parties and to political life in general as well as the resources it allocates to parties are also factors that will determine organisational access to politics. The extent to which parties rely on the trade-union apparatus as a political machine is also of importance in deciding the access of unions to political bodies (Coleman & Rosberg 1964).

Organisational access to political decision-making must take into account the whole process of decision-making from the early stages of preparation to the late stages of implementation and evaluation. Rothstein (1988, 1992) argues, for instance, that the structure of the public administration is one of the main reasons behind the gains of corporatism for Swedish labour. Access to the process of political decision-making as well as to its implementation and evaluation is necessary for labour to gain political influence.

The relationship and degree of conflicts between unions has an impact upon their individual political influence. Where there are sharp divisions in the labour movement for strategic or political reasons, labour leaders and the union movement as such are more likely to focus upon the competition between them for rank-and-file support than on mobilisation for political transformation. If, on the other hand, the internal divisions within the union movement are of a sectoral nature, the competition between unions may be smaller.

Changes in the distribution of power resources between different collectivities or classes can be assumed to be of central importance for social change. Such changes will affect the levels of aspiration of the actors and their capacity to maintain or change social structures (Korpi 1983). Furthermore, if the union organisation is decentralised and/or the union leadership sharply divided for political or ideological reasons, according to Valenzuela (1989), the transition process is likely to bring a sharp rise in conflicts which does not readily decline simply for the sake of securing the transition.

Social and organisational fragmentation of the union movement has been pointed to as another indicator affecting, and possibly undermining, union strength. The development of bargaining positions, income policies and political strategies has been made more difficult for several national union federations because of internal fragmentation of interests and/or external union competition.

Union density

Some will regard *size* – i.e. membership figures – as an indicator of union strength.[218] Their argument is that big unions, in terms of numbers of members, have more political power than small unions. Others have emphasised that in large organisations there will be more incentives (and fewer barriers because of a shortage of social norms and control) to free ride – i.e. not pay the costs of participation in order to gain access to the collective goods accruing from that participation. Olson (1965) argues that numbers do count, but in another way than is usually presumed. He argues that small organisations or groups in fact may have more political power than bigger groups. Small organisations with relatively strong control over the production of public goods and relatively large access to the gains without having to pay a similar proportion of its costs have, in his opinion, a lot of power. A big trade-union federation will, for example, also have to pay the costs of wage gains in increased prices and inflation. Small sectoral groups or trade unions, on the other hand, with control over their sectoral interests will have to pay a relatively small price for wage increases because the costs are borne by everyone in the market whereas the gains (wage increases) are accrued by only a few. The old craft unions, for example, had power through control over access to their own professions and sectors.[219]

Small groups can better provide themselves with collective goods, like higher wages, shorter hours and better working conditions, than large groups, and hence can also more easily mobilise their members for collective action. He also argues that small groups have a further advantage in that they can be meaningful social and recreational units and thus offer non-collective social benefits that attract members (Olson 1965:68).[220]

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[218] Olson (1965) argues that traditional theory drew a distinction between small and large groups in respect of the scale of functions they performed rather than, the extent to which they succeeded or not or their capacity to attract new members. However, even traditional theory has been concerned with variations in the political and economic impact of collective actions varying according to the number of people mobilised.

[219] "Open unions", on the other hand, were far more dependent upon numbers of members as a political weapon.

[220] Some syndicalist or Communist leaders also embraced the idea of small groups or elite unionism while others argued for small numbers of union members for opposite reasons: "Trust from fellow workers and support from the law seem sufficient for a small number of (union) militants to play their role" (Rosanvallon 1988, quoted in Visser 1992:24).

The number of members may indicate an organisation's *potential* for power, rather than power in itself. Olson (1975:136) argues that it was only after the unions started to deal with the employers, who alone have the power to force workers to join the union, that they began to prosper. Labour unions came to play an important part in the political struggle only long after they had forsaken political action as a major goal.

According to Valenzuela (1989), union density and organisational strength are more appropriate indicators of political strength than numbers. Still, "precision would turn into blindness if we were to suggest that union membership, or union density, provides a ready-made yardstick for union strength" (Visser 1992:22). Unionisation data is more readily used as a measure of developments over time than as an indicator of the strength of unions across countries (ibid).

The density of union affiliation in key areas of economic activity is one indicator of strength. The Zambian case is a good example thereof, with the mine workers' union (ZCTU) as the main driver of union strategies and political success (see Rakner 1992). In several countries unions have been able to negotiate strong bargaining positions in essential export sectors and thereby also acquired relatively strong political influence. The near full unionisation level in the Chilean copper industry is, for example, more important than the general level of unionisation in the country as a whole. Another indicator of strength may be the density of union affiliation in key geographical areas, like capital cities. Examples thereof may be found in Argentina, Brazil and Peru as well as in Spain and Korea (Valenzuela 1989).

Solidarity, militancy and internal strength

Some will also point to labour militancy as a political resource. Visser (1992:17) characterises unions as "oppositions that never become governments". Hernes and Martinussen (1980) argue that organisations' control of public policy is influenced by their means (and use) of sanctions like strikes, stay-aways etc. In a broad sense, unionisation does mean a collective rather than individualistic definition of interests and indicates a collective capacity to act (Korpi 1983, Visser 1992). Militancy may be a strategic resource only if leaders command sufficient authority over workers to decide when *not* to strike and if leaders have the resources to give strategic direction to the strike weapon when they do decide to use it.

Furthermore, workers' militancy does not always take the form of a strike: other forms of active dissatisfaction are incidents in the workplace, sharp criticism of workplace management or even union leadership.

According to Valenzuela (1989), for labour to achieve its specific objectives and an overall transition to democracy, the labour movement needs to be able to mobilise under certain circumstances and restrain its membership on other occasions. A number of conditions are necessary for this mobilisation-restraint sequence to happen: a strong and united labour movement, a close alliance between labour and political movements and a close working alliance with the transition elite during the transition process; however, labour must not be in government itself.

Labour movements are never completely unitary actors. They live, as all other organisations, with internal contradictions and differences, tensions and conflicts between the various constituencies. Interest organisations are supposed to further the *common* interests of their members. However, the extent to which they manage to do so will depend upon whether their internal structures are able to absorb and interpret their common interests as well as "keep under control" the interests of marginal groups that are best represented by other means outside the organisation. Lester (1958:18) argued that: *"Unions are only as strong as their leadership and membership"*. Strength should, however, perhaps be seen more in the light of the *relationship* between leaders and members. The extent to which unions are representative of members' interests will determine the loyalty of members and the extent to which unions function as a readily mobilisable group for collective action. The interpretation of the internal processes of trade unions should, however, be illuminated by a concern for the specific purposes of these bodies.[221] If the "common" interests of members are mostly concerned with economic instrumental issues, wage conditions, etc., unions should be organised in a different way than if members' interests are more concerned with far-ranging political issues or social concerns. While the former may best be furthered through local factory strategies, the latter may best be furthered through centralised strategies that promote unity *across* sectoral interests. At the same time, we must keep in mind that organisations not only represent but also *form* members' interests.

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[221] Which in Hyman's (1971) opinion is seldom done.

Mitchels (1971) suggested that in the trade-union movement, the authoritative character of leaders and their tendency to rule democratic organisations along oligarchic lines are even more pronounced than in political organisations. Lipset et al. (1963) say that:

> "in few areas of political life is the discrepancy between the formal juridical guarantees of democratic procedures and the actual practice of oligarchic rule so marked as in private or voluntary organisations such as trade unions, professional and business associations, veterans' groups and co-operatives"

Robert Mitchels and his "iron law of oligarchy" has also been quoted often enough:

> "It is organisation which gives birth to the dominion of the elected over the electors, of the mandatories over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organisation says oligarchy .....control of the organisational machinery, combined with membership passivity, operates to perpetuate oligarchic control...".

Marx and Engels themselves viewed oligarchy as part of an early stage in the political emergence of the working class. They believed that workers would come to control their institutions as soon as large numbers of them acquired class-consciousness and political sophistication (stated in Lipset et al. 1963). Mitchels (1971) argued that it was impossible for unions to operate on the basis of direct democracy, because the conduct of negotiations and strikes required an organisation led by officials with specialised experience and knowledge; and the larger the union, the greater the need for bureaucratic leadership. Oligarchic control is reinforced by mass apathy because ordinary workers lack adequate information and experience for critical appraisal of official policies.

Propositions about organisational behaviour can be grouped in three broad classes according to their assumptions about the internal processes of organisations (March & Simon 1959). Organisational theory has often focused on the internal processes of organisations as based upon members as passive instruments, as people bringing with them into the organisation attitudes, values and goals or else as decision-makers and problem-solvers. In March and Simons' (1959) words, there is nothing contradictory among these three sets of assumptions. An adequate theory of human behaviour in organisations will have to take into account the

instrumental aspects of human behaviour as well as the motivational and attitudinal and rational perspectives. We will return to the discussion of human behaviour within trade unions as well as to the subject of individual learning within organisations.[222] It will suffice here to say that organisational behaviour is an effect of the members' combined attitudes and motives, the profile of the leadership and the structures an organisation has implemented to enforce or contain the priorities and activities of its members.

The internal organisational structures of corporatist, pluralist and socio-political unions generally differ from one another only to a limited extent. Trade unions acquire organisational characteristics appropriate to their functional role (Higgins 1985). If unions are to successfully extend their operations into the political arena, they have to make radical adjustments to their methods of work and mobilisation and to their organisations (Higgins 1985). Higgins, in his argument, is looking most closely at the corporatist unions, or what he labels political unionism. He argues that a successful political strategy must be accompanied by a relatively centralised union movement in order for unions to be able to carry through co-ordinated policies and activities. A high level of union ambition, carrying with it the need to open up new fronts of class conflict (usually, be it noted, at the behest of local activities/activists? You can only say at the behest of a person!) calls for an institutional expansion from existing bases, which now have to be strengthened as the foundations for a denser organisation (Higgins 1985).

Centralisation seems to be a key factor emphasised in explanations of the political success of labour movements. Internal centralisation is looked upon as essential to push for political change and transitions from authoritarianism as well as to create conditions for the consolidation of democracy at a later stage. Valenzuela states that labour mobilisation followed by restraint sequence is more probable if union organisations and collective bargaining are highly centralised: "in that case, a small number of top labour leaders will be so empowered that they are more likely to be participants in the negotiations of the transition process" (Valenzuela 1989:454). However, several socio-political union movements have also learned that decentralisation is important in order for a union to be able to

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[222] See chapter Chapter 9 for a discussion of individual learning and human behaviour within organisations.

produce a new leadership every time an authoritarian regime restricts their leaders. Unions with a strong shop-floor have a continuous supply of new leaders.

Modernisation theories predicted in fact that with industrialisation, unions would gradually "mature" (Lester 1958). Unions think and act differently under changing circumstances. Lester (ibid) has highlighted evolution and growth processes of unions and the effect of the maturing process on the vitality and responsiveness of labour organisations. However, institutions tend not to change much. The formative cast is not easily altered. Security, stability and preoccupation with administration are moderating influences in social institutions. Drawing on examples from Europe and North America, modernisation theory tended to look at "normal" unionism as economist, likely to remain within the framework of employee-employer negotiations and to pursue members' interests. Nevertheless, even in processes of political transformation, unions that have been highly political and oppositional under authoritarian regimes tend to become more centralised as they increasingly build new and tighter networks within the new democratic systems.

One factor not emphasised by Valenzuela is the internal support necessary for unions to be able to mobilise their members for collective action. To what degree are unions representative of their members' views and able to control their members? What remains is a need for a fine balance between on the one hand a centralised union movement, which is able to co-ordinate action and priorities, and on the other decentralised participation of members. "Within a union, the active rank-and-file members need to participate in the formulation of demands in the process of negotiating and accepting the terms of settlement. Collective bargaining loses its educational value if this group does not genuinely participate in the processes that lead to the bargaining outcome, if by some 'deal' in advance of bargaining or by mere role playing on the part of spokesmen from both sides, the conflicts of interests are not examined and reconciled through democratic procedures on the union side" (Lester 1958:18).

Lipset et al. (1963) note that unions in their internal organisation and operation more closely resemble totalitarian one-party states than they do democratic organisations with legitimate and organised oppositions and turnover in office. Specific external tasks require specific internal organisational structures. Mitchels' (1911) ideas about the "iron law of oligarchy" in trade unions are well known by now. His thesis is that in spite of the democratic and anti-authoritarian origins of union movements, they tend to be governed along oligarchic lines. He explains this by the

apathy of workers who become engaged only when their direct and most immediate interests are at stake and by social differentiation, whereby the union leadership acquires social values and interests distinct from those of its members.

The political resources and power of the unions are thus determined by whether the organisation is representative of its workers and/or manages to create consensus behind its strategies. Success in this, however, is not only affected by internal decision-making structures. Hernes and Martinussen (1980) argue that members' degree of control of their organisations is conditioned by three factors. *First,* the formal rights in the organisation like voting and election procedures. *Second,* the actual differences in opinions and values between the shop floor on the one hand and the union officials and management on the other hand. *Third,* differences in the degree of activity and in attitudes between the various factions of the organisation. Trade unions are representative if workers have control over the strategies, goals and priorities of the organisation. Actual differences of opinion may also be due to the membership composition of a union or to the fact that it represents diverse sectoral interests. Various unions and union federations have found new mechanisms to deal with the combined concerns of centralisation and decentralisation, such as flexibility in deciding bargaining levels for various issues or building union support for and involving workers in decision-making at the workplace.

Concluding remarks

Union movements in developing countries are increasingly experiencing similar situations. Internationalised markets and some variant of "global Fordism", with heavy reliance on imported capital and technology and widespread use of mass production and semi-skilled workers, have confronted union movements with similar problems. Despite this, union movements and their relationship to politics continue to go in different directions. Such disparities are due to the unique cultural forms and traditions of the union movements themselves, but also to the ways employer and state interventions have affected labour movements and their constituencies.

Visser (1992:17) defines union strength as the degree to which unions in a given community combine in representative, comprehensive and inclusive movements. Union density, membership composition, unity,

organisational concentration, centralisation, bargaining extension and workplace representation are measures of union strength. The political resources of trade unions are shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Conditions for Trade Union Strength

Level	Aspects	Indicators
National (macro)	economic	- demand/supply of labour; economic growth, industrial relations, restructuring
	social	- social cleavages and conflicts; distribution of resources
	cultural	- democratic tolerance, acceptance for institutional participation
	institutional	- open versus closed; hierarchy versus "flat" structures; - norms for participation; centralised or decentralised decision-making; detailed versus general goal-oriented regulation; power of other movements
Medio-level	degree of cohesion	- competition between unions, co-operation within unions; - general or sectoral power
Micro-level		- membership density and participation; non-members' participation and support; conformism of members; internally centralised decision-making; leadership legitimacy; consensus around priorities

Valenzuela (1992) argues that there are five forms in which labour movements can enter into national political processes; the social-democratic, the contestatory, the pressure group, the state-sponsored and the confrontational. Bertrand (1992) says that "regarding the emergence and maintenance of trade unions, it is by and large accepted that they are more prosperous in economically developed countries and within a climate of civil and political rights, say liberal democracy". (Bertrand 1992). Payne (1991) says that the strategy chosen by labour does not determine the strength of the movement; the *character* of the movement does: "a labour movement which is able to build leadership, escape government control, and develop organisational skills, will prove more adept at expanding its base of support and mobilising workers. While these conditions are more likely to exist under stable democracies, they are not inevitable outcomes of democratic stability" (Payne 1991). The question is whether they can also emerge out of democratic instability or in authoritarian systems.

7 The South African Trade-Union Movement

Diamond (1994) argues that in order for civil society to play a constructive role in the process of democratic consolidation, certain conditions have to be met. Not all civil society organisations have, in his opinion, the same potential to perform democracy-building functions. As cited earlier (Chapter 5), "their ability to do so depends upon several features of their internal structure and character" (1994:11). First, the chances that a stable democracy will develop improve significantly if civil society does not contain maximalist, uncompromising, interest groups or groups with undemocratic goals or methods. Second, where group interests are organised in a structured, stable manner, bargaining, predictability and the growth of co-operative networks are facilitated, thus contributing to the stability and governability of democratic regimes. Third, if civil society is to function as a school for democracy, its own internal processes must also function democratically. We will consider each of these prerequisites in turn to see whether they hold true for South African trade unionism. First, however, let us take a brief look at its historical development.

7.1 The early days of South African trade unionism[223]

"First the white man brought the Bible, then he brought the guns, the chains, then he built a gaol, then he made the native pay tax. Were they told to do this in the Bible? Why does the white man want all this? It is because the white man wants more money. He can make money with machinery, he gets money out of the ground, he makes paper and turns it into money. The white man does not want to give

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[223] This part is based mainly upon the books by Baskin (1991), Friedman (1987), Luckhardt & Wall (1980) and Roux (1948) as well as interviews with, amongst others, Zora Mehlomakhulu in 1989 and Ray Alexander in August 1992 (both prominent in the early labour movement).

the natives money. Join together and keep on knocking – you will win in the end"[224]

Unions organising black workers have existed since the beginning of the century in South Africa. However, since these unions had no legal recognition they had no bargaining rights either.

The Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa (ICU)[225] was founded in Cape Town in 1919[226] and began by recruiting amongst dock workers. Strike action led to wage increases and union growth in all sectors. As a result, the union became a general union that was as much a movement of industrial and rural protest as it was a trade union. At its height in 1927, it had a membership of about 100,000 workers. From then on, however, it went into steady decline, hastened by government restrictions and internal conflicts. It was further weakened by a lack of internal democratic practices and the expulsion of Communists.[227] By 1930 it had ceased to exist in all but name (Baskin 1991).

The impact of the ICU was, however, enormous. And as it declined, attempts were made to organise unions along industrial lines. Although it never recovered, the ICU established a memory of collective action amongst Africans, which inspired other attempts to unionise in later years. Both the South African Federation of Non-European Trade Unions (FNETU) and its successor, the African Federation of Trade Unions (AFTU), had limited success.[228] It was only in the mid-30s that South African unionism experienced a revival. Industry and manufacturing were now developing rapidly, with a consequent high rate of urbanisation.

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[224] J.M.Mphamba, addressing a meeting of the Industrial an Commercial Workers Union (ICU) in 1929. Quoted in Raftopoulos & Phimister (1997:1).

[225] Which became the first large-scale organisation to mobilise African workers.

[226] Other unions existed before this, but they were rather small, invariably catered for white workers and were modelled on British craft unionism.

[227] From 1924, registered unions could represent workers in collective bargaining at Industrial Councils, but African men ("pass-bearing natives") were excluded from these channels. From 1931, Wage Boards of state officials and employers set African men's wages.

[228] FNETU claimed a membership of some 10, 000. FNETU was founded in 1928, but reorganised into AFTU in 1930. AFTU assumed the role of a broad militant movement directed towards struggle at a higher political level rather than concerning itself with wages and working conditions as a basis for political activity. In 1932 AFTU experienced a severe loss of members and some of its unions collapsed.

From the late 30s, workers were organised in Natal, the Western Cape and Transvaal. One of the most important unions in this period was the one organised around Max Gordon. His strategy was to use the wage boards to call for improvements in the minimum wage paid to African labourers. Wage gains led to recruitment of new members and his union had 20,000 members by 1939. It fell apart, however, when Gordon himself was interned for his opposition to the war. His excessive reliance upon the wage board strategy has also been argued to have made his union organisationally weak (Friedman 1987).

The outbreak of the war, which stimulated the development of the local economy (previously many products had been imported), opened up enormous possibilities for unionism. Employers were now forced to employ large numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled black workers in place of the white workers who had left for the battlefields. Following unity talks between sections of the union movement, the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU) was formed as a loose formation or coalition comprising many weak industrial unions together with a few which were better organised. CNETU grew rapidly through the war and claimed a membership of about 158,000 in 1945. After the war, however, the government grew increasingly harsh towards the union movement and CNETU went into rapid decline.[229] The lack of factory power proved critical in denying the CNETU the strength to resist assaults upon African unions (Southall 1995).[230] When the NP came into office in 1948, it marked the beginning of a new dark period for trade unionism.

The communist party was outlawed in 1950 and racist legislation was extended to most aspects of society, including the breaking-up of unions into separate racial branches, intensification of job reservation whereby certain jobs were reserved for whites and a government declaration that it would never recognise black trade unions (Baskin 1991). A new law prohibited strikes by African workers, and bargaining

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[229] Many have argued that the labour scene, and indeed the political situation in South Africa, would have taken a different turn if labour had mobilised during the war. The "Ten Shilling Strike" in the metal sector (1948) might, for example, have proven more effective if it had taken place a few years earlier. Unions calculated, however, that they would gain more politically if they showed their loyalty to the government and its engagement in the war. History proved them wrong.
[230] Divisions within the CNETU, and a massive state clampdown likewise played a critical role.

channels were open only to employers and white unions. From 1956, registered unions could no longer include workers of all races.[231] Although the ANC mobilised against the apartheid laws, union movement resistance was not total. Most unions were members of the Trades and Labour Council, whose national executive decided that it would support the exclusion of African trade unions. The Trades and Labour Council rapidly disintegrated thereafter[232] and the bulk of its members went on to form the Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA), a body which vacillated between total rejection of African trade unions and attempts to control them in the years to come.[233] TUCSA was a federation of registered unions, dominated by craft unions desperately seeking the most effective way of protecting their privileged position vis-a-vis semi-skilled African workers (Lewis 1997:192). Other workers joined forces with the ultra-right Afrikaner nationalist unions, fighting for racial segregation and white workers' privileges and eventually establishing the South African Confederation of Labour. A third camp of progressive unions within the Trades and Labour Council united, on the other hand, with the rump of CNETU unions and launched the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) in 1955.[234]

From the beginning, SACTU had nineteen affiliates and claimed a membership of about 20,000. Its organisational strength rested on three unions: the Food and Canning Workers Union (FCWU),[235] the Textile

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[231] Unions with mixed membership were required to create separate branches and hold separate meetings for different racial classifications. Non-African unions registered under the Industrial Conciliation Act and thus bargained through Industrial Councils for clauses, which covered African workers in "parallel" unions.

[232] The T & LC attempted to recover influence with government by reconstituting itself in 1954 as the SA Trade Unions Council, but without much success. SATUC was later formed into TUCSA in 1962.

[233] TUCSA opted to terminate the affiliation of African unions again in 1969.

[234] The formation of SACTU was partly a response to the exclusion of African unions by SATUC.

[235] As with some other unions, the Food and Canning Workers Union was split by apartheid legislation. Although it operated as one in practice, the Food and Canning Workers Union (FCWU) had two components: one for non-Africans, which was the registered FCWU, and the unregistered African Food and Canning Workers Union. They were forced into a nominal separation by the legislation that prohibited African workers from belonging to registered unions. The FCWU

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Workers Industrial Union and the National Union of Laundry, Cleaning and Dyeing Workers. For African workers, in particular, the emergence of SACTU represented a new impetus in the history of workers' struggle. Apart from the SACP in the 30s and 40s and the activities of CNETU, there had not been any systematic attempts to organise African workers into trade unions (Luckhardt & Wall 1980). SACTU adopted a far higher political profile than any of the previously existing unions. SACTU argued that you could not separate politics and bread-and-butter issues in the factories. The Statement of Policy adopted at the First Annual Conference of SACTU argued:

> "SACTU is conscious of the fact that the organising of the mass of workers for higher wages, better conditions of life and labour is inextricably bound up with a determined struggle for political rights and liberation from all oppressive laws and practices. It follows that a mere struggle for economic rights of all the workers without participation in the general struggle for political emancipation would condemn the Trade Union movement to uselessness and to a betrayal of the interests of workers" (Luckhardt & Wall 1980:97).

SACTU from the outset joined the forces involved in the struggle for political liberalisation and the drafting of the Freedom Charter, in alliance with the ANC. In this sense, it represented a new style of political unionism or social-movement unionism (Lambert 1993). Despite intensive state repression, it grew steadily both in membership and in organisational strength until it could claim a membership of about 51,000 members in 1961. The Sharpeville massacre in 1960, however, signified a turning point for resistance politics in South Africa. The ANC and the recently formed PAC were both banned, and SACTU leaders took over leadership positions in the newly formed armed wing of the ANC: Umkhonto we Sizwe. The union movement suffered severely from the mass arrests that were to follow.

thus represented coloured workers and the unregistered AFCWU represented Africans. Effectively, however, they continued to operate as a single union, working out of the same offices, and holding joint conferences and organisational campaigns, while, for the purposes of complying with the statutory obligation to divide their activities, maintaining nominally separate minutes, books of accounts, elected office-holder bearers etc. (Lewis 1997:218).

Friedman (1987) argues that SACTU suffered from its heavy reliance upon the political struggle and its concentration upon the political campaigns of the Congress Alliance as opposed to factory organisation and bread-and-butter issues. SACTU activists had put their energy into national political campaigns, sometimes in place of shop floor organising. Ray Alexander (1983:621), herself a veteran SACTU unionist, says:

> "The leaders of Congress were intellectuals and trade unionists, but trade unionism was too weak to set the pace".

Massive restrictions were, however, the main initial reason why SACTU had to dismantle and operate from exile after 1965. By the mid-60s, black trade unionism was effectively crushed. The efforts to build black trade unions moved through two phases during the decade and a half after 1964. The period before 1973 was characterised by official censure, comprehensive legal discrimination, employer hostility, weak organisation and quiescence on the factory floor (Lewis 1997:189). The few black trade unions that survived the dark decade of the 60s were affiliated to TUCSA. But in 1969, TUCSA expelled them from their ranks. Some of the issues which emerge from the early history of black unionism, however, are the key role of the communist party, the central role played by individual leaders, the inability to unite black and white workers and the weakness of general unionism[236] (Baskin 1991). SACTU thereafter emphasised the need to build a factory basis first and consider political involvement later. Furthermore, involvement in politics had to follow the lines of "independent worker politics" as opposed to "populist nationalism" (Friedman 1987:31). This was to become one of the lessons to be taught by the new unionism emerging in the 70s. The post-1973 period was characterised by the re-emergence of worker organisation and sustained factory-floor militancy.

7.2   The development of new unionism during apartheid

Strike waves in Durban in 1973, when nearly 100,000 largely non-unionised African workers forcefully struck for higher wages, put workers'

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[236] It failed to build working- class leadership and proper structures for democratic control and thus allowed the development of individual leadership and personality cults (Baskin 1991:8).

struggles and trade unionism back on the public agenda.[237] Manufacturing workers, textile workers, municipal workers and thousands of others joined bus drivers and dockworkers in flexing their muscles. The first three months of 1973 saw 61,000 workers on strike, more than the total for the previous eight years (Baskin 1991).[238] The strike wave spread rapidly across the country. In response the state banned individuals who were regarded as agitators and introduced laws making it possible for African workers to channel grievances through liaison committees to be established on the factory floor.[239] Yet, there were several remarkable features of the Durban strike (Lewis 1997:202). First, the sheer magnitude of the strike was noteworthy. Furthermore, the lack of visible leadership was remarkable. A strike involving more than 60, 000 workers in more than 146 plants would seem to demand active and visible co-ordination, and yet it proved impossible to identify the leadership. The reason was that the strikes were led from the factory floor, where grievances spontaneously ignited collective action (ibid).

However, the mass strikes won substantial wage increases (Campbell 1987:149). Furthermore, the striking workers gained considerable sympathy in the English-language press. A survey of whites in the Durban area indicated a remarkable sympathy with the striking workers, who were generally regarded as underpaid (Lewis 1997:202). Instead of tapering off, the strike wave exploded yet again, this time in East London in 1975. Together these strikes brought to a close a decade of industrial and political peace (Mamdani 1996).

The rebuilding of the union movement had started in the early 70s. The independent trade- union movement was far weaker in the early 70s than it had been a decade earlier, but there were glimmers of hope (Lewis 1997). Against all odds some African unions had survived the onslaught of the 60s and new organisations were emerging. Furthermore, African workers themselves were demonstrating their dissatisfaction and resilience in sporadic outbursts of strike action (ibid). The Metal and Allied Workers

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[237] The strike actually started in October 1972, but reached its peak from January to March 1973, thus referred to as "Durban 1973".

[238] Mamdani (1996) argues that more black workers were involved in strike action than in the previous twelve years after Sharpeville.

[239] Liaison committees were widely boycotted. It is still estimated that there existed 2,600 liaison committees and more than 300 works councils existed nationally in 1978.

Union (MAWU) and the National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW) were launched in 1973 with the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) and the Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) following in 1974. These were Durban-based unions initially and co-ordinated their activities to some extent through the umbrella body, the Trade Union Advisory Co-ordinating Council (TUACC).[240] In Cape Town, the first steps towards rebuilding the labour movement came with small general unions being co-ordinated through council structures.[241] Similar initiatives were taken in Witwatersrand (Gauteng). The Urban Training Project was launched in 1970 and helped service a number of existing unions and the formation of new ones. By 1977, these latter unions had established the Consultative Committee of Black Trade Unions which claimed a total membership of 19,000. For the first few years rebuilding the unions was not easy. Almost all the unions were politically inactive and generally struggled to recruit members. The Soweto massacre in 1976 changed that and resulted in a countrywide uprising. Millions of workers joined students in stay-aways and demonstrations organised by students and communities. Generally cautious, unions played little or no part, however, in these actions.[242] From 1977, unions started to score considerable successes and to grow. International pressure and increasing workplace unrest made the state realise that something had to be done in order to increase its support amongst blacks and black workers in particular. It was against this background that the Wiehahn Commission was appointed in 1977 to investigate the South African labour laws. This

[240] The TUACC was formed in 1974.

[241] The Western Province Workers Advice Bureau was set up in 1973. The origins of the WPWAB can be traced to two different sources: one was the African trade unionists who had gained experience in SACTU in the 1950s and early 1960s. The other source of origin was amongst students at the University of Cape Town who were on the Wages Commission together with some office-holders from the National Union of SA Students (NUSAS) (Maree 1989b). The WPWAB was later transformed into the (regional) General Workers Union in 1978 and merged into the national Transport and General Workers Union in 1986. NUSAS had made a decision in 1972 to form Wages Commissions on each of its affiliated campuses. The Wages Commissions concentrated on investigating and exposing research into and exposures of [low] wages and [poor] working conditions (Lewis 1997).

[242] In an attempt to choke the emerging unions, twenty-six individuals associated with the unions received banning orders in 1976.

resulted in recommendations that African workers should be granted the right to form and belong to trade unions and to bargain through registration in Industrial Councils.[243]

Simultaneously, the emerging Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) realised that in order to survive it had to rely more upon workers' demands than political struggles. FOSATU was formed in 1979 and brought together twelve unions with approximately 20,000 members.[244] It was established as a tight federation with centralised decision-making and binding policies on its member affiliates while pioneering the principle of direct worker control and worker delegates constituting the majority at all levels and structures of the federation. Other principles involved non-racism, shop-floor organisation and focus upon developing shop-steward and worker independence from political organisations (Baskin 1991).

Disagreements concerning registration in Industrial Councils split the emerging union movement in two. While FOSATU decided to register, others (backed by the exiled SACTU) decided to boycott. A new breed of unionism emerged, which rejected registration and consequent collaboration with state structures.[245] Many of these union styled themselves "community unions" and believed it was impossible to separate factory demands from the wider township problems. Furthermore, they aligned themselves closely with the township civics organisations and were seen as more political than the other emerging unions in the FOSATU tradition. Most of these "community unions" aligned themselves openly with the ANC's political perspectives and were affiliated with the UDF. Many of them experienced heavy state restrictions and organisational weakness, with resulting repressions. As the community-based unions rose quickly and then fell, the FOSATU unions grew and consolidated their strength. By the end of 1981, FOSATU constituted the largest union block, with 95,000 members in 387 factories (Baskin 1991). FOSATU affiliates increasingly followed national strategies, used Industrial Courts and Councils and won several landmark cases. Simultaneously, the Council of

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[243] Registration would imply restrictions upon political activities, which in turn was meant to control the unions.
[244] FOSATU was formed on the basis of the TUACC (Durban unions) and unions from Eastern and Western Cape.
[245] The South African Allied Workers Union was the most notable of these community unions.

Unions of South Africa (CUSA) was formed in 1980 and grew dramatically,[246] rejecting non-racism in favour of black leadership (arguing that there were too many white leaders within FOSATU), while establishing a loose federation leaving affiliates largely to decide their own priorities and strategies.

Unity talks began at the informal level in 1979 and were formalised in the early 1980s.[247] Meanwhile, FOSATU was evaluating its own experiences and those of the community unions. Locals[248] and shop stewards councils were established in an attempt to take members beyond plant-level consciousness and marked a more active engagement of FOSATU workers in politics. FOSATU faced increasing pressure from members to engage in political activities and assume a higher political profile. Political independence and the question of registration in Industrial Councils became major areas of controversy in the unity talks. While FOSATU put emphasis upon democratic structures, mandates, reporting back, etc. other unions argued that this would hinder speedy and effective decisions.

Unity talks took place through the next half decade to come. FOSATU's perspective was that a broader federation should be formed involving disciplined unity, which in practice would imply a federation formed along the lines of FOSATU's own structure rather than a loose federation (such as TUCSA) or a tight federation of industrial unions. Furthermore, the FOSATU faction claimed to be aware of the dangers of co-option through registration, but argued that the Wiehahn dispensation itself was a product of the struggle and it would be wrong *not* to use the space provided by it in order to expand union organisation. FOSATU was prepared to disband in order to form a new federation. Unity talks continued with the involvement of those unions who were committed to

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[246] CUSA had also managed to organise mine workers. The National Union of Mineworkers was launched in 1982 and brought a major increase in members for CUSAC.

[247] The four years between 1981 and 1985 are regarded by COSATU people themselves as a period of "painstaking deliberations" and were marked by mistrust, differences of interests and organisational outlook as well as conflicts (*The Shopsteward*, December 1995).

[248] Locals brought together shopstewards from a particular township or locality.

unity. The latter were ready to disband in order to form a new federation and to split up (where necessary) in order to establish industrial (as opposed to general) unions.

The rise of a giant, ...

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was finally formed in November 1985 on the basis of several FOSATU unions, independent unions such as the Commercial, catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa (CCAWUSA), some of the unions from the CUSA tradition, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and several of UDF- affiliated "community unions". Cyril Ramaphosa, then NUM general secretary, said at the launch:

> "In the next few days ...we will be putting our heads together, not only to make sure we reach Pretoria, but also to make a better life for us workers in this country. What we have to make clear is that a giant has risen and will confront all that stands in its way"
>
> (The Shopsteward, December 1995).

The launch of COSATU brought together about 460,000 workers from thirty-three unions. It also brought together three different approaches to organising. One was associated with FOSATU and the strong independent unions, which stressed shop-floor unionism and union independence, while preferring to remain unaligned to the liberation parties.[249] It emphasised the establishment of democratic, factory-based structures, which were based on principles of worker control and leadership accountability. The second approach to organising was that of the community unions, which had argued for affiliation with the UDF and stressed the indivisibility of working-class struggle from the wider political struggle. They traced their ideological roots to the Congress-aligned SACTU from the 50s. The community unions tended to identify with the main political parties and especially with the ANC. While FOSATU wanted separate union leadership, the community unions gave priority to alliances. The third approach, which embraced the NUM, workers in paper and printing

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[249] See Foster (1982 & 1983).

(PPWAWU), transport (TGWU)[250] etc. bisected these extremes (Murray 1994). While sympathetic to the UDF, these centrist unions were not prepared to throw themselves wholeheartedly into community struggles at the expense of building strong unions on the shop floor. They saw the need for the political struggle and *strategic* alliances, but also for an independent union movement.[251]

The central theme of the final COSATU constitution was that it would be an active, disciplined union federation with structures at national, regional and local level. All structures would contain a majority of worker delegates in order to prevent officials from dominating COSATU structures and to ensure mass participation in decision-making.[252] The Congress called for one union to be established in each industry within six months. The five unifying principles were: non-racism, one union-one industry, worker control, representation on the basis of paid-up membership and national co-operation. Three principles governed COSATU's internal democratic activities (Golding 1991). The first was worker control – i.e. discipline and active participation of rank-and-file members in the decision-making of both unions and the federation. Second, representative and collective leadership was established. This included the election of shop stewards, etc. subject to recall. Third, a principle of mandates, report-backs and accountability was implemented. Furthermore, resolutions adopted at the launch called for the lifting of the states of emergency, the withdrawal of troops from the townships, the release of political prisoners, the unbanning of all restricted individuals and organisations and for support for international pressure against apartheid to be kept up, including disinvestment. The Congress stressed

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[250] The PPWAWU and the TGWU were FOSATU unions. There was also a internal division within FOSATU on the question of organising. One view stressed shop-floor unionism and union independence. Another view was more sympathetic to the UDF, although the adherents of this view were not ready to throw themselves wholeheartedly into the community struggle.

[251] It did not, however, prevent them from engaging in stay-aways for political reasons, such as the SFAWU stay-away in support of SIMBA workers in 1984.

[252] This also implies that the only positions that can be held by full-time officials are those of secretaries. Office holders like presidents, treasurers etc. are not full-time in order to ensure that elected leaders remain in touch with their bases. Structures would also include a national congress every two years, a central executive committee (CEC) and an executive committee (Exco) which meets every month.

the close relationship *between* political and economic issues. Resolutions
also demanded the right to strike and picket, condemned the Bantustan
policies and the exploitation occurring in these areas, demanded that the
migrant labour system be scrapped and called upon the Central Executive
Committee to set a national minimum wage.[253]

.... and its reactions: competing and independent unions

Strong reactions from, *inter alia*, Inkatha followed the launch of
COSATU. Chief Gatsha Buthulezi grew increasingly wary of the growth
of a mass union movement outside his control. In order to stop the growth
of COSATU, especially in Natal, Inkatha launched its own trade union:
the United Workers Union of South Africa (UWUSA). Hostility between
Inkatha and unions in the region had been growing for years (especially
the FOSATU unions) and COSATU President E. Barayi's speech after the
launch of COSATU did not make it any better.[254]

The launch of COSATU also influenced those unions remaining
outside the federation. The black consciousness-oriented CUSA unions
and the Africanist Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions (AZACTU) in
turn also met to discuss a merger. COSATU's principle of non-racism and
long-standing cleavages between the black consciousness-oriented unions
and the unions more oriented towards charterism made them decide to
remain outside COSATU. CUSA's NUM was the exception and now
joined COSATU. The CUSA and AZACTU unions merged to form their
own federation the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) in 1986.
While some speculated that this was a PAC-aligned union movement,
NACTU leadership strongly adhered to the principle of political non-
alignment. Simultaneously, the NACTU unions were strongly dominated
by an Africanist and black consciousness-oriented leadership. They
distinguished themselves from the national-democratic and shop-floor
traditions in their emphasis upon black leadership and its corollary–
hostility to the leadership of white intellectuals in the labour movement.
Webster and Adler (1996:7) argue that:

[253] The CEC is composed of elected office-holders plus four delegates from each
of the large unions and two delegates from smaller unions.
[254] Barayi in his speech attacked all the homeland leaders including KwaZulu- and
Inkatha leader Buthulezi, labelling them "puppets for the apartheid government".

"not withstanding their radical political affiliations, these unions in their organisational form tended to emulate the old-line white unions with their emphasis on office-bound leadership. They tended not to develop the shop steward structures at the core of the shop-floor tradition"

The table below shows the main union federations in the period after the launch of COSATU.

Table 7.1   Trade Union Federations in South Africa, 1985.
            (SAIRR 1985:179)

Category	Federation	Affiliates	Members
Dem.	COSATU	33	450,000[255] (500,000)[256]
	CUSA	11	180,000
	AZACTU	8	75,000
Multi-racial	TUCSA	42	285,780
Whites only	SACOL	12	110,000
Unaff.		118	300,000

7.3   Unionism in 1997

The total number of organised workers in South Africa has increased from 1 million in 1979 to more than 3 million workers today.[257] Approximately 37 per cent of workers in the formal workforce belong to unions, a figure that rises over 47 per cent if we exclude the largely unorganised sectors of
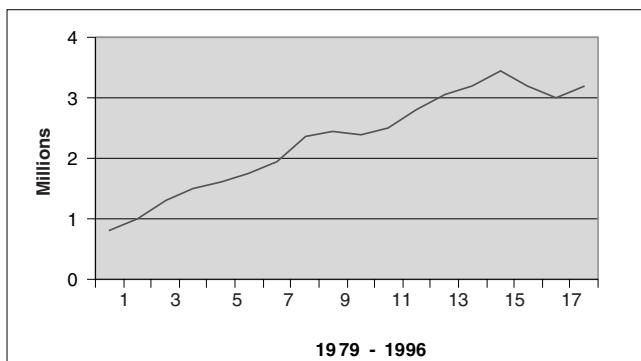
[255] Paid up.
[256] Signed members.
[257] 3 million workers belong to 248 registered trade unions, with an additional 200, 000 belonging to unregistered unions (Levy 1998).

agriculture and domestic services.[258] COSATU is clearly the dominant trade-union federation. From the time it was formed in 1985, the number of paidup members of its affiliates has increased from 450,000 to about 1.8 million in 1997/98, making it the biggest organised group in civil society. NACTU has approximately 220,000 paidup members (Levy 1998). The Federation of Independent Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA)[259] has about 515,000 paidup members and represents predominantly whitecollar workers, and hence a large number of white employees. The rest of the organised workers are spread over a large number of smaller independent unions, UWUSA, and finally a large number of white workers belonging to relatively small unions affiliated to the South African Confederation of Labour (SACOL). Figures 7.1 and 7.2 show the development of membership in registered trade unions from 1979 to 1993 and paidup union membership by federation in 1997.

Figure 7.1   Membership of Registered Trade Unions 1979–1996 (Levy 1998)
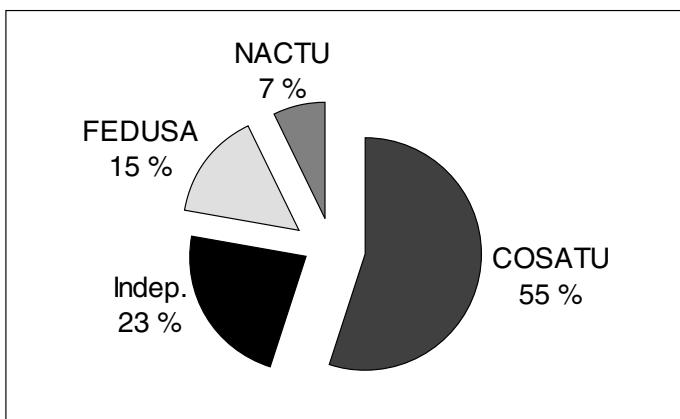
[258] The SALDRU/World Bank Study from 1993 indicates that 27 per cent of people in employment (including the informal sector, etc.) are unionised, ranging from 35 per cent amongst African males to 19 per cent amongst white males and 11 per cent amongst white females (Fallon & Lucas 1998). My own analysis of the OHS 1995 (CSS) confirms the picture of 35 per cent of African employed males being organised, with 23 per cent of white males unionised. The OHS 1995 indicates that 32 per cent of males and 29 per cent of females are organised. Levy (1998), on the other hand, reports on 22 per cent of the economically active population and 41 per cent of those employed being organised.
[259] FEDSAL changed its name from the Federation of Salaried Staff to the Federation of South African Labour in 1994 as part of an overall restructuring aiming at recruiting more black and blue-collar workers. In 1996, it took the name of FEDUSA.

About half the formal workforce is unionised, with the great majority belonging to COSATU affiliates. Whereas a large majority of Gauteng black workers are organised in COSATU, sizeable proportions of white workers belong to small craft or artisans' unions affiliated with SACOL.

COSATU and NACTU are mostly organised around sectoral interests generated by the final product more than the craft or work process. The traditional white workers' unions, on the other hand, represent to a larger extent interests generated by the production process, by crafts or professional interests. COSATU and NACTU mainly organise bluecollar, unskilled and semiskilled manufacturing workers and miners. In general, the highest union density rate is amongst semi-skilled and skilled workers (44 per cent) and amongst professional workers (43 per cent) (own analysis, OHS 1995), although these two groups belong to different union federations.

Figure 7.2   Paid-up Membership by Federation 1997 (Levy 1998)

Continued duality between black and white unions

There is clear a duality between the strategies and priorities of black and white workers as well as a duality of the organisational priorities and strategies of their unions. These dualities reflect the political setting and the apartheid protection of white workers through regulations and restrictions placed upon blacks. White workers were given priority and advantages by the apartheid regime, in terms of education and laws on job preferences and segregation restricting the entry of blacks to the labour market. Legal restrictions, Bantu education and direct discrimination in the workplace thus disadvantaged black workers. Unions or staff associations representing white workers were given special status by the apartheid state and

employers. By contrast, unions representing blacks had no bargaining rights until 1979, and in some "homelands" still had no rights or status by 1994. A racially divided labour market emerged from the discrimination, which will also carry weight in shaping workers' interests and union priorities in the years to come.

Differences in privileges and positions led to unions adopting different political strategies right from the beginning of the century. White workers joined TUCSA and through the 60s and 70s racially exclusive unions and the federation SACOL, whereas black workers joined SACTU and thereafter FOSATU and independent unions in large numbers. Both white and black labour unions were highly political, but with different strategies, goals and content. White workers' unions were relatively conservative, seeking to maintain their privileges and working closely with the NP. Black workers' unions sought to uproot white workers' privileges and worked closely with the political parties in underground and exile. Whereas white workers and their unions benefited from the undemocratic system, democracy was the primary goal for black workers and their unions.

The legacy of racial segregation of the earlier trade unionism continued into the 80s and 90s. In spite of non-racism in principle, it is only recently that COSATU increasingly involves white workers. The majority of whites were either organised in conservative staff associations in the public sector, or in the case of privately employed employees belonged to industrial-craft unions. Many of these hold supervisory positions, identified more with management than with the rest of the workers and are generally perceived to exhibit a "craft consciousness" (Holdt 1993, Murray 1995). White unions engaged in many militant industrial battles, but such struggles were centred largely on resistance to attempts by employers to extend the field of skilled work for African workers and to secure a reduction in the cost of white labour.[260]

[260] The "famous" Rand Revolt in 1922 was, for example, pre-empted by a decision of the Chamber of Mines to cut production costs by reducing the agreed proportion of whites employed relative to cheaper black labour (Southall 1995:49). The South African Communist Party under the banner "Workers of the world, Unite!" headed the revolt for a White South Africa. The revolt was finally ended when the government went in with bombs.

FEDUSA, as a traditional white union federation, is in principle non-racial. It is an alliance of mainly white clerical workers in banking, mining and the public sector. FEDUSA insists that the federation is a moderate, apolitical voice of labour that restricts itself to economic, labour and consumer issues.[261] It was originally formed on the basis of remnants of the old TUCSA unions, but then revitalised in the late 80s and early 90s with a broader recruitment base. Other whites only unions, like the *Mynwerkersunie* (the Mine Workers Union) and affiliates of SACOL like *Yster en Staal*, are still racially exclusive, have been conservative defenders of the old order and have actively worked against the democratic process. In fact, the elimination of apartheid protection, economic restructuring and new plans for affirmative actions, etc. ushered in a period of turmoil for the white trade unions. As their privileged positions disappeared, white workers responded with increased racism and militancy. Simultaneously, their refusal to co-operate in national economic or company-based bargaining with black unions has gradually eroded their political influence. The decision of the NP to support the enactment of the joint COSATU/NACTU/SACCOLA[262] accord over the Labour Relations Amendments Act in 1990 made the general secretary of the *Mynwerkersunie* conclude: "*this means that the old order, in which the white worker was the most important ally of successive governments, is obviously gone*" (Matlala 1993, Murray 1994). These unions have increasingly attempted to adopt new strategies of general (white workers) unionism as opposed to craft unionism, but some white workers, in particular the less skilled workers, have turned to the COSATU unions instead.[263] It is becoming clear that the "glory days" for white unionism are long gone.

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[261] See the *South African Labour Bulletin*, Vol. 17,. Nos. 3 and 6.
[262] The South African Co-ordinating Committee on Labour Affairs (SACCOLA) was an umbrella body of the employers federations' labour relations components.
[263] White low-skilled workers in the mining, metal, food and commercial sectors have joined COSATU. The most striking advances have been made on the railways, where the COSATU affiliate SAHRWU could suddenly claim 1,500 white members (Murray 1994).

Duality and unity among black unions

In 1988, a leadership far more oriented towards Africanist traditions and the PAC was elected to take over NACTU. Many expected that this would hinder any discussions about broader unity with COSATU. Over the following years, NACTU was plunged into internal conflicts, with the result that many workers left NACTU in order to join COSATU. After 1989, however, NACTU made steady gains in recruitment and managed to increase its membership from 150,000 in 1989 to about 330,000 in 1994. Several key mergers simultaneously reduced the number of affiliates from twenty to fifteen, which improved the effectiveness of the organisation.

COSATU is still a federation dominated by black, mostly African, blue-collar workers below the level of artisans. NACTU shares similar characteristics. NACTU is strongest in the manufacturing sector, particularly in chemicals, metals, construction, furniture and food. Lately its has also made inroads into the sectors recently included in the provisions of the new labour dispensations in the 90s, like farming. NACTU is strongest where COSATU has only medium-sized affiliates, but unlike COSATU, few NACTU unions have a strong national presence.[264] COSATU is strongest in the mining, metal and manufacturing sectors, and is increasingly gaining ground among public sector workers.

There have for several years been discussions and talks about a merger between COSATU and NACTU. COSATU and NACTU have worked together in a number of joint efforts, notably the Workers Charter Campaign, in order to build broad-based working-class solidarity outside the parameters of existing union structures (Murray 1994). Their most successful co-operation was, however, centred on the three-year campaign to oppose the amendments to the Labour Relations Act in 1989.[265] The main stumbling block to trade-union unity has remained the question of political alliances. While NACTU has been open to co-operation on specific issues, divisions between the ANC, the PAC and AZAPO on strategic and political questions have remained obstacles to forging more

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[264] With the exception of the South African Chemical Workers' Union which rivalled the COSATU- affiliated Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU).

[265] At its annual Congress in 1988, NACTU removed several obstacles to its working more closely with COSATU. Although unrelated to this, it also exchanged the concept of "black" for the more exclusive "African" workingclass leadership. Second, NACTU replaced the Black Consciousness leadership with Africanist-oriented people who in practice (although not for ideological reasons) appeared eager for closer co-operation with COSATU (Southall 1995).

long-term trade-union alliances. NACTU is unwilling to merge as long as the COSATU leadership maintains its formal alliance with the SACP and the ANC.[266]

Summary

COSATU and its affiliates today have about ninety-five national officeholders, 590 regional officeholders and employ more than 1,400 people on a fulltime basis (NALEDI 1994). While it was initially common in the union movements to find union leaders drawing the same salaries as secretaries, cleaners, etc. this has changed dramatically. Union leaders are still paid far below market rates in both the public and private sectors but have enjoyed relative wage gains compared to other groups of union staff. Most COSATU members are generally more highly educated than unorganised workers and most are found in semi-skilled and skilled occupations in mining and manufacturing.[267] Table 7.2 shows a breakdown of COSATU affiliates.

Furthermore, the union density rate is higher amongst black workers than amongst whites. And although the racial ratio in COSATU unions has levelled out, it is still a predominantly black trade-union federation. Table 7.3 shows unionisation percentages by race.[268]

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[266] Organisational difficulties, ideological differences, and regional rivalries also slowed the unity talks down.

[267] 36 per cent are in manufacturing, 19 per cent in mining, 24 per cent in public services, 13 per cent in services, 4 per cent in transport and 2 per cent in both construction and agriculture (Filita 1996).

[268] Racial figures for COSATU only are not to be found.

Table 7.2   COSATU Affiliates, 1996 (Filita 1996:3).

Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU)	48,703
Construction and Allied Workers Union (CAWU)	41,509
Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU)	145,124
Institute of Public Servants (IPS)	16,676
National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU)	131,938
National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)	357,198
National Union of Metalworkers of SA (NUMSA)	263,893
Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers Union (PPWAWU)	53,900
Police & Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU)	43,520
Communication Workers Union (CWU)	41,000
SA Agriculture, Plantations and Allied Workers Union (SAAPAWU)	35,000
SA Clothing & Textile Workers Union (SACTWU)	160,000
SA Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU)	134,626
SA Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU)	114,962
SA Domestic Workers Union (SADWU)	6,520
SA Municipal Workers Union (SAMWU)	112,059
SA Railways and Harbour Workers' Union (SARHWU)	40,421
SA Society of Bank Officials (SASBO)	73,094
Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU)	67,288
Total membership	**1,887,431**

Table 7.3   Unionisation by Race, 1994 (in percentages) (Baskin 1996:29)

Race	Men	Women	Average
Black	35.1	36	35.4
Indian	32.7	33.2	32.9
Coloured	29.5	31.5	30.3
White	26.9	16.5	22.7
Average of all groups	32.4	29.3	31.3

The representation of new interest groups also poses challenges to the internal consolidation of COSATU.[269] An increasing number of COSATU's members come from white-collar professions, white groups and/or the public sector. Both the public sector workers and white-collar occupations have different concerns to those of industrial workers and miners. Furthermore, the role of COSATU as a federation has been debated. One dilemma has been maintaining a balance between the co-ordinating and interventionist roles of the federation.[270] COSATU's aim at the launch Congress was to establish "one union per industry" within the next six months, implying mergers of existing unions and the establishment of new ones to fit industrial sectors and bargaining councils.[271] This took longer than planned. It is only in the late 1990s that this goal is closer to being attained with plans for mergers of the public sector unions, as well as the demarcation process between the affiliate unions of COSATU. Some of the COSATU affiliates are very powerful, others are very weak, with the result that campaigns and policies easily become more representative of the stronger, larger unions. South African unions today are faced with the challenges of finding a balance between alliances and independence, between politics and shop-floor issues and between centralisation and decentralisation. In the words of a COSATU unionist:

"In 1985, things were tough, - but much simpler"
        (Chris Bonner, CWIU in The Shopsteward, December 1995)

[269] As one concrete example, COSATU has for example had to revive its courses for organisers and shop stewards to accommodate new needs (*The Shopsteward*, December 1995).

[270] Jay Naidoo, former General Secretary of COSATU, says that there were many times when they as office-bearers could see problems and knew what to do, but where affiliates would argue that they were autonomous.

[271] The large numbers of smaller unions at the launch will illustrate the need for mergers. Five of the founding unions had, for example, fewer than 1,000 members and only fourteen unions (out of thirty-three) claimed more than 10,000 000 members. The Mine Workers Union (NUM) was the largest affiliate, with more than 100, 000 members (*The Shopsteward*, December 1995).

8 The political role of the South African labour movement

"In a country such as ours, a political organisation that does not receive the support of workers is in fact paralysed on the very ground on which it has chosen to wage battle. Workers are the principal force upon which the democratic movement should rely"
(Nelson Mandela, 1953).[272]

But to what extent did workers and the labour movement in South Africa take upon themselves the task of leading the democratic movement? To what extent did they actually take part in the struggle? And to the extent that they did, what explains the politicisation of labour and the pattern followed in its relations with the state? Furthermore, what resources did labour have at its disposal? And to what extent did it succeed? Is it structural relations and the strategic rational action of the actors involved which explains the development of labour's form and characteristics?

8.1 Labour and politics: testing the theory in a South African context

Changes in a union's development that derive from changes in the organisation's mode of functioning can be said to be *systemically* caused, while those that come about in response to external factors, such as technological and economic change, may be termed *environmentally* caused.[273] Both these perspectives portray unions as passive bodies that respond to structural factors in a rational fashion no matter whether the

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[272] Nelson Mandela, No Easy Walk to Freedom. Presidential Address to the ANC Transvaal Branch, 21 September 1953, reproduced in Karis & Carter 1977.
[273] Due et al. (1994) use this as a point of departure for explaining changes in industrial relations systems.

response comes from union leaders, from selected individuals or from the collective. Others, however, argue that unions develop on the basis of the *value-orientation of the actors* involved.

The early history of labour and of industrial relations and bargaining structures – i.e. the forces involved in its creation – will have long-term effects on industrial relations which may last for many decades.[274] A historical-institutional perspective provides a firm foundation for our analysis. The decision to treat the subject from a historical perspective makes it possible also to focus on continuity in the development of organisations and bargaining and on the drama evident in what Poole (1984:87) refers to as "strategic phases in institution-building". We will highlight the thresholds that have to be crossed in advancing towards a pluralist system of industrial relations (Rokkan 1970, Ebbinghaus 1992) – namely, the thresholds of association, of collective action, of bargaining and of participation.[275] We will also underline some of the key factors and phases during which the internal composition of labour and the political interaction with other actors served to direct the union movement in a specific direction.

[274] Industrial relations must here be seen from the "American perspective", based on Dunlop (1960), which sees industrial relations as a "rule-making process" (Due et al. 1994:24). Dunlop et al. sees collective bargaining as one of many relationships in which industrial relations actors are involved. These include, in their opinion, an "industrial relations system comprised of three actors; labour, employers and the government" (see Due et al. 1994). The "British perspective" of industrial relations maintains, in comparison, a narrower focus on the collective bargaining institutions as the pivotal factor.

[275] With respect to the transition to a pluralist system of industrial relations, Ebbinghaus (1992:5) suggests a similar set of thresholds to those suggested by Rokkan for political democracy (see Chapter 1). First, there is the threshold of association (when was the right to organise and form coalitions of labour granted?); Second, comes the threshold of collective action (when was the right to strike granted to all workers?); Third, the threshold of bargaining (when were unions recognised as collective bargaining partners?); Fourth, and finally, there is the threshold of participation (when did unions become intermediary organisations involved in the formation and execution of social policy?).

The politicisation of COSATU

Technological developments, market conditions and the division of power would have made many predict the development of either a pluralist, economist or else a corporatist trade-union movement in South Africa. The pluralist perspective looks at unions as geared simply towards improving the economic welfare of their members. While Marxists, for example, look at social classes as the critical source of conflicts and therefore of mobilisation,[276] pluralists see conflicts as emerging out of sectional interests that *cut across* classes. Perlman (1958) studied trade unionism in the United States, Germany, Great Britain and the Soviet Union and argues, for example, that "working people in the country felt an urge towards collective control of their employment opportunities, but hardly towards similar control of industry". According to the pluralist perspective, unions may under certain conditions become politically active because they have been "co-opted" by outside forces. They may also become politicised as a short-term strategy in order to attain political rights that will ensure their economic rights. In essence, however, unions are, according to the pluralist perspective, economist.

Modernisation theory, like the pluralist perspective, predicted that with industrialisation, unions would gradually "mature". Drawing on assumptions about labour trajectories from Europe and North America, modernisation theory tended to view "normal" unions as economist and likely to remain within the framework of employer-employee relations. Union officials would increasingly represent members' narrow interests, while their members, as relatively privileged workers, would pursue workplace issues rather than building links to communities, to peasant groups or to the unemployed. Modernisation theorists tended to view non-economist unions as aberrations brought into being by the intervention of nationalist movements and populist leaders, or by the failure of modernising governments adequately to incorporate industrial unions into policy-making processes. Some dependency theorists believed that industrial workers might take up radical demands, but they generally also underlined all the obstacles to militancy: unions could be co-opted by state policies, etc.

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[276] Marx suggested that levels of reproduction of labour power, on which wages and living standards are based, are historically determined, through struggles between classes.

The economy developed much more rapidly in South Africa than elsewhere on the continent. While mining relied on migrant workers from the region, it also laid the groundwork for the next stage in economic development, namely the beginning of local manufacturing. By 1939, there were 800,000 Africans employed in mining and manufacturing (Chazan et al. 1992; Mamdani 1996).[277] Economic growth was relatively high through to the 60s with exceptionally high growth in industry, and therefore a new demand for unskilled, but first and foremost semi-skilled workers, emerged. From 1946 to 1970, manufacturing grew at an annual average rate of 6.9 per cent and was in fact the leading growth sector for the economy as a whole, which grew at the lower rate of 4.9 per cent (World Bank 1993). From the beginning of the 70s until the end of the decade, hundreds of thousands of predominantly black workers found new formal employment. These workers became the backbone of the new union movement to emerge. Capitalist industrialisation in the post-war period was characterised by low wages, labour repression and production for a global market. Instead of investment in new technology and a gradual shift from artisan production, the post-war expansion of multi-national capital involved widespread application of new production processes using semi-skilled workers (Seidman 1994). The industrial strategy included a close alliance between foreign, domestic and state capital, concentrated in heavy industrial expansion and oriented towards a stratified market (ibid: 69). Black workers replaced white workers and semi-skilled workers replaced artisans and unskilled labour. On this basis, the economic climate through the 70s was favourable to the emerging union movement. Yet, economic developments did not result in a "mature" labour movement oriented mainly towards economic workplace demands. Instead, the union movement provided these semi-skilled, predominantly African workers with a political channel and instrument they had never had before. Labour combined economic with political strategies and as time went by, the success of labour's *economic* strategies (in improving wages and working conditions on the shop floor) reinforced the legitimacy of and support for their *political* strategies and campaigns.

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[277] Manufacturing employment grew slowly. Only about 5,600 jobs were created between 1955/56 and 1959/60 (Henson 1978:18). In 1930 there were 156, 000 black workers in manufacturing, by 1945 there were 245,000 000 (Vawda, undated). During the war, blacks moved into more skilled positions owing to the shortage of white workers.

Clearly some of the unions, like the original TUCSA unions, were primarily oriented towards the shop floor and economic workplace issues. There were also those unions under the later COSATU umbrella that would support a trade-union movement based only on economic factory-floor issues and strategies. The overall tendency, however, was towards a union movement which supported and embraced political strategies as *part and parcel* of the promotion of economic interests.

Unions in many parts of the world are indeed oriented mainly, or even predominantly, towards improving the economic, work-related interests of their members. Their activities and focus are mainly concentrated in the factory, or in the industrial sector, as opposed to national level strategies and/or broad alliances with other groups. Yet, up until the end of the 70s, in some countries, most notably in Scandinavia, unions engaged in more comprehensive, corporatist strategies.[278]

The corporatist perspective also looks at unions as primarily economist, but political strategies will also form *part* of their repertoire in order to maximise social and economic benefits. In a corporatist perspective, workers will organise in order to protect their economic interests and build class-consciousness. For unions to reproduce and recruit new members, however, they need to show results, which according to the corporatist perspective can only happen through negotiations and compromises with employers and with the state. The corporatist perspective saw the development of labour as a response to economic developments. Unions matured as a functional effect of economic developments, although in a different direction from that which the pluralists had predicted. Corporatism was seen as a policy response to the decline of a competitive economy (Cawson 1986) and as a contribution to more stable economies (Scott 1984). Corporatism and centralised bargaining were seen as contributing to economic growth and to the empowerment of unions and works councils (Boreham & Hall 1994). Furthermore, some pinpointed the strong correlation between a strong labour movement and a large public sector, which in turn produced lower unemployment (Schmidt 1982). However, corporatism was seen to require a certain amount of centralisation of labour and willingness to compromise, a condition that to some extent was present in other parts

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[278] Scandinavia came to see segments or "iron triangles" of interests representing the state, employers and labour, reflected in Rokkan's statement "votes count, but resources decide" (1966).

of Africa. A state corporatist union movement had after all also become the dominant model of labour in other parts of Southern Africa after independence.

Union-state relations in several of the Southern African countries fit into the category of "semi-controlled" or "controlled". In most countries in the Western world trade unions have retained a high degree of freedom of association. They have the right to strike, the freedom to choose their leaders and they are free of governmental scrutiny. In *semi-controlled situations*, on the other hand, the state maintains a degree of control and supervision in order to limit union autonomy. The most frequent forms are government appointment or selection of union leaders and the need for official recognition in order for a union to operate. *Controlled unions* exist in societies where efforts to bring about political dominance of trade unions has resulted in *full* integration of the union movement into the administration, the dominant party, or both. The history of trade unionism in Southern Africa demonstrates that by the time independence came, many unions were weak and too closely allied with political parties to be able to function as independent influential bodies. This was the case, for example, in Zimbabwe. Government policy in Zambia likewise included a heavy emphasis on worker discipline to achieve rapid economic development. In other countries, like Malawi and Mozambique, unions were almost completely controlled by the government. In Botswana, Malawi and Mozambique, the union federations were established on the initiative of the government.[279] A "totalitarian" corporatist system implies that individuals have political power only indirectly through their organisations rather than direct, individual, democratic rights. Thus, organisations are not private actors but form the *link* between the state and the individual (Rothstein 1992:12).

During the post-war period, the South African economy had gone through a profound transformation from competitive to monopoly capitalism, involving a centralisation and concentration of capital (Southall 1985). Southall (ibid: 305) argues that South Africa initially followed a strategy of dependent industrialisation, taking advantage of its mining resources to engage in an import substitution strategy whose success in developing local manufacturing capacity depended upon repressive measures against the black working class in order to secure

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[279] See Tørres (1998) on trade unionism in Southern Africa.

cheap labour (Mamdani 1996).[280] Simultaneously, the political framework implied a need to rely on migrant labour. From the 70s, the shift towards semi-skilled labour already had political implications because its relative scarcity to some extent required residential stability, which in turn challenged apartheid laws.[281] In consequence, changes within the labour process had so modified the control which capital had traditionally exercised over black labour that workplace discipline now depended upon management successfully juggling coercion with consent in a bid to accommodate a revival of black trade unionism. The number of Africans employed in manufacturing alone increased from 308,332 in 1961 to 780,914 in 1981[282] (Mamdani 1996:231).

Labour retained its independence from the government, in spite of attempts at co-option. And there were several such attempts. The first was the recognition in 1979 of African workers' right to bargain, in itself an attempt to co-opt the unions and control their political activities. The state sought to cope with widespread strikes and work stoppages by restructuring the relations between labour and capital while simulta-neously requiring unions to register in Industrial Councils with consequent restrictions upon their political tactics and strategies. In addition, there were attempts to establish liaison committees at the workplace in order to silence the unions, but these were largely unsuccessful.[283] Finally, there were numerous attempts to silence labour and remove its leadership by means of banning orders, detentions, etc., but without long-term success.

The pessimistic interpretation of trade unionism (Hyman 1971) argues that labour tends to develop in the direction of internal oligarchy and incorporation (and integration) into politics in the form of corporatist institutions. Yet, whether labour in South Africa followed economic or political aims, there were never, amongst the new unions emerging in the 70s and 80s, any attempts to follow a corporatist strategy of co-operation

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[280] In fact, Southall argues that the economic success of the 60s was due to the successful defeat of the black working class and its organisations.

[281] Apartheid policies had made it difficult for Africans to live in the white South Africa, and the state had first and foremost relied upon migrant workers (migrants from the so-called Bantustans/Homelands).

[282] Between 7.9 and 14 per cent of the economically active population

[283] In 1974, there were 1,482 liaison committees and 207 works committees covering some 510, 000 African workers. By 1978, there were 2,664 liaison committees and 303 works committees involving some 770, 000 workers (Vawda, undated).

with the apartheid regime.[284] Maree (1989:4) argues that the unions virtually all started as oligarchic organisations in which the leadership, and particularly the intellectual leaders, all played a dominant and influential role. But the intellectual leaders of the unions under the later COSATU umbrella also shared a commitment to creating democratic unions with their power based on participatory workplace organisations.

Furthermore, some have argued that the structure of the economy, namely "monopoly capitalism", dominated by a small number of companies, rather than promoting corporatism promoted the kind of industrial unionism which developed (Innes 1983, Adler 1985 and Southall 1985). Monopoly capitalism provided a material basis for the unity and organisation of the workers on a mass scale in production itself. The economic tendencies were particularly favourable to the development of an effective working-class resistance along industrial lines. Furthermore, monopoly capitalism in Southall's (1985:340) words: "tends to replicate the experience of both work and struggle *across* industries, thereby providing the basis for mutually supportive, interactive, unified and co-ordinated resistance by an increasingly proletarianised workforce". Southall (ibid: 341) demonstrates his point by referring to militancy levels, strikes etc. being higher in the motor, metal and textile industries, where a growing concentration of capital has led to a simultaneous concentration of labour. This indicates, in his opinion, that increasing concentration of labour in large-scale production units in the major metropolitan areas "facilitates the organisation of unions that are sectorally assembled". In fact, the FOSATU unions followed the strategy of organising first and foremost large factories.

In terms of place of residence the African population can be divided into three roughly equal groups: one third in the Bantustans/reserves, another third in the urban areas and a final third on European homesteads (ibid). The strikes of the 70s broke out amongst semi-skilled, newly urbanised workers. The industrial workforce tended to be concentrated in larger factories, mainly in textiles and metal, and it consisted at that stage mainly of migrant workers. Despite their semi-skilled status, 70 per cent of African workers had a monthly income below the monthly household subsistence level. The African working class was on the brink of starvation.

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[284] With the clear exception of the majority white union movement, although even here, some of the unions (most notably FEDSAL, later to become the federation of FEDUSA) declared political independence.

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Furthermore, living conditions deteriorated rapidly in the early 70s. From 1958 to 1971, the prices for basic goods had risen by 40 per cent, but they then rose by the same amount again in just two years (Henson 1978:19-20). While the political repressions of the 60s combined with high economic growth had served to weaken organised black resistance (Webster & Holdt 1992), economic decline in the 70s provided new mobilising ground for the union movement.

Clearly, the form and timing of industrialisation and the concentration of capital count among the formative influences on a union movement's political development.[285] And in fact many authors have assumed that the general course of the process of industrialisation, or more specifically, the creation of an industrial working class, determines the characteristics of worker politics (Bendix 1977; Valenzuela 1992). This perspective argues that there is a convergence between different national settings in mature industrial states. However, it does not explain the numerous differences between labour strategies in countries at the same economic, industrial level. Similarly, scholars may attribute national variations in state-labour relations to factors such as economic growth, distribution of resources, dependency on foreign trade, etc. Although such factors may be suitable for explaining variations between advanced economies, they are not successful in explaining differences *between* various state-labour systems (Rothstein 1992). Furthermore, this approach offers few guides to understanding the links between labour unions and the rise of a broader working-class consciousness involving alliances with other groups (Seidman 1994:20).

Yet, there is little doubt that the general conflict levels between labour and the state shape union strategies and norms both in the political field and in the industrial relations arena. The state in South Africa saw the union movement as a considerable threat. And increasingly the state clampdown on the labour movement posed a major challenge to the unions' own strategies and operations. In the mid-80s, COSATU leaders were arrested and detained without trial. Besides attacks on union personnel and members, COSATU's premises and possessions were often sabotaged and destroyed. In March 1986 a state of emergency had been declared. And from June 1986 until the end of the year, a total of 4,000 unionists were detained (Southall 1995). The security forces viewed labour, and especially COSATU, as a subversive organisation. COSATU

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[285] As on the strategies of the state.

accounted for between 78 and 87 per cent of detentions of trade unionists during the states of emergency (Southall 1995). But COSATU was definitely not willing to compromise, either in the political arena or in the industrial field.

Furthermore, and even more relevant, there is little doubt that the character and form of the political relationship between labour and the state is influenced by their relationship in the industrial arena and by industrial relations generally. The degree to which unions can organise in the labour market and negotiate with employers as well as the types and forms of collective bargaining etc. are important for political mobilisation. Political strength may be due to the relative weakness of private sector employers (Valenzuela 1989). This is the case in several developing countries where the market is poorly developed and the state has been given a relatively strong role in the economic sphere (Cohen 1985, Munck 1988). Whereas the strength of the union movement usually depends upon its legitimacy vis-à-vis its members, in authoritarian systems, the strength of the union movement may instead depend upon its legitimacy vis-à-vis the state. This was the case in countries such as Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe after independence.

The structure of industry, with a pre-dominance of small and medium-sized companies, may furthermore induce employers to form organisations and regulate pay and working conditions via collective agreements concluded with unions at the central industry level, which in turn may fragment the political strategies of labour. In South Africa, employers were relatively weakly organised in terms of employers' associations. Yet, a few large private companies dominated the economy. On this basis, strong industrial unions developed. The strategy they embarked upon was one of achieving industrial collective agreements. Yet, there was also strong internal ambivalence in the labour movement towards such a strategy, at least initially. With the government attempting to impose restrictions on the unions that registered in Industrial Councils for industrial bargaining, they were in one sense "forced" to struggle for collective bargaining and for political rights simultaneously. In the economic climate of the 70s and 80s, a labour movement consisting of predominantly semi-skilled workers also had increased bargaining power, since employers were increasingly in need of a more stable "skilled" workforce. The unions that did achieve collective industrial agreement were also those that became most developed and influential in terms of political strategies. They managed to release resources previously spent negotiating at each and every factory and thus had far more resources for

activities at the national industrial and political level. They were soon also to become well equipped for negotiating with both employers and the state. The relatively badly organised employers in many sectors,[286] and hence the shortage of bargaining partners, was another factor that helped push labour even more towards strategies targeting the state. Furthermore, with the state and its security forces taking sides with employers on many occasions, labour was increasingly forced to link political and economic tactics.[287] All in all, by the end of the 80s, COSATU was better prepared than employers were to formulate policy and win certain key demands.

The movement towards formal democracy is in many African countries facilitated not by excluded groups but by organisations like the unions, which have been dependent, in one way or another, upon the state for their organisation and functioning (Akwetey 1994). Through that relationship, they have become capable of mass political mobilisation and developed an aspiration for participation in government decision-making. Both in Ghana and Zambia, collective action organisations, and unions in particular, played a critical role in the "resurrection of civil society" during the liberalisation of authoritarian rule and played an essential role in constituting and reconstituting civil society and re-enacting democracy (Akwetey 1994: 109). However, although the initial political strategies of the unions were similar, differences in weight given to the industrial arena as a stepping stone to political power led to different political strategies and results in the final phase.[288]

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[286] A centralised national employers' association (co-ordinating both labour affairs and economic, industrial and trade policies) was only formed at the national level in 1996 (Business South Africa). In connection with the establishment of the NEF in 1992, SACCOLA had co-ordinated labour affairs. Previously, there had been only sector organisations and the Chamber of Commerce. In addition to Business South Africa, there is now SACOB, Nafcock and Handelsinstut Sabcos.

[287] Between 1973 and 1974, for example, the police intervened in 93 disputes, 44 stoppages, and 374 strikes. 905 workers were arrested in these interventions and 646 were prosecuted (information from the Minister of Labour in Parliament 1974, Lewis 1997:205). COSATU later in fact started its campaign for forums partly as a way of blocking the unilateral changes by the state and owing to the lack of an employer's body to negotiate with (COSATU 1994b).

[288] The Ghana TUC managed to reactivate the industrial relations machinery, which implied that it was able to redefine its interactions with the government and negotiate with the government from a position of increased strength. It was

The reassertion of the black working class in South Africa is by no means unproblematic, nor is it monolithic (Southall 1985:307). Nor, indeed, could it be monolithic, for it represented competing tendencies which extended across a broad continuum. They ranged from unions which cautiously probe management for workers' benefits (while stressing a separation of work from community struggles) to those whose stress upon the insoluble links between industrial and political issues entail a highly militant posture towards both capital and the state. These different perspectives were all represented within what came to be the dominant union grouping, namely COSATU.[289]

The pluralist, the corporatist and the socio-political notions of unions are emphatically passive. The stimuli that unions react to, the agendas that govern them, all originate outside the unions. For pluralists, the institutional development of the unions is determined by the logic of industrialisation. For corporatists, the state and the economy mould union politics and organisations. For the socio-political unionists, authoritarianism and suppression are crucial factors in building and forming the labour movement.

The South African labour movement is intriguing because it could not easily have been predicted by most developmental theories. However, while most theories of trade unions have emphasised the role of systemic and environmental factors in shaping the character of trade unions, these factors are interpreted differently within different national settings. The consequences of systemic and environmental influences will emerge via the social action of the actors and from there will be shaped into union strategies and norms: "the actors make contingency, strategic and tactical choices, which have permanent effects on the system in which they are made" (Due et al. 1994). Specific socio-cultural factors play a central role

therefore more concerned with changing the rules of access to decision-making rather than pushing for political change of the whole system in the way that the Zambian Congress of Trade Unions promoted (Akwetey 1994).

[289] The CUSA unions (Council of Unions of South Africa) are generally the most conciliatory, whilst the FOSATU unions (Federation of South African Trade Unions) adopted a middle course, which emphasiseding the establishment of a strong, factory-centred, industrial base as a prerequisite for national political action. Finally, there were various (previously non-aligned) unions, which stressed the inseparability of the economic and political struggles. See Chapter 7.

in shaping national industrial relations systems and the structure of state-labour relations. Trade unions are institutions which establish a structured pattern of action maintaining:

> "past and historic influences which are crucial in transmitting traditions of handling disputes or approaching conflict situations, and through processes of socialisation of the membership into defined roles, in ensuring that present practices in some measure reflect structures which were originally established at strategic phases of institution-building themselves"
>
> (Poole 1984:89; Due et al. 1994:28).

As such there are strategic phases or points of institution-building that we should investigate more closely. The degree of institutional participation by labour in state structures is a question of *labour* choosing the optimal political technique or instrument to bring about political change[290] (Rothstein 1992). Hence the relationship between the state and labour differs according to the choices being made and strategies being adopted by the actors, and to some extent according to the values, attitudes and perceptions of the unionists themselves. Formative influences may be different from one country to another, but it is only through the preferences and choices of interest groups that these influencing factors assume a shape, rather than through the *structures* themselves.

Using Rokkan's model, one can postulate thresholds that structure the political integration of the working class into the polity (Rokkan 1979:79; Ebbinghaus 1992:4): the thresholds of legitimisation, of in-corporation, of representation and of executive power. If the political channel remains closed longer than the system of industrial relations, one can expect a politicisation of the organisations in the "bargaining" channel, while in the reverse case, unions will attempt to go for political alliance (Ebbinghaus 1992:5; Seidman 1994:17). Yet, there are several examples of this postulate not being valid. Eastern Europe is one case in

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[290] And the state choosing the best strategy to obtain the collaboration of organised interests. The state can in circumstances of a political crisis regard organisations as a reason for the crisis or as an obstacle, to finding a solution and as such perceive organisations as a major problem. Or the state may see collaboration with organisations as necessary to solve the crisis,- hence organisations as solutions (Rothstein 1992:18).

point, where the industrial relations channel opened up first, but did not become politicised. The situation in several Southern African countries was similar.

Valenzuela argues (1992) that long-term programmes and outlooks of labour movements, their effect on national political debates and situations and even their internal organisational structure cannot be understood without factoring in the importance of the very durable ties unions develop with various political parties as well as the impact of their incorporation in different political regimes. The institutional frameworks within which unions emerge will, in other words, be important.[291] Following the same arguments, some emphasise the cultural as well as the institutional histories of labour.[292] Yet, as pointed out by Seidman (ibid), such perspectives tend to overlook variations over time and are unlikely to provide explanations for similar kinds of labour movements occurring in different settings. Clearly, a combination of economic, historical and cultural factors should be given weight in attempts to explain national variations in state-labour relations. Furthermore, the internal characteristics of labour movements will in themselves help shape choices and preferences.[293]

[291] Collier and Collier (1991) argue, for example, that the patterns of state incorporation in the early phases of industrialisation shaped the trajectories of labour movements (ref. also to Seidman 1994:20).

[292] Seidman (1994) refers, for example, to studies of Eastern Asian labour movements, which stress the that Confucian ethics in labour-management relations shape union characteristics.

[293] Valenzuela (1989:452) says that the main sources of variation in the attitude of labour movements to democratisation are, first, the strength or weakness of the labour movement and the economic context of transition; second, the centralisation or decentralisation of the labour movement and its unity or division; third, the authoritarian regime's treatment of labour and its political allies prior to democratisation; fourth, the modalities of the transition to democracy and the relationship between the labour movement and the elite guiding the transition process.

The "new" trade-union movement

The trade-union movement that developed during the 70s is often characterised as the *new* trade- union movement. The new elements were the legally organised *opposition* and its *nonracist* and *democratic principles*. Yet, the development of the union movement along these lines came about only after several internal conflicts, divisions and compromises.

Since the Durban strikes of 1973, social movements had been the driving forces in black politics (Swilling 1991:95). The East Rand Shop Steward Council movement was one of the early production-based movements (Swilling 1989). Starting in the late 70s, the social movements took a new offensive leading role, with labour in the driving seat. Yet, it was only in the 80s that labour started *initiating* political campaigns.

The major divisions and debates within the union movement centred on political alliances and independence from politics. There were at least three political traditions within the broader labour movement (Fine & Webster 1989; Mamdani 1996).[294] The first was the *national-democratic tradition,* which grew out of the popular political position established by the ANC, together with SACTU, during the 50s. This tradition re-emerged in the community unions and general unions in the 70s and was based on the thesis that South Africa could not be understood simply in terms of class. According to this thesis, social realities should be interpreted as "colonialism of a special type". Community unions, or the so-called political unions, aligned themselves with the exile-based liberation movement. The Cape Town-based "general unions" shared many of the characteristics of the political unions, first and foremost a boycott stance regarding negotiations with the government and registration in Industrial Councils. We will come back to this later. However, they also followed a policy of non-political alignment. *Shop-floor unions,* or the so-called *industrial unions* emerged as an alternative to the previous political tradition. These unions rejected the community unions as "populists" and developed a cautious policy towards involvement in broader political struggles. They emphasised instead the building of democratic shop-floor structures around the principle of worker control, accountability and mandating of worker representatives. The third tradition is the *black*

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[294] That is within the broader labour movement referred to as the "new union movement" which emerged in the 70s.

consciousness tradition. Associated loosely with NACTU in the 80s, the black consciousness tradition was distinguished from other traditions by its emphasis on "black leadership".

The conflicts between the community unions and the industrial unions – i.e. between the so-called populists and the workerists – were to shape the characteristics and development of the labour movement in the 70s and 80s. As mentioned above, the most controversial issues were political strategies and the kind of tactics that should be adopted towards the state and the employers (Mamdani 1996). The latter concerned chiefly the question of engagement with employers and with the state: in other words, was engagement with the state tantamount to collaboration, as the exile-based movements argued? This debate came to a head over the question of whether unions should register in Industrial Councils after 1979. While the community unions rejected any involvement with the state, the industrial unions saw registration in Industrial Councils (on their own terms) as a precondition for organising and strength.[295]

The Aggett work stoppage in 1982 was the first union-organised initiative since the 50s over an issue beyond the factory floor.[296] The anti-apartheid umbrella organisation, the UDF, had from the beginning made calls for workers to become more involved in its leadership and to have a stronger voice in deciding what direction the organisation should go in.[297] The Congress of SA Students, a leading affiliate of the UDF, furthermore initiated a series of consultations with FOSATU shop stewards in the East Rand in 1984 concerning stay-aways to protest against the defence force taking control over the townships. The 80 per cent effective response to the one-day stay-away (22.10.84) demonstrated broadly based worker support and FOSATU's willingness to become politically engaged on its own terms. The mass stay-away by 300,000-800,000 workers owed its success largely to the organisational input of the unions.[298] Where unions were strong, so was the stay-away, and according to Southall (1995), labour was

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[295] The debate was sparked off in the South African Labour Bulletin. The main protagonists were the Western Province General Workers Union on the one side and the FOSATU unions on the other (Plaut 1992).

[296] The unionist Neil Aggett died in police custody in February 1982 (see Mamdani 1996).

[297] Especially under the leadership of the UDF Publicity Secretary Terror Lekota 1984.

[298] Labour Monitoring Group 1985: 74-100

transformed into a leading political force overnight. This stay-away marked a turning point, not only in the political talks, but also in the unity discussions of labour.[299] The states of emergency and the arrests and kidnappings of union leaders also helped break down the barriers between unions and politics. Between September 1984 and May 1986, there were twelve local and regional stay-aways. Then, in May and June 1986, more than 1.5 million workers stayed away from work in commemoration of the Soweto uprising. Once successful strikes had revealed the potential power of union organisations, labour was enlisted in campaigns for community improvements and political goals (Seidman 1995) as well as for economic gains.[300]

Community-based unions believed the unions ought to defend the interests of the oppressed classes at large, not only in the workplace but also in their places of residence. Union members were also residents of apartheid ghettos, paying high rents for matchbox houses and governed by puppet local councils (*The Shopsteward* 1995).[301] The FOSATU unions, on the other hand, were more suspicious and preferred "pure" working-class organisations and alliances (*The Shopsteward* 1995). They feared jeopardising hard-won, factory-based organisational gains that were just beginning to be reflected in shop stewards' councils (ibid).

Unity talks started between the community unions and the industrial unions at the beginning of the 80s, while tensions continued to exist over the question of political alliances and strategies. COSATU's launching Congress did not adopt a political policy.[302] A joint working group resolution was presented to the COSATU Central Executive Committee in 1986, which expressed overwhelming agreement on two

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[299] The stay-away symbolised an easing of suspicion amongst FOSATU leaders towards alliances with community groups. Furthermore, when Joe Foster, FOSATU's president, who had argued strongly against active union involvement in community struggles, left his position as as a national office-bearer, it also eased the way towards political engagement.

[300] The Living Wage Campaign dates back to the launch of COSATU and aimed at a 40- hours week, job security, 21 March and 16 June as paid holidays, 6 months maternity leave, the right to decent education and training and an end to the hostel system.

[301] In 1983, twelve independent unions joined the United Democratic Front out of a conviction that only political organisations could mediate the intersection between state policy and workplace issues.

[302] Neither did it become affiliated with the UDF.

points: that COSATU would be politically active and that it would work in alliance with other organisations (Baskin 1991:92). However, it also revealed disagreements over *whom* COSATU should ally with and how such alliances should work. In the first few years of COSATU, the dominant political position within the organisation was that there was a need for strong independent working-class organisations. Populists and workerists were soon to engage, however, in long-term battles over the identity of COSATU. *Populists* argued that racial oppression was the central contradiction in society while class differences were less important. They saw the "struggle" as being against apartheid in all its forms, which required that all oppressed classes unite. Class differences were hence downplayed in the interests of broader anti-apartheid unity.[303] Eighteen of the community unions had affiliated with the UDF at the beginning of the 80s. *Workerists*, in contrast, saw apartheid as a mask concealing capitalist exploitation (Baskin 1991, Friedman 1987). The working class could, in their opinion, fight the struggle against apartheid and capitalism alone while co-operation with others would entail compromises that would run counter to working-class interests.[304] In short, strong differences existed on the question of alliance with the ANC, attitudes to socialism and how broad the political alliances of COSATU should be (Baskin 1991).[305]

The protracted debates between the different internal political viewpoints of COSATU made a long-lasting impression upon COSATU's external strategies and success. These debates, however, concerned strategy more than content. Whether to build external alliances and how *broad* they should be was the critical issue, not opposition to apartheid as such. Former union organiser Emma Mashinini expressed it in the following way:

[303] A variant of populism suggested that the working class should fight for socialism, but only after the anti-apartheid fight had been won.

[304] There were two key variations of workerism (Baskin 1991): while the group of "revolutionary socialists" saw unions as stepping stones to the establishment of a revolutionary Marxist Party. The other group tended to limit working-class struggles to the workplace or syndicalism.

[305] The question of alliances culminated in the COSATU officials' trip to see the ANC and SACP in exile in Lusaka in 1987 and marked the informal beginning of what is today known as the Tripartite Alliance.

"The trade union movement is a very powerful organisation, and it is not there just to look at bread and butter problems of the workers. If the trade union organisation cannot take on the liberation of the country, who will? ... The trade unions have got to follow the workers in all their travels - to get them home, and to school, in the education and welfare of their children, everywhere. The whole life of a worker needs trade union involvement"

(quoted in Seidman 1994:15).

COSATU identified racial oppression as the main contradiction within society (Baskin 1991). This made it imperative to engage in a political, popular struggle for such things as majority rule and a united, democratic state. The history of political initiatives was already there. Now the task was to make some compromises regarding the choice of strategies and goals for the democratic struggle. An agreement was reached stipulating that COSATU should be politically active and work in alliance with other organisations. In some respects the populist camp came out on the winning side. COSATU ended up giving its support to the Freedom Charter and the alliance with the ANC/UDF at the 1987 COSATU National Congress.[306] This victory, however, represented more of a *compromise*, or what Lewis (1988) labels a "strategic compromise". The Freedom Charter was adopted but was perceived by many of the unions as "a good foundation stone on which to start building a working-class programme" as argued, for example, by NUMSA when it endorsed the Charter (Lewis 1988, Fine & Webster 1989). This has been interpreted by many as a union attempt to imbue the Freedom Charter with the shop-floor tradition. In adopting the Charter, COSATU rejected the two-stage theory of socialism in favour of a view that the struggle for national liberation was *part* of the struggle for socialism. COSATU's new policy thereafter proclaimed that there was no conflict between the struggles for national liberation and

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[306] Thereafter, only the clothing and textile workers and the metal workers opposed the Tripartite Alliance that emerged in 1990. Their opposition was, however, based on different political points of views. SACTWU was traditionally from the "workerist" camp and emerged in the early 90s with a large constituency of coloured, who were not very sympathetic to the ANC (many voted for the NP in the 1994 elections). NUMSA, on the other hand, supported the stand of breaking the alliance only after the 1994 elections when it argued that socialism could best be promoted by independent unions.

socialism. The priority, however, was clearly to organise around the Charter with no provision being made for operationalising the call for socialism (Lewis 1988).

The next stage in the battle over the political strategies of COSATU came with the debate at the 1988 COSATU special congress between those who argued for a "united front" of working-class organisations and "the exploited and oppressed masses" and those who advocated a "broader front" – a front that was broader ideologically but narrower in class terms (Baskin 1991). It should be noted, however, that this was *after* the support for the Charterist wing had already been expressed. A compromise was reached which stated that a joint committee was to be set up in order "to develop a programme of action and organisation against repression" (COSATU Resolution 1988). The support for political alliances received a further impetus from 1988 onwards. The COSATU special Congress, the successful stay-away and the anti-apartheid conference called for later in the year all together seemed to make workers far more aware of political issues and of the need to mobilise politically.[307]

The compromise

O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) outline three motivating factors which dictate interest groups' choice of strategy during a political transition: "opportunists" are motivated by their fear of a "coup"; "maximalists" are motivated by self-interest; and "democratic recalcitrants" are motivated by a desire to participate in the political system.[308] Transitions offer fresh opportunities for political participation by labour movements, including new arenas for participation, and thereby allow them to exert pressure from within the system. In the South African case, there were several openings for both opportunists and potential maximalists, but we find few

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[307] Still, the same debate about political independence resurfaced later in connection, for example, with the "two hats" debate. This debate was centred on whether unionists could hold leadership positions in the SACP and/or ANC at the same time as they were office-bearers in COSATU. The question was how to make union leaders responsible to their unions. Some wanted to deny them office in political organisations all together. Others were more concerned with this as a practical issue of how to build internal accountability, alliance partners, etc.

[308] The Brazilian case demonstrates that additional factors, such as political opportunities and economic and organisational constraints, will dictate labour movements' choice of strategy (Payne 1991).

of them on the side of the unions that merged with COSATU during the 80s. While differing internally over the question of alliances and the degree of political commitment, the unionists had common views on opposition to apartheid and the democratic struggle. Their compromise became one of a *balance* between political and industrial demands and of political alliances coupled with (and balanced by) strong shop-floor structures. In this sense, the priorities and perceptions of the community-based unions were complemented by the experiences and priorities of the workerist unions.

While one of the most critical debates in COSATU from the beginning had centred on political strategies, another debate concentrated upon organisational strategies. The workerist FOSATU unions brought into the federation the principles of worker control, reflected in worker delegates to Congresses, and of worker officials participating in all executive fora. From the very beginning COSATU deliberately adopted the FOSATU tradition of having a layer of active, empowered shop stewards, seen as symbolising "the microcosm of the organised labour movement" (Pityana & Orkin 1992). It was this layer of militant worker leaders that led the federation forward, negotiated informally with supervisors and established networks between their own and other groups on the factory floor (Murray 1994). By relentlessly pursuing issues that went beyond narrow economic demands, they also altered the balance of power on the factory floor. It became increasingly difficult for employers to unilaterally implement changes in the organisation of work. Employers reacted by seeking new forms of collaboration and partnership with organised labour. Furthermore, the growing consciousness of collective empowerment that evolved out of these struggles on the shop floor laid the basis for a longer-term political mobilisation of the workforce.

Increasingly, centralised strategies were argued to be the right approach for organised labour in the 80s. The first recognition agreement had been negotiated in 1974. By the end of the 80s, there were more than 6,000 recognition agreements (Webster & Holdt 1992). The most powerful unions turned to centralised collective bargaining and increasing use of central national institutions like Industrial Courts and Industrial Councils to replace plant-level bargaining. The move was motivated both by ideological considerations and by changing material conditions and concrete organisational circumstances. It was, however, in fact less a change of strategy than a continuation of earlier aims that it was now

increasingly possible to realise.[309] Furthermore, while bargaining strategies increasingly focused on the Industrial Councils and aimed at collective industrial agreements, the democratic structures on the factory floor remained the basis for putting forward demands and for mandating and call-back mechanisms.

By the end of the 80s, a union movement had developed which was based on political strategies *combined* with economic aims, external alliances *combined* with internal democracy and national strategies towards industrial unions and collective bargaining *combined* with workplace organisation and strength. The union federation was internally structured in a way that allowed the various aims and strategies to be combined in an optimal manner and for a balance to be maintained between them. Strong shop-floor structures, internal democracy, mandating, accountability and report-back systems were aimed at assuring that workers on the ground had a firm knowledge and understanding of and control over federation policies and strategies. This compromise was partly a result of the fact that the various (community and workerist) union blocks were more or less equal in terms of membership, power and resources while also seeing the need for *unity* in the face of state repression. Furthermore, the leadership of COSATU, which promoted political alliances and aims, was to a large extent committed to socialism based on shop-floor power and worker control. It had also learnt from the experience of the ICU in the 20s and of SACTU in the 60s, that political unionism without strong shop-floor structures and organisation was not a viable trade-union movement. And finally, it made sense under state repression in the 80s to ensure that the union movement had a continuous flow of leadership cadres, hence the need to build strong shop floor structures in order to make sure that new people could take over when the state detained or "removed" COSATU leaders. The lesson was to build shop-floor structures resilient enough to survive both state repression and

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[309] Murray (1994) argues that a change of strategy from plant-level bargaining to central bargaining took place. However, COSATU emphasised from the very beginning a strategy of "one union per industry", which indirectly would benefit centralised bargaining (although the latter at the beginning was not a key point in the debate). This was also to a large extent built upon the organisational strategies of the previous FOSATU unions.

leadership crises![310] The unique merger of community unions (particularly from the Eastern Cape) and the industrial workerist unions created the character, strategy and form of COSATU.

8.2 The democratic struggle and political resources

COSATU developed into a sociopolitical popular trade-union federation. Its pledge to the working class was, broadly speaking, to fight against apartheid. The union movement worked for political and economic rights by building alliances with community organisations, the Church and opposition groups within South Africa and abroad. The strategy was mass mobilisation and international sanctions. The aim was a multiracial democracy with strong public intervention, regulation and a planned economy.

COSATU is generally regarded as having launched the biggest and most successful campaigns in the 80s and 90s (Buhlungu 1994). We will investigate some of these in the following. First, however, we need to look closer at the political resources of the FOSATU and CUSA unions, and thereafter of COSATU, which were built up through the 70s and 80s. Membership figures have, as mentioned before, often been used as indicators of organisational power and influence. COSATU was one of the few union movements internationally still to grow in the 80s and became the largest labour federation in Africa during the late 80s. However, a membership figure may at most show us the *potential* for influence. Unions represented less than 40 per cent of the formal sector workforce in the 80s, and the so-called new union movement only about half of these.[311] A crucial question becomes how this potential strength is administered, represented and carried forward.

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[310] This was to a large extent the original argument of the industrial unions from the 70s.

[311] Combined COSATU and NACTU membership. The union density rate in South Africa was already at that stage higher than in many countries in the Western industrialised world and far higher than in many countries in Southern Africa.

Internal resources

Valenzuela (1989) argues that the strongest union movements are those that have had the greatest autonomy from the state, are most centralised, have a predominantly political complexion and adequate funding. So let us have a closer look at the resources of COSATU and its founding members, FOSATU and CUSA, as well as of independent members.

COSATU's own political resources grew phenomenally in spite of external hindrances. COSATU started from its very foundation to build on two organisational principles: creating internal democratic structures under workers' control and national, sector-wide unions. In other respects, too, the federation started to follow a centralised strategy early on. The goal of the COSATU-affiliated unions was centralised bargaining through access to Industrial Councils.[312] For the unions which succeeded, large financial and organisational savings could be made if the union did not have to run around bargaining with every single employer separately. Centralised bargaining also made union leaders more professional and paved the way for a more creative and advanced negotiating team at the leadership level.

Building upon and supporting these factors was the financial and political support from international trade unions, which ensured independence from the state. International solidarity implied pressure on apartheid from foreign governments as well as support for black trade unions within South Africa.[313] Pressure was mounted against transnational, corporate and South African employers, with campaigns targeting disinvestment, codes for labour practices, etc. The Programme of Action against

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[312] From the very beginning, registration in Industrial Councils was controversial owing to the political restrictions they were expected to follow. The anti-registration faction warned that registered unions would be caught in a web of political restrictions and control. The registration faction claimed to be aware of the dangers of co-option, but believed that it would be wrong to ignore the opportunity opened up (The Shopsteward, December 1995). From the middle 80s, all COSATU affiliates accepted that the benefits were far higher than the potential costs.

[313] This is not to say that international solidarity only played a supportive role. There have also been instances where international support may be argued to have played a divisive role, as for example in the large amount of support given by the American AFL-CIO to the independent unions, with the specific aim to moderate the growth initially of SACTU, and subsequently of the FOSATU unions and COSATU.

apartheid, co-ordinated by the International Confederation of Trade Unions (ICFTU), played a particularly important role from the 80s onwards. Table 8.1 shows international funding as a proportion of the financial resources of FOSATU from 1982–1984.

Table 8.1   Sources of FOSATU income 1982-1984 (Rands)
(Southall 1995:177)

	1981	1982	1983	1984
Membership dues (% of total income)	–	33,574 (9.6%)	38,452 (8.4%)	42,917 (7.1%)
Other internal source (% of total income)	3,793 (2.5%)	−17,272	71,525 (15.7%)	16,099 (2.7%)
ICFTU (for education services) (% of total)	156,337 (97.5%)	331,868 (95.3%)	343,435 (75.8%)	544,805 (90.2%)

In addition to this international funding of the FOSATU unions, the international community supported the community unions, NACTU, labour advice and research centres, etc. Furthermore, millions of Rands were also provided through the ICFTU bodies as well as the EC for legal assistance in order to promote trade-union rights, relief and legal aid etc. The majority of NACTU's budget was covered by the American AFL-CIO. Independent unions received a lot of German and British funding. The Nordic Trade Union Federations and the Dutch covered most of COSATU's budget.[314] Table 8.2 shows the proportion of COSATU's budget which was covered by overseas funding. It also demonstrates the extent to which COSATU has managed to achieve self-sufficiency in the period since the elections.

[314] LO, Norway, LO/TCO Sweden, LO Denmark, FNV in the Netherlands and the Finnish unions were the main funders. Large amounts of the funding provided by these union federations were in turn financed by their governments.

Table 8.2 Proportion of International Funding to COSATU 1984-1996
(COSATU Audited Statements 1993, 94, 97 Congress Documents; COSATU Budget 1993)

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Budget assistance			80%	80%	70%	60%	55%	55%	45%	27%
Legal and Relief Trust Funds[315]	–	–	70%	90%	90%	95%	–	92%	–	–

Finally, an internally homogenous working class also made it far easier to concentrate upon and mobilise against external "enemies". In spite of ideological differences with UWUSA, NACTU and the traditionally white unions, COSATU had the advantage of being relatively dominant amongst specific sectors and occupational groups where competition from other federations was limited. COSATU's members were predominantly drawn from amongst African, male, blue-collar workers in manufacturing and mining. The overlapping of race and class cleavages gave COSATU an advantage over unions whose external attention and power was sapped by internal cleavages. Still, inter-union rivalry did make an impact on the recruitment of COSATU. And although other federations posed small threats in terms of recruitment, the rivalry was important in diverting COSATU's attention away from the "struggle". Moreover, although the other union federations competing in the same arena were far smaller in terms of membership figures, they played a rival role with regard to ideology and political alliances. In Natal, in particular, the rivalry with UWUSA and Inkatha constituted a major difficulty for COSATU.[316]

[315] Money held in trust accounts to pay for legal services, relief and emergency assistance to COSATU and its affiliates.
[316] The rivalry between COSATU on one side and Inkatha (with its union "wing" UWUSA launched in 1986) on the other side was strong right from the inauguration of COSATU. COSATU's newly elected president, E. Barayi, launched an attack on all homeland leaders during the inauguration Congress of COSATU by labelling them "puppets" of the apartheid government. This included the Inkatha leader Buthulezi (leader also of KwaZulu) which responded

By 1987, state restrictions and actions by the security forces against labour had reached a climax. The police shot and killed four striking workers during a protest march, a week later four "scab" workers were found killed after being interrogated at a COSATU house. A successful stay-away was held in May to protest against the white elections. Early the following morning a COSATU house was bombed.[317] Labour leaders were detained and the ICFTU reported that South Africa was one of the world's most dangerous countries for union leaders. State repression meant that a number of the early COSATU leaders had to go into hiding, structures were smashed and leaders detained. Simultaneously, the repression also encouraged, or made it easier, for employers to lock out, dismiss or threaten striking workers at the drop of a hat. The South African Police also used emergency regulations as a pretext for unnecessary and destructive interference in industrial relations.[318] While the highly restrictive ideology of apartheid, with ensuing states of emergencies, etc. functioned as a stumbling block to the mobilisation of the working class, an extremely lopsided distribution of resources and a high degree of legitimacy for opposition organisations in civil society culture played a constructive role in recruitment.

Last, but not least, COSATU had, as mentioned above, the advantage of a long history of labour experience, of failures and successes, which formed the basis for its own strategies from the mid-80s. There can be little doubt, for example, that the 1973 strikes and the stirrings of the workers organisation in the early 70s were shaped by the legacy of SACTU

by organising a public "funeral" and coffins for COSATU. The rivalry often had more drastic outcomes, however, with thousands dying in political fighting in the years to come.

[317] In April 1987, a number of COSATU members were killed by the police in Germiston. Shortly thereafter, about 100 policemen entered COSATU's head-quarters, assaulted and arrested leaders and members on the premises and caused damages in excess of R100, 000 to the building and property. More than 400 people were detained. The federation launched an appeal against the SA Police, and the Supreme Court declared the seizure of documents by the SA Police to have been unlawful. Shortly thereafter, the bombing mentioned above occurred, which was later also linked to the security forces (Truth Commission 1996).

[318] The SARHWU and NUM strikes in 1987 were particularly hard hit, as was the Nels Dairy Dispute the same year, where the police intervened and detained the entire workforce of 700 FAWU members (The Shopsteward December. 1995).

from the 60s (Seidman 1994:175).[319] Likewise, in building its strategies COSATU drew on the lessons that had been learned from the failure of the ICU and SACTU to concentrate upon political work as well as combining FOSATU's gains on the shop floor with the involvement of the community unions in the townships.

Collective action

A massive strike wave followed the birth of COSATU. A record 550,000 man-days were lost in strikes through the first three months of 1986 (Baskin 1991). Despite recession, restrictions and retrenchments, South Africa lost more man-days due to work stoppages during the five-year period from 1986 through 1990 than during the previous seventy-five years (Murray 1994). The federation initiated several major strikes and stayaways during the late 80s: stayaways on 1 May and on Soweto day (16 June) every year as well as mass actions against the white elections, actions for the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and against VAT and the new amendments to the Labour Relations Act in 1988, to name just a few. A general stayaway involving millions of workers in mass actions may cost employers and the economy more than R200 million a day. Mass actions were often successful both in terms of support from millions of workers and in terms of the short or longterm responses to their demands. Table 8.3 shows the escalation of strike actions from 1970 to 1989.
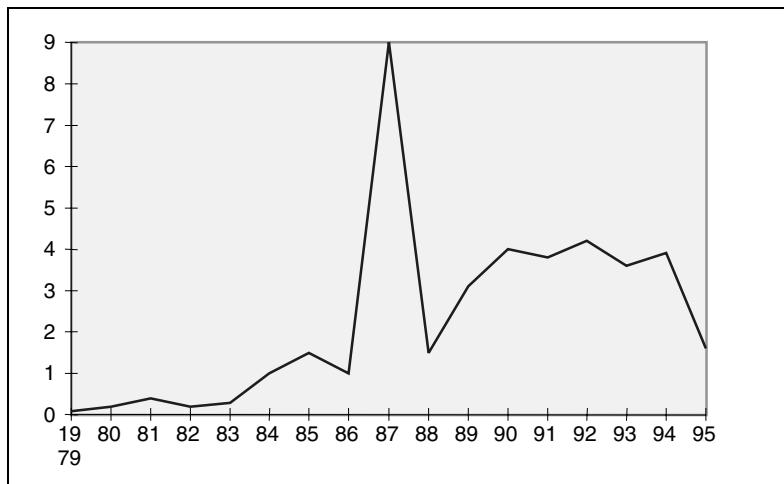
[319] A Report of the ICFTU/Nordic Trade Union Delegation to Southern Africa, 3 to 18 November 1978, supports this argument. COSATU built to some extent upon the FOSATU strategies in this respect. FOSATU had, for example, set up its structures with a strong focus upon the direct involvement of workers as opposed to full-time officials. FOSATU had not even established any contact with SACTU in exile, owing to fears that SACTU might issue a political statement supporting it, which might have had an adverse effects on its future (ICFTU 1978).

	No. of strikes and work stoppages	Total workers involved	No. of man-days lost
1970	76	4,168	4,528
1971	69	4,451	3,437
1972	71	9,224	14,167
1973	370	98,378	229,281
1974	384	59,244	98,583
1975	274	23,323	18,709
1976	245	28,013	59,861
1977	90	15,304	14,471
1978	106	14,160	10,558
1979	101	22,803	67,099
1980	207	61,785	174,614
1981	342	92,842	226,554
1982	394	141,571	365,337
1983	336	64,469	124,596
1984	469	181,942	379,712
1985	389	239,816	678,273
1986	793	424,340	1,308,958
1987	1,148	591,421	5,825,231
1988	1,025	161,679	941,388
1989	855	177,712	1,236,686
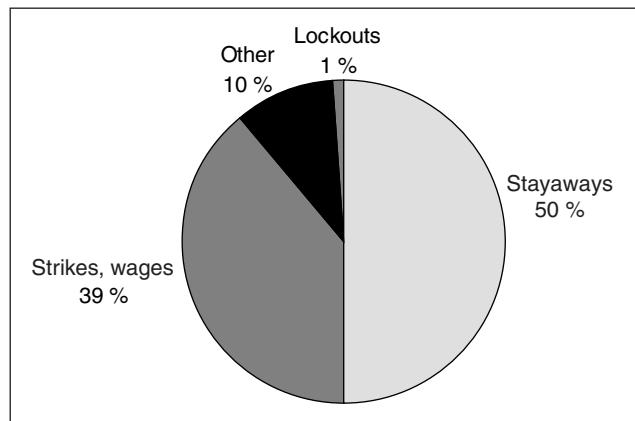
It was mainly after the black trade unions were granted bargaining rights and legal recognition in 1979 that the unions started gaining the resources necessary for engaging in collective action. Through the 80s, strikes and work stoppages were increasingly used as political and economic strategies (Figure 8.1). In 1987, as the strike actions reached a peak, R111 million were estimated to have been lost in wages for workers (Fine & Webster 1989). The character of industrial conflicts changed during the 80s. While strikes and work stoppages in the early 70s were often spontaneous and not very well prepared, strikes in the early 80s were better prepared, more organised and had more clearly defined goals (Urban Training Project Report 1980).

Figure 8.1   Man-Days Lost in Strikes, 1979-1995 (Levy and ass. 1996)
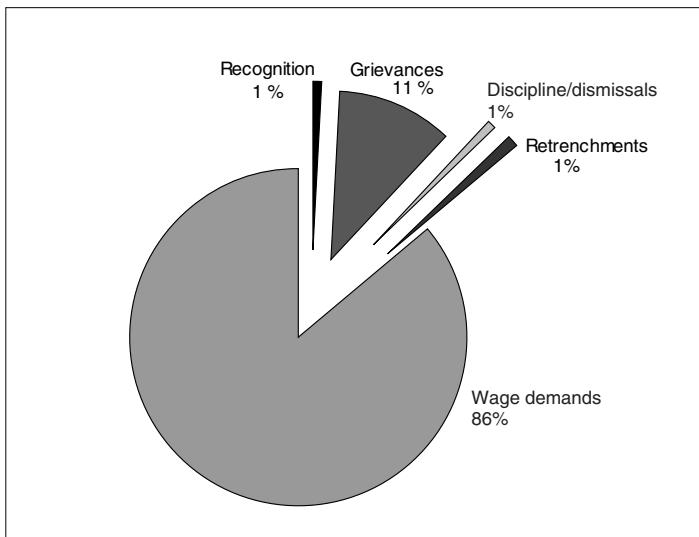
Political stay-aways have accounted for a large portion of the man-days lost in strikes in the 80s, while wages, work grievances and labour disputes became the dominant strike triggers in the 90s. Figures 8.2 and 8.3 show the motivation behind industrial actions in 1989 and 1995 respectively.[320]

Figure 8.2   Main StrikeTriggers 1989 (Levy & Piron 1990)

[320] While the private sector in the period up until the early 90s accounted for the most of strike action, activity in the public sector has gradually assumed a more dominant role. It should also be noted that in 1994, a relatively large number of strikes were initiated by grass-roots movements as opposed to union leaderships.

Figure 8.3   Main Strike Triggers 1995 (Levy & Ass. 1996)

COSATU demonstrated its ability to mobilise over a variety of issues, often with far-reaching effects (Levy 1993). Furthermore, strike waves occurred when employers were already complaining about a shortage of skills and they therefore could not afford to replace striking workers (Seidman 1994:36). Yet, strike action as a measurement of political power may be misleading. The *ability* to pursue collective action is what is important, not the actual use of this weapon. When 98 percent of workers in the Chemical Workers Industrial Union (CWIU) voted for strike action against Colgate in 1981, the company backed off. The labour-employer negotiations surrounding the mass actions in August 1992 likewise illustrated that strikes and stay-aways were a weapon whose mere existence was so threatening to employers that they were increasingly tempted to side with the unions in their political struggle against the apartheid government.

New strategies by labour and a new situation internationally emerged through the late 80s and the beginning of the 90s. Labour's access to state decision-making increased, especially in the economic sphere, from the end of the 80s. Simultaneously there was an increase in co-operation among the three big union federations (COSATU, NACTU and FEDSAL). As a step towards union unity, COSATU and NACTU held joint May Day rallies in 1992. Their participation in the National Economic Forum and the National Manpower Commission (together with FEDSAL) the same year also paved the way for closer co-operation.

Trade-union strength and resources

Labour both expressed and helped shape community demands. Union campaigns were in many cases combined political and economic campaigns and workers themselves perceived the aims as interlinked. Some examples will illustrate how political issues were perceived to go hand in hand with labour issues. Shop stewards interviewed by the *South African Labour Bulletin* in 1988 about the Labour Bill described their perceptions and opposition:

> "We demonstrated last Tuesday. We sang up and down from that corner to the gate about five times. We carried placards saying: Away with the Bill! Away with AWB![321] Down with minority unions!"

All in all it is worth noting that political involvement per se had support in *all* the affiliates of COSATU. Furthermore, it is also worth noting how COSATU made a point of getting internal political differences out in the open and debated. Several programmes of principles and action were drawn up to ensure that differences were debated and respected democratically (Baskin 1991). COSATU did not want to eliminate internal differences in political views, but was anxious to create an environment of free debate. Illustrative of the success of this strategy is the presence of both Inkatha members and members of the Black Consciousness Movement within the federation.

Maree (1989) demonstrates how from the beginning of the 70s the unions made a conscious effort to democratise the movement.[322] While trying right from the start to develop the individual capabilities of workers, their strategy was also to make workers conscious of their interests and identity. The unions went through three phases of democratisation. The first lasted almost four years and involved the setting up of structures in which majorities of worker representatives were established at all levels of the hierarchy and on the co-ordinating bodies of the unions. The second phase was the development of workers' capacity to participate effectively in these structures. This phase took longer and had not been fully accomplished by the end of the 70s. It involved both formal training as well as the mobilisation of workers to participate in workplace structures,

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[321] Right-wing military and political movement (Afrikaner Werstandsbevegung).
[322] Maree (1989) summarises his conclusions from his doctoral thesis.

negotiations with employers, etc. The third phase (running to some extent parallel to the other two) entailed making union representatives accountable to workers (Maree 1989:5). Alec Erwin, the then general secretary of FOSATU,[323] pointed out in 1979 the envisaged aims of the union movement (Maree 1989:6):

> "It seems to me that there are, broadly speaking, two conceptions of democracy. One I would style as a radical-liberal conception, which is that everyone must have his say and be allowed to vote. And within, those people must have a leader. I think that kind of democracy is actually open to disguised power manipulation and control because every man speaking will not change basic structures or institutions in society. We'd say you must have resilient structures that can hold people accountable in a real sense. So the alternate conception of democracy is a much more structured view: that people must be able to control what is possible to control. We must establish more definite structures of accountability. So what we are trying to achieve...is that the democratic structures must be through a process of the factory controlling the shop steward because that man the worker sees every day in the plant, his access to him is far greater. Then the shop steward sits on the Branch Executive Committee, and the report-back system is structured and definite".

As union membership grew through the 80s, it became more difficult to sustain the same democratic participation as in the 70s, but the structures and principles remained. COSATU internally put large emphasis upon worker control expressed through the continued appointment of workers to lead the top structures of the federation and the participation of a number of worker delegates, for example, in the COSATU Congresses.[324] The shop steward committees, composed of shop stewards from various unions in an area, also helped ensure that workers' identity and conscious-

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[323] One of the intellectuals who was later to become the Education Officer of the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) and one of the major "think-tanks" of COSATU. In 1994, he assumed the position of Deputy Minister of Finance and from 1996 became the Minister of Trade and Industry.
[324] In 1993, for example, worker delegates constituted 84 per cent of all affiliate delegates to the COSATU Congress, while officials constituted the remaining 16 per cent.

ness was not only focused on their own workplace. The shop stewards councils were aimed at building worker solidarity *across* sectors and industrial interests. Furthermore, the shop stewards councils were probably also instrumental in preventing a narrow focus on workplace issues.

The union movement assumed a particularly important role during the 80s when the calling of repeated states of emergency made it difficult for other groups to operate freely. When detentions silenced community activists, their campaigns were continued by trade unionists who could hope for some protection from shop-floor organisations, which were able to put pressure on employers (Seidman 1994:230). After the UDF was banned in the late 80s, the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) took over in 1989. With the ANC, SACP and other political organisations banned or exiled, the emerging trade-union movement had a unique depth of organisation and potential to mobilise. The "locals" played an important role in the links between the unions and the community. The locals were composed of shop stewards from individual unions and the leaders of community organisations.[325] Because the unionists who composed the locals in many cases were the only organised force in the society, they were "pressurised" to take up community issues, and in many cases established community structures and organisations.

The labour movement was shaped by both racial and class factors as well as simply workplace organisation. Yet, while having underlined the democratic nature and content of the unions that emerged in the 70s, there were problems too. The emergence of populist unions in the 80s that did not place the same emphasis upon internal democracy introduced some unhealthy practices in some sectors. Furthermore, there are also examples of very "undemocratic" coercion of members into solidarity, during strikes in 1987, for instance, which accounted for some shamefully violent acts on the part of union members (Maree, ibid).

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[325] They started up in many cases as shop steward councils, – i.e. committees composed simply of union shop stewards. In many cases, however, the participation in the locals was extended to community leaders.

8.3   Politics and labour issues-hand in hand

The 70s and early 80s demonstrated not only an escalating degree of collective action, but also an increasing number of issues being taken up by labour. The politicisation of the COSATU unions, in the late 80s especially, made many suggest that we were witnessing the emergence of a new form of trade unionism in South Africa: political unionism or social movement unionism (Lambert & Webster 1988).

Political principles, aims and norms were also followed by concrete strategies and action. Industrial action went hand in hand with more typical community issues and strategies. The linkage between political and industrial issues was realised in day-to-day life outside work. Let us just briefly illustrate this linkage in the words of ordinary workers:

> "We are always preaching about this new Bill on the trains. It's a way of mobilising workers, especially in companies that have not been participating. Then you find that they are changing when they come to the companies. You see a guy at work singing who never used to sing before. He learnt it on the train!"

> "When they (the government) are hitting in our areas (by banning 17 anti-apartheid organisations), we are also hitting, because we are residents of those areas. So we feel that we are attachk?ed by the banning and we cannot allow that. There are enough organisations underground, there want be enough space for all of us if we (COSATU) go underground, really!"   (1988, no. 4/5:52).

In 1988, organised workers took to spreading the news of the Labour Relations Bill in trains and buses. Such "moving meetings" took the form they did because of political restrictions. Workers, however, not only used the chance to speak about the bill and industrial issues but also about the lifting of political restrictions on COSATU and the UDF organisations, the release of political prisoners, etc. Not only was there a conscious mobilisation process taking place, unionised workers also went out into the community with less political and less conscious messages. Furthermore, many went out to teach the community the same experiences in democratic decision-making they themselves had learnt by setting up similar structures in the community. The unions set an example of democratic practice which others picked up. Sitas (1985) reports, for example, how unionised workers on the East Rand (outside Johannesburg)

in the 80s took their newly acquired experiences in democratic decision-making back to the migrant hostels where they organised similar democratic structures. Many community activists likewise argued for a "trade-union approach" to structures (building organisations from the lowest level) and practices (mandates and report-back) (*The Shopsteward* 1995). In Transvaal, COSATU locals (see below) went out and established community structures and organisations (Maree 1989). Street committees reflected union structures, with a bloc-by-bloc system paralleling shop-floor organisation (Friedman 1987b). The Port Elisabeth Black Civics Organisation (PEBCO) was, for example a community organisation spearheaded by worker elements. Its methods of organising and its frequent mass meetings inspired new awareness and broke the mystique of leadership and respectability which plagued African organisations (Campbell 1987:156). PEBCO developed out of links between the community and striking workers in the 80s (Davies 1984). The Western Cape Residents' Association is yet another example of a community organisation spear-headed by union activists[326]; likewise the Alexandra Action Committee, a community organisation which was based on trade-union structures of accountability and regular elections and spearheaded by union activists.[327]

The links between labour and communities took various forms, ranging from the individual workers who led both factory- and community-based groups in joint action in support of both worker and community demands (Seidman 1995). COSATU locals formed alliances with civics and other community structures at the grass-roots level. Their actions found motivation in rent- and school boycotts and in local affairs like housing, sewage and electricity. By COSATU's Second Congress in 1989, COSATU's regional organisations had been charged with establishing locals in all areas where more than one affiliate had a presence, their role being not only to promote internal democracy but also to form links with the unemployed, students' groups and community organisations. These locals, in turn, became recruiting grounds for senior union leaders.

UDF-aligned unions such as SAAWU, GAWU and MACWUSA had cemented close ties with civics and political organisations. Others, such as GWU, FCWU and CWIU, had won community backing for

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[326] This was an organisation of migrant workers under the leadership of Mr. Johnson Mpukumpa, former president of the General Workers Union.

[327] In this case, by Moses Mayekiso, then general secretary of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union

consumer boycotts in support of workers' demands. Joint action by unions, community organisations and the UDF took the form of opposition to the tricameral Parliament, to the local council elections and to the Koornhof Bills, boycotts in protest against rent and bus fare increases and in support of students' demands for democratic SRCs (what does this stand for?) as well as appeals to the unemployed in townships not to scab during strikes (*The Shopsteward* 1995). While labour was often asked to support community campaigns, COSATU and its affiliates also enlisted community support for workplace struggles (*The Shopsteward* 1995). Residents in areas closest to factories where unions arranged sleep-in strikes would, for example, bring food, water, newspapers, etc, to strikers. Other strikes were supported by consumer boycotts in the community. The stay-away was itself maybe the best example of joint labour-community actions. Some stay-aways were initiated by students, others by labour. An effective stay-away was one heeded by all sections of the community and the key to success was therefore broad consulta-tions.[328] The table below shows the stay-aways that COSATU staged in the decade from the mid-80s.

   Community "consumerist" issues were increasingly directly linked to workplace demands through the 80s. Struggles over transport services, consumer prices etc. are examples thereof. The Anti-VAT campaign in 1991 stands out as another good example of the close ties between labour and the community.[329] COSATU's demands for the postponement of the implementation of VAT spearheaded a coalition of twenty organisations, soon to grow to over 100 (*The Shopsteward* 1995). The VAT campaign put COSATU definitely on the map as a voice of the poor and exploited. COSATU picked up on issues such as food prices, drought relief, housing and electricity in both campaigns and forums. On COSATU's initiative, a whole range of organisations within civil society reached agreement on a set of demands to negotiate with government. The government's failure to respond to a compromise offer led to the November 1991 Stay-Away. Mass actions in August 1992 formed yet another example of the increasing combined mass mobilisation of labour, political organisations and community groups.

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[328] COSATU's own journal The Shopsteward argues that this lesson had already been learnt in the 50s and was underlined again during the 1976 student uprising.
[329] The government had decided to replace the General Sales Tax with the Value Added Tax (VAT).

Table 8.4.   National and Regional Stay-Aways 1984-1995.[330]

Year	Issue	No. and duration	Area and groups involved
Sept. 1984	Rent increases and increases in transport costs	1 day	Sharpeville. Civics and unions
Nov. 1984	Occupation of townships, repression, students' demands, cost of living and rents	2 days	PWV area. Students (400,000 boycotted classes) and unions (800,000 workers attended)
1984	Solidarity on rents, police in townships	1 day	Soweto Alliance of groups
1984	Political issues and socio-economic demands, students' demands	1 day	Springs Parents and students committees
1985	Support for striking workers	1 day	Pietermarizburg Trade unions, MAWU, 100% effective
1985	Solidarity stoppage over death in detention	1 day	East Rand Unions CWIU and FOSATU 100,000 workers
1985	Retrenchments and petrol prices	1 day	Port Elizabeth Alliance of groups

[330] Strikes are not included in the table. We have included the broad national collective actions in which groups other than workers also took part and where the goals were fully, or partly, political. While attempts have been made to identify the mobilising groups, it is difficult to distinguish precisely between those who initiated the actions, the actual organisers, and those groups, which lent organisational support to the protest call. One reason why this is unclear is that groups were themselves wanting to conceal their precise role due to political repression. The degree of popular support for the stay-away calls is hard to estimate with any accuracy, but is based mainly on data from the Labour Monitor Group (see, for example, LMG 1984, 1988, 1989, 1992 and others), which is based on interviews with employers nation-wide. See Adler et al. 1992 for stay-away between 1950 and 1977 and Bennett 1989 and Adler et al. 1992 for more on stay-aways between 1984 and 1988.

1985	Political issues, opposition to state of emergency and socio-economic demands	16 stay-aways	Regional Civics, students and unions
1985	Solidarity with victims of detention	2 days	Uitenhage Youth org. in alliance with others
1986	Socio-economic demands and political issues	3 stay-aways	Trade unions
1986	Recognition of 1 May as public holiday	1 day	Trade unions (1.5 million took part)
1986	Socio-economic demands	25 stay-aways	Regional civics
1986	Political issues and socio-economic demands	4 stay-aways	Alliance of groups
1987	Commemoration of Sharpeville shooting, 21 March. Political demands	1 day	Nation-wide, alliance of groups
1987	21 April	1 day	Nation-wide
1987	16 June, Soweto uprising. Political demands	1 day	Nation-wide, alliance of groups
1987	Against white elections	2 days	Alliance of groups
1987	Political issues and socio-economic demands	3 stay-aways (5 days)	Regional civics, Tembisa, (15 October), Soweto (3 days, 22-24 April) and Transvaal (15 April)
1988	21 March, in commemoration of Sharpeville, political demands	1 stay-away	Nation-wide, alliance of groups
1988	6-8 June	3-day stay-away	Nation-wide, called by unions against the LRA (2.5 – 3 million workers stayed away from work each day)
1988	16 June, SOWETO uprising	3 stay-aways	Nation-wide, alliance of groups

1988	Political issues and socio-economic demands	1 day	Regional Ashdown (1 February)
1988	Political issues and socio-economic demands	1 day	City of Jabavu in Soweto (17 February)
1989	White elections	1 day	Workers, students, civics (millions attended)
1990	Violence and Inkatha attacks, July	1 day	UDF (3 million people took part)
1991	VAT	2 days	Students and unions (almost 4 million people took part)
1992	Mass actions "take over the government", August	2 days	Tripartite Alliance (4 million attended)
1993	Chris Hani commemoration, political demands	1 day	General protest, alliance of groups, (approx. 4 million attended)
1995	LRA	Half-day	Nation-wide
1995	Local elections	Half-day	Regional, KwaZulu-Natal

In 1988, more than 9 million working days were estimated to have been lost in stay-aways, in spite of the relatively small number of stay-aways organised (Fine & Webster 1989). After the 1994 national elections, collective actions by the unions and community groups were rare. In 1995, COSATU called a half-day stay-away in support of labour's demands concerning the Labour Relations Act (LRA) and the Constitution. The main issue was for labour to stop the right of employers to lock out workers. However, a consciousness of labour's need for involvement in politics remained in the labour movement. The KwaZulu-Natal stay-away the same year was organised in protest against the failure of the province to hold local government elections.

Combined strategies

In 1988, political restrictions imposed on COSATU prevented it from opposing the local authorities, boycotting municipal elections, being involved in developing democratic structures in the community in opposition to the state and supporting a whole range of campaigns (SALB 1988, 4/5:22). Industrial action was its response to the Labour Bill in 1988, but industrial action in the form of strikes and stay-aways was linked to political issues. COSATU and NACTU hence demanded the lifting of political restrictions, the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, an end to the whites-only elections, etc.

COSATU was instrumental in using mass actions to get the transition process going again when it seemed stall. The high point of labour militancy was perhaps the strike on 3 and 4 August 1992, which was part of a wave of mass actions in the wake of the Boipatong massacre. This general strike has been estimated to have involved more than 4 million workers. In 1993, millions again stayed away in order to pay respect to the assassinated leader of the SACP, Chris Hani.

COSATU used mass actions, but with variations and additional and alternative tactics.[331] In the campaign against the LRA in 1988, for example, the union movement organised actions but chose deliberately to stay away from local bargaining. When stay-aways occurred, they were on the basis of individual actions without trade-union officials on the scene in their official capacity. This tactic was employed in order to avoid victimisation or being sued for damages for initiating industrial action, but it also served to place employers in a very difficult situation, as they were unable to approach anyone for negotiations (UN 1989). In turn, this pushed employers to the negotiating table at the national level. All in all, however, one of the major differences between the original industrial unions which later came under the COSATU umbrella and other unions was their tactics towards the state and employers. The exile-based or -motivated organisations and unions argued that anything short of armed or underground struggle, anything that smacked of agitation for reforms or open organisational work, was tantamount to a recognition of the apartheid state and capitulation to it (Mamdani 1996). The industrial unions, on the other hand, argued that negotiations and registration could be used to their advantage without capitulation in order to further the interests of the working class. In 1988, COSATU negotiated with the

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[331] It differed from NACTU in this respect

regime over the issue of the Labour Bill, made representations to parliamentary sub-committees, etc. while NACTU was careful *not* to negotiate. NACTU initially argued that negotiating with the government would imply "co-operating with the state" or being "co-opted". While NACTU later changed its strategy and joined COSATU in the negotiations, it was generally more conservative in its strategies than COSATU, which used a whole range of tactics and was far more creative in its response to political and employer restrictions. It combined different forms of mass action (strikes, stay-aways, sit-ins, etc.) with international pressure and discussions with employers and representations to Parliament. Likewise, although the core alliance partners were clear, other partners were chosen for specific purposes. The concept of "strategic unionism" developed on this basis (Holdt 1993). From 1990, the labour movement actively sought to influence macro-economic policies and from there, the distance was short to the political negotiations that started. Unions helped push forward political negotiations by means of negotiations in the labour market and the contact achieved here with state and employer representatives. Negotiations in a series of fora, at the local, regional and national level, prepared and reinforced the political talks by generating ideas and strengthening the democratic forces. Negotiations in the labour market helped to create legitimacy among leaders and grassroots structures for political negotiations. The moral or emotional effect upon whites (white employers in particular), who would never have dreamed of talking to blacks as equals before, should not be underestimated either. Many were now brought face to face with the "enemy" and learned to respect its tactics as well as gaining political and academic insights. COSATU had good-quality leadership and was assisted by an academic in-put of a high standard from external professionals, such as labour lawyers, university academics, labour-related research centres, etc. Of no less importance was the fact that many of the union leaders themselves had academic backgrounds or a history of student activism. The fact that the national, provincial and local governments drew many of their key political figures from union ranks after the elections gives some indication of the quality of the labour movement leadership. Furthermore, international assistance, from the Nordic-Dutch funding group in particular, helped create the basis for resources to run training courses, assist workers in labour cases, run political campaigns, etc. In this period of the very late 80s and early 90s, COSATU changed its strategy to embrace negotiations as well. It did not, however, abandon collective industrial action. At various times and places unions flexed their

"collective muscles" through nation-wide work stoppages. The COSATU-led anti-VAT coalition culminated, for example, in the highly successful November 1991 general strike (Murray 1994), which also paved the way for COSATU to push its demand for a national economic negotiating forum to parallel the CODESA political multi-party talks. The National Economic Forum was created on this basis. Labour's participation in the National Manpower Commission and in the National Economic Forum, where labour relations and macro-economic policies, respectively, were discussed, was an important contribution to the political talks. Furthermore, COSATU made its impact upon development policies through several joint ANC-COSATU initiatives.[332]

8.4 Political power?

Bachrach and Baratz (undated) argue that political power has two faces. Power is exercised when A participates in the making of decisions that affect B. But power is also exercised when A devotes his or her energy to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A, which in this case would be the trade-union movement in South Africa. Let us briefly consider some of the issues on the basis of which COSATU exercised power.

Registration and the 1979 Wiehahn reforms.
The strike waves of 1973 and 1975 had brought to an end a decade of labour peace. When the 1976 uprising led to the stay-away of September the same year, it caused alarm in official circles (Mamdani 1996:243). The prospect of politicised strikes and of overlapping waves of struggle bringing together township residents and workers seemed real. This in turn prompted the establishment of two government commissions in order to

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[332] Amongst others the Harare Recommendations in 1990: Recommendations on a Post Apartheid Economic Policy: ANC - COSATU Workshop on Economic Policy for a Post Apartheid South Africa, Harare 28 April to 1 May 1990.

see what reforms could possibly depoliticise the union movement: the Wiehahn Commission and the Riekert Commission. Wiehahn argued (Mamdani 1996; Bonner 1983:17):

> "If African unions remained unregistered, they would in effect function as power groups that would force employers to negotiate outside the statutory system but without being subject to any official supervision. This would no doubt constitute a rallying point for underground activity: an industrial relations problem would become a security problem".

The government strategy in brief was as follows (ibid): First, an "insider-outsider" strategy that would further entrench the division between migrant and urban labour by excluding migrant workers from registered unions. Second, a process of registration accompanied by controls that would effectively depoliticise the registered unions and contain their activity within the field of industrial relations. Third, a system of plant- and industry-level bargaining that would fragment the union centres and neutralise their new-found strength on the shop floor through workers committees (liaison committees) excluding and sidelining the unions. Yet, the outcome was different to that envisaged, because the unions refused to follow the script.

The predominant trend amongst the general unions and the community unions was to call for a flat boycott of the reforms. The industrial unions, however, reacted differently. They set up the Federation of SA Trade Unions as a direct attempt to co-ordinate and direct black workers' responses to the Commission reports. Because the industrial union federation FOSATU now included both migrant and urban workers, the government did not manage to split the union movement (Mamdani 1996). FOSATU successfully set its own conditions for registration. Amongst these conditions were the following: that their non-racial constitutions were met, that they were granted full and not provisional registration, that unregistered unions would be allowed to function as before and that registration should be granted on an industrial basis and not in a fragmented localised fashion. But even after registration, the industrial unions refused to join the Industrial Councils and continued to organise on the shop floor and to demand plant-level recognition from individual employers. When this was not forthcoming, illegal strikes broke out, culminating with the strike wave on the East Rand in 1981–82, with several employers giving in, eventually followed by the government. The

industrial unions, which were completely over-stretched by trying to co-ordinate shop-floor agreements, negotiations and strikes, finally joined the Industrial Councils in 1982.

Finally, while a conventional interpretation of the work of the Wiehahn Commission is that the legalisation of African unions was a result of the recommendations of the Commission, others have argued that the Commission simply legitimised what was already a government priority (Pretorius 1996). Pretorius (ibid) argues that the Commission was appointed against the background of increasingly strained industrial relations and the Soweto rebellion. Its membership included a number of trade unions, and employers' bodies. The purpose of the Commission was hence to cultivate the agreement of key interest groups, including conservative white unions, to the introduction of a state-sanctioned system for collective bargaining which would incorporate African unions (Friedman 1986, Pretorius 1996a, 1996b).

The Labour Relations Act 1988

Conflicts between COSATU and the state had reached a climax during 1987. Harsh political restrictions had been posed on COSATU at the beginning of 1988, in fact banning COSATU from engaging in any political activity. In this context, the government tabled new labour legislation to curb the union movement's engagement in politics. The new amendments to the Labour Relations Act *inter alia* permitted the Industrial Court to interdict lawful strikes and lockouts. It restricted the right to strike, attempted to reverse many of the unions' gains on questions like job security and threatened punitive damages for strike action against employers.[333] The initiative to change the labour law had originally come from employers (Baskin 1991) but was welcomed by both political and security forces anxious to contain the militancy of the unions. The minister of manpower argued that:

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[333] The LRAA also proposed a reduction of the powers of the Industrial Courts, a wide-ranging extension of the criminal registration of strikes, and restrictions on indemnity against damages so that employers would more easily be able to hold unions financially accountable even for legal strikes (Southall 1995:95).

"Changes in labour legislation will bring militant and irresponsible unions to heel...it will be the most effective disciplinary action instituted against unions since Wiehahn"

<div align="right">(quoted in Baskin 1991:262).</div>

The strategy of co-optive reforms initiated by the Wiehahn Commission and the recognition of black unions in 1979 had changed to plain repression from the mid-80s (Holdt 1988). States of emergency and political restrictions marked the days of "hard apartheid" under President Botha. Political restrictions could not, however, curb the industrial actions based on, or argued to be based on, workers' interests.

The law was generally perceived by the so-called new, or democratic unions in COSATU and NACTU as attempting to divide workers, but the government proposals in fact had the opposite effect. The first step towards greater labour unity was taken in the co-ordinated actions of NACTU and COSATU against the Labour Relations Amendments Act. Three COSATU unions took the lead in the opposition to the bill: the CWIU, the PPAWU and the NUMW (Baskin 1991). Stickers and pamphlets were published and an increasing number of demonstrations organised during lunch breaks. It was wrong, COSATU argued, to impose any new legislation without consultation with labour: the government had been elected without the workers' vote and therefore had no right to impose new legislation.

A COSATU special congress was organised in May 1988 in order to consider the banning of and restrictions on organisations and develop a response to the new Labour Bill.[334] It resolved to take immediate action against the government and adopted a plan for a broad anti-apartheid alliance to challenge the strategies of the state. The final political resolution was a finely tuned compromise hammered out between four affiliates and adopted unanimously. Simultaneously, there was little hesitation or caution on industrial action regarding the bill. The strategy of "alliance politics" had come far and COSATU invited community organisations to attend the Congress.

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[334] For two days, 1,500 delegates debated union actions. The debate centred on whether the protest should last for two or three days and whether it should be linked to the National Youth Day on 16 June 16 or not.

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The LRAA was followed by a three-day stay-away in June 1988, the biggest and longest stay-away in South Africa to date. The stay-away once again showed the close integration of political and workplace-related issues. The stay-away was called against the Labour Bill, the state of emergency and the political restrictions on political and community organisations and the trade unions. It was a successful test of union mobilisation potential after two years of severe repression (Holdt 1988:52). The emergency regulations specifically banned the calling of stay-aways. Between 2.5 and 3 million people were estimated to have stayed away from work each day, which cost the economy roughly R500 million in lost production (Holdt 1988). The numbers attending the stay-away itself suggest a wider community mobilisation (the number exceeded the joint COSATU/NACTU membership). Employers had also been mobilised in the days leading up to the stay-away. While previous stay-aways had been met with "no work, no pay" and little, if any, more attention, the employers organisation (SACCOLA) this time adopted a far more confrontational stance (Holdt 1988).

By the third day of the stay-away, employers were ready to enter into negotiations with the unions. They also signalled that they would be ready to consider COSATU's proposal that the bill be submitted for independent arbitration and increasingly put pressure on the government to postpone the implementation of the bill (Holdt 1988). Both parties were now ready to negotiate.[335] After the stay-away, employers refrained from the mass retrenchments that they had threatened.[336] The minister of manpower also signalled that he would be willing to consider postponing the implementation of the bill. A series of meetings between the unions, SACCOLA and the ministry followed and the implementation of the law was finally postponed with the aim of consultation and negotiations taking place before a new proposal was tabled.

The struggle ended in victory when the two federations COSATU and NACTU and the largest business association SACCOLA reached an agreement with the government that effectively annulled the 1988 Labour Relations Act. In September 1990, the *Laboria Minute* marked the break-

[335] COSATU and NACTU also abandoned their demand that employers reject the bill completely, in order to negotiate the removal of specific "union-bashing" clauses (Holdt 1988).

[336] About 2,000 COSATU workers and 1,600 NACTU workers were dismissed (Holdt 1988).

through for multi-lateral bargaining at the national level. This was the first fully-fledged tripartite agreement signed in South Africa. The Liboria Minute stipulated that no future amendments to the Labour Relations Act would be put before parliament until all parties had been consulted. Furthermore, it paved the way for bilateral negotiations between COSATU/NACTU and SACCOLA, which eventually led to the new Labour Relations Amendments Act being passed by Parliament in 1991.

The stay-away also strengthened the relationship between the unions and community organisations. Subsequently, many meetings in the unions were attended by community organisations. In the words of COSATU's general secretary at the time, Jay Naidoo:

"the Congress resolution calling for an anti-apartheid conference opened the way to a broader unity. but the protest action actually initiated this process by pulling in a diverse range of groupings. This illustrates the point...that unity is forged in action"

(quoted in SALB 1988,6:59).

The Reconstruction and Development Programme

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), later adopted as government policy by the democratic government in 1994, is the brainchild of COSATU, and was initially conceived as a pact which would bind the ANC to specific agreements while the federation in return would undertake to deliver votes.

A fourth draft of the RDP was presented to the COSATU Special Congress in September 1993. On the same occasion, a Platform of Workers Rights was presented which the Congress agreed should form part of the RDP itself. Both were adopted as COSATU policy. It was agreed that no accord should be signed between COSATU and the ANC. The RDP should rather constitute the platform of both organisations. It was for labour to be a yardstick by which COSATU could measure the ANC's performance in government. As debates proceeded, however, it was felt that such a programme should go beyond the COSATU/ANC and instead be a unifying plan which would include civil society and other parties and organisations. Thus, the RDP laid the basis for the ANC's election manifesto.

The process by which the RDP emerged is in itself interesting and illustrative of the goals it specified. People's Forums and Workers' Forums in the pre-election period were used to enrich the RDP drafts. A Mass

Democratic Movement Summit was held in December 1993 to obtain input from youth, women, religious groups, rural people, etc. In January 1994, COSATU participated in an ANC conference on strategy and reconstruction where a sixth draft of the RDP was debated (*The Shopsteward*, December 1995). After this, a Tripartite Alliance committee was tasked with finalising the RDP Document.

The RDP provided the point of departure for economic policy, with specific goals concerning housing, infrastructure, job creation, education, etc. While redistribution is seen as an aim in itself, the RDP especially targets the poorest of the poor in the rural areas and the unemployed in urban areas. Furthermore, the RDP includes specific goals when it comes to the empowerment and involvement of civil society in the transformation process. Some of COSATU's old demands from the Workers Charter Campaign and draft Charter, which was tabled at the COSATU Congress in 1991, later found their way into the RDP (*The Shopsteward*, 1995).

It is generally regarded as a measure of COSATU's influence that the RDP was not only adopted by the ANC and other civil society organisations as a basis for building a new future, but was also accepted by many others outside the alliance as the only hope for the reconstruction of South Africa (Buhlungu 1994). Despite many changes to its wording, the RDP still bears the unmistakable imprint of organised labour (Baskin 1996). COSATU initiated and carried the RDP forward in exchange for political gains like housing, job creation, and electrification. It was aware, however, of the potential conflicts between political goals and implementation. One of the aims behind the establishment of the National Economic, Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), put forward by COSATU in 1995, was hence to create a negotiating forum where labour market issues, economic policy and the RDP programme would be negotiated between the parties before going to Parliament or being implemented.[337]

[337] NEDLAC hence also brought together the NMC and the NEF.

8.5   Conclusion: the "big dog with big teeth"?

It is a long way from the "big dog with small teeth" that Wiehahn said was born in 1979[338] to the "lion" which was promised at COSATU's launch in 1985.[339] Diamond (1994) argues that only civil society organisations with the following characteristics have the potential to perform democracy-building functions in broader politics: they should not contain maximalist uncompromising, interest groups or groups with undemocratic goals or methods; they should be organised in a structured, stable manner, in which bargaining, predictability and the growth of co-operative networks are facilitated and thereby the stability and governability of democratic regimes enhanced; and finally they must also function democratically in their internal processes. This seems like a description of the South African union movement which emerged through the 70s and was sustained through the 80s. Yet, while these may be necessary conditions, they are hardly sufficient criteria for labour actually *having* political influence.

The Catholic Church argued in 1980 that precisely because of the highly industrialised nature of the SA economy "everything points to the pivotal role of black workers in any future overthrow of the apartheid system" (Catholic Institute for International Relations 1980:137, quoted in Southall 1995). And COSATU without doubt played a political *role*. Furthermore, industrial action, partly motivated by and partly organised together with political action, was damaging to the economy, which was already vulnerable because of international sanctions and lower prices for gold, diamonds and minerals on the international market in the 80s. Furthermore, internal turmoil led by the labour movement was disturbing for South Africa's international image and to the "peace and quietness" of whites internally.

Political power was exercised when the labour movement partici-pated in decision-making in the field of labour relations that directly affected the government and its attempts to silence the union movement. But political power was also exercised when labour devoted its energy to

[338] Wiehahn (the leader of the commission which recommended opening up registration to unions representing black workers said about the new union movement to emerge: "Don't worry, it is just a big dog with small teeth" (quoted in Baskin 1991).
[339] President Barayi in his speech to the inaugural Congress.

creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limited the scope of the political process of the apartheid regime.

Furthermore, COSATU's various mass actions, the 1986 stay-aways commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Soweto uprising and protesting against the deaths in detention and the repressive LRA Amendments (1988) etc. did much to convince national and international capital that apartheid generated more conflict than it did profits. On this basis, the labour movement helped push leading industrialists to support reform both in labour legislation and in racial controls (Seidman 1994:37). The government itself realised that it was becoming increasingly difficult to control the opposition. The Wiehahn reforms of 1979, which led to registration and bargaining rights for black unions, were in themselves an expression of attempts by the government to co-opt labour and quieten down its political protest. However, the trade-union movement gained strength and power not only through the use of mass actions and industrial actions. Trade unions were also negotiating bodies and gained respect and success through debate, negotiation and discussions. Sometimes debate and negotiations led to industrial action, but by no means always. This aspect of union practice is often underestimated. It was important in gaining external respect and not least in bridging internal divisions and controversies.

As employers realised that unions were gaining increased power through centralised bargaining at the industry-wide level, some tried to undermine or destroy the Industrial Council system.[340] But while employers did have some (albeit limited) success in this strategy,[341] there were clear wage gains and organisational gains to be achieved by labour in its campaign for collective bargaining.

[340] It has been argued that SA's biggest industrial conglomerate spearheaded the attacks on the Industrial Council system. In 1989, Barlow Rand was, for example, able to destroy the Industrial Council for the printing industry by pulling out of the employers' association and thus making it unrepresentative, just as the COSATU affiliate in the printing industry was about to apply for membership in the Industrial Council (Webster & Holdt 1992).

[341] The number of Industrial Councils decreased from 105 in 1980 to 91 in 1990. The number of workers covered by Industrial Council agreements fell from one million to 826, 000 in the same period (Webster & Holdt 1992).

COSATU also had an impact in contributing to redistribution in society. Some argue that the 1973 strikes resulted in 20 per cent wage increases (Vawda, undated). In 1991, for example, the government reduced VAT from 13 to 10 per cent owing to pressures from the unions and community organisations through the "Anti-VAT Campaign". Certain basic foodstuffs were zero-rated at the same time. White wages remained near stationary after 1970, while black wages grew in a somewhat erratic manner. Wage differentials thus narrowed considerably between whites and other groups of workers from 1970 to 1995 (Fallon & Lucas 1998). Increased union activity raised African real wages by about 15 per cent above what they otherwise would have been between 1979 and 1990 (World Bank 1994, quoted in Ginsburg & Webster 1995:106). In the second half of 1990, the unions won an average wage increase of 22 per cent for wage labourers, while inflation was running at 14 percent (Webster & Holdt 1992).

Southall (1995) argues that it was precisely their industrial weight and organisational depth which enabled the unions to play the leading role in confronting the state when, under the various states of emergency, the substance of the UDF and other democratic political organisations were all but swept away.[342] As a key figure in the democratic movement, Popo Molefe was well placed to provide a "before and after" perspective when he was released after almost five years in prison in 1989 (Baskin 1991). One of his first impressions was the enormous growth of the union movement: when he was arrested in early 1985, the unions had formed a relatively small part of the democratic movement, but when he was released, the labour movement formed a central pillar (Baskin 1991:1).

It seems reasonable also to argue that labour had an impact in changing the strategies of the apartheid regime towards reforms and political negotiations in the early 90s after a period of stalemate. The NP had by then realised that it was impossible to continue governing in the face of uncontrollable internal resistance. The fall of the Communist systems in Eastern Europe and the change of NP leadership were additional important elements in paving the way for reform in the NP.[343] International pressure also played a role and so did sanctions.

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[342] Indeed it was COSATU's emergence as the vanguard movement of the oppressed during these years which led it into the Tripartite Alliance when the ANC and SACP were unbanned in early 1990.

[343] De Klerk took over from Botha in 1989.

Together with these factors, union resistance played an important role in the political process. The states of emergency, with the resulting restrictions and "security measures" taken against COSATU and other political organisations, were supposed to neutralise the "radicals".[344] However, the failure to weaken the opposition and ensure long-term stability formed an incentive for political change. All in all COSATU put its stamp on the next stage in the transition process through mass actions and helped to install an ANC government in power. The industrial consultants Levy and Associates (1995) state that:

> "As the country's most powerful and highly politicised union federation, COSATU has been at the forefront of change in South Africa".

COSATU put its mark not only on the strategies of the apartheid government. The labour movement also challenged the black nationalist movement to define more clearly its commitment to economic as well as political change (Seidman 1995:37). Through these years, the new trade-union movement displayed immense organisational and strategic skills. In spite of political restrictions and strong resistance from employers, COSATU unions in particular demonstrated a growing strength, discipline and ability to carry out actions. Two factors are of specific importance in this respect. First, the development of national strategies is important for building class identity and national solidarity. There is little doubt that the union movement today has a more stable and structured bargaining system and organisational outlook than ever before, ensuring more predictability as well as long-term visions, strategies, resources and negotiation skills. Second, in spite of frank admissions by COSATU's head office in 1988 that lack of worker control over officials remained a key weakness, the internal democratic structures of COSATU remain a strong principle and in many unions, the *operating* principle. Many unions have divided their authority

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[344] Security measures were generally perceived as acts by the security forces. South Africa was regarded as one of the most dangerous countries to live in for a trade unionist, both because of the threaths from political opponents and from the security forces (ICFTU Reports 1992-1994). Evidence by the Goldstone Commission (1994) and the Truth Commission and others et al has definitively linked the security forces to violent actions against unionists. The bombing of COSATU house in 1987 also had its background in the security forces.

between a legislative body, an executive and an appeals tribunal (Visser 1995:48). However, while full-time officials comprise such committees in most union federations around the world, the COSATU structure has a relatively high representation of worker delegates and strong shop steward power.

The state had already had to give way on several issues. In 1979, it had already had to give up the original intention of the Wiehahn reforms of co-opting and controlling the political activities of the unions. In 1987, the government started acknowledging 1 May as a workers' holiday.[345] Furthermore, it gave way on the Labour Relations Act in 1989. In the early 90s, the government finally agreed to establish institutions for tripartite negotiations on economic policy, labour market policy, etc. Mass actions in 1992 are also generally regarded to have brought the government and the ANC back to the negotiating table in CODESA II. And in general, the political developments at the time were underpinned by negotiations concerning economic and social issues. The August 1992 stay-away also resulted in the employers (SACCOLA) agreeing to commit themselves to act as brokers between the unions and the government during deadlock on certain issues (Sowetan 22.12.92). Although we generally assume that COSATU played an important political role, it is hard to say how important. There are big difficulties in distinguishing between the actions of the various different groups that were mobilised. Labour's strategies, tactics, goals and identities were closely interwoven with community issues and strategies.

While inter-union rivalry has been mentioned as one barrier to political strength, we should not forget the importance of *external* alliances or, alternatively, external political rivalry as a potential barrier to political influence. COSATU's strength was connected to the strength of civil society and general opposition politics. It has also been pointed out, for example, that the Sharpeville Day stay-away in 1988 happened with very little public mobilisation and without formal backing from the trade unions. Holdt (1988) argues that the Sharpeville stay-away appeared to have been organised from the grass-roots. This may indicate, in his opinion, that a new phase of resistance politics had begun, characterised by a high level of informal organisation and political consciousness at the

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[345] At first, the government only accepted "the first Friday of every May" as Workers Day. By May 1990, however, it had to give way completely and accept the 1 st of May.

local level which was in some ways independent of national structures. In fact, the core of COSATU as an organisation with a relatively broad grass-roots base should not be underestimated in this respect. A strong emphasis on and practice in shop-floor control formed an important basis for COSATU's organisation from the beginning. It helped protect the organisation from state security measures and restrictions while it helped shape a vibrant, militant union federation.

We have so far focused on issues in which COSATU was successful; but what about all the other issues – i.e. all those "lame ducks", where COSATU failed to achieve its goals or pursued unsuccessful strategies or actions? One such issue is COSATU's long-standing call for nationalisa-tion.[346] COSATU on several occasions called for the nationalisation of key industries.[347] It called in the long-term for a democratically planned economy, worker control of factories, mines and shops and collective ownership of the mainstays of the economy (COSATU Congresses 1985-1995). In practice, however, these economic policies were hard to pursue. One reason for this was the incrementalist strategy pursued by several unions of gradually gaining more control through sectoral bargaining. Furthermore, nationalisation tended to become a controversial issue internally. Finally, the strategy of the democratic Left in South Africa had been one of pursuing the national revolution first and the revolution of the working class thereafter. When the "nationalist revolution" was finally won in 1994, labour was heavily involved with, or even de facto in partnership with, employers and the state as joint discussions were held concerning such issues as social partnership, reconstruction accords and social contracts.

Another issue is clearly that the strength of labour and the ties between COSATU and the civics grew strong in certain areas, while they were almost non-existent in others. Furthermore, at the national level, the

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[346] Another issue worth touching upon is the heavy strains put on (and the final closure of) the RDP office in early 1996. For two fiscal years after the elections, money allocated to the RDP Fund was not spent, the major reason being lack of state capacity; programme incapacity and policy ambiguity (Simkins 1996).

[347] In 1992, an economic policy conference called for nationalisation of selected enterprises providing basic goods and services and for the implementation of a land and wealth tax. Simultaneously, it indicated that certain industries in mining and financial services might have to be strategically nationalised in order to promote economic growth and, workers' control and enlarge resources available to a democratic state (Levy & Ass. 1993).

relationship between COSATU and the national civics organisation SANCO remained relatively weak.[348] How can we explain the regional and sectoral differences and differences over time? How can we explain the differences between those issues in which COSATU had success and the areas where COSATU policies and aims were accompanied by failure? Clearly state restrictions made some union campaigns doomed to failure from the outset. COSATU leaders continuously had to use all their creativity in order to avoid their campaigns from being categorised as so-called "political activities", which they were not allowed to engage in. Success also depended upon which sectors and unions took the lead. Those unions with a strong, powerful shop-floor presence and a sophisticated bargaining system were usually also far more powerful in political activities. However, it is also worth mentioning that no organisation or union movement was successful in all areas, or in all its campaigns.

From the late 80s and early 90s, labour strategies changed from opposition to targeted co-operation and negotiations. It was from this that the label "strategic unionism" was derived (Holdt 1992). Building on the successful anti-LRAA campaign of 1988, a COSATU-led anti-VAT campaign culminated in the highly successful general strike of November 1991. COSATU and the National Manpower Commission furthermore reached an agreement in 1992, which represented a similar success for organised labour. This agreement promulgated labour legislation covering working conditions and labour relations rights for farm workers and domestic servants and included provisions for certain categories of public sector workers to be covered by the agreement in the future. In the political sphere, COSATU played a key role in the setting up of the National Peace Accord and participated in all its structures, employed peace organisers for Natal Province and played an instrumental role in organising peace conferences and in the peace structures that were established in 1992 and maintained until the elections. COSATU hence contributed to preparing the ground for the elections of 1994, not solely through opposition and protest, but also by setting up instruments for reconciliation.

[348] COSATU and SANCO often found themselves in opposition in the local elections. Conflicts with traditional leaders in some areas, where COSATU and SANCO leaders have been found on different sides, have also inhibited a close relationship.

After 1990, organised labour actively sought to influence macro-economic policy through the emergence of the "forum movement". To this end, COSATU/NACTU sat on statutory bodies dealing with labour-related issues like the "revamped" National Manpower Commission, the National Electricity Forum, the National Training Board, the National Housing Forum and the National Economic Forum. They actively campaigned to reorganise the National Manpower Commission into a tripartite negotiating forum with powers to bring legislation before Parliament (Schreiner 1991). They also tried to restructure the Labour Appeals Court by enlarging its powers, extending its focus beyond labour legislation and ensuring trade-union representation in decision-making (Murray 1994).

During the 80s, the main task for the democratic union movement was to organise and unite black workers and to build internal organisational structures. The goals of the 90s were far more complex. First, the union movement now faced the challenge of building internal unity amongst diverse social and occupational groups. New interest groups had joined COSATU, with differing socio-economic backgrounds, occupational profiles and priorities.[349] Furthermore, political divisions also became more pronounced as different interest groups joined the federation and as the "struggle for liberation" came closer to the end. More direct outspoken support for the ANC, through the establishment of the tripartite alliance and finally campaigning for the ANC in the 1994 elections made it more difficult for COSATU organisers to maintain rock-solid support among NP, IFP and PAC members. Simultaneously, external challenges became more complex. The economic situation appeared increasingly bleak as the unions were drawn into more responsible positions. Wage demands increasingly had to be seen in relation to retrenchments and company performance, and national economic restructuring in relation to unemployment, international competitiveness and trade barriers.

[349] The affiliation of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) in 1993 introduced the first large group of professional workers.

The RDP and union candidates on ANC lists[350] were key elements in COSATU's election interventions. In return, COSATU decided to engage in voter education and canvas votes for an ANC victory. Yet, this carried clear benefits for the ANC too, which did not see itself as fit to campaign properly after years in exile and underground and generally perceived COSATU as enjoying high levels of support amongst ordinary people.[351]

Final questions: corporatism, pluralism or "something new"?
Why did the political union movement emerge when it did in a country lacking any recent tradition of labour militancy? State repression explains the "silence" on the labour front through the 60s, but although authoritarianism in itself explains some aspects of a labour movement which felt compelled to mobilise in the political sphere in order to obtain industrial gains, it hardly offers a complete picture.

At the end of the 60s, only 0.3 per cent of black workers were organised in the then "independent" unions. If those who were organised in "parallel" unions to white registered unions are added in as well, the figure amounts to around 2 per cent. In comparison, 30 per cent of whites, 21 per cent of coloureds and 16 per cent of Indian workers were organised (UTP 1980). Union organisers encountered repeated problems in trying to persuade workers of the benefits of unions through the 60s, and up until the mid-80s political alliances, community engagement etc. also encoun-

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[350]   After 1990, many leading unionists left the unions to take up political positions. After April 1994 several went into national, regional or local government. Union candidates on the ANC list for parliament were supposed to offer workers an access to sympathetic decision-makers and COSATU an easy access to information and influence. Simultaneously, union nominees were regarded as better placed to understand the aspirations of workers and as having more respect for the principles of accountability, mandates and report-backs (Buhlungu 1994).

[351] In 1991/92, for example, more than 55 per cent of Africans participating in a national survey argued that unions should have more influence on government and have co-determination in the companies (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996).

tered opposition amongst the ranks of workers.[352] Seidman (1994:233) argues that in a sense Natal provides the test case for the argument that experiences of labour mobilisation shaped the way that communities formed political agendas and hints at the extent to which involvement in the labour movement offered an alternative identity for many Zulu-speaking workers.

The mixture of working-class and community identities must be seen in the light of specific legal and regulatory mechanisms which linked them together. While discrimination was based on race, many forms of discrimination were directly related to production relations. Working-class communities who immigrated into the urban areas with no access to (or indeed direct exclusion from) social services, for example, easily raised political and community issues as part of their struggle for improved working conditions. The dynamics also worked "the other way", however: community organisers recognised that the possibility of community demands being backed up by strikes opened up new strategies and potential. Union activists helped shape the discourse of the groups in which they participated (Seidman 1994). Unions had the bargaining skills and the strength in terms of numbers of members that the community organisations badly wanted. It has even been suggested that community organisations changed their priorities in the 80s in order to accommodate the concerns of workers: instead of demands which reflected the upward mobility of the black bourgeoisie, claims were shifted in a direction which did not challenge working-class consciousness. The underground ANC and SACP also stressed working-class demands, which facilitated links between labour and the community.

The union movement relied upon community support and in turn provided support for community *campaigns*. When the emergent union movement began to win real gains in wages and working conditions and success in the industrial field, as well as increasingly in the political arena, it simultaneously recruited new members. Decades of state-imposed racism had also created the solidarity and opposition collective culture which was

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[352] As documented by Seidman (1994:231-233), the relationship between unions and community groups was problematic. In the PWV (Gauteng) triangle and in Eastern Cape, for example, there were several instance of unions and workers having opposite views on what position unions should adopt in relation to politics and community issues.

needed in order to challenge apartheid. While cleavages and conflicts were present within the black majority, they had a *common* enemy. Population classification and suppression formed community identities.

Broad structural processes were clearly instrumental in shaping the union movement which emerged in the 70s and 80s: economic conditions, industrialisation and the structural differentiation which accompanied it. However, as argued by Seidman (ibid:260), an export-oriented economy in the 70s did not raise wages for African workers until factory-based organisations disrupted production. The business opposition to apartheid only emerged with the worries of private capital and decreased economic growth and once the union movement discovered how to take advantage of the emerging conflicts between business and the state. Conflicts between the state and business in specific sectors were underpinned by industrial conflicts.

Wide variations in workers' experiences and the behaviour of their unions reflect different histories, cultures and opportunities. But with the expansion of multi-national investments in the 60s and the increased internationalisation of trade and production, most newly industrialised countries experienced some variant of "global Fordism" (Liepietz 1964) – i.e. heavy reliance on imported capital and technology, with widespread use of mass production processes and semi-skilled workers. Surges of labour militancy erupted in many countries, including early industrialised Europe, when rapid industrialisation processes created urban working-class communities of semi-skilled workers and their families, who were denied access to political and workers' rights and social resources and where the moderating influence of established craft unionism was lacking. During rapid industrialisation in the late 60s and early 70s, South African employers acquiesced in labour repression. During the 70s, however, economic growth slowed and industrialists began to demand greater access to state decision-making bodies. This created the political space in which the labour movement could begin to demand the right to organise factory-based unions. While the employers certainly did not help create the unions, the timing of the appearance of "new unionism" strengthened its chance of survival.

Labour also helped level out the lopsided distribution of resources between blacks and whites by contributing to improved living conditions amongst black workers. On that basis, it served as an *agent* of the political struggle yet to be won. However, it was also part of the broader fabric of civil society in that it drew resources and skills from other organisations and forged strategies and alliances with community groups, the Church,

and youth and students' organisations. The social movement unionism (Webster 1989) which emerged in the late 70s and early 80s was rooted in a pro-Charterist ideology, syndicalist strategies, socialist goals and mobilisation around local demands. In contrast to earlier Communist initiatives, the unions of the 70s emphasised tight factory-based organisation, highly trained shop stewards and a focus upon workplace issues together with an eschewal of external political links (Lodge 1996:192).

So was the union movement drawn from external political forces as argued by pluralists? The leaders of the union movement that emerged in the 80s did not come solely from the factory floor. Many of them had never been workers but came from student circles and banned youth organisations. They found in the union movement a vehicle for a wider struggle, in which people could learn skills, experience and procedures applicable to other forms of organisation (Lodge 1996). Maree (1989b) argues that when the Western Province Workers Advice Bureau was started, its structures and policy were firmly rooted in the hands of white intellectuals within the organisation. Yet, the white intellectuals were also very aware of their dominant role in the union movement and did their best to overcome it. Policies, principles and practice of workers' control and internal democracy were therefore pursued consistently (Maree 1989b:145).

Yet, all in all, South African labour was neither composed of leaders alone, nor was it composed exclusively of unions inspired by community-oriented political activists. COSATU was formed on the basis of a combination of and balance between various kinds of unions shaped by compromises made at particular key moments in the historical development of labour. Furthermore, COSATU was based on the values of the leaders of the various unions as well as of their constituent members, for it was the perceptions of unionists that interpreted the economic and industrial climate and found loopholes for strategies and gains.

Buroway (1979) suggests that production processes in advanced capitalist societies have tended to engender broad consent to existing social and workplace relations, as workers come to accept, or even expect, inequality. In newly industrialised countries, however, the effect of authoritarian industrialisation processes may be quite different: the politics of production, both inside and outside the labour process, may create new possibilities for broad labour movements seeking to challenge the existing distribution of power and wealth. It was the twin grievances of capitalist exploitation and apartheid which compelled the unions to seek *both* political and economic means to solve their members' problems. And

having embarked on a "combined strategy", the organisation was internally built to maximise both, which again reinforced the combination of means, alliances and aims.

The pessimistic traditions of Lenin, Trotsky and Mitchel are not supported by the South African case. Unions were not co-opted and incorporated into state decision-making. And while Trotsky argued that the monopolisation of capital was such that "unions are deprived of the possibility of profiting by the competition between different enterprises and therefore turn to the state for help" (Hyman 1971:19), he was proven wrong in the South African case.

In conclusion, neither corporatist perspectives nor pluralist per-spectives have necessarily been proven totally wrong in the South African case.[353] Most unions draw on different and combined strategies simultaneously. While emphasising the combination of strategies, it is worth raising a critical voice against the corporatist versus pluralist debate. Most union movements, at least strong union movements, will change their strategies from period to period and invariably use a *combination* of strategies and have a combination of areas on which they focus in any one period. In fact, Regini (1997) also argues that the debate about corporatism in the 80s and 90s tends to regard and judge corporatism as analogous to a system composed of social partners with the same characteristics as those of the corporatist decade and sphere of the 70s. Seeking to transpose the characteristics of the unions of the 70s and then concluding that corporatism is "dead" if these fail to fit the unions of today will lead us off in the wrong direction, for it also fails to take account of the various social pacts currently being concluded between labour, employers and states. Regini (1997) argues that the corporatist scholars have made undue generalisations on the basis of the historical experiences of the "classical" corporatist countries. The same argument would be valid for the pluralist perspective. Still, the South African labour movement was more militant and all-embracing in terms of aims, tactics, strategies and alliances than many other labour movements in the Southern African region and internationally.

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[353] That is, in explaining the relationship between the state and the new independent/democratic unions. Looking at the historical relationship between the NP government and the white unions, there were far stronger corporatist structures, such as the Economic Advisory Council established in 1960 (Pretorius 1997).

The South African trade-union movement cannot be characterised either as a pluralist union movement or a corporatist union movement. If anything, it was a socio-political trade- union movement with strong tendencies towards centralised concentration in the 90s. It was mobilised and found its general character against the background of economic developments and the institutional setting. Its identity and organisational characteristics were shaped, however, on the basis of the culture, expectations and ideological commitments of the people involved and found its concrete form on the basis of the compromise arrived at between the various union traditions in the mid-80s. The thresholds of association, collective action and bargaining were passed in the industrial sphere in the late 70s. Yet, while the crossing of these thresholds before the political thresholds of legitimisation and incorporation had been reached would explain the politicisation of the labour movement, it does not explain the combination of industrial *and* political strategies that labour used and aimed at. In other words, why did COSATU not become SACTWU in the 60s? This may to some extent be explained by the compromise that emerged in the 80s between industrial unions and political unions. Structure was important, but culture determined the individual and organisational reactions to the structural changes. The relationship between the state and labour took shape on the basis of choices and strategies made by the actors themselves, and their values, attitudes and perceptions.

IV UNIONS AS LABORATORIES FOR LEARNING

9 Individual political learning and socialisation

There are several new questions that emerge from the previous sections portraying civil society, culture and the union movement in South Africa. South Africa seems to have an extraordinary degree of civil society involvement and democratic consciousness. How can we explain this? Structural factors alone will not suffice without an elaboration of the contribution made by culture and subcultures. But is it the culture of apartheid repression, of ubuntu and traditional African society, of industrial society or of opposition that has made its impact upon the attitudes and activities of the people? And why did this specific form of socio-political trade unionism emerge in South Africa? The trade-union movement is generally regarded as having led and shaped the political struggle in South Africa in the 80s. But is it working-class consciousness, trade-union consciousness or "racial consciousness" which explains the extent of collective action?

Few in South Africa have the data necessary to analyse these questions in depth. So with the aim of probing these questions in more detail and providing a further analysis of the political attitudes of South Africans, particularly the role of work and the unions as a learning area, we conducted a survey of a representative sample of approximately 1,000 workers in the formal workforce in Gauteng in 1994.[354] Of these workers, 861 were Africans and 141 were white.[355] In the following section we will report on the main findings of this survey.

[354] The survey design is described in detail in Appendix 6, the sample described and compared to other information in Appendix 5 and the variables operationalised in Appendix 3. The questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix 7.
[355] The sample of white workers was collected in a traditional white working-class area. The small sample makes it difficult to do advanced analysis, but the information provided by this data will be used as a comparison with the sample of black workers.

9.1   Rational actors or socialised comrades?

Different cultural traditions help shape the way individuals respond to their world. The South African labour movement draws on a unique cultural form and traditions. Skocpol (1979) argues that social action is a result of intended actions and structural conditions:

> "What is at issue is not so much the objective potential for revolts on the grounds of justifiable grievances. It is rather the degree to which grievances that are always, at least implicitly present can be collectively perceived and acted upon".

People must themselves ultimately choose to act. Structural theorists,[356] like Skocpol, argue that the nature, scope and timing of a choice or decision to revolt is structurally determined by the position of the group as a social class (Bereyikian 1992). She argues in *States and Social Revolutions* that it was rational for the peasants in Russia and China to join in the struggle for independence and democracy because it was in their *economic interest* to do so (1979:115).

South Africa has the strongest trade-union movement on the African continent. It emerged against the background of rapid industrialisation in the 70s, with the mining sector providing the initial impetus and the manufacturing sector following. Industrialisation gave rise to a large wave of recruitment of unskilled, but first and foremost semi-skilled African workers who had previously been excluded from the economy for political reasons. Industrialisation was closely followed by urbanisation, resulting in a large influx of blacks into urban areas. All of this could be seen as providing the structural conditions that made it possible for grievances to be collectively perceived and acted upon.

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[356] Structural explanations assume that socio-economic and political structures determine and explain preferences and action directly without reference to intentional phenomena such as values, beliefs, ideas, attitudes, intentions and strategic thinking: "instead of seeing structures as a set of constraints and opportunities for action, structural explanations see them as causing action" (Cohen 1995:3). Cohen argues that because beliefs, preferences and intentions often cannot be inferred from structural conditions, they must be given an autonomous explanatory role. In Elster's (1989:13) words: "to explain social institutions and social change is to show how they arise as the result of the action and interaction of individuals".

But why not free ride and let someone else pay the costs of involvement? The essence of Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Actions* (1965) is that when an individual is confronted with the decision to contribute or not to the provision of public goods, a rational individual will decide to free ride rather than contribute. This well-known "collective action problem" has in several cases proven valid where groups of individuals have chosen not to revolt (Bereyikian 1992). In Skocpol's argument, specific structural conditions may build or provide solidarity between the oppressed and the autonomous community. In this sense, unions may create and express *tactical freedom*. This still does not help us explain, however, the variation in the behaviour of members of different COSATU affiliates. Furthermore, how can we understand differences in behaviour between different groups of workers from COSATU and other "black" federations like NACTU, the Federation of Independent Trade Unions (FITU) and the independent unions or between organised and unorganised workers for that matter? Most stay-aways, large strikes and political events were organised and led by COSATU and had relatively higher attendance amongst COSATU workers, although the events were motivated by universal principles and interests and therefore "targeted" all blacks. Political activities also seem to be generally higher amongst COSATU members than other groups of workers.

In Popkin's opinion (1979) in deciding how to act people always employ the rational rule of maximising their own self-interests. Individuals will contribute to a revolutionary movement if there is moral compulsion, if it is rational in a cost-benefit analysis, if there are sufficient selective incentives and/or if the contributions of others are contingent upon their own. If we apply this argument to the South African setting, workers should only become mobilised if one or more of these conditions is present. The problem with such an explanation can be summarised briefly. In a strict sense, the benefits of participation are not exclusive – i.e. they do not extend only to those participating. One can of course argue, like Taylor in *The Possibility of Co-operation* (1987) or Lysgaard in *Arbeiderkollektivet* (1976), that the costs of non-participation, in the form of exclusion from the "workers collective" and the loss of respect from comrades, may be too high. But while workers can impose sanctions on, for example, scab workers, it is more difficult to "pressurise" people to take part in marches

and mass meetings, stay-aways, etc.[357] Nevertheless, they still participate. Simultaneously, it can hardly be seen as rational to engage in politically motivated collective mass actions if workers always seek to pursue their own economic interests. Involvement in politically motivated stay-aways aimed at forcing the state to take responsibility against violence (1990) or to force the government back to the negotiating table (1992) is in this sense an irrational action if workers forfeit their wages in order to attend, as millions of South Africans indeed did. Short-term costs are paid for very long-term, uncertain and unclear gains.

In line with Popkin's theory (1982) it might still be rational for workers to participate in stay-aways if a *by-product* theory of collective goods is invoked – i.e. if the collective good is the by-product of the union's primary function and this primary function is the source of organisational support. Workers will thereby contribute if the benefits of the primary function flow only to members, or to those who contribute. Neither of these conditions is, however, fulfilled in the South African case. The primary function of the unions, or of COSATU in particular, has been *both* political and economic. To the extent that economic interests/gains are given the status of a primary function, rights and goods are distributed widely to members as well as non-members. Bargaining agreements are to a large extent extended to a whole industrial sector, and COSATU is committed to universal rights and benefits.[358] A final condition under which rational actors, in Popkin's view, may participate in collective actions is if the individual feels that his own contribution is critical to the success of the final outcome, which is hardly possible to evaluate without a close study of people's self-assessment and values.

[357] It should be noted that there was some pressure in certain areas in order to keep people away from work during stay-aways, such as the setting up of by roadblocks etc. organised by the community in the townships in order to prevent people from getting to work. Yet, no similar pressure was possible to force people to attend marches, and meetings, but they still participated in large numbers.

[358] This applies to economic benefits, although in retrospect, there have been examples of COSATU choosing to reserve benefits only for its own members. On issues such as worker participation, for example, COSATU did not agree to the new 1995 Labour Relations Act's provision stipulating that such rights should be extended to everyone irrespective of whether they were union members. In this sense, COSATU's strategy has now changed to become more exclusive in order to recruit and retain its own members.

Elster (1989:17) refers to the saying that "necessity is the mother of invention" and that "hardship is the mother of revolt". While recognising that people's motivation to revolt may be high when they are badly off, he also argues that their capacity and opportunity to revolt is at its lowest at this stage. Their capacity and opportunities will in turn affect their motivation. Yet, in several authoritarian countries, logic is formed on the basis of people feeling they "have no choice, but to act", although the rational option might be to remain passive and let others act for them.

To take one example, the student activists of the 70s were both black and white. These militant black and white activists had much in common: they did not support the argument that "anything short of armed or underground struggle and anything that smacked of agitation for reforms or open organisational work was tantamount to a recognition of the apartheid state and capitulation to it". Mamdani (1996:233) argues that:

> "Together they shaped the agitation and organisational context that nourished the countrywide urban uprising of the 80s and out of which came most of its key cadres. It was that non-violent uprising – and not the much awaited armed struggle – which really defined the imperatives and split the camp of apartheid, creating a paralysis that ended only with De Klerk's initiative of 2 February 1990".

The political culture tradition and socialisation

The political culture approach is distinctive in arguing that people's actions and reactions are shaped by subjective orientations, which vary cross-culturally and within cultures. These variations reflect differences in socialisation experiences (Inglehart 1990).

The founding socialisation studies of the 60s established two distinct research traditions: one associated with David Easton and concerned with the sources of political stability; the other associated with Herbert Hyman and concerned with the sources of political participation (Conover & Searing 1994). The Hyman tradition, which was indebted to election studies, became dominant.[359]

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[359] Resulting from the publication of his book *Political Socialisation* in 1959 (Glencoe: The Free Press).

Traditionally, scholars distinguish between political learning and socialisation. While political socialisation refers to beliefs facilitating adaptation to a community,[360] political learning is far broader and refers to the learning of any political belief. Most studies of political socialisation have, however, in reality concentrated more upon people's political interests, party preferences, etc. rather than their adaptation to a community. Hyman (1959), who is generally regarded as a founding father of political socialisation theory, was aware that the essence of the discipline lay in the process of people becoming members of a collective. But in his day there were hardly any studies in this area. He therefore concentrated upon the existing studies, which focused on party politics, electoral behaviour, etc (Conover & Searing 1994). Conover and Searing (ibid) also distinguish between political learning and socialisation, but they argue convincingly that we should rename the whole field of research political learning, for this is a broader term than political socialisation. Political learning refers to the learning of any political belief regardless of whether or not it actually facilitates adaptation to a collective. A reconceived concept of political learning would then comprise both the internalisation of new values and attitudes *and* their expressions in new forms and degrees of political participation. It would include both those socialisation variables that facilitate adaptation to the community and those that may rather function as indirect stimuli, or barriers, to such political adaptation.

Theory of political learning is today mostly concerned with the political learning of the masses, or ordinary citizens. However, this has not always been the case. Initially, attention was given to the political learning of the political elite. Moreover, the beginning of this academic tradition was dominated as much by a normative discussion as by the academic debate. Two contradictory positions emerged in what has been labelled the "debate on political belief systems" (Knutsen 1983:12-16). On the one hand there was the so-called "elitist" tradition espoused by Philip Converse and the authors of *The American Voter* (Campbell et al. 1960), which argues that most people do not have sophisticated political belief

[360] "Becoming social". See Conover and Searing (1994) for a clarification of the concepts of political socialisation versus learning.

systems,[361] owing to cognitive limitations – i.e. a lack of political interest and knowledge. On the other hand there was the "populist tradition", which argued that individuals at large had sensible belief systems and that making a distinction between the elite and the masses was too simplistic (Klingeman & Wright 1980; Knutsen 1983). This emphasised the "cognitive flexibility" of the masses, underlining the *external* political and social factors which determine to what extent people respond with ideological answers to open questions.[362]

Social action may be guided by consistent rationality and identity as well as by social norms and values. In order to understand the former, we need to examine the development of the latter. This is particularly important when we confront societies undergoing rapid transition where goals, preferences and identities may change equally rapidly.

9.2   The areas and process of political learning

The process of childhood or primary learning has generally been regarded as the most important for political values and activities. Psychological and anthropological studies have linked political attitudes to other components of people's personality, and most theories have stressed the relationship between child development in general terms and the induction of the child into his or her political roles and attitudes. The following assumptions were often made: the significant political learning process takes place in early life; these experiences are not manifest political experiences, but they have political consequences; and the learning process is unidirectional – i.e. family structures have a significant impact upon political learning, but are not in turn affected by political structures (Almond & Verba 1980). Almond and Verba (1963) argue that political culture rests upon a set of non-political attitudes and non-political affiliations, many of which have

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[361] A sophisticated belief system will be characterised by internal constraint (Converse 1964) or sorted hierarchy so that we can predict what people think about one issue from what they believe about another (Knutsen 1983:3).

[362] The whole debate was prompted by analyses of survey data and of how people respond to open questions concerning politics. The elitist tradition argued that people responded without any internal constraint, consistency or hierarchy in their responses.

little explicit political content and are quite distant from the political system. They mention primary group affiliation as being one such distant affiliation.

When we turn our attention towards those aspects of citizenship that make people members of the political community, we often in fact encounter attitudes that draw our attention to childhood learning, that is to matters of identity and experience in the basic bonds between the self and the collective. In fact, the cleavages contributing most often to political instability in newly established states are religion, language, race and ethnicity, all acquired to a large extent through childhood learning. Support for political communities and regimes, patriotism and identity are all related to psychological bonds established in childhood.

While political socialisation was launched as a sub-field of sociology in 1959 with Hyman's book, up until the mid-70s it focused almost exclusively on childhood socialisation (Sigel 1989). Easton and Dennis (1969) found, however, that the relevance of childhood learning varies a great deal according to the types of orientations being investigated. Furthermore, several studies of childhood socialisation failed to explain the deviant behaviour of youth and adults. Greenstein (1975) and Easton and Hess (1962) reported, for example, how school children idealised political authorities, but the same children rebelled against the system as student and anti-war activists a few years later. Such findings, Conover and Searing (1994) report, sent shock waves through academic circles: if the idealised attitudes learned in childhood did not persist *into* adulthood, it was difficult to see how they could affect the attitudes and behaviour of adults. Jennings and Niemi found important changes in most political orientations throughout the life cycle (1974). They argued that there were substantial changes in adult years, for example, in attitudes related to partisan politics. Several models of learning were considered. One was the endurance (or persistence) model, whereby a political belief learned during childhood persists in a relatively unchanged form into and throughout adult years. Another was the developmental model, whereby beliefs are transformed over time, with each modification being shaped by the previous state of the belief. Such a model would, however, entail major changes in the long-term perspective. Towards the end of the 70s, learning researchers reacted to disappointments with early theoretical frameworks by turning the field's focus in a new direction: namely, towards attitude change during adolescence and adulthood (Conover & Searing 1994).

Although political culture rests upon early learning and distant affiliations, the gap between these and politics is, in Almond and Verba's opinion (ibid), too large to make the connection meaningful. Numerous other factors intervene between the early experiences and later political behaviour that greatly inhibit the impact of the former upon the latter. In fact, there is evidence to support the idea that later experiences have more direct political implications. Some of the findings of the studies of childhood socialisation, however, continue to have academic support. Knowledge about the impact of family *authority structures* upon attitudes towards political authority is one example. The role that an individual plays within a family may be considered as training for the performance of political roles (Almond & Verba 1963). There is also intentional teaching of political attitudes in family and schools as well as the unintentional exposure to politics through family, schools, media, the neighbourhood and peer groups. Clearly, much in an individual's value system that has been acquired during childhood structures how he perceives and reacts to new experiences.[363] Sigel (ibid:ix) assumes that amongst the more stable attitudes are those touching on very basic values like equality, freedom, and attachment to a religious or ethnic group. The individual does, however, encounter other authority structures in school, in organisational life, and not least at work, which may yield just as much influence on political attitudes and behaviour.

Much evidence in fact sustains the position that beliefs, values and feelings significantly influence political behaviour and that these beliefs, feelings and values are the product of learning experiences in early childhood. Studies of political stability had documented the importance of the family and the school system in developing adult trust and affection for figures of political authority.[364] But the Civic Culture study became one of the first to stress the importance of adult political socialisation and experiences and to demonstrate the *relative* weakness of childhood learning (Almond 1980:29). Almond and Verba (1963) suggest that authority structures in the family have only a weak relationship with adult propensities for participation and that later experiences at school and work are more closely correlated with political competence and participation (Almond 1980:25). They note that membership and activity in organisations can independently produce civic competence.

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[363] The so-called primacy or persistence-through-life principle (Sigel 1989:ix).
[364] Sigel (1989:viii) points to "system analyses" conducted in the 60s.

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Political learning is, in other words, no longer seen as completed by adulthood. And adult political learning is gaining increasing interest. Yet, Sigel (ibid:x) argues that, broadly speaking, attention to life-long learning and adult development is still the exception rather than the rule in socialisation studies. Those who challenge the view that childhood socialisation is the main source of political learning and who argue instead that socialisation is a life-long process have, however, also argued strongly that this learning is highly dependent on the *social setting* in which it takes place. They attempt to specify the conditions for change and/or continuity (Sigel 1989:ix).

Analyses of adult political socialisation identify three clusters of explanations as to why political socialisation is continuous throughout the life cycle – i.e. why adults are susceptible to political change: societal-level phenomena, time-lag or temporal aspects and changes in the individual's life situation (Steckenrider & Cutler 1989:57). Major historical catastrophes or events are examples of societal phenomena and may profoundly alter, de- or resocialise individuals.[365] Intense events like depressions, wars or revolutions may serve as catalysts for the emergence of new political agendas, coalitions or opinions.[366] The time-lag dimension points out that the modern world presents challenges and novel situations for which the childhood situation has not prepared us. There is also a time-lag between our learning and the point when we need to put it into practice (like voting, etc.) which gives more space to later socialisation agents.

The change in focus towards the importance of adult socialisation also reflects a change in social organisation, or what Coleman (1991) refers to as the process from primordial to social organisation. It is a development away from the family as the most important agent of socialisation and of the internalisation of norms and values towards a society of organisations, associations and plurality. Constructed social organisations need to rely upon a whole new set of ways of imposing social norms and sanctions.[367] They need to rely upon a combination of norms,

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[365] Sigel (1989) refers to Laufer's (1989) and Horowitz's (1989) work.

[366] Some of the best examples of dramatic alterations in established opinions is represented by research on "critical elections": brief, intense periods during which fundamental shifts in mass support for particular political parties, people or agendas took place (Laufer 1989 & Horowitz 1989).

[367] Stable and traditional societies exercise control over their members by shaping their values and through sanctions (Coleman 1991:9).

procedures and internal organisation in order to exercise control over their members. Attempts to socialise their members in the direction of loyalty and support will, however, in any setting be better and less costly than having to turn to sanctions in order to get their support.

Political learning and culture are formed by structural factors, socio-economic conditions and institutions where people spend a considerable amount of time. The workplace is one such institution, voluntary organisations are another example. All in all, there are many types of experiences that can affect political attitudes in adulthood. We will return to some of these in subsequent chapters. The various agents of socialisation may, however, have a different impact within different settings. While childhood or pre-political experiences may give limited encouragement for participation in some settings, social and organisational experiences in adulthood may be more encouraging. And where people have no access to political participation, participation in non-political decision-making may provide the skills needed to engage in political activities – namely, the skill of self-expression and a sense of effective political tactics (Almond & Verba 1980). All in all, the political socialisation which takes place in more intimate social units or even primary associations may be inadequate training ground for the performance of civic activities within the larger political system. Therefore, institutions closer to the political realm and in which the authority structures resemble more closely the political authority structures may be crucial for the formation of political attitudes and behaviour.

The process of political learning

Citizenship is developed in stages, which begin in childhood, and goes through phases of membership, identification and consciousness in later phases of life. At a minimum people are simply members of a community. This gradually becomes imbued with psychological meaning through the development of a communal activity, a sense of attachment and positive effect for the community. Some develop a sense of communal consciousness, a recognition that others share one's communal identity and that, through this sharing, a "civic bond" is forged which binds members to one another and to the community as a whole (Barber 1984).

Pye (1962:44–46) suggests that it may be helpful to picture the individual passing through three processes which condition his approach to political choice and action. First, there is the basic socialisation process through which the individual is inducted into a particular culture and

trained to become a member of a society. Thereafter comes political learning or socialisation, through which the individual develops his or her awareness of the political world and gains an appreciation, judgement and understanding of political events. Just as he or she was first socialised to a general culture, so now he or she is socialised to a *political* culture and assumes his or her own political identity. Lastly, there is the process of political recruitment, when the individual goes beyond the passive role of citizen and observer to become an active participant and to assume a dynamic and recognised role in the political process. All these stages of socialisation can take both manifest and latent forms. The important point, however, is in Pye's argument about the continuity of the process. He states:

> "In a stable and dynamically developing society there is a high degree of continuity in these three processes, each reinforcing the other, and thus there is a sense of coherence throughout the society .... The situation in transitional societies is dramatically different. By definition, the three processes lack coherence" (Pye 1962:46).

Kieffer (1983) describes the political learning process as one initiated by a mobilising event; "action" is followed by reflection and the individual will gradually become more aware and active. Such a dialectic relationship between action and reflection indicates that politics is not something we learn through reading and passivity but rather through engagement and activity. Through adult organisational experience and participation, for example, individuals confront life with other values and expectations.

In Pateman's (1980) opinion *The Civic Culture* suggests that political culture is produced by the combined action of individuals and institutions but without explaining how this happens, beyond a reference to "political socialisation". Street (1993) argues that political socialisation only plays an active role if there are tensions between the independent orientations of people and the way the system actually works.

Clearly, this also bring us to the difference between active and passive learning: we all go through both. Passive learning is a process of information-gathering, of receiving and storing information and input from the environment, from the media, core groups, school, family and friends. Active learning will imply challenging, digesting and evaluating this information in active participation in institutional settings and discussions. Information is generally supposed to be gathered in the

memory in an organised way and affects the way we comprehend and respond to the outside world (McGraw & Lodge 1995). In McGraw and Lodge's words:

> "People acquire, store, retrieve, transform and use information in order to...create reasonable responses to an experience-based representation of the world".

"Thinking" is therefore regarded as "information-processing". What we still have to identify, however, is the context in which people gather and use information. If we assume that this process of information gathering is governed by some degree of rationality and some degree of identification with cultural norms and values, the context and networks that people find themselves in can be said to form the frameworks of learning and political training. While the early socialisation studies regarded childhood socialisation as the most important, they also regarded learning largely as a "passive" process in which the child was seen as a passive recipient of "lessons" (Sigel 1989:viii).

More effective learning will, however, take place in active dialogue with and participation in a dynamic environment. Participation is an act of sharing with others in some action (Parry 1972). Participation has been seen as both a process of promoting or defending interests and as a process of political and moral education (Parry 1972): "participation stretches the individual, forcing him to develop his latent qualities". Participation is in this sense a developmental process of learning, not only of participation itself, but also of the values and norms of democratic participation (Pateman 1970 et al.). Participation builds self-esteem and confidence, thereby creating the necessary requirements for political engagement.[368]

The learning *context* will also be of importance for the learning process. Political change is the product of the interaction between individual maturation *and* socio-political and institutional circumstances, specifically interpreted within *national* settings.

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[368] Self-esteem has also been found to relate closely also to academic performance, juvenile delinquency and psychological states of mind (Rosenberg, M. et al.1989.).

The context of political learning and culture

The frequency of various types of political attitudes and behaviour differs from nation to nation as shown by Almond and Verba (1980) and others, which indicates that the political system is of relevance for the political socialisation of citizens. Different citizenship profiles are shaped by different regime patterns (Conover & Searing 1994). Whereas low-income groups in one country are associated with specific political values and activities, low-income groups may behave completely differently in another national setting. And whereas working-class consciousness in Western Europe is increasingly connected with political apathy and right-wing values, black working-class consciousness in a country like South Africa, which is marked by the struggle against apartheid, is probably far more left-wing than that of the white working class both within South Africa and outside. The extent and direction of class voting varies greatly between countries. Likewise, Inglehart (1977) demonstrated that economic conditions, political culture, etc. create different attitudes and preferences in different national settings, varying across continents as well as over time.

The type of regime is of fundamental importance to the building of different citizenship profiles. Institutional arrangements, the political system's "rules of the game", constitution and legislation as well as the political leaders will influence citizenship. Conover and Searing (1994) argue that the underlying goals of a society will also be important – the values, ideals and projects that are widely shared and pursued, sometimes by the political authorities alone, more often by substantial numbers of the public as well. Such goals, different mixtures of equality, freedom, tolerance, etc., characterise a regime and define its ethos. These are the goals of adults, which, through political socialisation, are passed on to the new generation of citizens (Conover & Searing 1994). Barber (1984) and others argue, for example, that direct democracy, extensive use of referendums, for example, will facilitate the development of communal citizenship. Communities that provide many opportunities for participation will also facilitate communal citizenship. Inglehart (1977, 1990) likewise looks at ideologies as "organisations" of prescriptive political beliefs, which may influence attitudes and behavioural patterns. Different national settings influence people in different ideological settings but also give relative weight and different content and meaning to childhood versus adult socialisation. Countries undergoing political and/or economic transitions may, furthermore, create more fluidity and instability in people's value-systems. Against this background, we expect national

variations in political values and behaviour and variations in the impact of each of the learning fora. The interpretation of rationality will also differ on that basis.

If political learning in adulthood is of importance, and in particular so during transitional periods, and if political socialisation is a process of manifest and latent learning through *doing* – i.e. through participation – and if the role of organisations and work are specifically important, how can this affect or condition the political learning of people taking part in civil society oppositional life, or participating in an alternative sub-culture of civil society? Orkin (1994) argues that South African civil society developed a counter-ideology to apartheid. Through a richly organised society and the development of the Black Consciousness Movement through the 70s and 80s, a collective opposition black sub-culture developed, which, in the opinion of many academics, reinforced the original, traditional, collective African decision-making model. If this holds true, we can expect the pre-industrial cleavages, first and foremost race, still to be of importance, although with the model which says that those who have taken part in electoral politics – i.e. Whites – are the most politically active and aware now reversed.

We also need to keep in mind that periods of rapid political and/or economic transition may also bring changes to values systems, attitudes and expectations, creating potential contradictions, a lack of internal constraints in values systems, etc. Social systems are made up not of individuals, but of roles, and as roles change, so do the interests, attitudes and behaviour that go with them.[369]

9.3   The ideological setting in Gauteng

Taking this as our point of departure we now need to look at the ideological setting and the structural cleavages in the country and locality concerned in order to grasp political attitudes, expectations and

[369] Almond and Powell (1966:22) argue that a principal aspect of development or transformation of political systems is what they refer to as "role differentiation" or structural differentiation. By differentiation, they refer to the processes whereby roles change and become more specialised or autonomous, or whereby new types of roles (or new structures and subsystems) are being established or created.

activities.[370] We have already described, as far as possible on the basis of existing surveys, the ideological settings which influence peoples' political culture in South Africa (Chapter 4). In the following, we will present data from a survey carried out in Gauteng in order to test our hypotheses in more depth. We will turn to the structural and ideological cleavages in Chapters 10-12. But let us first look a little closer at the ideological and structural framework in which they are set.

Gauteng,[371] the area around Johannesburg, is by far the largest of South Africa's metropolitan areas with a population estimated at about 9 million people.[372] The area is the industrial heart of South Africa with gold and mining as the main sources of income. Since Gauteng contributes an impressive 40 per cent to South Africa's GNP, its share of economic activity far outweighs its share of the population.[373]

The most important sectors are manufacturing and finance, real estate and business services. Their share of the GNP is larger in Gauteng than in the country as a whole. Mining, which was the main urbanisation and industrialisation factor in Gauteng, has, however, lost ground and is now less important here than in the country at large (10.7 per cent versus 13 per cent). Manufacturing is dominated by the metals, machinery and equipment sub-sectors. The population is almost totally urbanised. People live in the townships and work in the metropolitan areas of Johannesburg and Pretoria. However, the township local economies have also developed considerably during the past few years. Soweto, for example, has 1,300 traders, and 450 traders operate in Mamelodi. The formal local economies of the townships are made up mostly of small-scale commercial, locally owned enterprises. There are, however, substantial informal economic activities in Gauteng and a trend towards greater informal activity and much greater visibility of such activities. Mabin and Hunter (1993) estimate that the number of people involved in more informal activities in

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[370] Inglehart (1977) and , Knutsen (1986) et al. describe ideological and structural cleavages as setting the parameters for attitudes and behaviour. We will, however, at this stage neither analyse ideological cleavages nor their potential relative importance for attitudes as compared with that of the structural cleavages. We will return to this later. For now, all we want to do is to describe the ideological setting and thereby also the survey material we collected.

[371] Previously referred to as the PWV: Pretoria/Witwatersrand/Vereeniging.

[372] The region constitutes one out of nine regions in the new South Africa.

[373] Which would indicate that about 20 per cent of the national population lives in Gauteng.

Gauteng in 1988 was at least as high as the number of people involved in the formal sector and may now be substantially higher. The less formal sector shows a strong orientation towards services and distribution.

Township history was earlier almost identical with working-class history (Bozzoli 1979). The creation of black townships after mining had become dominant in the area was aimed at consolidating in daily life what segregation at work had achieved by separating economic interests. Newly proletarianised workers moved to unsegregated areas wherever possible, while the state continuously devised legal mechanisms or resorted to force in order to stop them doing so. The state's struggle for a pure white city gave rise to the continuous establishment of new townships and forced removals. It is the ghetto character that gave the township its cultural characteristics. What people had in common were their racial characteristics, which made it illegal for them to own property, make demands upon the government or to try to influence the circumstances that ruled their lives. In that sense, they were not governed but administered (Bozzoli 1979). There was a complete absence of accountability on the part of the administrating body to those it administered.

Urban squatting has been part of the Gauteng landscape since the early years of industrialisation. However, it was only during the 40s, with massive industrialisation and urbanisation, that informal squatter settlements emerged on a significant scale and the major squatter-based social movement made its appearance (Sapire 1990). The squatter settlements emerged with their own political culture. Many of these elements still exist, such as the social regulatory functions of squatter committees, the importance of the imagery and vision of the independent African Churches, the adaptation of features of traditional chieftainship, populist politics, the personalised nature of leadership and the politics of the crowd (Sapire & Schlemmer 1990). Although squatter struggles were usually centred on the fight for scarce resources, they also took the form of political or even ethnic struggles. As ex-squatters settled down in formally regulated areas and proper houses, militancy decreased. The 80s and 90s, however, witnessed a rapid growth of informal settlements, first with the number of backyard shacks within the formally regulated townships growing during the 70s and 80s, and then in the 90s with a growing number of squatter camps or informal areas.

Hence, the Gauteng township culture "melted" together people from different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds into an urban, working class. From the 70s, this was to become one of the main locations of struggle in South Africa.

10 Civility and pre-industrial cleavages

We will in this chapter analyse elements of communal citizenship in South Africa on the basis of different sets of structural cleavages. Our attention centres on political knowledge, political participation and finally democratic consciousness: "public-spiritedness" and democratic trust.[374] The daily lives of South Africans are informed by four distinct cultural and institutional legacies: the traditional African value-systems; the value-system of apartheid and colonialism; the industrial, class-based society; and finally, the legacy and practice of opposition and of resistance politics. Each of these "systems" attempted to enforce "social control" through various cultural, institutional and organisational mechanisms (see Chapter 2). Which of these legacies are expressed in the political attitudes and expectations of South Africans? And how do the various structural cleavages in South African politics overlap with and reflect these cultural legacies?

10.1 Culture and cleavages in South Africa

The issue of who can practice citizenship, and on what terms, is not only a question of the legal scope of citizenship and the formal nature of the rights entailed in it (Barbalet 1988:1). It is also a matter of the non-political capacities of citizens, which derive from the social resources they command and to which they have access. People in different societies are characterised by different values, attitudes and skills (Inglehart 1990). Different kinds of societies are characterised by different types of variables, which define the cleavage structure of that society. Cleavages are potential lines of conflict that result from differences in the social structure and the mobilisation of these conflicts by collective actors (Ebbinghaus 1992). Such

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[374] The operationalisation of the variables is described in Chapter 2 and Appendix 3.

cleavages may persist even after the structural conditions that gave birth to them have changed or evaporated (Knutsen 1986, Lipset & Rokkan 1967). They reflect differences in the expectations that form generations. Not all cleavages are necessarily politicised and/or find organisational representation. One can distinguish between latent and manifest interests and therefore cleavages (Ebbinghaus 1992). Furthermore, we should conceive cleavages not as social stratification, but as a variation in interests that is given political expression. Huntington (1990) argues that cultures represent people's strategies for adaptation to economic, technological and political conditions. Barnes (1986) maintains that cultures are sets of beliefs and assumptions developed by particular groups in their efforts to cope with *external* adaptation and *internal* integration. Sub-cultures will on this basis represent different strategies for external adaptation and internal integration. Cleavages will reflect the differences, contradictions and/or conflicts between sub-groups and sub-cultures.

Inglehart (1977) uses the terms pre-industrial and industrial to distinguish between different types of cleavages. Pre-industrial cleavages are descriptive variables like religion, race, gender, language and territorial identity.[375] Industrial cleavages are related to the polarisation pattern underlying industrial societies: status and hierarchical variables such as income, occupation, education[376] and union membership.[377] Political cleavages may be defined as relatively stable patterns of polarisation which can explain variance in our dependent variables of political participation, identification and a civic culture (Inglehart 1984, Knutsen 1986). Socio-structural pre-industrial cleavages are generally presumed to be of most importance for shaping political attitudes in developing countries. South Africa is, however, characterised as both a developed and underdeveloped

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[375] I do not attempt here to go into the whole sociological debate regarding the importance of ascribed versus achieved factors for social mobility and development of interests: mobility versus constraints and fluidity versus determinism. I choose to use these categorisations for now only as a way of sorting the factors and variables in the analysis.
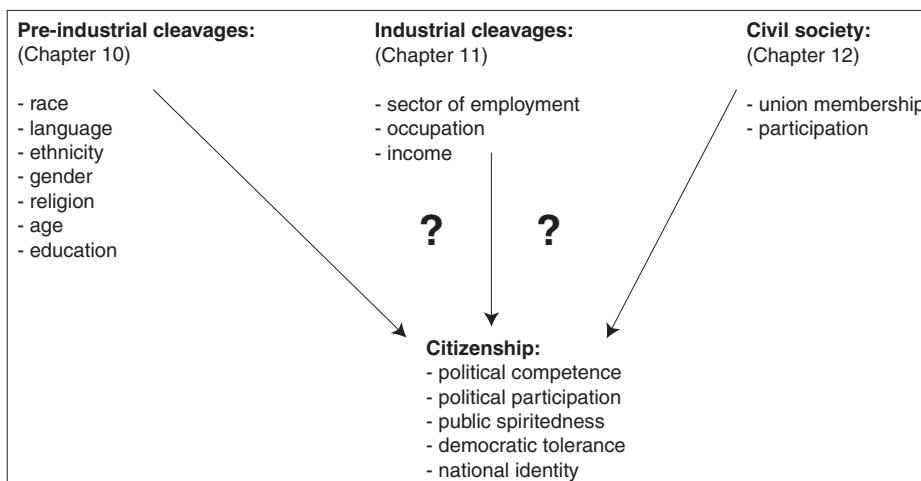
[376] Education is generally regarded as an industrial cleavage, but on the "borderline". It is important in both pre-industrial settings and industrialised countries. It is not simply a prescriptive variable, but is generally perceived as helping to determine occupation and income, – i.e. the core industrial cleavages.

[377] The post-industrial variables reflect individual level values, particularly those based on post-economic needs. This dimension is particularly related to Inglehart's post-materialist dimension (Knutsen 1986).

country. Does this mean that a pre-industrial cleavage model is now replaced by a more class-based pattern of political polarisation? Will the legacy of apartheid now yield to a more typical industrial society?

The structure and character of conflicts – i.e. whether conflicts cut across one another or overlap – will influence the nature and seriousness of national conflicts and the potential for national integration. The question is whether a significant number of citizens in South Africa meet the standards of civic competence and democratic consciousness. If so, which factors explain this? Or alternatively, what are the chief barriers to the building of political competence, democratic skills and democratic consciousness? Figure 10.1 shows the cleavage variables included in the following analyses.

Figure 10.1   Cleavage Variables for the Development of Communal Citizenship

Pre-industrial cleavages:
(Chapter 10)

- race
- language
- ethnicity
- gender
- religion
- age
- education

Industrial cleavages:
(Chapter 11)

- sector of employment
- occupation
- income

?   ?

Civil society:
(Chapter 12)

- union membership
- participation

Citizenship:
- political competence
- political participation
- public spiritedness
- democratic tolerance
- national identity

We will not attempt to repeat the presentation of the different variables here,[378] but rather present the cleavage models as such and analyse their impact on our dimensions of political participation and culture. We will mainly deal with the pre-industrial cleavages in this chapter, while the following two chapters address the importance of the industrial cleavages – workplace characteristics, worker participation and working-class consciousness (Chapter 11) – and trade- union engagement and consciousness (Chapter 12).

[378] See Appendix 3.

10.2 Testing out the pre-industrial cleavages

In what way does the subjectively competent citizen differ from someone who does not feel that the affairs of politics and government are amenable to his or her influence (Almond & Verba 1980)? Certain patterns, in particular, should be mentioned concerning the workers' sense of political competence and confidence.

Cultural diversity, the ideological foundations of apartheid, complete segregation of population groups, restrictions on political activities and the state of emergency until 1990 are some of the factors that helped shape what is probably the most important cleavage in South African politics: *race*. The legacy of apartheid and a distorted distribution of socio-economic resources may perpetuate such cleavages. Various racial groups will in gross terms have different interests and therefore different priorities. We may also expect them to express them differently when it comes to the type and degree of political activity, support for democracy, democratic tolerance, civic virtue etc. Both white and black workers in our survey commented on the changes that had happened in South Africa up until 1994. Their comments may serve as a good illustration of the degree of racial polarisation in South Africa:

One white worker argued:
"Things are changing. In the old days, we could throw kaffirs down the mineshafts for fun. Now we cannot do that anymore"

An African worker argued:
"This country belongs to blacks. It should be run by blacks only"

But the white workers argued:
"We wish, please, a white volkstaat"
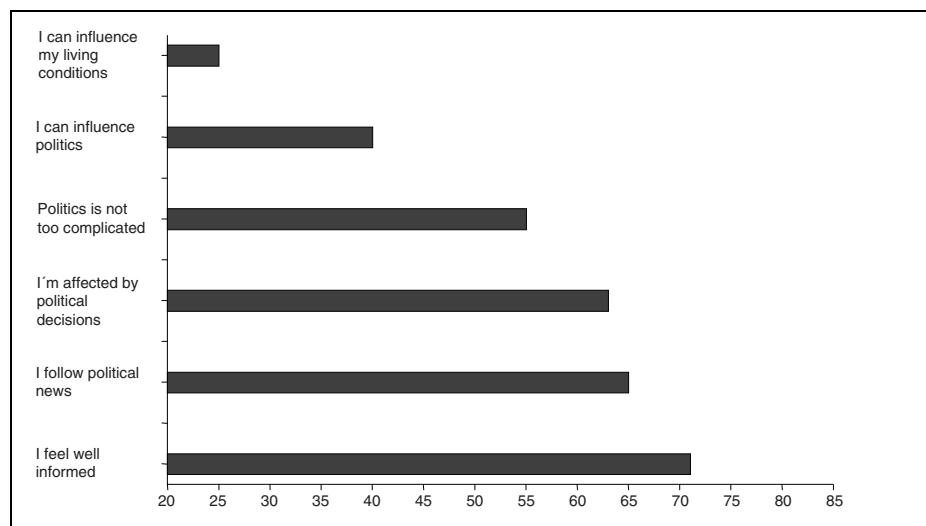
At the point of departure, we would expect African workers to be relatively politically alienated given the background of decades of exclusion from politics. Furthermore, most socio-economic resources generally regarded as political resources (like income, education, etc.) are concentrated in white hands. Yet, an active civil society, the struggle for democracy and the period marked by a high degree of awareness of political issues may have moderated the effect of such factors. So, is it imitation and loyalty or

opposition and exit which characterise black political culture (see Chapter 2)? To what extent has the influence of apartheid repression affected people's values and activities?

The Gauteng African worker is *not* politically alienated or powerless. Figure 10.2 reveals a picture of a highly competent citizen on political matters. He or she feels affected by political decisions and believes that he or she has the knowledge, competence and resources to influence the course of political events. A large majority of workers regard themselves as well informed and think that political decisions often affect their lives. Most workers feel they are well informed about the political negotiations that have taken place concerning a new constitution and a democratic dispensation. They read political news in the newspapers or follow it on TV or radio everyday. As one indicator of political efficacy, more than half (55%) believe that politics is *not* too complicated for them to understand.

Figure 10.2 Political Competence and Confidence amongst Black Gauteng Workers[379] (in percentages) (n. 861)

[379] They were asked several questions about as to whether they: (1) feel well informed about the political negotiations; (2) follow political news on radio, TV or in newspapers every day; (3) feel that their lives and living conditions are changed because of decisions made by the state or the region; (4) think that politics is too complicated to follow; (5) think that people like them (and not only people in high positions) can influence the course of events; (6) think that they can change their living conditions through their own political action.

While highly politicised, they have less confidence in their ability to influence politics. More workers feel that they are well informed or affected by politics than that they *influence* politics, or are *capable* of doing so, through their own actions.[380] The smaller number of those who feel politically competent compared to those who feel informed and confident reflects to a large extent a "hierarchy" in the building of political skills that may be observed in many other countries.

The politically competent citizen does not necessarily participate actively in politics. Most citizens in fact use only a small portion of their political resources. However, their competence lies in their *ability* to mobilise for political action on specific issues. It is important to note in this respect that more than 40 per cent of the black workers perceive themselves to be *able* to influence politics, while only 27 per cent of white workers express the same self-confidence. After all, black workers have seen that "they" managed to fight to bring down a political regime! This brings us to the importance of structural cleavages in forming political competence in South Africa.

The significant pre-industrial group differences that should be mentioned concern the effect of race and of education. Men generally feel slightly more confident about their political competence and influence than women, but generally gender has a limited impact upon people's sense of political competence.[381] There is no difference between the various age groups.

Race has an effect, for example, upon the extent to which people believe people like themselves can influence their own *living conditions* through political action.[382] Twenty-five per cent of black workers believe this is the case, compared with 18 per cent of white workers. Less than half the African workers believe that it is only people in high positions who can

[380] In addition to the roughly 25 per cent of workers who say they are capable of influencing their own living conditions through political actions, another 50 per cent say they are able to *a limited extent* to change their own living conditions through political activity.

[381] 73 per cent of black men feel they are well informed, compared with 68 per cent of women. 28 per cent of men feel they can influence their own living conditions through political action, compared with 20 per cent of women.

[382] Two questions were asked about their sense of political influence: whether they believed they could influence politics and whether they believed they were able to influence their own living conditions through political involvement.

influence the course of political events.[383] The fact that close to half the workers say that they themselves can influence politics is astounding given the decades of exclusion from formal politics. However, this confidence reflects the experience of resistance politics more than participation in any formal political channels! We will return to this later

More blacks also reported that they felt well informed about the political negotiations that determined South Africa's future and that they regularly followed the political news through the media.[384] White workers, on the other hand, are more inclined to believe that politics is not too complicated for them to *understand* (62% versus 52% of blacks). This may to some extent reflect the higher education levels amongst white workers.[385] Figure 10.3 portrays the differences in the extent to which people believe politics is too complicated to understand, according to educational levels.

Education has a significant positive effect upon the extent to which people find politics complicated. The more years of schooling people have, the more confident they feel that politics is *not* too complicated for them to understand.[386] The more highly educated also feel more confident about their own potential political influence and tend to believe that it is not only people in high positions who can influence politics.[387] The bivariate correlation is weaker than the direct effect, which indicates that some of the original effect was "hidden" by race, which has a negative effect,[388] for whites generally feel less politically confident than blacks.

[383] 44 per cent of black workers believed it is only people in high positions that could use their influence to change the course of political events. 41 per cent believed they themselves were able to influence politics, while 15 per cent werwere uncertain.
[384] 83 per cent of black workers followed the political news regularly, as compared with 69 per cent of whites; and 71 per cent of blacks felt well informed, while 61 per cent of whites did express the same.
[385] Correlation r.31
[386] Bivariate correlation eta = .15, unchanged when controlled for race, gender, age, occupation, sector of employment, union membership and union affiliation.
[387] Bivariate correlation eta .13 strengthened when controlled for race, gender, age, occupation, sector of employment and union affiliation: beta .18.
[388] The variable was given the following values: 1 = black, 2 = white
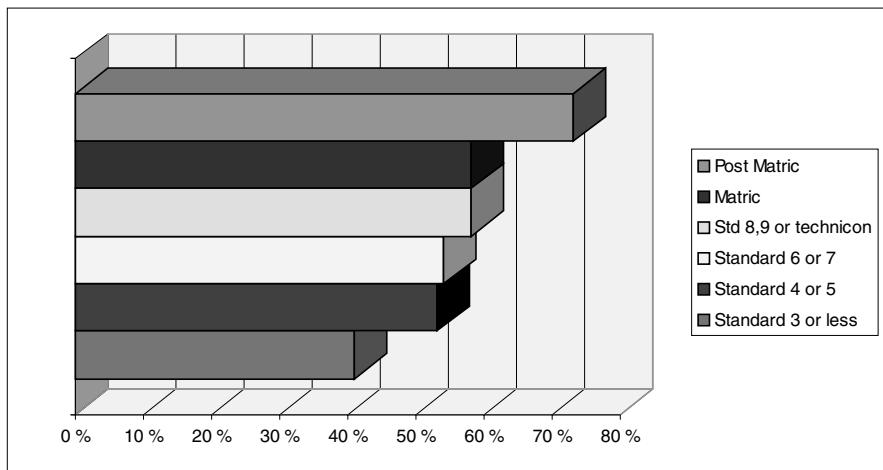
Figure 10.3   Political Competence According to Education (in percentages) (n. 1,002).

The generally higher confidence level amongst blacks was, as mentioned before, reflected in race being the main variable affecting people's perceptions of themselves as well informed about politics and able to influence politics through their own actions.[389] Yet, if the material is analysed for blacks only, we see that education also has an independent effect upon political competence. While 78 per cent of black workers with education higher than Standard 9 said they felt well informed, "only" 61 per cent of those with Standard 3 education or less share the same confidence. Likewise, 93 per cent of the highly educated blacks, versus 62 per cent of those with no education, regularly follow the political news. And finally, more of the highly educated group (49 per cent) than those with Standard 3 education or less (31 per cent) feel that they themselves can influence "the course of political events".

[389] Race: eta .08, beta .10 on the extent to which people find politics too complicated and eta .14, beta .13 on the the extent to which they believe their own actions have had an effect on politics. Controlled for gender, age, education, occupation, income, sector of employment and union affiliation. Age, education and income were included in the analysis as covariates.

Political participation and citizenship

Political participation is certainly the key concept of a democratic system. However, political involvement or apathy is never evenly spread throughout the population but depends upon people's political resources. Political resources are factors which promote interest in, knowledge about and confidence in politics and thereby enhance participation and influence. Political resources must be seen against the background of *resources and socialisation*. People's involvement also depends upon specific issues and their alternatives, as well as upon how much people feel personally affected by the issues and upon the resources they have at their disposal. Workers have been mobilised for collective action through the workplace, through unions and through industrial township culture. All in all, the interviews show high levels of political activity amongst workers (Figure 10.4). They believe political participation is important to protect their own interests, but even more important, the interests of the community. Almost two thirds of the black workers believe that it is important to participate in politics to improve their own or their family's living conditions, or even more important, in order to improve the quality of life in the community.[390] Simultaneously, far more white than black workers are "group-oriented" and believe that it is important to take part in politics to protect "their own population group".[391]

The South African opposition to apartheid was never one united group. Blacks were to some extent split according to socio-economic and political criteria. Cultural characteristics, the apartheid ideology of making people conscious of their ethnic cultures together with the Inkatha Freedom Party's distinct use of ethnicity as a mobilising factor also potentially made *ethnicity* and *language* important cleavages in South African politics.

Looking at race, ethnicity and language in relation to politics, the picture that emerges is one of race having major implications for politics. But in spite of decades of apartheid segregation, different cultural roots and history and diverse regional backgrounds, *ethnicity* hardly seems to

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[390] 64 per cent of black workers believe "it is important that people are involved in politics in order to improve their own or their family's living conditions". 88 per cent of black workers believe "it is important that people are involved in politics in order to improve the quality of life in the community".

[391] 68 per cent of white workers as compared with 58 per cent of the black workers.

affect the degree of political participation. There are no differences in our survey results between the political behaviour of the various black language and ethnic groups. Analysing the IDASA 1994 national survey, however, we find that Xhosa are far more active than other language groups when it comes to political activities.[392] While only 33 per cent of Xhosas on a national basis are inactive, approximately half of the other black language groups do not take part in any activities, and about 85 per cent of those with English and Afrikaans as their first language are completely inactive.[393] Johnson and Schlemmer (1996) likewise find that Xhosa-speakers are the most active party-supporters. One reason why there is no clear effect of language upon the degree of political activity in our survey may be that the urban township culture of Gauteng has levelled out many of the previous internal differences. These people may have been exposed for a long time to the culture of industrialised, politicised society in which the pre-industrial cleavages have faded in significance. We should also remember that our sample of workers had lived for a relatively long time in the urban township area and were all employed in the formal sector of the economy. Analysing the COSATU shop-steward survey from 1991, we also see that ethnic background has no significant impact upon whether shop stewards believe that workers are able to influence the political system, that workers can understand politics, or that blacks and whites will ever be able to trust each other.[394]

More than half the African workers had participated in political marches or political meetings in the previous four years. And more than half the workers said they had taken part in rent boycotts, which were frequently used as a protest against illegitimate local governments and disproportionately high rents. Most workers had also taken part in consumer boycotts called by political organisations or the labour movement. Moreover, most workers had participated in strikes and stay-aways. Their political activities had, in their own perception, not changed

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[392] I analysed political activities on the basis of the IDASA survey. I made an index of the degree of activityies in strikes/stay-aways, boycotts (rent, rates, taxes, etc.), occupation of buildings, political marches, damage to property in protests and/or taken participation in political violence. The index will therefore indicate the number of activities taken part in.

[393] English- and Afrikaans- speakers will also include Indians and "coloureds".

[394] There was only one white shop-steward in their sample, making it impossible to include analyses of the impact of race (black-white) for shopstewards.

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much in the period of political top-level negotiations after 1990 compared with the period of resistance and state repressions before 1990 .[395] Almost all our workers – i.e. more than 90 per cent – said they had never taken part in meetings of local government and approximately 80 per cent said they had never taken part in elections of local government. Most workers had, on the other hand, participated in alternative structures to solve local community problems. Seventy-two per cent of the workers had participated in meetings of civics or of squatter or residence committees during the previous four years. Furthermore, a big majority of the workers expected that they themselves would be able to give directions to Parliament after the elections. Only 16 per cent said they expected Parliament to take all decisions without further consultations.

In comparison, white workers are far less active in political life. More than 90 per cent of the white workers in our survey had never participated in strikes, stay-aways or political marches or consumer boycotts.[396] A small minority of 17 per cent had, however, taken part in political meetings and the majority had taken part in local and provincial elections and 84 per cent had voted in the white Parliamentary elections. While black workers take part in opposition resistance politics, white workers take part in formal political channels.

An index of the degree of participation in stay-aways, strikes, civics/ residence committees, political marches and meetings demonstrates the large difference between black and white workers in political *participation*.[397] While black workers regularly take part in an average of 3.2 activities, white workers score an average of less than one activity (0.5). An IDASA survey confirmed that the African community is by far the most
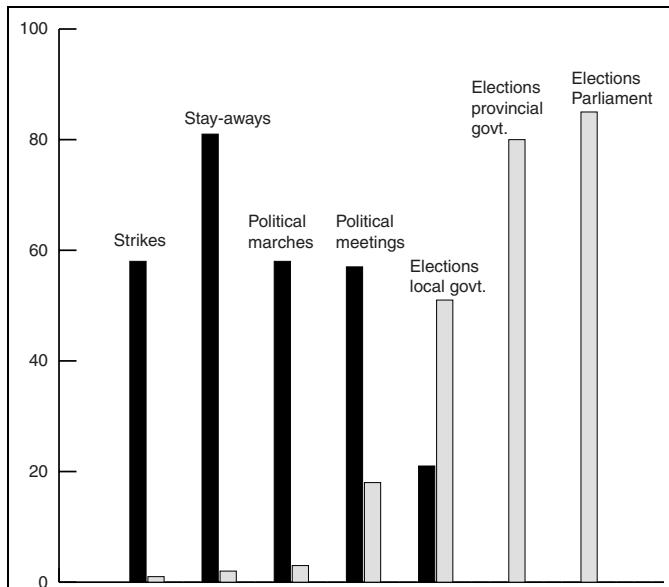
[395] Separate questions were posed concerning their political participation before and after 1990. There is a slight up-turn in activity when it comes to strikes and stay-aways, but a decrease in activities when it comes to political marches and meetings. Retrospective questions are difficult because of problems in terms of validity and memory loss. Yet, this may still give an indication of changes in activity patterns.
[396] We did not ask the white workers about participation in rent boycotts or school boycotts, which are typical expressions of black workers' politics.
[397] Electoral politics could not be included, as blacks were excluded from such channels. Elections for local government form the exception, but such local governments did not yet exist in all black areas. The lack of participation in elections for these bodies was also to a large extent an expression of political confidence and consciousness rather than alienation.

politically active segment of the population. If petitioning, public demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, sit-ins and occupations, property damage and political violence are taken into account, Africans are twice as active as coloureds, with whites showing little activity apart from petitioning (James & Caliguire 1996). This confirms the finding that black workers also feel more politically informed and confident, as mentioned above.

Figure 10.4   Comparison of White and Black Workers' Political Activities (in percentages)
(n. 861 and 141)

Age is generally regarded as one of the most important cleavages in politics. First, culture, economic conditions and so on differ from one period to another and hence the influences of childhood socialisation. Second, the older one gets, the more the "class of origin" diminishes relative to the class of existence and destination.[398] And furthermore, the particular stage in personal and social development the individual has reached will make him or her perceive and react to the same experiences in

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[398] The impact of age and ageing has in itself been focussed by many who look at the extent to which generational replacements in and of themselves account for social change (Sigel 1989, Carpini 1989). There is, however, a difference between age cohorts and a generation. Generations are made, not born. Age cohorts *may* develop into a generation.

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different ways. However, while it is generally assumed by many that authority patterns, self-esteem etc. are learnt in early childhood within the family, childhood socialisation in this sense will probably not have the presumed effect in South Africa. Family dissolution amidst increasing political turmoil has profoundly disturbed the pattern of childhood socialisation in South Africa. Apartheid regulation, pass laws, influx control and a system of migrant labourers living in single-sex hostels was followed by the break-up of many African families. Where families did not break up completely, the status of parents, especially fathers, came under increasing economic and political pressure with resulting strains on the family. Street experiences of socialisation through school boycotts and confrontation with the state became the dominant form or agent of political socialisation in the 80s.

The values, norms and political orientation of South African youth *have* been found to differ from those of older generations. The younger generation between eighteen and twenty-five tends to be more favourably inclined towards the PAC and AZAPO than older generations (de Kock 1991).[399] The higher tendency of youth to support these parties is confirmed, as will be noted later in our sample of workers in the formal sector. Youth also say more frequently than people from older generations that they discuss politics with friends and relatives. De Kock (ibid) furthermore finds that there is a negative relationship between political literacy and age, which indicates that youth show the highest level of political literacy. It may seem, however, that it is more the intensity and kinds of activity through which political ideas are *expressed* that distinguishes youth from older people. De Kock (1994) found that youth are slightly more politically active than the older generations. Orkin (1994) found the same result on the basis of a big survey in the early 90s. It should be underlined, however, that the differences are not large. In fact Kock's conclusion that youth discuss politics more frequently than older people is based on the answers to only *one* question. All in all, however, it would appear that the pattern of political participation amongst blacks in general is that the *oldest* generations differ from the younger in a lower frequency of political activity. This is, however, not an exclusively South African phenomenon: the generation over sixty[400] is generally found to be less

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[399] He bases his conclusions on a national representative survey amongst more than 8,300 Africans in 1993.

[400] In Kock's (1991) case he lumps together those of 56 years of age and older.
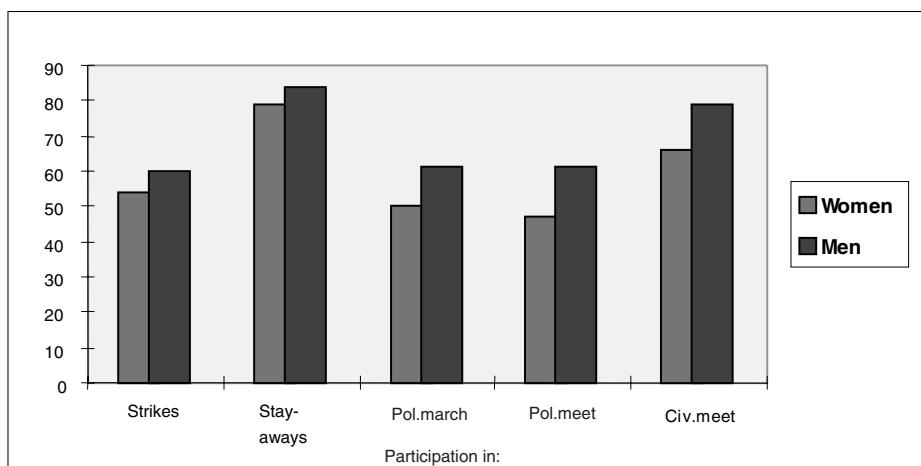
politically active in most countries. Our survey did not, however, at this stage confirm the importance of age for degree of political *participation*. In general, workers between twenty-five and fifty-four are most active, with those between twenty-five and thirty-four particularly so. The youngest (18-24) and those over fifty-five were less active in strikes, stay-aways, political meetings and marches. However, the effect of age is weak. The simple explanation may be that it is either the unemployed, informally employed or youth under the age of eighteen (groups not included in our survey) who are the most militant and who differ most from the rest of the population. In getting a formal sector job – all the people interviewed by us were employed in the formal sector – people are in a sense "settling down", and there are very small differences between the age cohorts in our sample. In the COSATU shop-steward sample from 1991, on the other hand, both age and education had a significant impact upon the extent to which shop stewards believed workers could influence the political system, understand politics and on whether they thought that blacks and whites could ever trust each other. The youngest shop stewards were most likely to believe that whites and blacks would be able to develop trust towards each other and that workers could influence politics. The highest educational groups amongst shop stewards also believed that workers could influence politics and that they were able to understand politics.[401] In other words, youth and higher educational levels are both indicators of more sympathetic attitudes to democracy amongst shop stewards.

Religion is not a uni-dimensional factor when it comes to its effect upon political values in South Africa. With the Dutch Reformed Church being highly supportive of apartheid ideology, we may expect its supporters to be less democratically tolerant than the more opposition-oriented Anglo-Saxon Churches. Yet, neither our survey, nor the COSATU shop-steward survey shows any political differences between the various religious groups.

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[401] MCA analysis with age, race, gender and education included as independent variables. Only education and gender had significant effects, but gender was very weak (eta .08, beta .09). Education had a bivariate effect of .18 (eta) and a direct effect of .16 (beta) after control for the impact of the other variables. A cross-tabulation indicates that while 60 per cent of the shop stewards with the lowest educational qualifications believed "workers cannot understand politics", only 35 per cent of the shop -stewards with the highest level of education agreed with this. Likewise, 47 per cent of the young as compared to 60 per cent of the older shop stewards agreed that workers could not really understand politics.

Gender has been found to have a great impact on political learning in many countries. South African women and men have different levels of education and different occupations, positions and status and therefore also different levels of income and wealth. Women and men are brought up with different value frameworks and role models. Whereas girls are brought up with the aim of taking care of children and the "home sphere", boys are directed towards production and the "political sphere". Many women have ended up as single mothers or single breadwinners owing to migration and the homeland system. Labour markets are also highly segregated, with a large number of women occupying jobs in the service and domestic sectors. Gender is one of the factors which we expected to have a strong influence upon political competence, activities and attitudes and this expectation was confirmed. Figure 10.5 portrays the differences between women and men when it comes to political activities. Male workers participate more actively in politics than women. While more black women than men participate in *stokvels* and in the Church, men's domain is the civics and the unions.

Figure 10.5   Comparison of the Political Activities of Black Women and Men (in percentages) (n 861).

Many people suggest that the higher the educational level of a nation's population, the more likely democracy is to exist and endure. Education is in fact *the* factor which has been shown all over the world to correlate most strongly empirically with democratic tolerance. In South Africa, approximately 60 per cent of the population is under the age of thirty-five and of

young blacks in this age group about 60 per cent is illiterate (Chisholm 1991). The quality of education and the lack of schoolbooks and facilities all contribute to enormously high failure rates. Continuous school boycotts over the years also pushed thousands of children out of schools. The Bantu education system itself aimed at creating and reinforcing differences between population groups.

Blacks were to fill subordinate positions in society and therefore had no need for sophisticated learning. The highly educated have therefore passed through an educational system aimed at reinforcing differences and segregation. Furthermore, they will occupy a more privileged socio-economic position in society on the basis of education and have better jobs and a higher status and may therefore also have more to "lose" through democracy and the promised affirmative action programmes by the new ANC government. The effect of education in South Africa may on this basis differ from other parts of the world, with the most highly educated being the most conservative and least democratically tolerant, while those with the least education being more inclined to hold socialist values and support democracy. Political competence may be higher amongst the most-educated but they use it differently. An alternative hypothesis to what we find in the rest of the world is that the most educated tend to be less democratically tolerant. Education, not surprisingly, has a limited effect upon individual politics. There is no difference in the degree of political activity between less- and better-educated black workers. The more highly educated workers are mostly *white* workers, but *they* participate less in politics.

There are problems entailed in using advanced statistical analysis on the kind of survey data we have here.[402] Nevertheless, we have done some analysis on the basis of which we can draw some tentative conclusions. Political participation is here represented as an index, as briefly mentioned before, composed of five variables: some or frequent participation in strikes, stay-aways, political meetings, political marches and civics and residence committees.[403] We are, in other words, measuring the *degree* of political activity.

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[402] See Appendix 8.

[403] The index is made up so that those who take part in one political activity are coded 1, those who take part in two activitities, (2);, three activities, (3;), four activities, (4;) and those who had participated sometimes or often in five political activities over the previous four years (5).

Race, gender and age have a significant impact upon the degree of political participation (at 1 per cent level). Gender has an impact upon the degree of political participation, with women being less active than men. Furthermore, age has a significant impact upon political participation with the age group from twenty-five to thirty-four, and even more so thirty-five to forty-four, being more active than the average (grand mean 3.23 activities). The effect of education is, on the other hand, weak and not significant.[404] All in all, religion also has a minimal effect upon political competence, activities and attitudes.

The strong effect of race cannot be traced back to other cleavages, given that the bivariate covariation is almost unaffected by the control of the other variables (eta .55 & beta .57). The effect of race, however, reduces the effect of both education and age. First, there is a considerable correlation between education and race, with whites having a higher level of education. Second, when it comes to the effect of age, an interesting picture emerges. The effect of age upon the degree of political activity within each of the racial groups is curvilinear, but with the curve pointing in different directions for each group. Black workers in the middle age groups are the most active in the political arena, while the most active white workers are the youngest and oldest.[405] This may be explained by a combination of factors. The most active black workers are in fact the "'76 generation" (between 25 and 34) that was mobilised for the struggle against apartheid by the Soweto students' uprising and the violent reaction by the police. This most active group of workers was mobilised by the events of 1976 and thereafter by the wave of mass action that turned the 80s into the decade of black struggle. In the early 90s, many in the new generations knew that democracy was close and many reforms had already been introduced. The political militancy amongst youth at that stage was taken over by unemployed youth who were disillusioned by the fact that political changes had not been followed by higher living standards.

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[404] When we look more in detail at the effect of education, the analysis shows us, however, that the bivariate connection is one in which the higher the level of education, the less people participate! While 67 per cent of those with standard Standard 5 or less participated in 3 or more political activities, "only" 47 per cent of those with technicon or more participated to the same degree. The latter group consisted mainly of whites, and when one controls for race, most of the effect of education is reduced. (the correlation between race and education is r.31)

[405] Clearly some caution must be exercised when it comes to drawing conclusions about the whites on the basis of such a small sample (n 141).

Analysing the IDASA 1994 national survey confirms such an explanation. Less than half the unemployed (those seeking work) are politically passive, as opposed to almost two thirds of other groups. These people, however, engage mostly in activities we would now easily define as political violence or even vandalism (damage to property) and they are in the youngest group (18-24 years).[406] Participation in politics is generally lower in the national IDASA sample than what we found in our Gauteng sample. But that is not surprising, considering that the national sample includes all races as well as rural areas and areas/provinces where we would expect politicisation to be lower than in Gauteng. The high level of activity amongst white youth is comparable to the situation in Europe where youth are generally most politically active and then "settle down" with age. This also indicates, however, that while black participation can be explained as a cohort phenomenon, white political participation must be explained by general ageing.

One further comment should also be made about the urban politicised culture, which confirms the remarks about the high participation levels in our Gauteng survey. The 1994 IDASA survey points out that political participation is much higher in urban areas than in rural ones. It is, however, not the city culture or the suburban culture which mobilises people, it is the townships and squatter areas which serve as areas for political mobilisation. While 86-88 per cent of urban city and suburban residents have never taken part in strikes, political marches, boycotts, political violence etc., less than 45 per cent of township residents show comparably low levels of participation (own analysis).

Capacity-building for participation

Theories of political learning usually expect participation to follow from information, competence and confidence. In other words, the individual needs to feel informed about politics and affected by decisions made by political decision-making bodies in order to be mobilised for political action. This does not imply that those who feel informed and affected by politics *will* in fact participate, they can also choose *not* to. In fact, the

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[406] While participation is higher amongst the very youth in the IDASA sample than in our Gauteng survey, the youth in the IDASA survey participated most in activities which we have not included in our survey (political violence and damage to houses and property).

stability of political regimes is often assumed to rely upon high individual competence and *low* participation.[407] Simultaneously, feeling informed and affected are necessary, though not sufficient conditions for participation. The individual usually also needs to feel able to influence decision-making in order to take part. We often assume that these factors correlate with each other – i.e. that those who feel informed and affected will find politics less complicated and will feel more confident about their own potential for influence.

In order to obtain an indication of the degree of constraint attached to the dimension of political competence and political confidence, we wanted to check the congruency and consistency between each of the questions. Our analysis using this original additive index on political efficacy was, however, unable to cause much variation since both factor analysis and correlation revealed that the variables included in the index were not sufficiently related and the independent variables "killed" each other in their effect on the dependent index variables. These factors are not internally correlated and do not constitute an overall consistent dimension. A rotated factor solution matrix revealed two clear sub-dimensions in our first original index, which comprised all the questions concerning political competence and confidence included in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 Principal Component Analysis of Political Competence and Confidence.[408]

Political knowledge	Principal Factor
"I am familiar with the Transitional Executive Council"	.84
"I am familiar with the National Economic Forum"	.82
"I am familiar with the National Peace Secretariat"	.78
"I am familiar with the National Manpower Council"	.65
"I keep well informed about politics"	.34
Political confidence	
"Politics is not too complicated for me to understand"	.59
"I am well informed about the political situation"	.49
"I often follow news on TV, radio or through newspapers"	.76
"I can influence my politics"	.58

[407] Such an argument can be found in Almond and Verba (1963) et al.
[408] Principal Component Analysis. Varimax. The full rotated factor analysis is presented in Appendix 9.

These components were thereby split up and merged into two new variables: one on political knowledge and competence, including questions on whether people felt informed about politics in general and specific institutions in particular and on whether they followed the political news regularly. The other new variable reflects political confidence and is created on the basis of questions about whether people feel they are able to influence politics or whether it is only people in high positions who have such powers, whether people believe they can change their living conditions through political action and whether they think politics is too complicated for them to understand. These will be analysed in relation to political participation below.

We included the two new variables on political knowledge and political confidence in the statistical analysis of political participation.[409] People's sense of political knowledge and confidence has a strong impact upon their degree of political participation. Political knowledge has a significant effect of beta .18 when adjusted for the other factors (eta .26) and political confidence a direct significant (although weaker) effect of beta .11 (eta .25), which confirms that feeling informed, affected and confident about one's own influence are stepping stones, or political resources, for participation. All in all 38 per cent of the variance in political participation is explained when these two variables are included in addition to the model above. Political confidence and trust must also be seen, however, on the basis of resources. Race and gender have strong effects upon the degree of political confidence and trust.

Participation in civil society
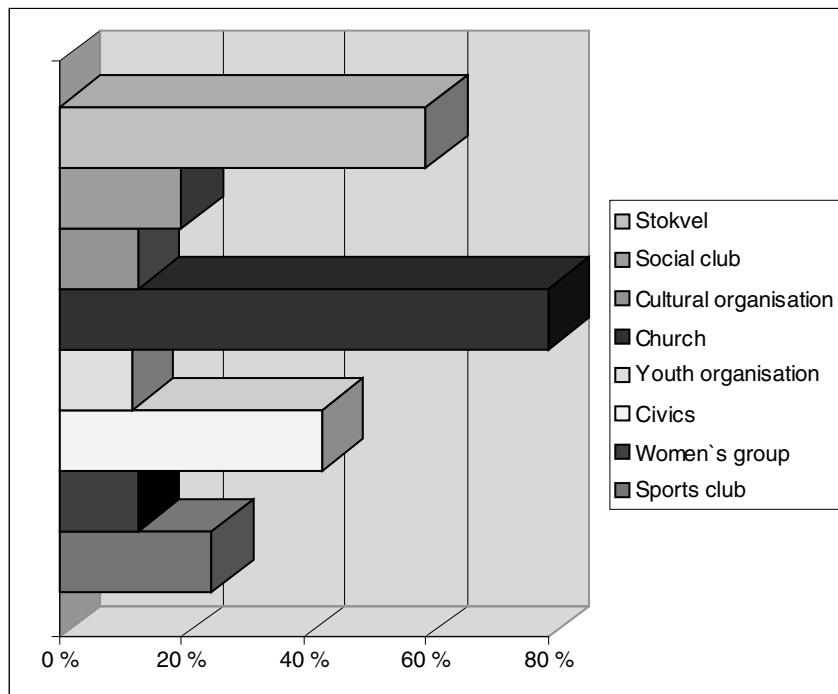
The high level of political activity is reflected in participation patterns in organisational life. The majority of workers do not belong to a sports club, cultural organisation, social club or women's group. They *do,* however, take part in the Church and religious activities. The vast majority of African workers participate regularly in Church meetings and ceremo-

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[409] Both are constructed as additive indexes. Political competence is based on questions such as whether 1) if people follow political news in newspapers or on the radio or TV daily or often, 2) feel well informed about the political negotiations and 3) have knowledge about the Transitional Executive Council, Nnational Economic Forum, National Manpower Commission and the National Peace Secretariat.

nies.[410] People also participate regularly in *stokvels*. Sixty-four per cent of our workers said they participated, were members of or held office in *stokvels* or burial societies. Figure 10.6 reveals that black workers' activity in Churches, civics and *stokvels* is especially high in South Africa.

We constructed an index of organisational activities. Altogether less than 20 per cent of workers (both blacks and whites) are completely passive or take part in only one organisational activity.

Figure 10.6   Organisational Activities amongst Black Workers (n. 861)

[410] The majority, 66 per cent, say they are members of a Cchurch. Most workers in Gauteng are Christians. Black workers surveyed are either Methodists (13 per cent), Anglicans (9 per cent), Catholics (13 per cent), members of the Reformed Churches (6 per cent), Lutheran (6 per cent), or they belong to the Evangelical (6 per cent) or Apostolic Churches (15 per cent) or to one of the African independent churches (18 per cent). A rough estimate indicates that 77 per cent of the total national population adheres to Christianity and 35 per cent of the total black population belong to the African independent Churches (Oosthuizen 1992).

Table 10.2 Accumulation of Organisational Activities amongst Black Workers (n 861)[411]

Value Label	Valid		Cumulative	
	Value	Frequency (no. of people)	Percent	Percent
No activities	.00	35	4.1	4.1
One activity	1.00	95	11.0	15.1
Two activities	2.00	184	21.4	36.5
Three activities	3.00	218	25.3	61.8
Four activities	4.00	152	17.7	79.4
Five activities	5.00	91	10.6	90.0
Six activities	6.00	56	6.5	96.5
Seven activities	7.00	19	2.2	98.7
All activities	8.00	9	1.0	99.8

Only 4 per cent of the black workers are completely passive in civil society organisational activities. About two thirds take part in three organisational activities or more.

Political changes during the last few years have given rise to speculations about a potential decrease in legitimacy or even collapse of the civics and residence committees in the black townships. However, our survey contradicts the argument of such a trend. More than two thirds of our workers had attended, sometimes or often, meetings of civics, squatter or residence committees during the previous four years.[412]

Political trust, confidence and identity

The stability of any democracy depends upon the effectiveness and legitimacy of its political system. Effectiveness, in this context, means actual performance, the degree to which the system satisfies basic needs as seen by the majority population and powerful groups within it. Legitimacy

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[411] The percentage of workers taking parts in one or more of organisational activities (*stokvels*, unions, youth organisations, women's groups, church, cultural groups, civics, and social club and/or sports clubs).

[412] In fact, the participation in and the legitimacy of civics seem to have increased. Whereas one third say they never participated in civics or residence committee meetings before 1990, only about a quarter say they have not participated in the most recent fouryear period up to 1994.

involves the capacity of the system to engender and maintain the belief that the existing political institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society. A political system can be effective without being legitimate and it can be legitimate without being effective. However, for a democracy to remain stable in a long-term perspective, it must be both effective *and* legitimate (Lipset 1963).
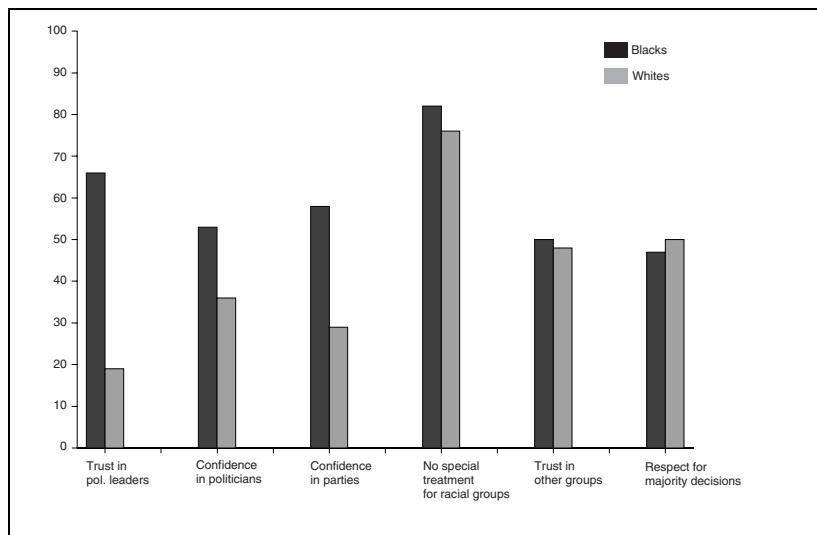
blacks have more trust in politicians, parties and the government. One aspect of democratic consciousness or citizenship is respect for opposing viewpoints and for the rules and procedures of democratic politics. Two out of three of the black workers surveyed agreed that political leaders could be trusted. The majority of black workers did not believe that politicians would stop caring about the needs and interests of the people after the elections or that political parties had lost touch with the people.

Political tolerance levels amongst Africans are less unambiguous than democratic trust. They, like other population groups, are relatively liberal when it come to principles, but less so in practice when tolerance is tested by asking, for example, whether they would let representatives of their most opposed party live in their own area, speak at political meetings, etc. While this has been interpreted as reflecting a lack of tolerance, it may simply reflect a fear of political unrest in the local area, which people knew would often follow if opposing views were given a platform (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:260).

We analysed democratic tolerance along three dimensions: respect for majority rule, trust and tolerance for other ethnic groups and belief in the defence of minority rights in the constitution. The most highly educated had more respect for majority decisions, while no other pre-industrial cleavages were of significance for any of the dimensions of democratic tolerance. A staggering 80 per cent believed that "no racial or ethnic group should get special treatment in the future", and while it may be surprising to find no difference between blacks and whites, the result surely reflects a combination of commitment to egalitarian nation-building and fear amongst both groups that other groups might receive special benefits. The latter interpretation seems more likely given that only half of all the workers interviewed said they might be able to trust people of other ethnic or population groups in the future.

White workers, in contrast, believe far more often that politicians have lost touch with people, that they will stop caring about the needs of the people after the (1994) elections and that they cannot be trusted (Figure 10.7).

Figure 10.7   Trust towards Politicians amongst Black and White Workers (in percentages)
                    (n 861 & 141)

We analysed democratic trust as an additive index thereafter on the basis of the potential cleavages mentioned above.[413] The index is composed of the three questions concerning trust and legitimacy for the politicians and parties mentioned. The variance explained by this model is relatively low and the effect of race the only one which is significant. Blacks generally have a far higher trust in politicians, political leaders and parties, as mentioned previously.

When we include the index on political participation described above the effect of race is slightly reduced, but still remains one of the most important explanatory factors (eta .21). The importance of both political competence and confidence is reduced (eta .08 and .22, respectively) slightly. Political participation per se has a strong significant effect upon political trust (beta .30 and eta .14). In other words, the more people participate politically, the more trust they gain in the political system.

How do workers regard themselves? An overwhelming majority (80%) of our black workers said they identified themselves primarily as South Africans rather than as members of their own racial or ethnic group. Only a small minority identify themselves in ethnic or racial terms. Simultaneously, 36 per cent of the black workers surveyed said they would

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[413] Non-racism and respect for majority decisions are not included.

never really trust people of other ethnic or population groups.[414] The majority expressed trust in other population groups but believed no population group should get special treatment in the future (Figure 10.7).

Support for the principle of equality does not manifest itself as respect for common problem solving and for the democratic principle of majority decisions. Only half the black workers believed they should always respect the decisions of the majority in the future, if the majority did not represent their own interests. And only half the workers had trust in other population groups. It should be noted, however, that while there are fairly large discrepancies between black and white workers on political trust and confidence in parties and politicians, their attitudes to other population groups and to the principle of majority decisions are quite similar.
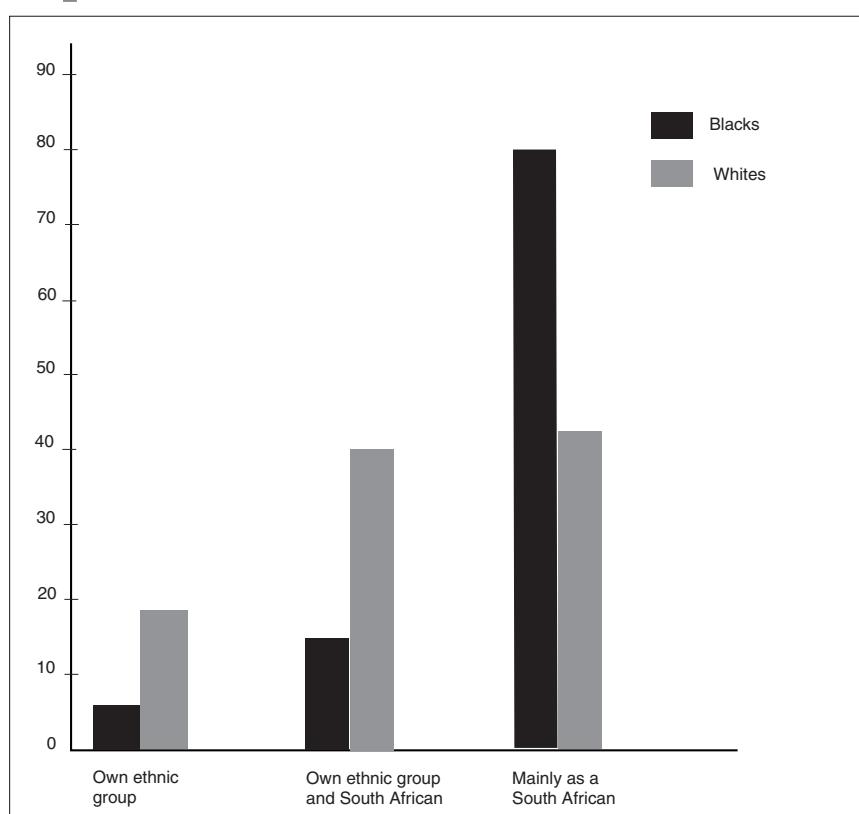
The discrepancies and lack of correlation between the factors mentioned above are manifest in low and/or insignificant correlation coefficients. One clearly correlated sub-dimension emerges, however, concerning confidence in politicians, parties and the political system. The results of a principal component factor analysis are shown below in Table 10.3.

Trust in politicians, political leaders and parties obviously go together.[415] More surprising, however, is the fact that trust in other ethnic groups goes together with the belief that some racial groups should get special treatment in the future. This must be seen on the basis of strong emphasis in the community on the need for affirmative action programmes to advance the interests of blacks in order to repair the damage of the past. Finally, those who believe that one must always respect the decisions of the majority also believe that it is important to participate in order to improve the quality of life in the community.

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[414] 50 per cent of the shop-stewards in the Case COSATU survey thought blacks and whites would never really trust each other (Pityana & Orkin 1996).

[415] Varimax Rotation. The variables are coded: 1: strongly agree; 2: agree; 3: uncertain; 4: disagree; 5: strongly disagree. The whole factor analysis matrix is included in Appendix 9.

Two out of three of the black workers agree, as seen above, that political leaders can be trusted. The majority does not believe that politicians will stop caring about the needs of the people after the elections or that political parties have lost touch with the people. The highest expectations to improvement in own living conditions seem, however, to be amongst those (in the low- to middle-income bracket) who stand to gain least if the government uses poverty or socio-economic factors to set priorities. The workers who have the highest expectations are also the workers who are most easily mobilised for political action and who retain the most scepticism or uncertainty concerning political leaders and the system. Challenges to the stability of the government will more probably come from relatively well-organised interests and from people with, relatively

speaking, greater resources rather than from those who were most disadvantaged by apartheid: the unemployed, the illiterate and poor majority.

Table 10.3   Principal - Component Factor Analysis of Democratic Trust,
             Non-racism and Democratic Consciousness across Seven
             Different Attitudes[416]

I Democratic Trust	Principal Factor
"Our politicians can be trusted"	.69
"When the elections are over,	
politicians will stop caring about the people"	.77
"Political parties have lost touch with people"	.74
II Non-racism	
"No racial or ethnic group should have special	
treatment in the future"	.81
"I will never really trust people of other ethnic	
population groups"	.63
III Democratic Consciousness	
"We must always respect the decisions of	
the majority"	.67
"It is important to participate in politics	
in order to improve the quality of life	
in the community"	.60

Substantive civility is said to lie in a readiness to moderate particular, individual interests to give precedence to the common good (Shils 1991). The majority of African workers expect their living conditions to improve after the elections. On the other hand, as many as 40 per cent of the workers actually say that they would be willing to take a lower wage increase in order to avoid retrenchments of workers in their company. Whereas 36 per cent of black workers, who are first and foremost the best

[416] These three variables are clearly correlated: trust in politicians shows a significant correlation (r. 35) with the beliefs that politicians will still care for the needs of the people after the 1994 elections. Furthermore, there is a significant correlation (r .33) between trust in politicians and the belief that political parties have *not* lost touch with the people.

paid workers themselves, support this idea, as many as 64 per cent of white workers would be willing to contribute to avoid retrenchments of their colleagues at work. The support for redistribution is not as strong amongst white workers when it comes to increasing the welfare of those who are less well off in society. When we asked whether they would contribute through lower wages or higher taxes to help these people, only 30 per cent of the white workers said they would, whereas 44 per cent of black workers support the idea of redistribution to the less well off in society.

High needs and expectations coupled with economic problems have set the "expectations gap" or the "delivery crisis" high on the political agenda. Legitimacy for government performance may turn out to be more important for stability in a newly established democracy than in old democracies where institutions and compromises have long traditions. At the same time, there is also a general perception that workers are a relatively privileged minority compared to the huge number of unemployed and the poor in the rural areas. So what will workers do if their living conditions do not improve? Workers will first and foremost vote for another party if the new government does not represent their interests. The tendency to engage in mass actions is relatively weak.[417] On the other hand, this must be seen in relation to a generally high level of trust in the ability of the democratic government to deliver. Furthermore, a large majority of black workers also expect that they themselves will be able to give directions to Parliament after the elections. Less than 20 per cent say they expect Parliament to take all decisions without further consultations with the people. Trusting the new government, political parties and the new political leaders makes mass actions a more remote possibility. This is reinforced by the period in which the survey was conducted, 1994, when there was a generally high level of confidence, trust and patience regarding democracy.

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[417] A total of 17 per cent of the workers consider the possibility of turning to mass actions.

10.3 In conclusion

Whereas we might expect gender, age, education and language to have a strong effect on political participation, these influences are in fact relatively weak. On the other hand, men more often than women and the middle age groups (the '76 generation) more often than youth and older people take an active part in politics.

Analysis of the data from the COSATU shop-steward study conducted in 1991 confirms the weak significance of structural cleavages. Education is the only significant factor of importance for whether shop stewards think workers can understand politics[418] (eta: .22, beta: .21) and influence politics or not (eta: .17 beta: .16). Those with the highest educational qualifications tend to have more trust in the political competence and power of workers. On questions of trust in other ethnic groups,[419] only age is of importance, with the youngest shop-stewards having most confidence that racial barriers can be overcome (eta: .13, beta: .10). All in all, however, the structural cleavages, except for race, have little significance politically .

Race is the factor which most divides the politics of the new South Africa. However, expectations that the democratically "inexperienced" should be the most politically alienated, the least informed and the most passive fail completely to be fulfilled. The content of the pre-industrial cleavage set would rather seem to enhance the stability of democracy: political competence and participation as well as trust and confidence in the political system are present amongst the majority of the population.

Two completely different political cultures seem to emerge from our analysis: a black political culture based upon participatory values and practices; and a white political culture based upon alienation, lack of trust and confidence and worries about the future. These two opposing cultures are based upon political opposition versus loyalty, high versus low participation and competence versus alienation. The culture of white South Africans can to some extent be compared to that of the Western world where there are similarly low levels of trust and participation. Several factors may explain the relatively low levels of political participation amongst white workers; first, whites have in common with

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[418] "Do you agree or disagree in that politics is too complicated for workers to understand?"
[419] They were asked whether they agreed or disagreed within the following statement: "blacks and whites will never really trust each other".

Europeans a long experience of democratic political channels[420] which may have had the effect of cooling down their political "enthusiasm" for participation amongst individuals. Second, religion and "ethnic culture" amongst English-speaking whites and the Afrikaners have been argued elsewhere to entrench individualism and hierarchies as well as respect for authorities. Finally, whites' degree of alienation may to some extent also be an expression of a general feeling after the 1994 political negotiations of having been abandoned or "sold out" by the NP.[421] Yet, we should not automatically argue that lack of participation implies alienation. Lack of participation can also imply "lack of time" or may simply indicate as well that people do not feel the need to participate in order to defend their interests.[422]

Black South Africans, on the other hand, feel politically competent and active and express participatory values supportive of the new democracy. It is not the culture of suppressive, alienating apartheid that comes across in their attitudes. It is a culture of pride and resources, of activity and expectations. The values, educational system and general socialisation of apartheid aimed to teach blacks their "right" place at the bottom of the social, political and economic ladder. That is definitely not where they *are*. The question for us, however, remains to establish *where* blacks have learnt the skills and attitudes of participation and democratic traditions. Is it a heritage of ubuntu and African politics, of industrialised society or of opposition and resistance culture in the anti-apartheid struggle?

[420] In spite of the apartheid system's excluding the majority of the population, several of the institutions generally perceived as part of democratic governance were in place for white South Africans.
[421] The National Party had started the political talks with the aim of defending minority rights in the constitution, federalism, etc. but with no success.
[422] Pateman (1983) has also argued this point in a more recent article published after her 1970 book *Participation and Democratic Theory*.

11   The Workplace

People's wealth, welfare and interests are to some extent determined at work. And work itself is increasingly also viewed as an arena for political learning. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to explore the importance of worker participation and working conditions for political learning independently and as mediating factors for the pre-industrial cleavages emerging in the previous chapter. But in order to assess the workplace as a learning area for politics we first need to look closer at the characteristics of work itself and of the workplace. Furthermore, there are various perspectives concerning the direction in which the reality of work will lead workers. Is there such a thing as working-class consciousness in South Africa? If there is, what is the content of it, and which factors are most instrumental in forming working-class consciousness?

11.1   Work and politics

Over the years much focus has been given to working life and the workplace as an arena for learning. Most of the studies have, however, been of a theoretical nature and have looked at class-consciousness, or more recently at productivity-related topics.[423] While *parental* work background was pinpointed relatively early as important for child-rearing and thus for conditioning responses to political authority amongst children, direct adult political learning at work has been less *empirically* studied. Lafferty (1989:102) argues that "as a setting for political learning, the industrial workplace is the least studied of the political socialisation phenomena". A few, however, compare work to the family as one of the

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[423] They focus on the conditions for improved efficiency and on the extent to which structuring of decision-making, and of work itself, is important for increasing an individual's loyalty to the company and hence for enhancing his or her performance.

most important institutions for political learning (Sigel & Hoskin 1977, Sigel 1989, Moore 1969, Lafferty 1989). But while they point out the need for further empirical research in this area, they also recognise the vast theoretical work done on, for example, the development of working-class consciousness.

Traditionally work was emphasised as the key to politics by the left wing. Marx and Engel's theory of the evolution of working-class consciousness is specifically related to characteristics of the production process and the workers' relationship to the means of production and its surplus value. The key element of the Marxist argument is the theory of alienation – i.e. the belief that the separation of workers from their product creates internal tensions which lead the working class to a common recognition of their plight and ultimately of the need for political action (Hyman 1996, Lafferty 1989:103). Marxist theory of class asserts that agents who belong to one class also tend to have other common attributes and behave in certain common ways (Elster 1985). Elster (ibid:347) defines class-consciousness as the ability to overcome the free-rider problem in realising class interests.

The Marxist argument led many (both Marxists and others) to focus on the traditional production process in which workers are engaged in manual and semi-skilled production in huge manufacturing plants and are alienated from their products. Others, like Lockwood (1982), argue that the attitudes and views that workers hold about the class system, and their part in it, are heavily influenced by their experiences in their *local* environment. Since work settings and the communities in which the workers live vary, we will find divergences in characteristic forms of "social imagery" (Giddens & Held 1982). Lockwood (1982) argues that there are three different types of work and community relationships that can be distinguished in developed capitalist societies and that these are associated with three different types of class outlook on the part of the workers. The first group is the traditional, proletarian worker. The second group is the worker with traditional attitudes, which he refers to as "deferential". And third, there is the relatively new group of "privatised" workers. The proletarian workers will be closest to the development of class-consciousness as envisaged by Marx (Giddens & Held 1982). The "deferential" workers, on the other hand, will see social order as a prestige hierarchy and the relationship between the classes as non-antagonistic. The "privatised" worker is oriented primarily towards securing his or her own economic prosperity, measured in terms of income and material possessions.

Others still look at working-class consciousness from the point of view of the organisation of work or the degree of worker participation in decision-making at work. Cole (1919,1920) looks, for example, at participation in industry as political participation in its own right and claims that industry holds the key that will unlock the door to a truly democratic polity. Pateman (1970) likewise focuses on the importance of the workplace as an arena for political learning. She argues that the more participatory the environment at work, the more community-oriented and active the individual will become outside work. In Lysgaard's (1961) opinion, it is similarity of tasks, and of problem situations (inside and outside work), that leads to a greater degree of group interaction, identification and problem interpretation (Lafferty 1989:108). By implication, a "worker collectivity" (Lysgaard ibid) is formed which will affect workers' attitudes and actions both inside and outside work. Sigel (1989:90) points out that work does have both a direct and an indirect effect on political learning. Certain occupations demand or directly engender specific socio-political values, and the holding of such values is essential if the worker is to function efficiently in his or her occupation.[424] More indirectly, work affects political attitudes and behaviour by creating self-esteem, satisfaction, etc. Certain kinds of organisation of work, such as routine work or poorly rewarded and arduous work may lead to general alienation and low self-esteem, which will also affect people's approach to life outside work

While class analysis and political learning on the basis of the above-mentioned perspectives have been focused on in the Western world, some scholars, like Fanon,[425] would argue that the search for an African working class would be in vain. Fanon pointed out that classes in African societies act on the basis of living standards (and the size of the group and its relationship to the colonial society). While arguing that the means of production forms the point of departure for the definition of social classes,

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[424] Several of the human-service industries illustrate this point (Sigel 1989, Sigel and Hoskin 1977:275 et al). Social work virtually demands a specific socio-political outlook, they argue. Sigel and Hoskin (1977:275) illustrate this by arguing that: "social workers are not apt to view poverty as an indicator of having fallen from divine grace, being lazy or lacking intelligence.... the occupation as a whole is unthinkable without the philosophical assumption of society's responsibility for its poor".

[425] See also Hirson 1990 Chapter 1 for his discussion of the the African working class.

Fanon would add that the "*lumpenproletariat*" in Africa would be a mixture of wage labourers and subsistence farmers (Peltola 1995:85). Yet, in South Africa, the concept of the "super-exploitation" of the African workers arose from the "colonial" nature of apartheid society (Henson 1978). African workers were, according to this view, exploited both as a class and as a race. National consciousness would supersede class-consciousness but serve the same purpose. In Braverman's words (1974:57): "national antagonism is a form of class antagonism in South Africa". Economic and national oppression are so interwoven that the worker has to play a dual role: fight for his economic rights and simultaneously for his national rights (Sechaba 1969). In this context, African workers develop, through their struggle, not "pure" class-consciousness, but a revolutionary nationalism. Following from this, a proletarian nationalism or a mixed class- and national/race-consciousness would develop. Others will simply, on this basis, deny the existence of any working-class consciousness in an African setting. Under colonialism and repression, all that could develop according to such a view is race-consciousness. When independence or democracy is introduced, "class-consciousness" will wither away.

So, on the basis of class theory, theory of political learning and research on the impact of voluntary associations (Mann 1973, Sklar 1982), what impact does the workplace have as a learning area for workers in South Africa? Which work factors are most important in generating various, and potentially conflicting, interests and attitudes? And to what extent do they moderate or reinforce the cleavages of race, gender and education reported upon above? Let us look closer at some of the work factors emphasised by both class theorists and others before we turn to the political impact of workplace participation, of class, and of socio-economic interests and status.

11.2   The political organisation of work

We may as a point of departure differentiate between a number of different work-related political cleavages. Two are "horizontal" and refer to the functional specialisation of various types of economic activities. Following from this, workers will differ in their values and priorities first, according to whether they work in the profit (private) or non-profit (public) sector; second, according to whether they work in production or perform

administrative tasks; and third according to which occupational stratum they find themselves in. Most of our black workers are semi-skilled, work in the private sector and in manufacturing.[426]

The focus upon the "public-private division" occurred in the aftermath of the rise of the "new class" in advanced industrial societies (Bruce-Briggs 1979). Public sector workers, especially those employed in public services, were found in some countries to hold specific values congruent with a strong welfare state and social-democratic state models. Owing to different types of products and therefore different relationships to markets, suppliers and consumers, the various *sectors of economic activity* usually have different forms of employment patterns, remuneration, organisation of work and systems of managerial control. Furthermore, wages and working conditions differ between the various sectors of employment. Finally, there is a tendency for workers to identify with the overall norms and clients of the company or organisation they work for. On this basis, diverse priorities, interests and cleavages emerge between workers in different sectors of the economy: public versus private sector; manufacturing versus services etc. Sector of employment and type of production is thus often found to have an impact upon attitudes both to work and to life *outside* work.

Occupation is generally viewed as the most important agent of political socialisation. Sigel and Hoskin (1977:271) argue that one's occupation has important political implications:

> "work shapes his (the worker's) outlook (beliefs and ideologies), habits and lifestyle, status in society and - sadly enough - often his appreciation of himself"

Occupation is generally perceived to engender interests, status, and priorities and therefore diverse choices and preferences. Furthermore, different occupations involve different working environments and different structures of work organisation. In addition, some occupations and professions involve training and education, which affects people's view of the political world. Kanter (1976:42) argues that:

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[426] Appendix 5 describes our sample of workers according to these dimensions: public versus private sector, sector of economic activity and occupation.

"occupations are important socializers and teachers of values, especially those like the professions that come to constitute "communities" with shared normative standards for conduct, even outside work".

Lafferty (1989) argues, however, that if one inspects the literature on the relationship between occupation and political radicalism, a picture emerges of certain labour conditions which seem to be related to radical ideology and possibly to more radical forms of direct action.[427] Lipset et al. (1954:1143) identified the following reasons for leftist electoral choices amongst specific groups of workers: "types of deprivation", like insecurity of income, unsatisfying work, and low prestige; and "facilitating conditions" like good interclass communication, low expectations of mobility and lack of traditionalism.

Altogether these factors will condition workers in a radical rather than a moderate, more reformist direction. Others confirm the importance of occupation and job structure.[428] Job autonomy is, for example, seen as one dimension of job structure perceived to be important for self-esteem, work satisfaction, political efficacy and political views.[429] Being closely supervised is therefore regarded as producing alienated citizens, with low political competence and ideological constraints.[430]

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[427] The occupations that stand out in this regard are forestry workers, miners, dockworkers, large-scale construction workers, shipbuilders, and steel and metal workers. Lafferty (ibid:107) refers to Lipset et al. 1954, Allardt 1964 and 1976, Allardt and Pesonen 1967, Soares and Hamblin 1967; Petras and Zeitlin 1967 and Lafferty 1974.
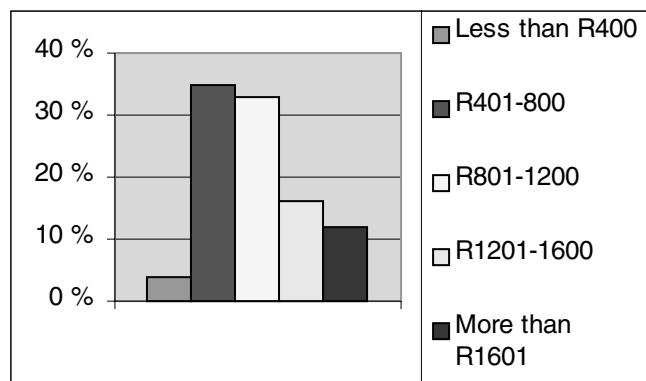
[428] Kohn and Schooler (1983) report that job structure has twice as much impact on people's broader orientations than orientations have on job structure. (quoted in Peterson 1994).

[429] Lipsietz (1964) argues that the nature of one's work helps shape one's political views, with the least autonomous jobs producing the most alienated worker. Burn and Konrad (1987) have supported the thesis that increased job autonomy also goes with greater political participation. Sheppard and Herrick (1972) likewise found that job autonomy increased people's political efficacy. Elden (1981) and Greenberg (1981) likewise support this.

[430] Being supervised goes with low voting rates in the US, UK and Italy, while being in a position of supervisory responsibility or authority is associated with more voting, communal behaviour and campaign-oriented behaviour (Sobel, 1984, 1986 & 1987, and various papers presented at the International Society of Political Psychology Conferences: referred to by Peterson 1994).

Wage levels are also generally perceived as an important factor influencing political attitudes and behaviour. While Marx focused on the relationship to the means of production as the point of departure for his theory of social class, Max Weber (1978) gave similar attention to wages and the social status accruing from occupation and wages as a basis for stratification. The argument of Fanon (1968, 1990), Peltola (1995) and others that there is a shortage of free labour in Africa also led them to focus upon living standards and wages as the key to an understanding of class-consciousness. Although South African black workers have become increasingly urbanised, there is still a large proportion with rural links and landholdings. On this basis, we should look not only at the relationship to the means of production as a basis for identity, and the development of interests and attitudes, but also income. African workers earn on average R 1,090 a month compared with R2,686 for whites. Figure 11.1 shows the distribution of income amongst black workers.[431]

Figure 11.1   Distribution of Income amongst Black Workers in Gauteng (n 861)

The organisation of work

The organisation of work is seen as one of the main influencing factors causing diverse motivation and attitudes amongst workers. Degree of control over one's own job and decision-making in the workplace are the main factors influencing job satisfaction and alienation at work and therefore loyalty and motivation to perform. Common "knowledge" says

[431] Please note that these are formal sector, urban wages. If the total country is analysed, the size of the income bracket of R400 and less will increase substantially.
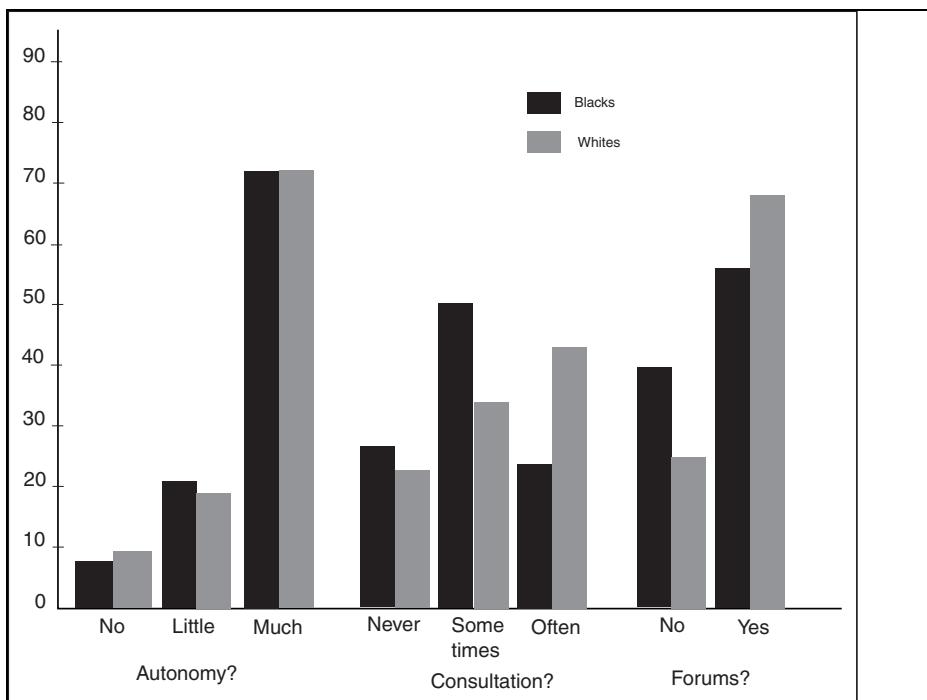
that mass production typically involves people performing fragmented, routine and repetitive tasks under restrictive conditions. Automated or process production, on the other hand, often brings people together in relatively small teams within which they can perform a variety of tasks. The latter group of workers tend to enjoy a greater degree of freedom in planning and organising their tasks and time schedules. At the same time, they usually have greater freedom of movement in the company, more responsibility and are more often consulted about how to carry out and organise their work.

Occupation and sector of employment are usually correlated with specific types of organisation of management and production. South African *managerial strategies* are in general often perceived as emphasising hard work, discipline, piecework and specialisation.[432] The more repetitive the work and the less autonomy workers have, the more alienated they are expected to become from work itself, from social life and from politics. Workers, on the other hand, who find themselves within flexible, more trusted circumstances at work, where they themselves have more influence over the pace and execution of tasks, will feel more committed to the company and become more productive and active. We need to look at the organisation of work against the background of both different sectors (profit/non-profit, manufacturing/ non-manufacturing) as well as on the basis of occupations. The issues of skills and degree of control in the carrying out of a job are usually closely linked. Alienation indicates the extent to which workers are separated from the final product, from the total production process and from other work mates or comrades as well as the degree to which they feel that they lack control over their own work situation.

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[432] See Joffe, A. et al. (1995). There is however, tendencies in the 90s of management having become more concerned with human relations, especially in companies where machinery and capital investments are at stake. Against the background of political developments, new legislation (most notably the new Labour Relations Act from 1996) as well as increasingly competitive home markets and exports markets from which sanctions and tariffs have been removed, there has been an increasingly wide-spread use of machinery to replace heavy manual labour and/or artisans; upward occupational mobility of African workers into machine- operative jobs, and programmes of worker participation and affirmative actions.

Figure 11.2 gives an idea of the degree of autonomy and control workers find in their work. Most workers in our Gauteng survey say that they have considerable autonomy in the execution of their tasks and are consulted frequently by management on how to organise their work. They also argue that they co-operate with others to a large extent in finishing their own tasks or jobs and that they are able (to a large extent) to decide themselves how fast to work and when to do their various tasks.[433]

Figure 11.2   Degree of Autonomy and Control in Own Work.
             (in percentages) (n 861 & 141)[434]

[433] 67 per cent say that they have to co-operate a lot very much with others in order to finish their own tasks and a similar numbers say they themselves can decide very often how fast (and when) to do their various tasks.
[434] The following questions were asked: (1) "To what extent can you decide how your job is best done?" (2) "Does management or your supervisor ever ask your advice or consult you about how your work is organised?" (3) "Are there any forums in your company where you can tell management your opinion about the work and your working conditions?"

Industrial jobs differ in the degree to which they offer opportunities for the use and development of workers' skills, knowledge and abilities. They also vary in the degree of autonomy that workers have in deciding work schedules, methods and pace of work. Unskilled workers have the least independence in the execution of work tasks. They have to co-operate with others to finish their jobs and have less freedom in the timing and strategizing of their work. Skilled and white-collar workers are far more often asked for advice by management on how to organise work than unskilled and semi-skilled workers are. Apart from workers in the armed forces and civil service, most workers feel that they themselves to a large extent can regulate the time taken and procedures used to execute their tasks. Public sector workers, on the other hand, obviously feel that they are far more regulated by norms and instructions. People working in the finance sector, health and education, in the civil service and in the wholesale sector say that they have most autonomy at work and are consulted most often by management concerning the organisation of work. But although alienation is assumed to be at its most extreme in large-scale mass production based on assembly-line principles, there are minimal differences between the various sectors of employment.

How can we explain the fact that a relatively large proportion of workers actually perceive that they have autonomy at work? Several studies argue that black workers in South Africa are stripped of any form of control, both over the ordering of tasks and over the speed at which they have to be executed. Adler (1993), on the other hand, argues that the grading system in South African industries reflects more the racial divisions of apartheid than real skills and knowledge. The South African worker may be responsible for a number of operations which in comparable industries in other countries would be performed by separate groups of workers. Adler (ibid) argues that there are substantial informal and plant-specific skills learned through informal learning channels. "Tacit skills" and "multiple or all-round skills" must be seen against the background of the specific characteristics of South African economic activity and apartheid job segregation.[435]

Autonomy at work should also be studied with some caution. Even if workers feel that they do have autonomy, their perceptions of freedom may be within strict routines for time and quality performance. Their

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[435] Adler (1993) studied the automobile industry. However, his arguments are easily applicable also to other parts of the economy.

autonomy may hence be interpreted as autonomy in the execution of tasks to meet such requirements. A better indication of workers' control is the extent to which they are consulted about the organisation of work. The higher income and occupation groups clearly have the greatest autonomy at work as well as the greatest control over their own work situation. They are also far more often consulted about how work is organised than unskilled and semi-skilled workers. When asked whether management or their supervisors ever ask their advice or consult them about how their work is organised, only one out of four workers state that this never happens.

Rather than viewing industry as dominated by deskilling and dehumanisation and driven by rapid mechanisation, we must recognise that jobs obviously require far more thought and control over execution than we often expect. It is racism and systems of grading based upon population group categories, more than skills and performance, that have frozen people in specific job categories, whereas the skills they have and the tasks they perform are far broader. Workers possess tacit skills which are indispensable to the multi-tasked work they perform but which are not formally recognised in their qualifications and in job-grading structures.[436] Against this background, workers may feel that they do have autonomy in their work.

Testing out the effect of workplace structures and organisation upon our political efficacy and participation shows us that the degree of workplace autonomy and consultation produces only small differences in the degree of political participation. There is a slightly higher degree of political participation amongst skilled workers than amongst the other groups.[437] Autonomy in the execution of work tasks has no effect upon the degree of political participation. Autonomy at work does, however, have an effect (albeit moderate) upon the degree of political competence. People who feel that they can exercise their own discretion in the timing and organisation of their work feel that they also have more control over their

[436] Others have supported this argument (Leger 1992; Kraak 1995, 1996).
[437] The means for the whole black working population is 3.24 activities;, while unskilled workers take part in 3 activities, skilled workers in 3.44 activities, supervisory workers in 3.15 and white collar workers/professionals in 3.21 activities.

political lives.[438] Furthermore, 82 per cent of white-collar workers and professionals, in comparison with 63 per cent of unskilled workers, believed that they were well informed about the political negotiations in 1994. While only 38 per cent of those who had no autonomy in decisions concerning the organisation of work said that they felt well informed about the political negotiations, 72 per cent of those with a large amount of job autonomy expressed this view. While 47 per cent of those who had no autonomy in deciding how their job should be done agreed that politics was too complicated for them to understand, 35 per cent of those who had autonomy at work held this view.

While there is only weak, moderate evidence of the spill-over from work organisation into political efficacy and participation, no correlation at all is found between workplace autonomy and democratic trust. While the various dimensions of workplace autonomy are significantly correlated[439] and these again to some extent are correlated with occupation, to which we will return later,[440] democratic attitudes are not learned through the production process. Organisation of work does not seem to be the main breeding ground for political *activism* either.

Work satisfaction

Work satisfaction is a mediating factor which is expected to make the organisation of work, type of production etc. have a strong impact upon the political attitudes and activities of workers. Job satisfaction can be perceived as the degree to which expectations are fulfilled.

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[438] 35 per cent of those who believe they have no control over how fast they do their work, also believe that political actions and their own actions in particular have no effect upon changing their own living conditions. Only 21 per cent of those who said they had a lot of freedom in decision-making at work held similar views concerning their political efficacy. A similar pattern was expressed when they were asked about autonomy in decisions concerning how the job was best done.
[439] The extent to which people can decide how to organise their work, and give it their own time-schedule is correlated ($r = .57$). These are in turn correlated with the extent of workers being asked for advice by management or supervisors ($r = .22$ with freedom in execution of tasks and $r = .27$ with freedom in organising work).
[440] Occupation will be correlated with whether people have forums ($r = .14$) and with whether people are consulted by management/supervisors. ($r = .20$).

Most workers say that good pay is the most important factor in a job. Black workers rate good pay as far more important than job security, good work mates, work satisfaction or responsibility. And far more black than white workers say that good pay is the most important factor in a job. Not surprisingly, pay is perceived as most important amongst those who are poorly paid.[441] But although the majority of white workers are most concerned with wages and job security, they are also more oriented towards the content of the job than black workers. Twenty-five per cent of white workers quote work satisfaction and 14 per cent say health and safety are the most important work factors. Figure 11.3 shows workers' preferences in the labour market.

A closer look at the data reveals that the workers quoting work satisfaction, responsibility, training and development or fair supervision as the most important work factors have a higher average net income than the workers who think that good pay and light work are most important.[442] Work satisfaction, empowerment and development are in one sense "luxuries" that must be struggled for and achieved after the basic necessities like wages have been acquired.

Figure 11.4 shows the extent to which workers feel that specific job requirements are fulfilled. Most of the black workers (about 70 per cent) state that their need for good pay is *not* fulfilled in their job today. A big majority of whites (close to 70 per cent) feel in comparison that their job fulfils their need for good pay.[443] Amongst whites, highly educated workers in the highest occupation groups are most satisfied with their wages. Amongst black workers, those working in services and the commercial sector, construction, wholesale and manufacturing as well as

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[441] This is, however, not so in many countries where living standard are generally high and inequalities relatively small. In Scandinavia even the most poorly paid workers have been found to give priority to worker solidarity etc. while the highest paid workers are the ones who perceive a good pay as the most important.

[442] These workers have an average net monthly income of R1,600. Workers who perceive full- time work, health and safety, light work and good pay as the most important factors in a job are, on the other hand, the lowest paid workers, paid R1,000 net or less a month. This group wants what they do not have – namely; a secure job paid at, or above, the minimum living level.

[443] The groups of workers most likely to say that their jobs fulfill the requirements of good pay are, not surprisingly, the workers who are best paid themselves. There is also a far higher average income amongst those workers who say that work satisfaction is achieved in their jobs.

public sector workers in the civil service, health and education are least happy with their wages. Only 30 per cent or fewer of these workers are satisfied with their wages.

Figure 11.3   What Is Most Important in a Job? (in percentages) (n 861 & 141)
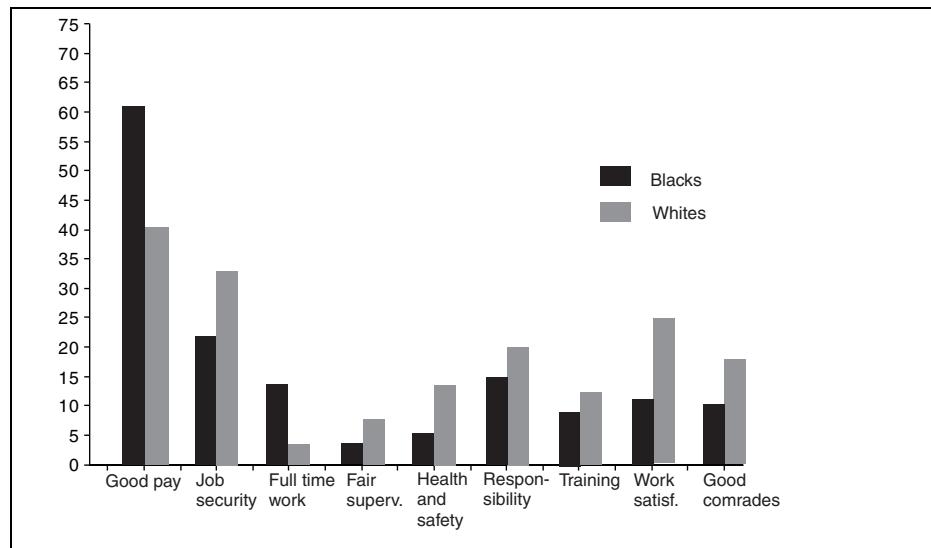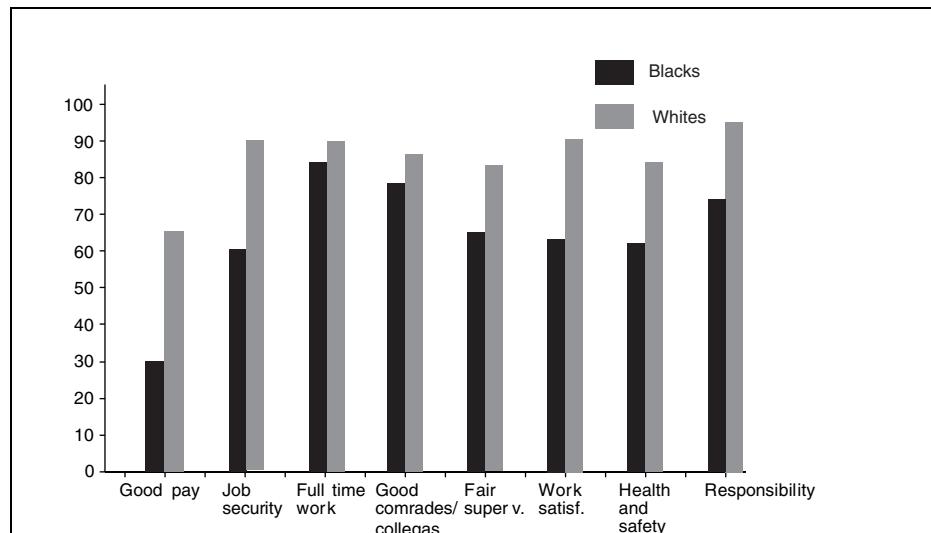
Figure 11.4   Fulfilled Job Requirements? (in percentages) (n 861 & 141)

11.3 Decision-making and consultation

Economic and industrial democracy have received increased attention in South Africa from both employers and unions in the context of debates about new production policies and/or high expectations that the political democratisation process should be followed by increased participation by workers in production. Liaison committees had already been introduced in the 70s through legal mechanisms, but these were widely regarded as an attempt to co-opt black workers and tame the growing militancy amongst workers.[444] The new "wave" of consultative mechanisms introduced in the late 80s was the initiative of employers. New strategies of communication were implemented: Quality Control Circles (QCCs) and "green areas" for social gatherings and the exchange of information as well as for improved contact and consultation with workers were introduced.[445] QCCs were small, semi-autonomous problem-solving groups composed of employees. They had no decision-making powers, but were to be consulted by management and were aimed, like the other consultation and communications schemes, at encouraging workers to identify with company objectives and increase productivity.

South Africa's political unionism tended to go hand in hand with adversarial industrial relations on the shop floor (Maller 1994). Unions refused to a large extent to participate in the management process of communication and consultation committees.[446] Management, for its part, attempted as far as possible to protect its management prerogative with as little interference as possible from the workers or else implemented "participatory programmes" in an attempt to bypass, or even undermine the unions. Participatory processes were most often introduced by em-

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[444] Liaison committees were to be composed by equal numbers of worker and management representatives.

[445] QCCs and "green areas" were most typically introduced in larger companies with foreign investments where the pressures for industrial relations reforms from the parent companies were strongest. Some of the examples of this were the Toyota and Mercedes Benz in East London. Some national companies like Iscor, Samcor etc. al followed the trend (see Maree 1987 and 1989; Maller 1986 and 1992; and *SALB,* Vol. 15, No. 4 covering the Mercedes Benz crisis in 1990).

[446] This differed greatly, however, from one union to another. The FOSATU unions, for example, were generally far more inclined to take advantage of such initiatives and turn them to their advantage, while other unions had a more negative attitude to any structured relationship with management.
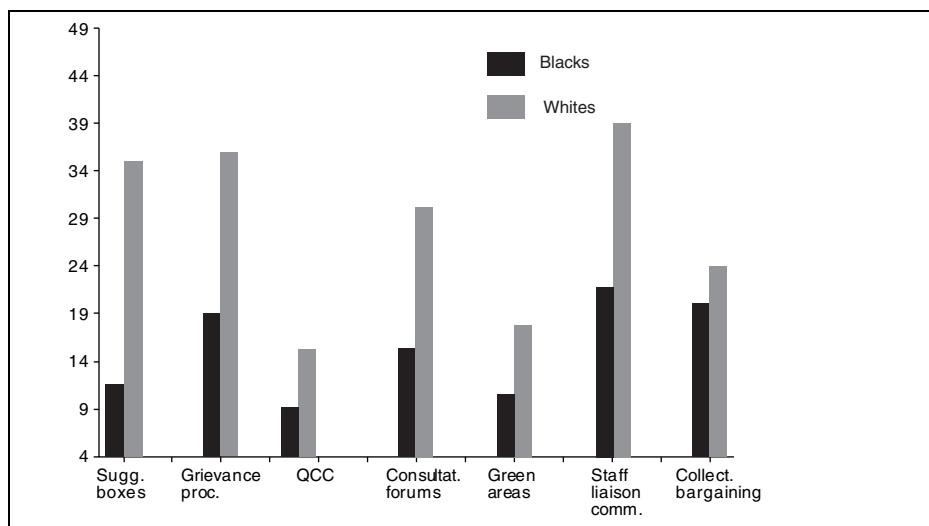
ployers in response to a productivity crisis and in the hope that it would dissuade workers from taking part in unions and confrontational industrial action (Maller 1992, 1994).

Worker participation in South Africa is still in its early days, and most of the schemes introduced have less to do with decision-making than with re-organisation of work and improved communication between management and workers. Workers are, however, increasingly consulted by management on matters such as the organisation of work and workers, production lines, work periods, etc., but it is management's prerogative to decide whether to listen to the opinions of the workers.

The early 90s saw economic and political changes reflected in changes in the labour market. A survey of the metal, engineering and automobile sectors indicates, for example, that communications and information-sharing schemes have become widespread within the manufacturing sector (Maller & Dwolatsky 1993). There are also indications that although the existence of liaison, work or staff committees decreased through the 80s, there has been a steady growth in such structures during the early 90s.

Figure 11.5   Communication at Work.
(Percentages of black and white workers saying they have various forums of communication at work (n 861 & 141)

The majority of workers say that they have forums or mechanisms at work through which they can voice their opinion about work and their own working conditions. Such channels for communication are open to more than half of black workers and to almost 70 per cent of white workers. However, the type and form of such communications channels varies substantially. Figure 11.5 gives an idea of the types of forums offered, both consultative and participatory.[447]

These participation schemes are aimed at individual participation and to a large extent at the exclusion of the trade-union movement.[448] In spite of long and strong resistance from unions to the introduction of liaison committees by management, they still exist. Furthermore, black workers tend to take advantage of communications committees of this kind. Most workers participate often in structures associated with quality control circles, consultation forums etc. Although these schemes are more often than not aimed at keeping decision-making prerogatives in the hands of management, some communication is obviously seen as better than none. White workers, on the other hand, are in higher occupational groups and tend anyway to have more influence through the work they are doing and closer contact with management even without formal structures. They participate less in the formal structures of communication than black workers do.[449]

Carole Pateman (1970) was amongst the first to explicitly attack existing theories of democracy for overlooking the workplace as a learning area for politics and argued the "spill-over" effect of work into the political arena. Dahl (1970) also stated that if workers could meaningfully participate in decision-making at work, they would become both politi-

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[447] More white than black workers have such arrangements. Furthermore, more public sector workers than workers in the private sector and more skilled workers than unskilled workers are covered by such arrangements

[448] Employers' preferences for worker participation extended to employees rather than to unions were confirmed in their policy statements inter alia towards the Labour Relations Act of 1995.

[449] While, for example, only 15 per cent of black workers have never taken part in QCCs (of those who have such forums fora in the first place), 31 per cent of white workers who have access to such for a have never participated. Likewise, 41 per cent of whites, compared with 31 per cent of blacks, have never taken advantage of grievance procedures and 44 per cent of whites versus 27 per cent of black workers have never taken part in liaison committees.

cised[450] and collectively oriented. Pateman (1970:43) reports that participation "has an integrative effect and ... it aids the acceptance of collective decisions".

Others have documented this through empirical material. Greenberg (1981a, 1986) shows that workplace participation has a political effect. Sobel (1986) concludes that for those with low civic competence, an active stance at work to some extent compensates for a feeling of low personal efficacy. Lafferty (1989) likewise reports that greater democratisation at work in Norway leads to greater political involvement, consistent with the spill-over effect anticipated by Pateman (ibid). Peterson (1994) reports the same on the basis of a small probability sample in New York. He (1994:518) concludes that workplace efficacy is associated with political efficacy, trust in government, less conservatism and more political participation.

Others are less optimistic about the political "spill-over" effect from workplace participation. Elster (1983a) argues, for example, that workplace participation is first and foremost an instrumental activity in that it promotes workers' economic interests. Others propose cultural explanations for the negative responses of black workers to traditional forms of motivation like incentives and advocate instead the use of paternalistic discipline, which, they claim, closely resembles traditional tribal forms of authority (Maller 1986:5; Webster 1976).[451]

Now let us look closer at what political effect these workplace structures have when it comes to altering the cleavages based on race, gender, and education which we established in the previous chapter. What we find if we look closer at the schemes of workplace "participation" existing in South Africa is that participation in such schemes in fact hardly increases political participation. Interestingly, participation at work rather *reverses* political participation. People participating most in QCCs, consultative forums, etc. seem to be those who participate least in political action – i.e. in strikes, stay-aways, political marches and meetings. While 66 per cent of those who have never taken part in consultative forums at

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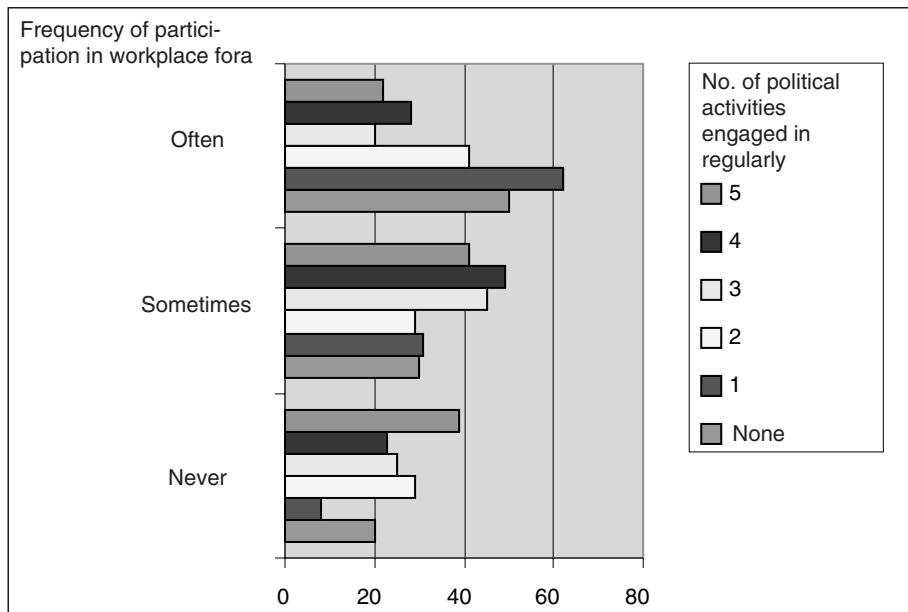
[450] In other words political interests, issue awareness, voting, campaign activities, etc. would increase

[451] They quote an African who said: "We put the White superior in place of our father" (ref. in Maller and Webster, ibid).

work are active in four or five political activities, "only" 46 per cent of those who often take part in consultative forums at work are also active politically (see Figure 11.6).

The most politically conscious are, in other words, hardly active in consultation and communication schemes at work at all. This may be because workplace participation schemes were generally perceived by workers through the 80s as attempts at co-option by management and the state in order to curb the political struggle of workers. It does not change the fact, however, that workplace participation, which is generally perceived by participatory democrats as a school for the self-education of the working class in democratic values and experiences, fails to achieve these goals in South Africa. The experience of workplace participation does not serve as a breeding ground for class-consciousness. The institutionalisation of workplace consultative fora may rather have had the effect of building working-class unity by producing a collective reaction *against* it.

Figure 11.6   The Negative Spill-over of Workplace Participation
             amongst Black Workers in Gauteng (n 861)

11.4 Industrial cleavages

Looking at the political effect of work satisfaction and organisation of work, we find no difference in attitudes and participation between the different categories of workers. This would therefore seem to indicate once again that work, and the organisation of work, is primarily an instrumental factor for improved living conditions rather than a forum for political learning.

Yet, when we analyse political participation and democratic trust in terms of wages, sector of employment and occupation, industrial cleavages suddenly acquire a completely new meaning. These are the hard-core factors which determine interests, living standards and status in society, but they also seem to have a considerable impact upon levels of political participation.

Race is still the major political cleavage, and the difference between white and black workers' level of participation is virtually unaffected by controls for age, gender, occupation, sector of employment and wages.[452] Occupation has a strong bivariate effect upon political participation, but becomes insignificant when we control for wages. Part of the explanation for this is to be found in the relatively high correlation between occupation, sector of employment (r.41) and wages. All in all, it is primarily the semi-skilled and skilled black workers in manufacturing earning between R1,100 and R1,200 a month who are the militant political activists. Manufacturing workers participate in an average of 3.5 political activities, while workers in health, for example, participate on average in 2.9 activities and those in private services in 2.7 activities. It should be mentioned, however, that workers in the civil service generally have a participation pattern similar to those in the manufacturing, transport, electricity and water sectors. Sixty-one per cent of semi-skilled workers participate regularly in political marches, as compared, for example, with 48 per cent of white-collar workers.

The effect of income deserves special attention. The socio-economic model argues that socio-economic standing translates into political orientation, which in turn affects political behaviour. Marxists usually perceive revolutions and collective action as a function of declining

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[452] Running a MCA analysis indicates that the effects of race and gender upon the degree of political activity in South Africa are virtually unaffected by controls for wage, occupation and sector of employment.

economic opportunity, poverty and deprivation. Toqueville's argument was, on the other hand, that revolutions occur more easily when people experience improved living conditions (Østerud 1978). Following from this, Olson (1965) argues that revolutionary situations may follow from rapid economic growth. Growth itself creates mobility, uncertainty and instability. Davies (1962) combined these perspectives and argued that revolutionary action would occur when people experienced an improvement in living standards followed by a deterioration. The effect of living conditions upon collective action can, however, not be seen in isolation from the general living conditions of other groups in society. The theory of "relative deprivation" argues that perceptions of one's own living conditions and expectations will be based upon comparisons with others. Changes in racial disparities or income *gaps* would hence affect collective action. Without time series studies of the relationship between incomes and collective action, it is hard to build evidence for any of these arguments. Relative improvements in living standards for Africans recruited to the mining and manufacturing sectors through the 70s and relatively high wage increases for semi-skilled and skilled African workers through the 80s (Moll 1993) at a time when collective action also increased may, however, indicate support for the linkage made between living standards and political action. Olzak and Olivier (1994) reported that any changes in the income gap between blacks and whites in the rigid apartheid system of stratification had profound effects on collective action and racial unrest. In their opinion, declining racial disparity raised the likelihood that "racial unrest" would erupt.

Income is in fact the factor that has the strongest direct effect upon the degree of political participation. Wages, in turn, are related to education (corr. r. = .44). However, while education determines wage levels, it has a limited (direct) effect upon political participation, competence and the degree to which people feel informed about politics. The effect of wages is curvilinear showing a higher degree of political participation amongst the middle-income groups. Political participation does increase with income in our sample, with the exception of the highest income group, those earning more than R2,000. In fact, the top income bracket has a participation pattern which is more similar to that of the lowest-paid workers, except for when it comes to participation in political meetings, where the highest-paid workers are more active. The black political activist may on this basis be assumed to be found more easily amongst male, semi-skilled or skilled workers in the manufacturing sector, rather than amongst professional workers. On this basis, it may appear that it is not racial

disparities or changes in the income *gap* between whites and blacks that stimulate political action as such; rather there would seem to be an active core of political activists in the "middle" of the income and occupational hierarchy. Furthermore, while Olzak and Olivier (1994) characterise collective action as "racial unrest" on the basis that most of the people involved were blacks, collective action was for most people aimed at overthrowing the authoritarian state rather than targeting whites as a racial group. Opposition to apartheid was aimed at democracy, not black rule in itself.[453]

Looking at democratic trust, we still find race playing a major role. In fact, it is the only significant factor for whether people think that politicians will stop caring about the people after the election, that political parties have lost touch with the people and that the politicians can be trusted. Black workers generally display far more trust in politicians and political parties. Regarding respect for majority decisions, workers are far more mixed and ambivalent in their answers. In spite of significant (but weak) differences between workers from different wage levels and sectors of employment, it is hard to see any institutional logic in their answers for the time being. Workers in construction, electricity and water as well as those in private services, hotels etc. come out as agreeing that majority decisions should always be respected, even if they do not agree with the decisions. Workers in health and in the wholesale and retail sectors are for some reason far more sceptical. We will come back to this in the discussion of union background in the next chapter.

11.5   Segregated labour markets- segregated politics?

The workplace can be seen as a microcosm of South African society as a whole, which is marked by racism and apartheid. Whites dominate the best-paid and protected parts of the labour market, whereas Africans dominate the bulk of the lowest part of the job market. The divided labour market is illustrated by the occupational distribution of various racial

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[453] The history of the ANC and COSATU shows clearly that these organisations, which spear-headed the struggle against apartheid, were non-racial and had political *democracy* as their main goal.

groups and hence income distribution, work tasks and status.[454] Population groups are segregated in terms of work tasks, jobs and hierarchies. Managerial strategies often reflect discipline, piecework and specialisation. Industrial relations are generally characterised as bureaucratic and hierarchical, dominated by mass production, all of which may reinforce the cleavages between different occupational groups.[455] Furthermore, the workplace was an area marked both by direct and indirect discrimination and racism. An attitudinal survey in the 60s demonstrated, for example, that 72 per cent of white managers believed that "Africans had a different skull formation and brain structure from whites".[456] South African managerial strategies, migration patterns and the political struggle have been argued to have given rise to a specific worker culture (or cultures) and "worker collectivity" (Sitas 1992, Maller 1992).

But the labour market contains several other divisions of skills, occupations, sectors and genders. There is no longer, if indeed there ever was, *one* black working class with common interests. Affirmative action has also opened up new divisions in the labour market and deepened the divisions between African workers who have gone into artisan, supervisory or white-collar jobs and the less-skilled workers with low wages and no job security.[457] What then is the relationship between work-related factors and satisfaction on the one hand and class-consciousness and work-related political activity on the other hand?

Class theory asserts that people who belong to the same class also tend to have other common attributes and to behave in certain common ways. Class-consciousness implies identification of oneself as part of a

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[454] There is a primary labour market for white, predominantly white- collar, professional or artisan workers which offers high wages, good working conditions, stable employment, job security, the possibility of mobility and promotion within the company and trade- union protection. The secondary and tertiary labour markets for "coloured" and Asian workers by contrast are marked by lower wages and unstable employment. The fourth labour market for African workers has been marked by the lowest wages and the greatest unpredictability (see Crankshaw 1993).

[455] Gelb (1991) characterises South Africa as "racial Fordism" – , i.e. a racially constructed variant of Fordism: it was an attempt to industrialise by using Fordist technology and its model of consumption, but without either its labour processes or mass consumption norms.
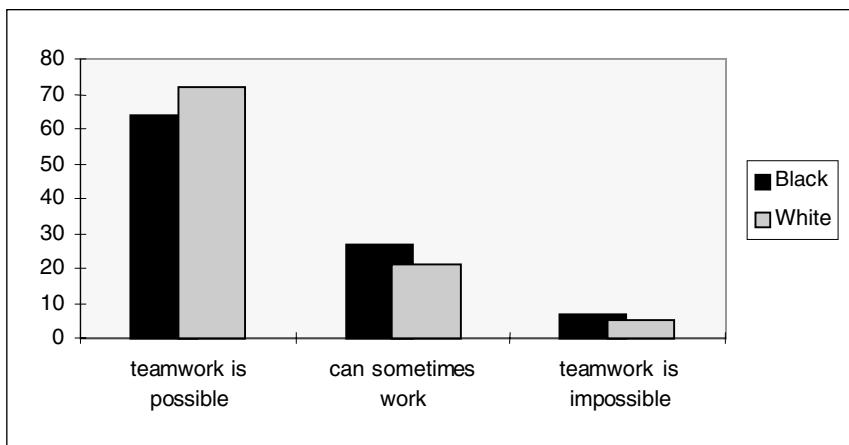
[456] Survey conducted by Heribert Adams in 1966, quoted in Webster (1980:54).

[457] See Crankshaw (1993 and 1996) for changes in the labour market.

group, a perception of this broader collectivity as in opposition to other groups and a willingness to act and do something to change the situation (Mann 1973).[458] But as we have seen from previous chapters (Chapter 10) workers identify themselves first and foremost as "just a person" and less as workers. They also see themselves in terms of nationality rather than as members of an ethnic group.

We asked workers several questions to probe the extent of their opposition to management and class-consciousness. Figure 11.7 shows how workers responded to such questions.[459] In spite of black workers being more sceptical than white, most workers believe it is possible to engage in teamwork with management. However, there is a difference between seeing a need to co-operate with management and trusting it. While both white and black workers agree to a large extent on the need to make a common effort for the company, they differ strongly when it comes to *trusting* management.
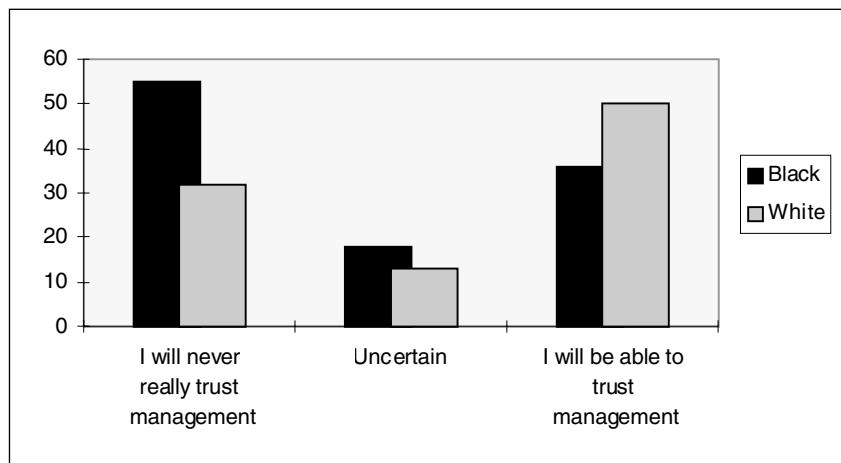
Figure 11.7   Opposition to Management (in percentages) (n 861 & 141).

[459] The question on teamwork with management was formulated like this: "Some say running companies after the elections is like playing soccer/football where good teamwork (between management and workers) is success and to everyone's advantage, Others say that teamwork is impossible because employers and workers are really on opposite sides" Who would you agree with most? (Goldthorpe 1968).

Black workers do not *trust* management. Trust goes "deeper" than a potentially instrumental need to co-operate for a common benefit. Their lack of trust may indicate that they will give more emphasis to the need to control the *conditions* for their co-operation and they may more easily be inclined to pull out of co-operative structures. They also believe that it is only if workers stand together that they can protect their own individual interests and living conditions.

Figure 11.8   Workers' Trust towards Management (in percentages) (n. 861 & 141)

Working-class consciousness in the "traditional sense" is most developed amongst workers in typical private sector industries than amongst public sector workers and stronger amongst unskilled and semi-skilled workers than amongst the more skilled workforce. Workers in the manufacturing sector tend to identify themselves more often as workers than public sector workers, who more often look upon themselves as "just a person". Unskilled and semi-skilled workers believe less in teamwork and co-operation with management and they give more support to the idea of workers running the factories than more skilled workers do.[460] White-collar workers express the strongest trust in management. Support for

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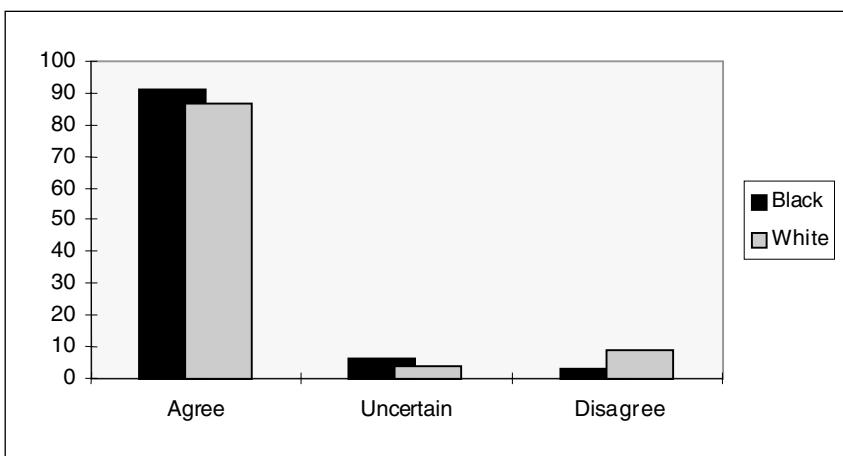
[460] 35 per cent of unskilled workers say teamwork with management is impossible whereas only 10 per cent of skilled workers express the same attitude. Almost half the unskilled workers disagree with the statement that workers should *not* run the factories, whereas only one third of the skilled workers say this.

redistribution, in the sense of workers themselves agreeing to take a lower wage increase or pay more in taxes in order to avoid retrenchments of workers in their own company or in order to benefit those less well off in the community, is stronger amongst skilled than amongst unskilled and semi-skilled workers. This is to some extent explained by wage levels. Unskilled or semi-skilled workers are paid less and therefore have less to contribute.

There is generally strong support for worker solidarity amongst both black and white workers. Figures 11.9 and 11.10 portray how black and white workers perceive worker solidarity. However, while *collective* solidarity is seen as the main vehicle for promoting *individual* interests, workers are also realistic that building labour strength may not necessarily be the best means to rebuild the *country*. Other means will also have to be taken into account. There are no differences in attitudes to these questions between different occupational, employment or wage groups.[461]

Figure 11.9   Worker Solidarity
"It is only if we workers stand together that we can protect our own individual interests and living conditions!" (in percentages) (n 861 & 141)
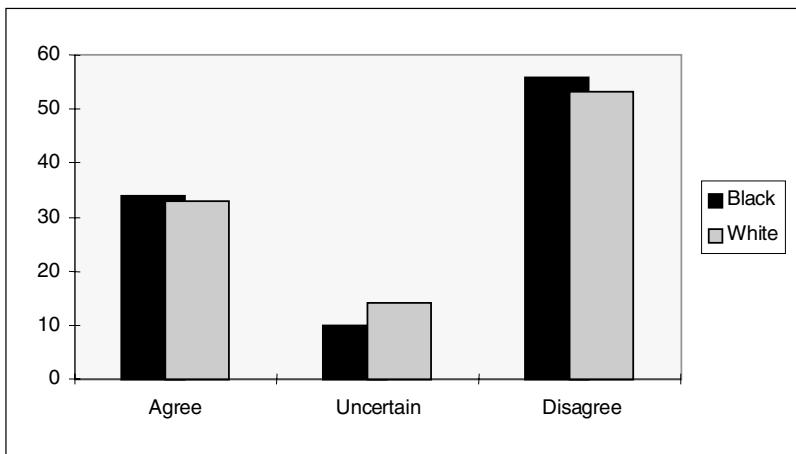
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[461] It should, however, be noted that on questions of, for example, worker solidarity as a tool to promote individual interests, there is also little variation in the total sample.

Figure 11.10 Worker Solidarity
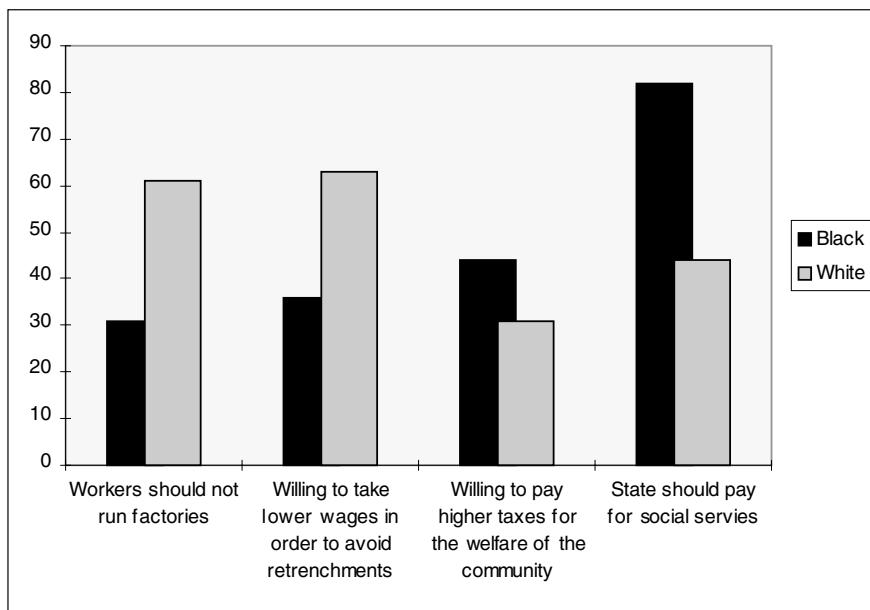
"Building unity amongst workers and a strong labour movement is the best method to rebuild our country!"[462] (in percentages) (n 861 & 141)

The left-right axis of questions concerned with redistribution and worker control of factories has often been used to measure working-class consciousness. Race is the factor which comes out as the strongest significant factor for attitudes concerning whether workers should run the factories, whether they themselves would be willing to contribute to redistribution through higher taxes or lower wage increases and finally whether they think the state, community or individual should pay for social services (Figure 11.11). Interestingly, white workers show more solidarity when it comes to exercising wage restraint for the benefit of workers in their own companies, while black workers would be prepared to exercise wage restraint or pay higher taxes for the welfare and benefit of the *community*. White workers, furthermore, believe far more often that the onus of paying for social services should be with the individual through taxes (19 per cent) or with the employer through profits (19 per cent).

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[462] The question was originally formulated as follows: "Building unity amongst workers and a strong labour movement is not necessarily the best method to rebuild our country". The question was formulated like this as part of a general strategy in the questionnaire of turning questions around in order to prevent people from giving a long series of positive answers. On some of the questions, this may have resulted in lower response rates to questions on solidarity than if the question had been formulated the other way". The results have been "turned around" in the graph.

The higher wage groups also express slightly more liberal attitudes when it comes to the question of who should pay for social services. They argue more often that the community or the individual should pay for social services rather than the state (through taxes) or employers (through profits). Finally, we looked at the extent to which workers believe in a fair economy after the elections or whether they think that (with the way the economy is organised) a small elite will retain all the power and resources while "the majority working class will be exploited". While 68 per cent of black workers believed that the economy would give everyone a fair chance after the elections, only 42 per cent of white workers thought so. At the same time, 48 per cent of black workers and 57 per cent of whites believed that "the majority working class will remain exploited".

11.6 In conclusion

With regard to the degree of political competence and participation and democratic consciousness, industrial cleavages seem to have a rather weak effect compared with pre-industrial cleavages, especially race, which is the main factor determining political attitudes and participation as well as attitudes to work and employers. Some important points should be made, however. Not surprisingly, those workers who participate most in strikes are also those who are least satisfied with their own wages and working conditions. Participation in stay-aways, political meetings and marches is, on the other hand, not influenced by individual satisfaction with wages or working conditions.

Some people might expect workers' political participation to increase as they participate more in decision-making at work (Pateman 1970). However, work participation seems to influence political attitudes and participation only to a limited extent. This indicates the importance of the national setting in structuring the different effects of workplace reforms. A political setting in which management may be broadly perceived as being part and parcel of the system of political and economic exploitation makes it hard to build trust in management. Furthermore, a heavy emphasis upon opposition, class- and race-consciousness makes consultative measures at work an unlikely learning area for political participation in South Africa.

There are few differences between workers from different economic sectors or between workers enjoying different degrees of autonomy, consultation, work satisfaction and participation in communication and consultation schemes when it comes to class-consciousness, working-class identity and opposition to management. The only exception is that those who have consultation structures and participate in these are less inclined to be in opposition to management. Those who participate most in QCCs, Consultation Forums etc. tend, for example, more often to agree that it is possible to have teamwork with management. Those who argue that they generally have to co-operate with others in order to fulfil their tasks tend more often to believe they can influence their own living conditions through political actions (eta .09) and believe more often that other ethic groups can be trusted (eta .09). Furthermore, those who believe that management asks them for advice at regular intervals also have more respect for majority decisions and believe less often that they themselves can influence political action and not only people in high positions (eta

.17). All in all, although workplace *participation* has a negligible political effect, it seems that the *organisation of work* does have some, albeit a limited, political effect.

Race, wage levels, employment and occupation are the hard-core cleavages in South African politics. The political activist is most easily found amongst black, male, semi-skilled or skilled workers in manufacturing, construction and parts of the service sector rather than amongst professional workers. Yet, it should be emphasised that the differences we are talking about are relatively small. Class-consciousness and race-consciousness overlap to a large extent. Over the past few years the consciousness and confidence of black workers has been much affected by developments outside work and outside the organisation of and participation at work. Working-class consciousness is influenced by events in the townships, by education and hence by the individual's position in the workplace. Working-class consciousness is also formed in the unions and other institutions of civil society. Those workers who have been active in collective bargaining structures participate more in political activities and have a stronger identity with the working class. It is therefore time to turn our attention towards the unions.

12 In the unions

Unions are interest organisations, but they are also social movements and labour market institutions. What interests, priorities and attitudes do they represent? The aim of this chapter is to address the content of union interests and union consciousness. First, we need to remind ourselves that COSATU workers are generally more highly educated than unorganised workers and that most COSATU members are found in semi-skilled and skilled occupations in mining and manufacturing. Furthermore, most are black, with a high percentage of African workers. But what effect does unionisation have upon political attitudes, participation and priorities? What characterises trade-unionised workers in South Africa?

12.1 Unions and politics

The "economic man" thesis implies that organisation, collective action and labour ideology will be formed by the rate of industrialisation and by economic characteristics.[463] Workers are, according to this perspective, rational actors who seek to advance their own social and economic interests through the unions. Workers' joining unions has therefore been interpreted by some not as a sign of increased identity with the working class and collectivism, but merely as an instrumental step to protect individual economic interests and to further personal advancement. "Instrumental collectivism" or "instrumental class-consciousness" (Gold-

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[463] Classical Marxists argue that industrialisation will lead to alienation, increased class-consciousness and therefore a radical labour response, while "vulgar" Marxism argues that industrialisation will lead to higher living standards which in turn will lead to moderate labour standards. Both are, however, based on rational choices by the individual (Lafferty 1974).

thorpe et al. 1969) refers to a more individualistic interpretation of why workers join unions. In this view unions are already, or are on the way to becoming, more apolitical and instrumental institutions.[464]

To others, unions function as an emancipatory social movement when political rights are restricted or as a school for class-consciousness and socialism. Unions are places where workers internalise values, skills and commitments appropriate to the struggle against authoritarianism and capitalism. According to Marx himself, working-class consciousness grows dialectically with experience in trade unions, in political parties and in production itself (Mann 1973:12).

In a sense, both the perspectives mentioned above follow the line that collective action and class-consciousness are a reflection of rational choices. Workers react to their conditions of life and work (albeit in different normative directions) in order to maximise their own interests in the labour market and politics. The structure and culture of the organisation and collectivity around them will, however, also influence their perceptions.[465]

The "sociological man" thesis argues, on the other hand, that labour's response to industrialisation depends:

"upon conditions of integration, which introduces a more dynamic aspect into the posited relationship since it is not the state of the system itself which is most determinate, but rather the transition from one state to another"   (Lafferty 1974:21).

In Blumer's (1960) opinion, industrialisation is in itself a totally neutral factor. Worker ideology will, in his opinion, rather depend upon the composition of the class, the milieu encountered in industrial establishments, workers' living conditions and the definitions which workers use to interpret their experiences: in other words, the degree of discontent or

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[464] Goldthorpe et al. (1969) conducted a survey amongst factory workers and concluded that workers' consciousness was in fact an instrumental consciousness. A short time afterwards, however, the same workers went on a traumatic and long-lasting strike. The whole debate on latent versus manifest class-consciousness emerged thereafter. Mann's book on class-consciousness must be viewed against this background.

[465] Variations in the form and degree of class voting from one national setting to another also turn our attention to external factors, which we will return to in the next chapter.

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radicalism will be determined by unique structural and symbolic configurations of each context. Val Lorwin states likewise that labour's response to economic change, for example, is determined by non-economic factors like politics, religion, cultural patterns, class structure and historical accidents and personalities (quoted in Lafferty 1974). The interactionist theory, which relates participation to social interaction in networks and groups, reflects the same perspective (Klandermans 1996).

In fact, however, workers' ideology is a *mixture* of rational preferences on the one hand and values and culture drawn from the environment and internalised on the other hand. Trade unions form an important part of that environment. The "economic" and the sociological "expressive" theories of political behaviour may be complementary: people act collectively because they have common interests *and* because they are influenced by one another. Moreover, this relationship is also *reinforcing*: people's association with others from the same group makes them more aware of their own interests, while establishing and identifying their own interests will make people seek the company and solidarity of others with the same interests.

Furthermore, workers may be more inclined to internalise working-class culture or union culture when they have experienced a rapid change of environment, roles and social status, as was the case in South Africa during the rapid industrialisation and urbanisation of the late 70s and 80s. Black recruitment to semi-skilled and skilled positions formed the basis not only for black advancement and improved living conditions but also for the emerging trade-union movement. The processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and organisation implied, however, a rapid loss of social status, identity and group identification for all those workers leaving the rural areas in order to seek work, and thus made them open to *new* social and political identities and norms.

Union norms and organisation

The effect of unions on workers' consciousness again depends upon the norms, strategies and internal procedures of the union movement. The ideology of a union serves the fundamental purpose of giving the members some account of what characteristics they share in common and what values give meaning to their activities (Crouch 1996). During the formation of a social movement, ideology plays an important role in legitimising and guiding "strategies of action" in the pursuit of group interests (Ebbinghaus 1996). The role of ideology is thus threefold. First,

an ideology delineates an interest group and a programme of action to pursue its interests. Second, ideology legitimates and promotes the mobilisation of supporters to invest resources in pursuing a "common cause". Third, it guides the building of broader strategic alliances with other organisations and social groups. Ideology unites by disuniting and it disunites by uniting (Ebbinghaus 1996:31). Any new movement needs to find means to "infuse with value its organisation" (Selznick 1957). In order to create group solidarity and mobilise resources, collective organisations rely on "social closure" (Weber 1922, Ebbinghaus 1996). Furthermore, cleavage-specific organisations also use organisational closure and alliance-building to enhance their power.

Research done on voluntary organisations also shows that they may serve as important learning areas for individual politics. Membership in organisations gives the individual a more structured set of interests and of political resources. The claim of participatory democrats is that organisational democratic arrangements have the effect of nurturing democratic consciousness among workers. Operating within an institutional framework which is egalitarian, co-operative and democratic will enhance the development of such values in people. Pateman (1970) states that democratically organised workplaces will nurture a collectivist approach to community and politics rather than individualistic solutions. What she calls the "collective spirit" is identification with the problems and strategies of the collectivity. If unions are revolutionary, with the declared goal or strategy of overthrowing capitalist production, then individuals will learn class-consciousness in a revolutionary sense. If, on the other hand, the union is instrumentally oriented towards wage increases and tackling grievances in the workplace, then this will, as mentioned before, more probably nurture individualism as opposed to socialist class-consciousness among workers.

On the other hand, Lipset, Trow and Coleman (1956:3) argued in their classic study *Union Democracy* that:

> "In few areas of political life is the discrepancy between the formal juridical guarantees of democratic procedures and the actual practices of oligarchic rule so marked as in private or voluntary organisations such as trade unions".

With reference to Michel and his "iron law of oligarchy" ("who says organisation, says oligarchy") they state that the nature of large-scale organisations is such as to give the incumbent officials overwhelming

power compared to that of the opposition. Leaders in most unions will wish to stay in office and will adopt dictatorial tactics in order to do so. The pessimistic interpretation of unionism, which argued that unionism would become the "bourgeois politics" of the working class (Hyman 1971) in many ways reflects the same scepticism towards the unions. Lenin argued that the working class could in fact only generate trade-union consciousness (Mann 1973:12). Even within the struggle movement in South Africa there were those who argued that as working-class organisations trade unions were limited and counterproductive to revolutionary action. Union members would, according to this view, develop neither revolutionary consciousness nor social consciousness (Henson 1978). The relationship of members to their union results in low levels of participation and "apathy of the members is the normal state of affairs", Lipset et al. argue (1956:10). Yet, their study (1956) demonstrates that the International Typographical Union is unique in this respect. The following factors help explain, according to Lipset et al., why this union developed internal democracy, organised opposition and a relatively high level of internal participation by members: a strong occupational community (fostered by pride and identity with the craft, a high status and irregular working hours) stimulates participation in the organisation; moreover the various locals had a long history of complete autonomy and had resisted efforts to create a centralised structure. If a large organisation comes into being as a federation consisting of already existing groups and as a "bottom-up" organisation (rather than being organised from the top down), there is a strong likelihood that strong local structures will be maintained.

Not only will the internal organisation of a trade union affect the extent to which members internalise union norms and values. We also have to look at various union strategies and norms in relation to one another, their internal consistency, etc. Mann argues that to the extent that unions pursue economic and job control issues separately and the latter defensively, and to the extent that they do not pursue wider issues of worker control, they operate to *weaken* class-consciousness. If this is the case, we will expect workers' attitudes to be economist and defensive when it comes to questions of worker control. Worker consciousness has, on the other hand, been shown to be highest in companies where managerial strategies are tightest (Mann 1970).

However, we must also keep in mind that the relationship between the organisation and the individual is "circular": not only do union norms and strategies affect the attitudes and behaviour of union members, union

members also *form* union priorities. Clearly the interdependency of union norms and members' priorities will increase proportionally with the degree of internal democratic structures, but no organisation can survive completely *without* support from its members. If influence and control in general and worker control in particular are not an issue or priority for the workers, they may also feel less alienated if unions pursue strategies of shop-floor unionism rather than socio-political unionism (Mann 1973).[466]

Touraine (1966) and others argue for a socio-technical determinism,[467] whereby the physical and social location of work and the character of employing organisations structure workers' consciousness (Hyman 1996:63). Craft workers are different from less skilled production workers, who again differ from technologically qualified employees. Hence trade unions too acquire different forms. Yet, such determinism will not explain the numerous international differences in trade-union profiles, nor the differences between, for example, COSATU and NACTU inside South Africa. Furthermore, in choosing to look at class-consciousness as determined solely by sector of employment and occupation, one also overlooks the independent importance of trade unions. Hyman (1996) argues that a major weakness in Touraine's account is his neglect of the relative autonomy of trade unions in shaping workers' consciousness. Unions have always been engaged in an effort to influence definitions of identity – collectivism versus individualism, but also the principle of inclusion versus exclusion – which constitute collective consciousness (Offe & Wisenthal 1985; Hyman 1996). The norms, ideology and organisation they have at their disposal thus become important in discovering their potential and direction.

[466] Simultaneously, when talking about the difference between reformist and revolutionary unionism (defined according to its goals and norms), we should remember that trade unions internationally seem to differ more in their ideals than in their actions and actual strategies.

[467] The references to Touraine (1966) are mostly based on Hyman 1996.

12.2 South African unions as learning grounds

The identity embraced by particular trade unions has shaped the interests with which they identify, the conceptions of democracy influencing members, activists and leaders, the agenda they pursue, and the type of power resources which they cultivate and apply (Hyman 1996:65). The three types of trade unionism identified above (Chapter 6) – business unionism, unionism as a vehicle for social integration and unionism as a class struggle – will each have a distinct ideological orientation. The South African union movement that developed through the 70s and 80s can easily be characterised as a sociopolitical trade-union movement or a revolutionary union movement (up until the late 80s). In many ways, the union image which emerges in the previous chapters (Chapters 7 and 8) has much in common with the so-called "social movements", or pressure groups, of the 80s in Europe. It was a *new* trade unionism that emerged in South Africa, based on the principles and practices of internal democracy and non-racism and on a combination of political aims, shop-floor issues and strategic tactics.

Webster and Kuzwayo (1978) found back in the 70s that working-class consciousness in South Africa was already quite developed: 44 per cent of workers interviewed in a survey conducted in Durban identified themselves with other African workers and another 25 per cent with people on the same occupational level.[468] Friedman's (1987) research centred upon the union movement in the 70s and 80s. He argues (ibid) that the unions helped develop democratic consciousness amongst workers. Maree (1987, 1989), Holdt (1989) and others argue likewise that the union movement played an important role as a laboratory for democracy both directly, by teaching democratic values, and indirectly, by extending workers' participation in the workplace. Apart from Sitas' work (1985, 1992) there was, however, little empirical evidence to test this thesis. Sitas

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[468] It is not clear, however, whether this is a non-racial class-consciousness and if they would also identify with white workers in the same position in the production process. With several of these studies of working-class consciousness we also have the problem that workers are not given the option of saying they do not identify with any particular class or race. Surveys often pose forced options: workers were asked whether they identified "with other workers", with "African workers" or with "Africans". Seldom were they given the option of no class-consciousness – i.e. identifying themselves "simply as a person".

(1985) conducted a study amongst migrant workers in the East Rand outside Johannesburg and showed how these workers "copied" the democratic practices they had experienced in their trade unions in the hostels where they lived and set up similar committees, mandating procedures and principles of accountability.

Ginsburg (1994)[469] indicates that organised workers have different expectations of democratic procedures and institutions to those anticipated by the major political parties and to those envisaged by the political system laid down in the constitution. The majority of the respondents subscribe to a "radical" democracy, with an emphasis on popular participation in all decision-making that affects their lives and on organisational and societal power located at the grassroots rather than with the leadership (Ginsburg 1993:4). The majority of them firmly believe that parliamentary democracy ought to consist of universal suffrage, binding mandates for and accountability of representatives and the right to recall parties that fail to uphold their mandate or adequately account for their behaviour. More senior officials distinguished between the democracy they would like to see and the democracy they thought would be installed. Their more conventional view of democracy included the belief that there was no other way of influencing policy than voting for a new party in the next elections and that the political parties (and the ANC in particular) would be accountable to a broader constituency than just the working class. In summary, the majority of the respondents tended to look at democracy as an agency of popular empowerment and therefore both as an end in itself and as a means to improve their living conditions.

A new study was conducted in 1994 designed to follow up on the previously mentioned study and the COSATU shop-steward survey from 1991. Interviews conducted with COSATU-organised workers from all over the country confirmed the impression of COSATU workers as committed to grass-roots democracy, accountability and mandate procedures (Ginsburg & Webster 1995). They also argue that what emerges from their survey:

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[469] The study was based upon interviews with 38 union officials representing the major unions and federations located in the Durban Functional Region. Approx. half were shop stewards while the rest were senior office- holders, general and regional secretaries, etc.
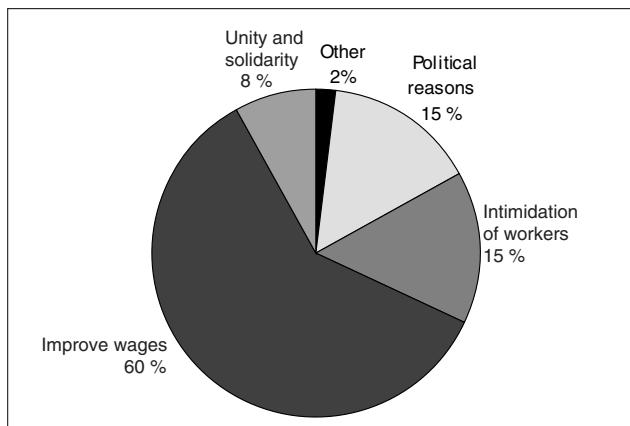
"... is that the vigorous culture of shop floor democracy has translated into a rather similar understanding of the new parliamentary political system" (Ginsburg & Webster 1995:44).

Against the background of these studies, we find several references to unions as "laboratories" or "learning grounds" for democracy. Several of the same studies, however, have empirical and/or theoretical shortcomings. The political restrictions at the time also made it almost impossible to carry out surveys on political and social issues amongst black workers. Unions as "laboratories" for democracy are therefore to a large extent unexplored territory.

Unions and internal strategies

In order to address the question of union consciousness, we first need to investigate the content of union *membership:* what attracts people to unions and what do unions offer? The extent to which the unions manage to incorporate the interests of their members will determine the level of recruitment and the degree of loyalty and support from their constituency. Unions in many countries face challenges because new groups and new interests increasingly encroach on the labour market and their constituency. Union success will depend upon the extent to which they manage to take up and defend the new and changing interests of their members. Many of these new interests and demands go beyond the traditional area of collective bargaining to include issues such as health problems, day care, maternity leave, flexible hours, training etc. Figure 12.1 shows why workers themselves say they join unions.

Figure 12.1 Reasons Given by Black Organised Workers for Joining Unions (n 429)

Increased wages, or expectations of improved wages, is the most commonly cited reason for membership in the unions. But black workers also join unions to be "protected against their bosses". This is not surprising, considering that organised workers, and COSATU members in particular, negotiated the most significant wage improvements during the 80s. In fact, black unions in South Africa made wage gains similar to those of unions in more developed countries. (Moll 1993).[470] Furthermore, black unions tended to compress wages across skills levels by securing higher minimum wages for unskilled workers. The union-wage effect for black workers in blue-collar jobs is highest amongst unskilled workers. Amongst white workers the union-wage effect has been shown to be significant but not as strong as amongst black workers (Moll 1993). Lowincome groups more frequently state that they have joined unions to improve wages and working conditions than do high-income groups.[471] In addition to their wage-increasing effects, unions reduce other forms of wage segmentation. Perhaps most importantly, union membership improved female earnings by more than those of male workers and reduced the gender gap by about 21 per cent (Fallon & Lucas 1998). Metropolitan/urban-rural and public/private pay differentials are also lower within unionised labour (ibid).

Many black workers also joined the unions because they believed this was a way to make a contribution to the liberation struggle. However, political reasons are mentioned by only 15 per cent of the black workers as their reason for organising and women are less driven by political motivation than men. The lowestincome groups are more motivated by instrumental reasons and by the wish to improve wages and working conditions. White workers, in comparison, often joined unions because they believed this was a way to build strong institutions in order to stop the liberation struggle. Or they joined unions simply because it was compulsory (60 per cent). All in all, ideological motives do not seem to

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[470] Fallon and Lucas (1998) argue that union membership is associated with larger wage differentials than normally found in comparable studies of other countries. Time series analyses of manufacturing wages suggest that the African union/non-union earnings differentials lay in the range of 25-30 per cent in 1980-93.

[471] Three out of four lowpaid workers say they joined unions to improve their wages and working conditions, whereas only one out of three with incomes between R2,400 and R3,000 gave this reason for joining. Those workers stating that they joined unions for political reasons, or because of pressure from other workers, in fact have a higher average income than those workers giving other reasons for joining. Low-paid workers are those paid below R800 per month.

play an important role in motivating people to join trade unions. Instrumental motives clearly take pride of place. However, political and ideological motives may still play a latent role, which we will return to later.

The motives for not becoming a member of a trade union form the logical complement to the motives for becoming a member (De Witte 1996). In order to survive, unions must focus not only upon the interests of members in order to retain them but obviously also on the wishes and interests of nonunion members in order to *recruit* them. Unorganised workers must also be studied in order to understand the mobilising potential of labour. Figure 12.2 therefore looks at the main stumbling blocks to union recruitment in Gauteng. The main reason why black workers do *not* organise is found in resistance and intimidation from employers. Almost half the unorganised workers cite this as their reason for not joining a union.[472]
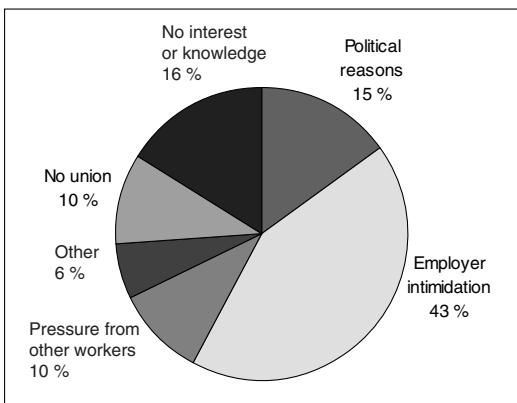
Union satisfaction will be important for the extent to which workers internalise union norms and values. Members' satisfaction with unions is closely linked to members' assessment of the quality of the relationship between leaders/centres and members, the willingness of leaders to listen to the concerns of the members etc. It is also closely linked to the members' perception of the degree of influence the union leadership has and of its effectiveness in dealing with management and is related to the members' attitudes concerning the instrumental value of unionism in general (Glick et al. 1977).

COSATU says that it has uncovered widespread dissatisfaction amongst members about the lack of service they receive from the unions (Shilowa 1994). In the new political climate from the early 90s, unions are, and increasingly will be, pressurised to show moderation on wage demands. Employers may tend to push for alternative kinds of compensation like profit-sharing, fringe benefits etc. where the cost of benefits is linked to company performance. These factors together make services and benefits an extremely important area for union advances. But

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[472] Others say that there are political reasons why they are not in the unions, or that other workers intimidate them to stop them joining. A total of 16 per cent of the workers say that they are happy without unions or that they are un?informed about or uninterested in union matters.

what sort of services? We asked both organised and unorganised workers what service they would most like to see the unions provide (apart from higher wages).

Figure 12.2   Reasons Given by Black Workers for Not Joining Unions
(n 389)[473]

A relatively large proportion of the workers (20 per cent) state that they would like to see the unions provide traditional shop-floor benefits, like job security, representation of workers vis-à-vis management or preventing intimidation by employers. The second category of priorities concerns communication at work and will primarily be promoted via negotiations and co-operation between managers and unions. It includes improved relations between workers and management, improved race relations and improved relations amongst workers. A third category of priorities concerns "quality of work", and includes improved working conditions, health and safety and training and education.[474]

[473] The category "other" includes those who believe it benefits their wage interests not to organise or who have changed jobs and therefore left the unions.

[474] A fourth type of services consists simply of "benefits". Many of the workers would like to see the unions provide, or rather pressure the companies to provide, specific benefits like housing loans, scholarships or free or cheap transport. In addition, there is a smaller group who state that unions should work for sociopolitical issues, such as creating jobs or providing external community services. A relatively small group of workers says that unions should concentrate upon improving themselves and becoming more effective or else they simply state that unions have nothing to offer (13 per cent). The last group consists primarily of unorganised workers.

Union satisfaction is related to the extent to which members see unions and management as having shared responsibility for the terms of employment (Fiorito et al. 1988:303). In general, workers would like the unions to work on issues that they will benefit from directly on the shop floor. Unorganised workers tend to give less priority to improved working conditions and race relations and far less priority to benefits. They have less knowledge or idea of what unions can offer. White workers stress improved working conditions and health and safety. Whereas, for example, less than 20 per cent of black workers cite the need for unions to promote better working conditions, 25 per cent of white workers say this is a service they would like the unions to provide. It should also be noted that white workers are far less inclined to say that unions should give priority to fringe benefits and to education and training. This corresponds, however, to the tendency of lower-income groups to give high priority to the promotion of benefits rather than other issues.

A political profile of the unionised worker

So who is the black organised worker? Earlier data reveals, that the degree of unionisation is higher amongst men than amongst women (Pityana & Orkin 1992). However, women are estimated to comprise some 36 per cent of COSATU membership (NALEDI 1994), which corresponds roughly to the proportion of women in the formal labour market. The unionised workforce is first and foremost composed of semi-skilled workers; 39 per cent of union members fall within this occupational category and 27 per cent are unskilled workers.[475] A large proportion of the organised workers are found in mining and manufacturing: 80 and 65 per cent, respectively, of the workers in these sectors are organised.[476] Furthermore, the higher the income group, and the higher the educational level, the higher the degree of unionisation. However, there is no difference in income and educational level between COSATU members and workers organised in other unions.

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[475] 11 per cent are skilled workers and 22 per cent of the organised workforce falls within the semi-professional and professional and white-collar workforce.

[476] Altogether, they compose about 40 per cent of union membership. The proportion of unionised workers in mining is, however, in our survey an underestimate due to the sample not including hostel workers (see Appendix 5).

How long a worker has been in the union movement and his or her degree of activity and participation in the union movement will determine the extent of loyalty to union norms. Some will argue that the aims of power struggles within the union movement or political goals or missions outside the unions are too corrosive of personal relations and too removed from the deepest, most enduring concerns of the members to be able to sustain mass interest (Lipset 1960). Others argue that the longer you spend in an organisation, the more loyal you become to the norms of the organisation and the more active in defending these norms. About 40 per cent of the unionised workers in our sample have been in the organisation for four years or less. This may indicate that the turnover of members is relatively high. Most unions, and this goes particularly for mining and manufacturing, have in fact experienced a loss of membership as a result of retrenchments. There has also been an emergence of new union constituencies in recent years, with growth in public sector unions in particular – i.e. new types of workers with new interests and priorities have joined unions (Baskin 1996, Cranskhaw 1996 & Filita 1996).[477] Workers who joined unions for political reasons or to promote unity and solidarity amongst workers have in fact on average been union members for longer (1011 years) than those who state that they joined unions for instrumental reasons like increasing their wages or because they felt pressurised by other workers (56 years). The workers who have been the shortest time in the unions are most likely to say they joined in order to get better wages.

12.3 Trade-union consciousness

We have already distinguished between one model of unions as an anticapitalist opposition aimed at advancing class interests, a second model of unions as a vehicle for social integration representing social interests, and finally a third model of business unionism with its priorities directed towards collective bargaining and narrow occupational interests. The first model resembles the revolutionary union movement or the socio-

[477] The average black worker, however, has been a union member for seven years, whereas whites have been union members for a longer average of twelve years. Furthermore, workers who joined the unions after 1990 may have done so for more instrumental reasons than the workers who joined earlier.
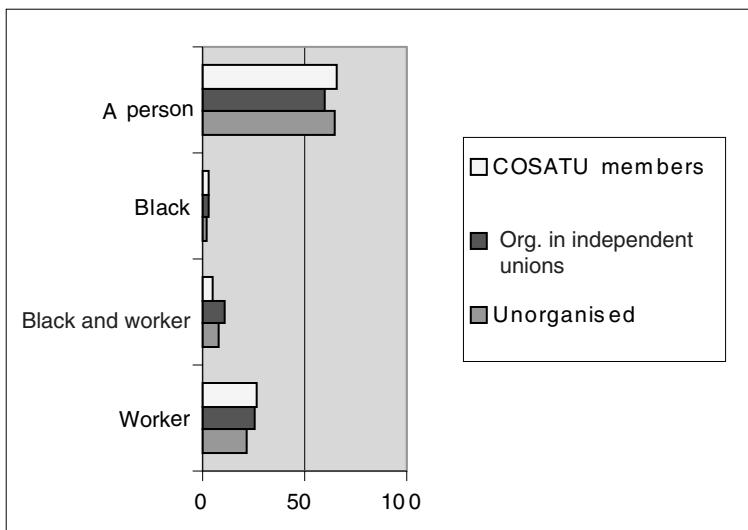
political trade-union movement aiming at changing the system. The second model operates within the system and resembles a social democratic, reformist or corporatist union movement. The third model of business unionism resembles the pluralist union movement, with its focus upon the economic interests of the workers.

The important point is that the broader the issues focused on by the union movement, the more likely union members are to feel affected by decisions taken within the union and the more inclined they will be to participate and try to influence these decisions both within and outside the union. The type of union is, in other words, important not only when it comes to the content of the political learning taking place within it: focus, strategies and relationship to the state will also mobilise workers to differing degrees because of the numbers and types of issues that affect workers.

Furthermore, the various models of trade unionism will, as mentioned before, represent different kinds of interests and form members' interests and attitudes in different directions. Business unionism, for example, would be expected to represent and carry forward a rational choice, or "economic man" perspective upon individual participation. People join unions and participate because it serves their economic interests to do so. A revolutionary trade-union movement will, on the other hand, operate from a frustration-aggression perspective, which explains union participation in terms of factors such as dissatisfaction and alienation (Klandermans 1996). Both the rational choices of its members and a normative integrative strategy and sense of responsibility reaching far outside their own ranks will guide the reformist or corporatist union movements. Yet, as mentioned above, the "economic man" and the "sociological or interactionist man" perspectives are potentially complementary and reinforcing. So which perspectives do trade-union members in South Africa express? To what extent do union members differ from unorganised members in their class-consciousness or identity? Is it "economic man", "sociological man" or both, who characterises union members?

Class-consciousness has previously been viewed in terms of class identity, opposition and class totality (Touraine 1966, Mann 1973, Hyman 1996). Looking at the identity of union members first (Figure 12.3), we see that there are minimal differences in class identity between organised and unorganised workers. The majority of all groups identify themselves as "just a person", rather than in terms of class- or union-consciousness.

Figure 12.3   Class-Consciousness amongst Organised and Unorganised Workers:
"How do you see yourself, mainly as a...?" (n. 861).
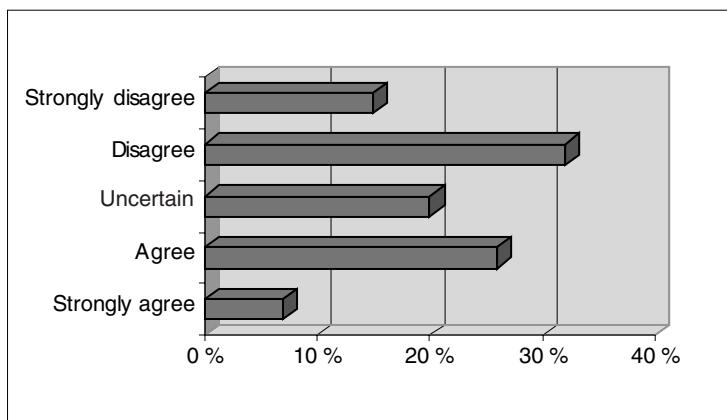
Hyman (1996:64) argues that all the analytical categories of identity, opposition and totality involve ambiguity and contradiction. Workers' sense of identity can focus on many different points of reference; the workplace, the occupational group, the sector, the nation, etc. Often, he argues, we identify ourselves in terms of many of these identities simultaneously, and the priorities of one over the other can shift according to time and circumstances. Furthermore, for blacks who have been fighting for years against being "categorised" and "classified" as belonging to one or other group, it seems to make sense to look at themselves as "just a person".

Opposition, as another criterion for class-consciousness, likewise poses a problem, according to Hyman (1996). People will often both perceive that there is a distribution conflict between themselves and management while simultaneously seeing a common interest in ensuring the firm's survival. Likewise, workers will often recognise the need for rising productivity and price stability while aspiring for higher wages themselves. In terms of the class-consciousness issues raised in Chapter 11, such as opposition/trust towards management, the need for building workers' unity, etc. there are, however, small differences between organised and unorganised black workers, indicating that solidarity and loyalty stretch far beyond union boundaries.

One of the dilemmas facing labour all over the world concerns the balance between union members' interests on the one hand and societal interests on the other. It involves questions such as the extent to which a privileged (but still poor in absolute terms) group of workers in the formal workforce should show wage moderation and responsibility towards the interests of unemployed and poor people and society at large. How, and to what extent, should unions act as private interest organisations, concerned with the interests of their own members, as opposed to identifying with broader constituencies? Another important question, thrown up by the same dilemma, concerns the degree of union independence from government within the context of an alliance whereby leading union activists assume parliamentary and government positions. We will return to this and to the question of class-consciousness later, but let us just have a brief look at worker expectations regarding the political role of the unions in the future. We asked the workers whether they agreed or disagreed with the idea that unions should stay independent of political parties. Figure 12.4 gives an idea of how workers perceive the relationship between unions and political parties.

Figure 12.4   Black Workers' View of Relationship between Unions and Political Parties:
            "Do you believe that unions should keep independent of politics?" (n 861)

Workers are relatively polarised in their answers, with a slightly positive balance of opinions – i.e. the percentage of workers who agree that unions should be independent of political parties almost balances the percentage of workers disagreeing. Half the black workers disagree with the statement that unions should remain independent of political parties. Most workers have made up their minds, but quite a big proportion (about 20 per cent)

of the total number of black workers are uncertain or indifferent. Organised workers, however, feel more affected: a larger proportion of the unorganised workers are uncertain or indifferent. White workers are more polarised than blacks, with fewer white than black workers indifferent about the issue of union independence.

Strong support for union involvement in politics was found amongst COSATU shop stewards earlier (Pityana & Orkin 1992).[478] Supporting union involvement in politics is obviously different from supporting union alliances with political parties, but the support for political alliances gives an additional indication of how workers perceive unions' adopting political strategies as opposed to concentrating on shopfloor issues and of whether they think political participation and broad alliances are important to the pursuit of workers' interests.
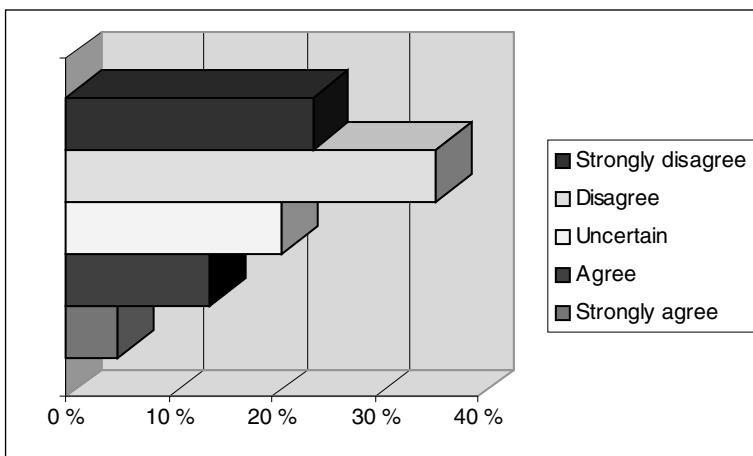
We also asked the workers whether they agreed or disagreed that unions should concentrate more on breadandbutter issues and less on politics in the future, whether the tripartite alliance (between ANC, COSATU and the SACP) should be broken in the future, and whether they believed strikes would be used as readily in the future as in the past. All these questions concern strategies and agendas that are on the dividing line between members' own interests and societal interests.

The tripartite alliance between COSATU, the ANC and the South African CP has strong historical roots in South Africa. Some argue that unions should remain independent of political parties in order to forcefully defend workers' interests through the shop floor. Others, however, argue that broad massbased alliances are *the* route by which workers' interests can be integrated into politics and into the struggle for democratic rights, which in turn will benefit workers on the shop floor. The old debate within COSATU between workerists and populists to some extent reflects the dilemmas and conflicting points of view concerning broad alliances and agendas. Furthermore, whereas some will argue that the unions should now stay independent of governments in order to serve as "engines" of social change and not be held responsible for state policies, others argue that co-operation between government and civil society is crucial for reconstruction and development. COSATU hence reemphasised at its 1994

[478] The 1991 shop-steward survey found that only one out of five thought unions should stay out of politics (ibid).

Congress that it is *independent* within the alliance.[479] Figure 12.5 suggests that the majority of black workers think that the alliance should be maintained.
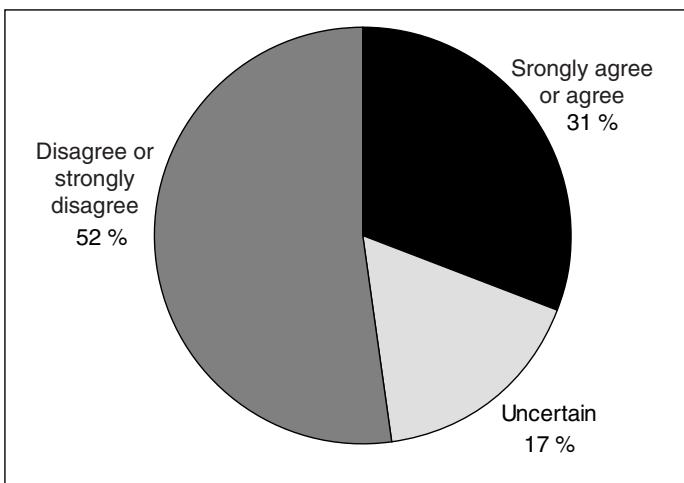
Figure 12.5   The Future of the Tripartite Alliance. Black workers' responses to the statement: "The tripartite alliance should be broken after the elections" (n 861)

A total of 60 per cent of the workers in our sample believe the alliance should be maintained. This is in line with the previous finding that most workers believe that unions should not stay independent of political parties. There is slightly stronger support for the alliance among organised than among unorganised workers. Unorganised workers tend to be more uncertain than organised workers and tend to give slightly stronger support to union independence. However, there are only small differences between unorganised and organised workers as well as between workers organised in independent unions and in COSATU unions, when it comes to support for the alliance. There seems to be a general perception among all black workers that a close relationship between labour and the majority party in government will benefit all workers. White workers, on the other hand, tend to favour independent unions. Figure 12.6 shows how workers perceive the role and priorities of unions in the future.

[479] Only two affiliates have pushed to break the alliance now after the elections, namely SACTWU and NUMSA.

Figure 12.6 Workers' Perceptions of Union Priorities in the Future: black workers' responses to the statement "Unions should concentrate more upon bread-and-butter issues" (n 861)
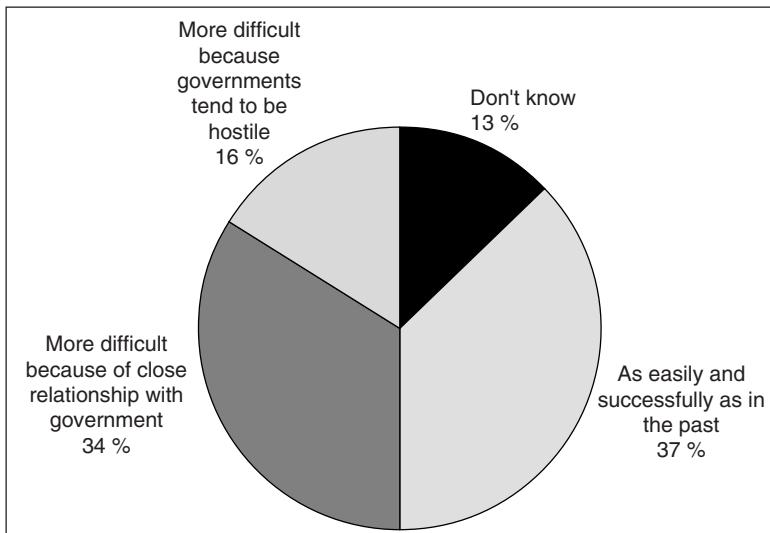
Black workers generally believe that unions should keep up their political work. One third believe, on the other hand, that unions should concentrate more on bread-andbutter issues. And here there are no differences between unorganised and organised workers. There are, however, dramatic differences between black and white workers. Almost all the white workers indicate that unions' direct involvement in politics will not serve their interests. They believe a narrower "economist" approach by the unions would be a correct strategy in the future. However, while all white workers believe breadandbutter issues must be given priority in the future, they obviously believe (as was found earlier) that these issues can be pursued in alliance with political parties or independently of them.

Organised workers have trust and confidence that the unions can represent their interests in the political sphere and clearly tend to define their own interests broadly to be fought for in the political arena. The means and instruments for obtaining power in the political arena are, however, based on the ability of unions to mobilise collectively through strikes and stayaways. This does not necessarily entail actual strikes, or loss of mandays and therefore of productivity due to strikes. It is the potential to strike that makes labour powerful. To what extent do workers now believe that this weapon is as effective now and in the future as it was in the past? Figure 12.7 shows how workers perceive the use of strikes in the future.

Figure 12.7   Will Strikes Be as Effective in the Future?
            Percentages of black workers agreeing with one of the following statements (n 861)

Most workers believe that it will be more difficult for unions to use strikes and stayaways as readily and successfully in the future as in the past because of the close relationship between unions and government or because governments will tend to be hostile to such actions. In fact, it is white workers who more often support the view that unions will strike as easily in the future as in the past. Half (51%) the white workers are of this opinion, as against only 37 per cent of the black workers.

There are only small differences between organised and unorganised workers on questions concerning the unions' relationship to politics. Organised workers tend, however, to believe more often that the close ties between governments and unions will make it increasingly difficult for unions to go on strike.[480] In conclusion, therefore, workers support the political involvement of unions but seem more hesitant about the efficacy of strikes and stayaways to back up such political power.

Although there is majority support for political involvement and the tripartite alliance, this should not be overestimated. Whereas common interests in fighting apartheid have united workers and unions in the past,

[480] 38 per cent of COSATU members versus 31 per cent of unorganised workers believe it will be more difficult to go on strike in the future owing to the close relationship between unions and the government.

the future may see the advent of stronger interest conflicts and ideological cleavages within labour. First, a relatively sizeable minority supports the breakup of the tripartite alliance and independent unions. Second, support for political alliances varies between different unions, sectors and groups of unionists. Workers from the metal, clothing and textile unions are far more critical of the political involvement of unions. Furthermore, leaders are surprisingly less supportive of the tripartite alliance and the political involvement of the unions than are ordinary members. Leaders tend to say that unions should concentrate more upon bread-and-butter issues and that it will be more difficult for unions to go on strike in the future because of close ties with government or because governments tend to be hostile to such actions. "Leaders" here includes all strata of elected leaders, from shop stewards to national office holders. Such a broad categorisation of leaders may hide internal differences within the group and between different strata of leaders, however. Most of the elected leaders in the survey were (or had been) shop stewards – i.e. the stratum of union leadership expected to be most militant. Around half the shop stewards agree that unions should remain independent of political parties and that unions should concentrate more upon breadandbutter issues in the future. Ordinary members are less inclined (about 30 per cent) to support a greater focus on breadandbutter issues.

With potential internal differences in interests and strategies emerging within the union movement, another dilemma concerns the organisational strategies of the future, and the fine balance between internal democracy on the one hand and the need to create a consensus and centralise decisionmaking in relation to macroeconomic negotiations, national collective bargaining, etc. on the other hand.

The organisational strategies of unions
The COSATU principle of worker control has a strategic basis as well as an ideological and political component. The new unions built up strong democratic grassroots structures in order to reduce dependency upon leaders and ensure that they had new people to replace leaders who fell victim to political harassment and restrictions. The emphasis was upon building worker leaders and preventing bureaucracy and domination by strong union officials. Some have argued, however, that internal democracy has been, or become, more rhetoric than reality and/or that organisational strategies differ between the various affiliates of COSA-

TU.[481] It is argued that leadership and elites have attained far more power in the union movement than is often recognised. Workers complain that the leadership has left the membership behind and is losing accountability and hence information and input from the grass-roots. The problem therefore seems to be not only one of diminishing representativity, but also one of information and contact with workers' issues. The responses from workers surveyed by us indicate that a minority is not confident of the democratic practice in their unions. Although this perception of alienation is far more pronounced among white workers, some alienation and weakness is also evident in the new black unions.

The majority of organised workers believe that decisions in their union are usually taken via democratic debate and via mandates to leaders, who are in turn accountable to the workers. Trust in democratic decisionmaking is stronger amongst black than amongst white workers. Whereas 8 per cent of black workers state that decisions in their unions are never taken through undemocratic channels, 18 per cent of white workers say they are sometimes taken through undemocratic channels.[482] A further 35 per cent of black workers say that union leaders never take decisions on their own without consulting the workers, whereas 30 per cent of white workers believe this is the case and 19 per cent do not know. In total, 44 per cent of the organised workers feel that decisions in their unions are generally taken via democratic debate and via mandates to leaders who are accountable to them. The lower income groups have stronger trust in democratic decisionmaking and disagree more often that union leaders take decisions on their own than do higher income groups. When it comes to their own perceived influence on union decisions, the great majority feel that their contribution is important in shaping union decisions.[483]

The degree to which workers internalise the values of their union depends upon how centralised the organisation is. The more bureaucratic and hierarchical the union, the less the potential for membership influence over policy and the less members are likely to feel part of the union structures and loyal to the union's norms. The more democratic the organisation, the more members will be able to take part in decisions that

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[481] See debates in SALB 1992-93, in particular Marie (1992).

[482] And 22 per cent don't know

[483] Only 12 per cent of the black workers argue that they have no influence whatsoever over union decisions. Whereas 46 per cent of black workers say they have a lot of influence, only 15 per cent of white workers are of the same opinion.

affect them and also hence identify more strongly with the norms, values and decisions of that organisation. There is increasing awareness within the COSATU unions that the level of bureaucracy and centralisation has grown. Furthermore, union leaders, administrators and organisers are now increasingly professionals who come to work in the unions to do a job, not necessarily out of a political commitment to the struggle. There are now several other places and organisations where people can pursue their political commitment and earn more and enjoy better career possibilities and working conditions.

Union satisfaction is closely linked to how members assess the quality of the union's relationship with its members. This includes the readiness of the union to listen to members' concerns and provide feedback as well as members' perceptions of the degree of union leadership influence and effectiveness in dealing with management (Fiorito et al. 1988). There is also evidence that union leaders often overestimate how satisfied members are with union internal affairs and with relations between the union and its members. Union participation is positively related to perceptions of union performance concerning breadandbutter issues and issues concerning the relationship between the union and its members. At the same time, it is not enough for unions just to "deliver the goods". Members who participate most actively in union activities have been found to be more satisfied with their unions (Fiorito et al. 1988). Not only do they feel part of the decision-making process, they also gain access to information about union matters. The communication and contact between leaders and the shop floor is thus important for members' satisfaction with their unions.

Shop stewards are usually elected by their shop-floor constituency (ILO 1996 and Ginsburg & Webster 1996). Nevertheless, they are in several respects still regarded as "in the middle", between workers and management in the company and between members and leaders within the union. Shop stewards constitute the most important link in the internal communication of the unions. In one sense, they are caught between the employer they work for and the members they represent. Their power and position depend upon continuing support from members. An over-whelming majority of COSATU shop stewards in the earlier mentioned COSATU study agree that shop stewards are bound by workers' mandates (Pityana & Orkin 1992). On the other hand, 80 per cent of them feel that they may be in conflict with their constituents and occasionally have to discipline their members.

Two thirds of the black workers in our sample say that their shop stewards frequently report back to them concerning issues discussed within the company and on matters discussed in the union or federation. The higher income groups tend to be less appreciative of the feed-back from shop stewards and white workers far less so. The communication goes in both directions. Most black workers believe that they, in turn, contact their shop stewards often with ideas, complaints or suggestions. All in all, more than 70 per cent of the black workers said that they felt their shop stewards represented their interests well, while this was the case for less than half the white workers interviewed.

12.4 Unions as laboratories for democracy?
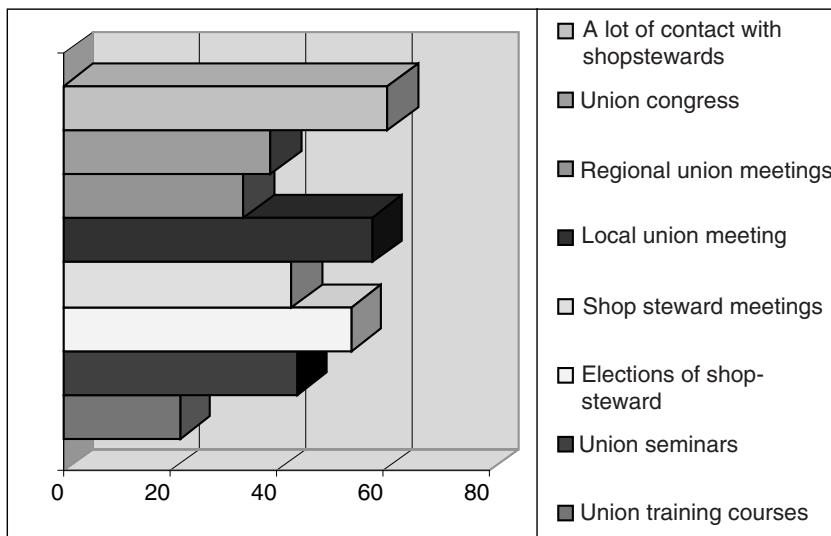
The principle of worker control carries more weight in the history and practice of South African unions than in most other unions. Many would link the reemergence of militant trade unions in the 70s to the radical ferment amongst leftwing academics and students who advocated a more participatory notion of socialism (Collins 1994). Unions were, in Friedman's (1987) words, "laboratories for democracy" in which workers could become empowered to take control of their own lives both at work and in the community at large.

And indeed, union activity is not restricted to a few leaders (Figure 12.8). Twenty-two per cent of organised black workers have participated in union training courses during the last five years and 43 per cent have participated in seminars. Furthermore, over half the black workers have participated in elections of shop stewards and most have participated in local union meetings, but less in regional union meetings and congresses.

White workers participate far less in union activities than do black workers. Sixty-five per cent of organised white workers have, for example, never taken part in elections of shop stewards, in comparison with 47 per cent of black workers. Sixty-one per cent of black workers often contact their shop stewards with ideas, complaints and suggestions in comparison with 22 per cent of white workers who *never* do so, and 18 per cent who only contact their shop stewards sometimes. Figure 12.8 portrays the level of internal union activity. Most white workers have never taken part in local union meetings. Women are also generally somewhat more passive union members than men. Whereas 46 per cent of men have never

participated in the election of shop stewards, 55 per cent of women have never done so. Whereas 42 per cent of men never took part in local union meetings, 48 per cent of women did not do so.

Figure 12.8   Black Workers' Degree of Activity within the Union Movement (percentages sometimes or often taking part in: .....) (n 473).
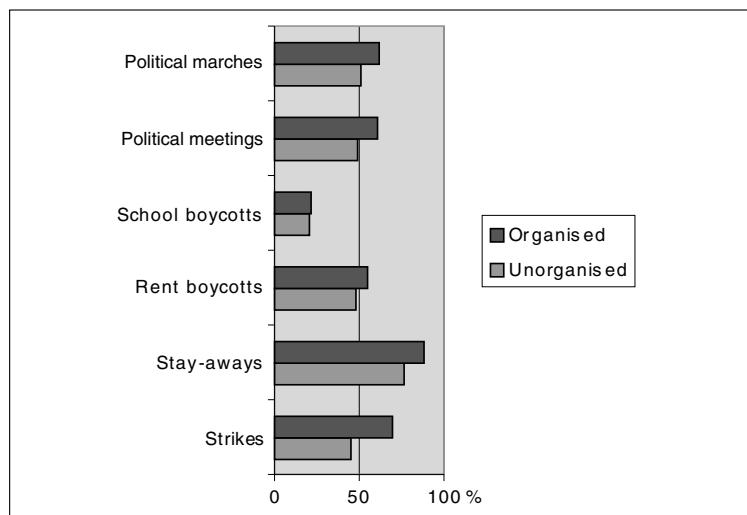
There are very small differences between COSATU workers and workers organised in other (black) unions. The general picture is one of high participation in union meetings and elections of shop stewards and a high level of contact with shop stewards. It is interesting to see that internal democratic traditions do not seem to extend only to COSATU workers, but generally to all workers belonging to the traditionally "democratic" black union movement. This contradicts arguments by, for example, Naledi (1995) that COSATU is distinguished from the other "black" unions (i.e. the independent unions and the ones affiliated to NACTU) by its strong internal democratic practices. Our results indicate, on the other hand, that while COSATU's democratic norms may have been more visible/highly publicised *externally*, there are no differences regarding vigorous, active democratic practices amongst the rank and file *internally*.

Given black workers' high level of activity within the union movement, is there a basis for the spillover thesis argued by Pateman (1970) and others? Our survey indeed confirms that organised workers

participate more actively in politics than unorganised workers. Figure 12.9 portrays the differences between unorganised workers and organised workers in political activities.

Organised workers engage more often in strikes, stay-aways, political marches and meetings. Whereas 56 per cent of unorganised workers never participate in strikes and 26 per cent never participate in stay-aways, only 32 per cent of the organised workforce falls into this inactive category when it comes to strikes and only 11 per cent of organised workers never participate in stay-aways. Furthermore, 50 per cent of unorganised workers have never taken part in political marches, 52 per cent have never been to political meetings and 32 per cent of the unorganised workers have not attended meetings of civics or residence committees. Of the organised workers, on the other hand, we find that that only 38 per cent have never attended political marches, only 39 per cent have never attended political meetings and less than 22 per cent are passive when it comes to participation in civics activities and meetings. A further analysis of the data shows us that when it comes to participation in strikes, stay-aways, political marches and political meetings, there is a significant difference between unorganised workers, organised workers in non-COSATU unions and COSATU-affiliated workers. COSATU workers are most active in these political activities.

Figure 12.9   Political Activity amongst Union Members – a Comparison with
              Non-Unionised Workers (n 861)

While the degree of political activity differs between organised and unorganised workers, their feelings of political alienation, degree of informedness and degree of political competence hardly differ at all. In other words, feeling informed, competent and confident would not appear to be what makes organised workers more politically active. Table 12.1 portrays the percentages of black workers who feel that they are informed about and competent in political matters.

Table 12.1 Political Confidence and Competence among Black Union Members-A Comparison with Unorganised Workers (n 861) [484]

	Alienated	Informed	Affected	Competent	Confident
Unorganised	42%	67%	75%	52%	70%
Organised	45%	75%	73%	58%	77%
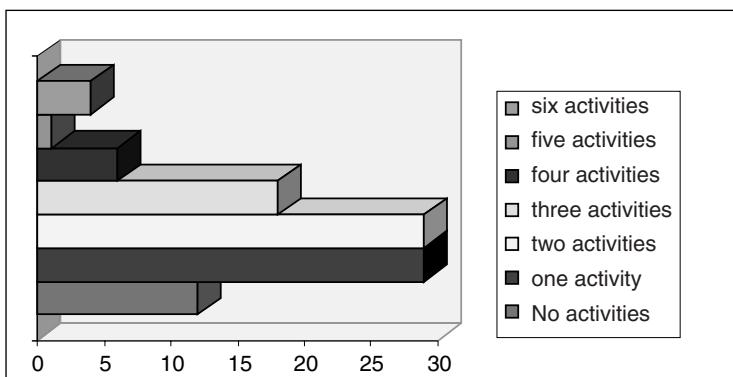
Finally, union members are more active in general organisational life outside work. *Stokvels*, for example, have more unionised than unorganised workers. About 70 per cent of union members, as compared with 60 per cent of unorganised workers, participate in *stokvels*. Fifty-five per cent of our black, organised Gauteng workers participate in four organisational activities or more outside the unions, while only 18 per cent of unorganised workers show a similarly high level of participation in civil society.

In general, findings from other surveys confirm the picture of an active union membership. Likewise, the COSATU shop-steward study from 1991 shows us an astonishing degree of organisational activity.

[484] Alienated: those replying negatively to the statement "People like me cannot influence the course of political events. Only people in high positions can do so" (Percentage portrays people answering that they believe they *can* have an influence) Informed: those replying positively to the statement "Do you feel that you are well informed about the political negotiations that have taken place about the new Constitution?" Affected: those replying positively to the statement "Do you feel that your life and living conditions are changed because of decisions made by the state or the region?" Competence: "Politics is not too complicated for me to understand" Confidence: those replying positively to the statement "Do you think your own involvement has had some (or more than some) effect on changing your own living conditions?"

Figure 12.10 shows the percentages of shop stewards taking part in various numbers of activities.[485] Thirty per cent of the shop stewards take part in three or more organisational activities.

Figure 12.10 Organisational Activities amongst COSATU Shop Stewards
(in percentages) (n 860)

We have seen from the previous chapters that race has a strong influence upon the degree and type of political activity. White workers are, as mentioned before, far less active in political life than black workers. Gender is yet another cleavage in politics, but the difference in the level of political activity between men and women is smaller than the one between whites and blacks. Education, on the other hand, has a smaller role to play in the level of political activity than might be assumed. Democratic practices and participation are not learned at school. Industrial cleavages, such as occupation and sector of employment, had some effect upon the degree of political participation. Semi-skilled workers in manufacturing and mining are the most active politically.

Membership in unions is in itself a significant political resource for many people. Unionised workers are, as mentioned earlier, more active in politics. Furthermore, there is a significant difference between unorganised black workers, those organised in non-COSATU unions and COSATU-affiliated workers when it comes to participation in strikes, stay-aways, political marches and political meetings. COSATU members are most active. If the whole sample of organised workers had been compared with

[485] Additive index composed of participation in sports organisations, youth organisations, the Church, women's organisations, civics and *stokvels*.

the whole sample of unorganised workers, however, the difference between them in terms of political activities would have been even larger. The relatively strong correlation between union affiliation and political participation is reduced quite drastically when controlled for the other variables.[486]

Black organised workers participate far more often in strikes, stay-aways, political marches and meetings than their unorganised comrades. White organised workers, in comparison, participated far more often in apartheid politics than their unorganised colleagues. In other words, unions mobilise both white and black workers for political action, but into different channels. Civics also seem to be a forum for male politics more than for female and for organised workers more than for unorganised. In addition, the effect of income deserves special attention. Political participation increases with income, with the exception of the highest income group earning more than R1,600. In fact, the top income bracket has a participation pattern that is more similar to that of the lowest paid workers, except for when it comes to participation in political meetings, where they are more active. Political activists may, therefore, be assumed to be found most easily amongst male, semi-skilled or skilled workers in the manufacturing, mining or public sectors, rather than amongst professional workers or workers employed by the private service sector. The strong effect of race, however, remains unaffected by control for the other variables.[487] The role of skin colour also reduces the effect of class, occupation, sector of employment and union affiliation. Owing to the larger proportion of active, black organised semi-skilled workers in the manufacturing sector in particular, the direct effect of these variables is drastically reduced when controlled for race.[488]

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[486] Running an MCA analysis indicates that the effect of union membership upon political participation is reduced from eta. 39 to beta .16 when controlled for race, gender, education, occupation and sector of employment. A bivariate correlation between sector of employment and degree of political participation is likewise reflected by the large number of active semi-skilled black workers in manufacturing (eta .29, beta .13). Altogether, the model above explains approx. 36 per cent of the variance in political participation.

[487] It is evident from an MCA analysis that the bivariate covariation is by and large unaffected by control for the other variables (eta & beta .54).

[488] We also included the two new variables on political knowledge and political confidence (composed by the indexes described in the earlier section above) in the analysis. Political knowledge has a significant effect of beta .15 when adjusted for

When we include the degree of internal activity within the union movement in the model above, an interesting picture emerges that supports the spill-over hypothesis: those who are most active *within* the unions are also the most active *outside*. Taking part in union activities has an independent impact upon political participation. An index[489] variable of (degree of) internal union activities was included in the model and had a significant effect upon the degree of political participation.[490] In other words, the collective practices of organised workers have a constructive effect upon the degree of political participation. Many may highlight the importance of democratic learning that workers have been exposed to through their experience of democratic decision-making at work. However, we should not forget the lack of variation between organised and unorganised workers in the extent to which they feel informed, confident and competent politically. *Both* organised and unorganised workers feel to a large extent politically informed and competent. Organised workers, however, put their confidence into practice to a larger extent. Either unions give organised workers the experience they need to put their confidence and competence into practice, or else unionised workers may be subjected to additional "group pressure" which gives them the mobilising "kick" they need in order to take part in politics. Figure 12.11 demonstrates the relationship between the degree of participation within unions and in politics.[491] The average degree of political activity is portrayed by the number of activities that black union members are involved in inside the unions.

It should also be mentioned here that when we test the spill-over hypothesis out on white workers, unionised *white* workers also seem to show a higher degree of involvement in electoral politics than unorganised

the other factors (eta .15) and political confidence a direct, significant (although weak) effect of beta .06 (eta .11), which confirms that feeling informed, affected and confident about one's own influence are stepping stones, or political resources, for participation. All in all, 38 per cent of the variance in political participation is explained when these two variables are included in addition to the model above.

[489] Number of activities taken part in (elections of shop stewards, union seminars, union training courses, participation in local or regional union meetings and federation/affiliate congresses) sometimes or often.

[490] Eta .28, beta .18.

[491] With an increasing degree of political participation, there is also a background of increasing union activity.

white workers. While black organised workers participate far more often in strikes, stay-aways, political marches and meetings than their un-organised comrades, white organised workers have, in comparison, participated far more often in apartheid politics than their unorganised colleagues. In other words, unions mobilise both white and black workers for political action, but into different channels. The union effect is, however, weaker amongst white workers than amongst the black workers in our earlier analysis.[492]

The spill-over hypothesis argues that not only will workers taking part in decision-making at work or within organisations become more active in external political activities, they will also become more community- and collectively oriented. Similarly, we can argue that active exposure to union norms, which in the South African case imposed principles of democracy, non-racism and equality, will have a similar effect. From a socialist perspective, we could also expect unions to nurture a collective class perspective. So do unions generally work as breeding grounds for class-consciousness? Do unions develop values friendly to socialism? Do unions function as laboratories for democratic conscious-ness?

blacks generally have far more trust in politicians, political leaders and political parties than white workers. There is, however, no difference between union members and unorganised black workers in this respect.[493] Unions function as more important schools for democratic practices than the education system itself in South Africa. However, while the education system has had no effect in levelling out the differences in democratic *activities* resulting from apartheid, it has had a more positive effect upon democratic *attitudes*.[494] Furthermore, education seems to have a "positive"

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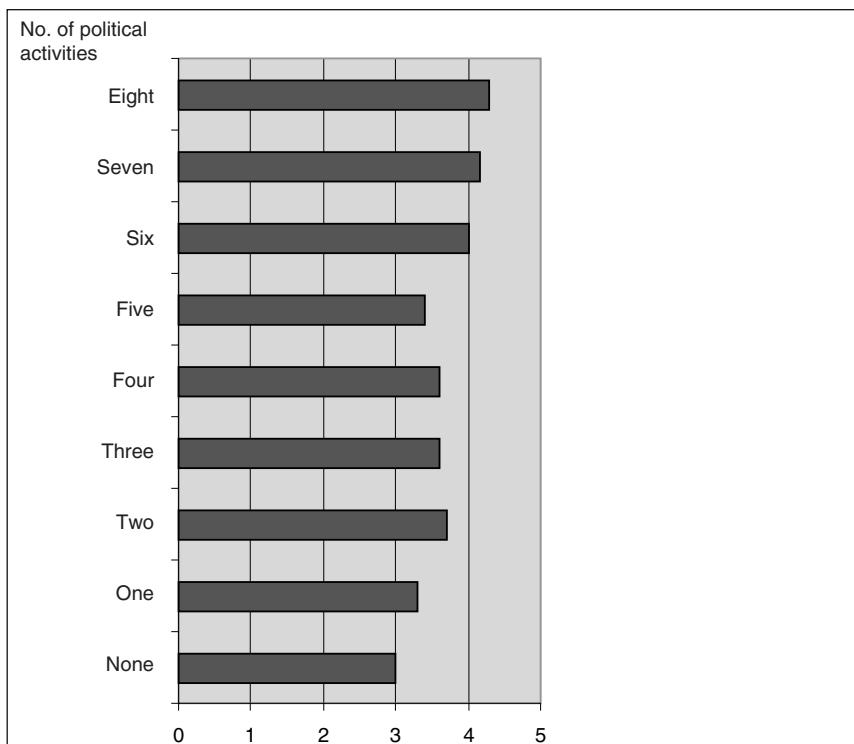
[492] An MCA analysis on an index of formal political participation (sometimes or often participated in political meetings, meetings of local government, local, provincial and parliamentary elections over the past four years) revealed that union membership had a significant effect upon political participation amongst whites. Eta .15, beta .21. However, this is a small sample and in a sense "unrepresentative" for whites in general (see Appendix 3).

[493] The variance explained by this model is relatively low and the effect of race the only one which is significant.

[494] Democratic trust and the extent to which people believe they themselves can influence Parliament's decisions were the only areas on which education had an important effect. We conducted an MCA analysis with race, gender, education, occupation and sector of employment as independent variables. Race and

effect for whites but a "negative" effect for blacks. In other words, the effect of education upon democratic attitudes varies according to race. Fewer educated blacks show trust in democracy than less-educated black workers, while educated whites show more trust than their less-educated counterparts. With regard to respect for majority decisions, there is only one significant effect: degree of participation within the union movement. In other words, the more workers participate in decision-making and activities within the union, the more they believe that majority decisions should be respected (even if they don't agree with them).

Figure 12.11   Spill-over from Unions to Politics
          (no. of union activities versus no. of political activities participated in by black workers)

education showed the only significant effects (race: eta .14, beta .17 and education: eta .10, beta .12). When we included the degree of activity within the union movement (although not significantly affecting our dependent variable), however, race lost its effect while the effect of education remained significant and was strengthened (eta.21, beta .21).

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In conclusion

We have found a picture of South African unions, and COSATU unions in particular, which confirms the idea of a political and internally democratic trade-union movement. Workers have firm confidence in the democratic structures and practices of the unions and they believe in their political power. Still, for workers the priorities are clearly on the shop floor. They give priority to wages and benefits, whereas working conditions, education and training are seen as less important.[496]

It has been indicated by the argument and analysis in the above section that union consciousness does not confirm the "economic man" thesis. Workers' perceptions generally indicate far broader and deeper political engagement by the unions. They generally support the political role of the labour movement rather than preferring it to concentrate upon bread-and-butter issues. Nonetheless, there does not seem to be an ideological dimension underlying motivation to join unions in South Africa. On the contrary, motivation for joining unions seems to be instrumental and with regard to working-class consciousness, there are few differences between organised and unorganised workers. Nevertheless, although workers regard unions as channels for pursuing their individual economic interests, they have a far more collective approach to the strategies, priorities and norms of the union movement than what is argued by the "economic man thesis" or rational choice theory. Workers have become used to regarding unions as their political representatives, and that is how they would like it to continue. It should, in this respect, be noted here once again that even unorganised workers give support to the idea of political involvement by the unions. The trade-union movement seems, in other words, to be seen as a body for workers' political representation beyond the rank and file.

Unions clearly function as a political resource for the individual worker. The spill-over hypothesis suggested by Pateman (1970) and others is, in other words, supported by levels of union activity but fails to be confirmed in the sphere of workplace participation in South Africa. This in itself confirms the thesis put forward by Lafferty (1985), Greenberg (1981, 1983, 1986) and others that the relevance of the spill-over hypothesis,

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[496] By contrast, the reconstruction agenda of many unions is now turning increased attention towards such "quality demands", in order to strengthen productivity and avoid retrenchments and dismissals, and away from more typical wage demands.

which argues that the more the individual participates at work the more the individual will also participate in politics outside work, depends upon the national political context and whether the national political climate is supportive of participatory democracy. We have several indications that civil society culture is conducive to and supportive of participatory democracy in South Africa, but clearly formal political structures and culture under apartheid were *not*. Work itself reflected the realities of apartheid and against this background it is not surprising that workplace participation had a "negative" spill-over effect while trade-union participation had a "positive" spill-over effect.

Unions seem to function as a political resource for their members when it comes to political participation, but hardly at all when it comes to democratic consciousness. It should, however, be remembered that there is a generally high level of democratic trust amongst black workers in particular and it is hard to explain variation when there is very *little* variation. Generally high levels of democratic trust can be explained by unions having no effect in "teaching" their members about democratic ethos and norms *or* by the fact that unions generally functioned as agents for democratic ideals in society as a whole. On the basis of the close alliances between unions, civics, the Church, youth organisations and students groups, the latter explanation seems most valid. We also find a generally high level of support for union involvement in politics and for the tripartite alliance (between COSATU, the ANC and the SACP) amongst unorganised workers, which seems to confirm the "agent" hypothesis. Furthermore, when we include general participation in civil society organisations in the analysis of democratic trust and consciousness, explained variations in the models increases considerably. We will turn to this in the next section. For now, however, it is sufficient to establish that both working-class consciousness *and* trade-union activism seem to exist in South Africa. In the following, we will conclude our analysis of which political cleavages affect? participation in civil society.

12.5 Structural, participatory or ideological cleavages?

Most scholars have been concerned with the question of what explains or causes collective action, rather than of what collective action itself causes! Tarrow (1994) illustratively calls his book on social movements *Power in Movement*. And there *is* power in movements, firstly because of their

numbers, secondly because of the empowerment they give to the individual and thirdly because there is power in the process itself, in the *movement* from alienation to empowerment, in decision-making, in action.

Collective action frames and constructs meaning. Any movement against oppression has to develop a new diagnosis and remedy for existing forms of suffering (Moore 1978). This is what Snow et al. call "framing work" (1986). Frames like injustice are, for example, powerful mobilising resources (Tarrow 1994, Gamson 1988, Moore 1978 and Snow et al. 1986). Racism, repression and discrimination are examples of injustices which have mobilised people all over the world in social movements and collective action.

Successful movements combine framing legacies with strategic choices and create unique symbols of struggle. In South Africa, ANC colours were used in ordinary clothes as well as those worn on marches. Stickers, T-shirts and specific slogans became part of collective action and soon penetrated everyday life as symbols of opposition and of the struggle for democracy. Tarrow argues that the most far-reaching consequences of social movements are the slow and incremental changes they bring about in political culture. We find reflections of these changes, he argues, in changes in political agendas and in the changing frames for collective action. Zolberg (1972) argues along the same lines. In his opinion (ibid:206), collective action and social movements bring about substantial transformations in which new ideas, which were initially formulated in small groups, will emerge as widely held beliefs amongst a large public through intense learning experiences. These new ideas are then anchored in new networks which will also be mobilised and lead ultimately to these ideas becoming institutionalised. Collective action by social movements escalates, in other words, into social "movement cycles" (Tarrow 1994) and disseminates their ideas and norms to a broader public.

In Tarrow's opinion (ibid), the organisation of social movements takes three forms: we speak of formal organisation, organisation of collective action and thirdly of the mobilising structures that link leaders to the organisation of collective action. The social movement for democracy in South Africa had many different components and the struggle was fought at different levels with various degrees of institutionalisation. We have in this essay considered a combination of them. Participation in *stokvels*, youth organisations and women's groups on the one hand and in strikes, political marches and rent boycotts on the other hand are all different forms of individual participation, which together form different kinds of collective action. The trade-union movement took over leadership

of the social movement for democracy in the 80s, however, when other forms of protest and civil society politics became difficult to carry out in the face of state repression. It was here, in the unions, that people seem to have acquired the tools and instruments for participation, which were to prove important for the opposition to apartheid. It was in the unions that people learned the significance and value of *participation* in politics and also in broader civil society. And it was civil society participation and broader political participation at the next stage which taught people democratic attitudes and values.

Let us just briefly first look at the congruence between specific sets of values and political as well as civil society activities. Table 12.2 shows the correlation matrix between different political activities and civil society activities. All these activities are fairly closely related to one another. One exception is the correlation between participation in opposition politics and activities related to "apartheid" politics – i.e. participation in local government elections and meetings of local government. Clearly, it is hard also in reality to distinguish between political activities and civil society engagement in South Africa. In the following, we distinguish between, on the one hand, those activities that are directly aimed at changing political decisions or institutions and, on the other hand, those that are more related to improving people's living standards, catering for cultural or religious needs or promoting socio-economic interests. We have, however, included participation in strikes under political activities.[497]

[497] In reality, strikes and (politically motivated) stay-aways are hard to separate. While some stay-aways have been clear in their political goals – e.g. the stay-aways in protest against the white elections – others, like the stay-aways in protest against the Labour Relations Act, are harder to define as clear political acts (rather than as civil society acts). Furthermore, words like stay-aways and strikes are often used interchangeably by workers and unions. Finally, this is reflected in a very strong, significant correlation between the two: r .51.

Table 12.2 Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between Different Kinds of Political Activities amongst Black Workers (n 861)[498]
(2tailed signif: * .01 ** .001).[499]

	Strike	Stay-Aways	Political Marches	Rent Boycotts	School Boycotts	Consumer Boycotts
Stay-Aways	.50**		.43**	.34**	.15**	.48**
Political Marches	.33**	.43**		.21**	.20**	.28**
Rent Boycotts	.24**	.34**	.21**		.15**	.38**
School Boycotts	.13**	.15**	.20**	.15**		.14**
Consumer Boycotts	.36**	.48**	.28**	.38**	.14**	
Political Meetings	.19**	.31**	.51**	.19**	.13**	.31**
Local Elections	.05	.08	.18**	.16**	.04	.14**
Meetings Local govt.	.00	.05	.15**	.12**	.11**	.08
Parents school Meetings	.09	.13**	.10*	.15**	.17**	.17**
Civic Meetings	.21**	.28**	.29**	.22**	.12**	.28**

[498] Often or sometimes participated in any of the following activities.
[499] Strikes, stay aways, political meetings, political marches, civics meetings, school boycotts, rent boycotts, consumer boycotts, school parents meetings, local elections, meetings of local government.

	Political Meetings	Local Elections	Meetings Local govt.	Parents school Meetings
Stay-Aways	.31**	.08	.05	.13**
Political Marches	.52**	.18**	.16**	.10*
Rent Boycotts	.19**	.16**	.11**	.15**
School boycotts	.13**	.04	.11**	.17**
Consumer Boycotts	.30**	.14**	.09	.17**
Political meetings		.31**	.20**	.26**
Local elections	.31**		.53**	.19**
Meetings local govt.	.20**	.53**		.13**
Parents meetings	.26**	.19**	.13**	
Civic meetings	.38**	.22**	.17**	.31**

We also compared civil society activities with political activities amongst black workers on the basis of two constructed indexes composed of degree of activity.[500] Civil society activities and political participation are strongly correlated.[501] Those who are most active in civil society organisations are also most active in political life, but even those who are "only" *members* of civil society organisations are also active in political life (r .22).

[500] The civil society index is constructed as the degree of activity in the Church, unions, *stokvels*, civics, cultural groups, youth organisations, women's groups, sports clubs and social clubs. The political activity index was composed as participation in a number of the following activities: political meetings, marches, strikes, and stay-aways. Boycott activities, which are highly politicised in South Africa, were also included in this new index: participation in school boycotts, consumer boycotts and rent boycotts.
[501] Pearsons r of .42. Significant at .001 level two-tailed.

Table 12.3 Correlation Matrix between Indexes of Participation and Democratic Consciousness (n 844) (Twotailed signif: * .01 ** .001)[502]

Correlations:	CIVORG	CIVACT	POLACT	TRUST	ETHNIC	DEMRESP
CIVACT	.19**		.42**	.07	.17**	.09
POLACT	.22**	.42**		.18**	.12**	.06
TRUST	.08	.07	.18**		.53**	.00
ETHNIC	.03	.17**	.12**	.53**		.05
DEMRESP	–	.09	.06	.00	.05	
IDENT	.12**	.04	.06	.20**	.06	.08

We used MCA in order to see the extent to which political action may be explained by civil society engagement, degree of organisational membership and our democratic consciousness indicators. The result is portrayed in Figure 12.12 below. Three factors have a significant impact upon the degree of political activity: whether people are members of civil society organisations, take part in civil society activities; and whether they have confidence in the democratic system and politicians or not. The extent to which people have respect for majority decisions and believe in the need to participate in politics (for the sake of the community) has, on the other hand, no significant effect upon the degree of political participation. Neither has respect for non-racism.
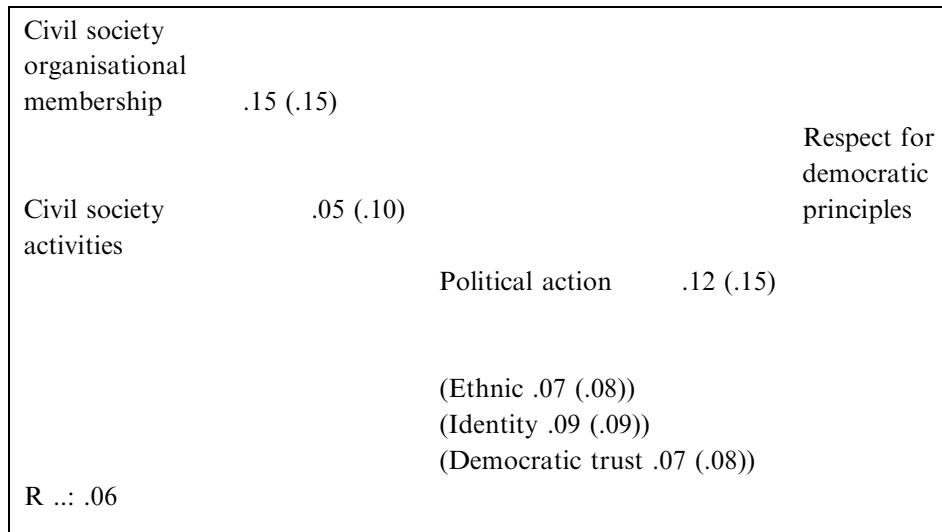
Figure 12.12 Political Activity amongst Black Workers (n 861).

Civil society
organisational membership   .15 (.26)   Political
                                                      activity

Civil society   .41 (.44)
activities

                                                      Democratic trust .15 (.21)

R : .26

[502] CIVORG = membership in civil society organisations; CIVACT = degree of activity within civil society organisations; POLACT = degree of political activity; TRUST = trust in politicians; ETHNIC = trust in other ethnic groups; and DEMRESP = respect for majority decisions.

Turning this around, we looked at the extent to which respect and support for democratic procedures can be explained by degree of political activity and civil society engagement. The results of this MCA analysis are shown in Figure 12.13.

Figure 12.13   Respect for Democratic Principles amongst Black Workers (n 861)

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Civil society
organisational
membership          .15 (.15)
                                                        Respect for
                                                        democratic
Civil society               .05 (.10)                   principles
activities
                                Political action         .12 (.15)


                                (Ethnic .07 (.08))
                                (Identity .09 (.09))
                                (Democratic trust .07 (.08))
R ..: .06
```

Engagement in civil society organisations seems to be the factor of most importance for political action, civil society activities, democratic trust and the development of a national identity amongst individuals.[503] However, while they point to a strong relationship between civil society activities and political participation, these models do not have much explanatory power. We need to look closer at the structural cleavages and the relationship between structural and ideological factors in order to grasp how democratic citizens are formed.

Trust in politicians is also correlated with the degree of political participation. Those who are most active in politics also place most trust in politicians.[504] Furthermore, those who are most active in civil society

[503] Significant effect at .05 level eta .14, beta .13.
[504] The correlation between trust and political participation: r .18 (signif. at .001 level two-tailed signif. test).

activities identify themselves more often as South Africans than in terms of their own ethnic background.[505] The likelihood of identifying oneself as a South African also tends to go together with trust in politicians.

Furthermore, we compared the group of highly active political workers with the less active to see if we found differences in democratic commitment. The workers who felt most affected by politics and who thought that they themselves were able to influence their own living conditions through political action were also the workers who placed the most trust in political leaders and parties while also believing that they themselves would be able to give directions to Parliament.[506] Furthermore, the activist workers – i.e. those who participated most often in stay-aways, strikes, political meetings and marches – are also the workers who have most trust in the new system and most respect for majority decisions but simultaneously they are those who have the highest expectations, are most easily mobilised for action if the government fails to deliver and expect to be able to give directions to Parliament. Let us look closer at the extent to which ideological cleavages influence political attitudes and democratic behaviour.

Respect for majority decisions and belief in the need to engage in politics in order to promote the welfare of the community is enhanced by the degree of political activity but not by civil society engagement.[507] Yet, the degree of political activity is itself heavily affected by civil society engagement. Either we find here a spurious effect or the causal hierarchy is one in which political activity influences civil society engagement rather than the opposite. Civil society and political engagement enter into a complex relationship which needs to be investigated more in detail after also looking closer at the significance of structural cleavages.

We analysed the degree of political activity against the background of civil society activities and the structural factors, race and gender which we had found earlier to influence heavily the extent to which people participate in politics. Figure 12.14 shows us the results.

[505] Degree of engagement in civil society activities correlation with ethnic/national identity: r .11 (signif. at .01 level, two-tailed signif. test).

[506] More than 70 per cent of workers saying they influenced their own lives through political actions said they expected to be able to give directions to Parliament, as compared with about 50 per cent of workers who felt that their own actions had no effect.

[507] Pol. act. eta .15, beta .14.

Race	. 53 (.55)	
		Political
Gender	.08 (.12)	participation
	Civil society	
	participation	.22 (.32)
Multiple R Squared	.37	
Multiple R	.61	

Civil society participation has an independent strong effect upon the degree of political participation. With a shortage of schools, family settings and other institutions to teach people the skills and values of decision-making and collective affairs, civil society seems to have taken on that role. Looking at the index of democratic trust analysed in the previous chapters (trust in politicians, in the political system and in parties) we find again that political participation has a strong independent effect upon the extent to which people have political trust (Figure 12.15)

Figure 12.15 Political Trust amongst the Politically Active (n 1002).

Race	15 (.19)**	
		Democratic trust
(Gender	.02 (.01))	
	(Civil society participation	.09 (.10))
	Political participation	.18 (.23)**
Multiple R squared:	.09	
Multiple R	.30	

This would seem to indicate that it is political participation which divides the population into more and less active people in civil society and that it is political participation which determines the extent to which people believe that politicians, parties and the political system will take care of people.

As opportunities widen and information spreads about the vulnerability of a political system to challenge, not only activists but also ordinary people start to test the limits of social control. It was on that basis that collective action escalated in South Africa in the 80s. In other words

social movements acquire their own dynamics and as the cycle of protest and action continues, new opportunities for power and successful outcomes are opened up. The power to trigger collective action is not necessarily the same power required to control or sustain collective action. Small groups triggered off collective action in South Africa, but through strategic vision and organisational talents, strong internal organisation, tight shop-floor and local power and flexible, but solid external alliances collective action was sustained and escalated into cycles of action.

Political culture and social organisation may be important intervening variables between structural factors and political outcomes. In Tarrow's words (1994:3):

> "bringing people together in co-ordinated collective action at strategic moments of history against powerful targets requires a social solution,- what I will call the need to solve the social transaction costs of collective action. This involves mounting collective challenges, drawing on common purposes, building solidarity and sustained collective action - the basic properties of social movements".

However, while political participation and the collective action carried forward by civil society provided a significant learning experience for the people involved, the social movement was also of more general importance to the less active. The democratic struggle gained legitimacy amongst the black population at large. The general levels of democratic trust and consciousness in the black population are high. Simultaneously, while participation functioned as a development process in which values, priorities and attitudes were digested and fermented, there must have been a general collective spirit and consciousness there to begin with. If black culture had been one of alienation and "exit" (suggested as one option for action in Chapter 2 of this thesis), the developmental potential of civil society and collective action would hardly have brought the social movement and the alliance structures to the point where they were at the end of the 80s. If the culture had been one of general alienation, it seems more likely that the trade- union movement itself would have been more stubborn in maintaining its focus upon the shop floor and only pursuing the economic interests of their members. It seems more likely that there was a collective culture there at the point of departure, which was carried forward by civil society organisations and the unions. Through civil society

organisations, values and culture latent in the population were interpreted and given organisational expression, and through participation, latent values became manifest.

Rational choice and political culture are not incompatible but rather complementary modes of explanation. The most common denominator of collective action is common interests. Still, interests are no more than an objective category imposed by outsiders. It is participants' *recognition* of their common interests that translates the potential for movement into collective action (Tarrow 1994:5). Leaders can only create social movements and collective action in Tarrow's opinion if they tap more deep-rooted feelings of solidarity or identity and this is why nationalism, ethnicity (based on real or imagined ties) or religion (based on common devotion) have been more reliable bases for the organisation of movements in the past than social class (ibid). Common purpose, collective identities and identifiable challenges help movements pursue sustained collective action.

State performance is definitely *one* factor influencing legitimacy, but scholars are now beginning to insist that the structure of opposition is the *key* variable affecting political support and that state performance is virtually irrelevant (Weld 1989). No state can survive in a long-term perspective without a minimum of legitimacy within the population. When the opposition gets organised and is carried forward by escalating collective action, any regime will easily move towards collapse.

V   CONCLUDING REMARKS ON LABOUR, DEMOCRACY AND NATION-BUILDING

13 A discussion of our findings: the South African case and implications for theory

In the international arena, the balance of power between unions and employers has generally swung against labour during the last decade. Membership and militancy have declined in many countries[508] and the institutional power of unions now carries less political weight (Mouriaux 1996). Reasons for this can be found in changes in labour markets, increasingly internationalised economies and the introduction of new technology, flexibility policies and various instruments of individualised reward systems. Union decline can also be caused by ineffective unionism or by internal political divisions in the labour movement as well as by government policies that undermine union power. There has to some extent been a transformation away from ideological labour movements towards pluralist interest organisations. The interests of workers and union members have changed, and so has the nature and essence of trade unionism in many countries in the Western world.

By contrast, unions have gained increased political power and social force in several developing countries and in countries in the process of democratisation. The political power of unions in mobilising for democracy can be observed in countries such as Brazil, Poland, the Philippines, Zambia and not least South Africa. Recent political changes as well as economic recession, inflation and unemployment are, however, factors which turn our attention towards the new role of labour in national restructuring in both developed and developing countries. Simultaneously, the past few years have seen an increase in academic interest in the role, impact and content of social movements and civil society. Civil society, it is argued, plays an important role in newly democratised countries in the developing world. On the threshold between the experiences of the Western

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[508] Trends in unionisation rates vary, however. French, Portuguese, Austrian and Spanish unions, for example, lost many members between 1970 and 1990, while the Nordic unions in general gained members during the same period (Mouriaux 1996:5).

world and those of the developing countries, the question emerges as to what implications our new-found knowledge has for the development of theory and research as well as for concrete policy-making in the future.

13.1 Democratisation and nation-building

While theories concerning democratisation have focused upon necessary economic growth and institutional development, this thesis started from the assumption that civil society and political culture also play a role in striving for and maintaining democracy. We do not attempt here to give a causal explanation of the relationship between a strong civil society and the fall of apartheid. Other factors obviously played a role as well. Ultimately, however, political changes were to a large extent brought about by a change in the attitude of the ruling regime, which realised that it would have to start negotiating with the democratic opposition. In this sense, the political turn-around in South Africa was unique compared with many other African countries where political change came about as a result of military, or violent, opposition, warfare or coup d'etats.[509] Yet, the changes in the views and strategies of the ruling party and its leaders came about because international sanctions and, probably even more important, continual mass action, strikes, stay-aways and internal opposition had made the costs of maintaining apartheid too high. Furthermore, the costs of political *change* had become smaller because of the fall of the communist bloc and the decrease in support for the ANC amongst international socialists. While acknowledging the role played by other factors, this thesis has aimed to demonstrate that civil society in South Africa is *strong* and that the trade-union movement in particular, through its collective action and as an interest group campaigning for the redistribution of resources, has probably played a crucial role as an agent of political change.

Stable democracy is not an automatic consequence of economic development. Economic development may encourage, but not does *guarantee*, the emergence of democratic institutions and a culture in which they can flourish. The economic growth, industrialisation and urbanisation in South Africa in the 70s created the conditions necessary for working-

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[509] In this sense, there was no internal civil war in South Africa.

class organisation. Simultaneously, the new settings in which these newly "urbanised" people found themselves – namely deprived of their stable rural background and social norms, deprived of their friends and family and forced by social, economic and political circumstances into the same poor living conditions as many other people of a similar age, social background and aspirations – provided the background for the internalisation of a collective consciousness of race and class.

Both modernisation theory and the dependency school can help to identify some of the principal factors explaining political change in South Africa. Modernisation theory stressed structural and economic factors and economic growth; and economic development in South Africa was indeed important in preparing the ground for the democratisation process that took place. Yet, modernisation theory pays little attention to the beneficiaries of economic activity and to socio-cultural factors. Furthermore, the effects of economic development upon political change to a large extent functioned indirectly through the organisations and institutions of civil society that had developed on the basis of economic development. Furthermore, it was chiefly the growth of the 60s *combined* with the stagnation of the 70s which mobilised people politically. The first wave of growth helped build the trade-union movement, giving workers the instruments and channels for protest during the second wave of stagnation. Dependency studies, on the other hand, turn our attention towards external factors and international relations in explaining political change. As a result of sanctions and international boycotts of the apartheid regime, a "laager" economy developed in South Africa, which ultimately put increasing pressure upon the political regime for change. Yet, neither the modernisation school, nor the dependency school nor the statist school paid much attention to state-society relations or to socio-cultural factors. The struggle for democracy in South Africa was also marked by the activities of civil society and the particular cultural and structural *characteristics* of that society. Thus, the *political interaction framework* goes beyond the limitations of existing schools of thought and presumes that the state-society relationship is central to understanding the political dynamic of South Africa today. It focuses on identifying the multiple factors at work and acknowledges that social, economic, organisational and cultural factors all define constraints and available options at any given historical moment. Government institutions are indeed significant actors, but so are individuals, social groups, organisations and traditional authority structures. Political competition encompasses struggles over material, political and normative resources, over identity and interests,

over institutions and symbols. By studying the political process in South Africa from this perspective, it is possible to trace more accurately the shifting political patterns that led towards democracy. It was not economic developments alone or industrialisation which led to democracy in South Africa, neither was it the international sanctions and boycotts. The pressures from civil society organisations seem to have been one of the final straws that broke the back of the apartheid government and persuaded it to change its political views.
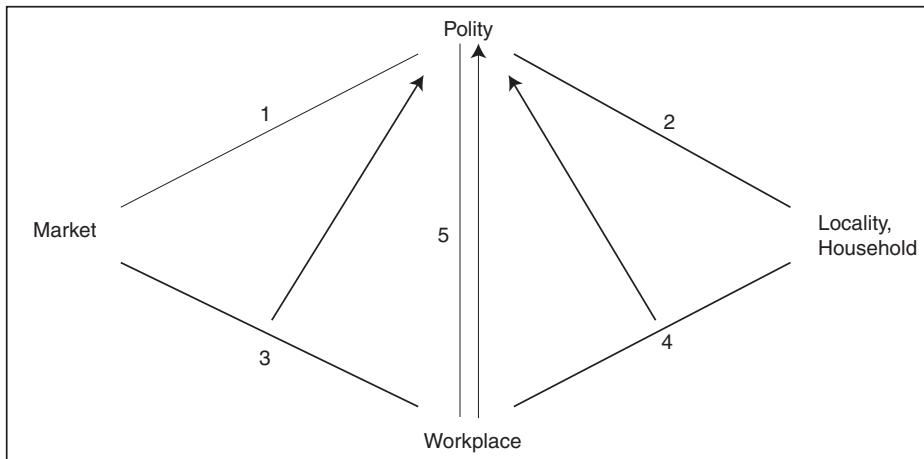
The threshold of *legitimation* (see Rokkan 1970) – i.e. the point from which there is effective recognition of the right to petition, criticise, and stage demonstrations against the regime, etc. – was crossed in South Africa only in 1990, while the thresholds of *incorporation* and of *representation* were crossed only in 1994.[510] In Chapter 1 we introduced four functional segments in which different groups of actors or elites are born and in which resources can be mobilised either in alliance and support or in opposition. Figure 13.1 below portrays our model for democratisation and nation-building in South Africa. These are the spheres or segments of society generally recognised as generating interests, potential cleavages and culture. The pressures, counter-pressures and political competition within/between these segments (which may be referred to as dimensions – economic, functional, territorial and so on) encompass struggles over material, political and normative resources, over identity and interests, over institutions and symbols and in turn determine the extent to which, and the speed at which, the thresholds mentioned above are passed.

The speed at which the thresholds were passed was determined by the mobilisation of all the segments mentioned above simultaneously. Pressures within the territorial (2), functional (3) and economic (1) segments had already been building up since the late 80s. Through the mobilisation of employers through the bargaining channel and of the general public through political meetings, marches and stay-aways, civil society and the trade-union movement in particular seized the political initiative in the late 80s. Why did this not happen before? Why did the turn-around come in 1990? The focus upon the role of civil society does not imply that this was the *only* factor of importance in the democratisation process in South Africa. The collapse of communism in Eastern

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[510] Incorporation refers to the formal recognition of participation being extended to everyone on an equal basis and the threshold of representation refers to the access to representation for new movements and parties.

Europe reduced the fears amongst NP leaders of the communist threat associated with majority rule in South Africa. Economic developments lent urgency to the desire to become a full member of the world economy. The change of leadership in the NP also played a role. Yet, the mobilisation of civil society was a decisive factor in the process.

Figure 13.1   Nation-building in South Africa

13.2 Civil society and democratisation

Lodge (1996:194) says: "If a democratic political culture depended only on high levels of popular political activity, then the habits and attitudes engendered by the township rebellion would hold out considerable hope for the future. Some of this hope would not be misplaced". The communal organisations constructed in the 80s *did* help to change popular attitudes to unjust authority, to alter popular expectations of government and to instil more egalitarian political values (Mkhabela 1994).

This thesis has confirmed the role of civil society in a broad sense as a learning ground for political attitudes and for democratic change. While trade unions served as schools to instil in workers the concrete skills and practices of political participation and decision-making, civil society in a broader sense taught people the basic attitudes, trust and expectations necessary in order for a democracy to get a good start.

Even most participatory democrats have neglected the role of civil society as a learning area for democratic values and participation as well as assumptions of political spill-over from organisational life to politics. Yet,

this thesis confirms that civil society involvement generally brings with it stronger support for democratic attitudes and behaviour. Likewise, Bratton and Liatto-Katundu (1993) were struck by the fact that where local associations were active in Zambia, there seemed to be a greater sense of civic competence and a more optimistic view of the direction that Zambia would take. Without conclusive evidence, they still sense and suggest that there is a positive connection between community organisation and effective democratic representation. Membership in community organisations is a stepping stone to political participation in wider national arenas in Zambia (Bratton & Liatto-Katundu 1994). A recent study of villages in Tanzania found that households in villages with high social capital[511] have higher incomes than do households with lower levels of social capital (World Bank 1997:115). Important spill-over effects arise at village level from individual participation in local associations and groups.

Studies of social movements, although varying in focus, definitions and causal explanations, share some common components and definitions (Diani 1992:17). They all, for example, focus upon the networks of relations between a plurality of actors, on a collective identity uniting them and on a "common enemy" that brings people together and mobilises them in the first place. The goals of social mobilisation in Africa were in most cases linked to the liberation struggle. The types of social movements that emerged reflected both historical factors (shaped by both external and internal forces) and material conditions. Writers like Dahl (1971, 1982) have already focused upon pluralism as a necessary component of functioning, stable, consolidated democracies. In periods or situations dominated by injustice, repression or discrimination, this plurality can take on a dynamic that does not bode well for authoritarian rule.

Yet, certain conditions seem to be needed in order for civil society to play a constructive role in the process of democratisation. First, unity in civil society was an important factor in the South African struggle. The dismantling of apartheid would by implication entail different things for different social forces, but competing interest groups would have undermined the struggle for democracy. In a move towards unity, the working class and the Left were brought together by the "two-stage theory" of revolution ("liberation first, socialism thereafter"). Furthermore, as long as the liberation struggle did not specify its conception of democracy, it

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[511] Defined in terms of the degree of participation in village-level social organisations.

allowed for unity of classes (Campbell 1987). The lack of religious or ethnic cleavages in civil society was in this respect also a huge advantage. Second, civil society needs to be democratically organised in order to serve as a school for democracy. This becomes important as a political strategy in order to survive repression and political restrictions but also for the concrete participatory learning of members themselves.

The existence of social movements and their location in civil society is one of the remarkable characteristics of the evolving South African political system (Swilling 1991:97). An entire generation has grown up in a system of socialisation that has defined the struggle for economic survival, identity and power in terms of collective activities rooted in the school, sports clubs, the Church, the street, the neighbourhood, the township and the home. It may well be that their continued survival and autonomy is a precondition for the creation of a flexible, multifaceted, robust, pluralistic, post-apartheid democratic order. Against this background, students of democratic processes should give more attention to the role of civil society and the conditions necessary for civil society to play a constructive role in democratisation.

13.3 Unions as agents or laboratories of democratic change?

Lafferty (1989:104) argues that there is virtually no country which has experienced a revolution from within where industrial labour has provided crucial leadership. His statement, however, preceded the developments in South Africa. The South African labour movement is particularly intriguing because it could not have been predicted by most development theories. Modernisation theory predicted that with industrialisation, unions would gradually mature and become more bureaucratic while remaining economist. Corporatist and pluralist theories would have expected South African labour to be economist, oriented towards the needs and rational choices of its constituencies. There was also clear scepticism amongst some in the struggle movement in South Africa concerning open working-class organisation. This stemmed from the view that the apartheid state was too powerful and that the only form of struggle appropriate to the strength of the state apparatus was armed struggle (Henson 1978). The issue of working-class rights could only be

solved through military struggle, it was argued. Yet, developments in South Africa turned in another direction, towards a socio-political, trade union-based opposition movement.

Rueschemeyer et al. (1992) argue that capitalist development is associated with democracy because it transforms the class structure. They found that the centrality of class power in the process of democratisation was repeatedly confirmed in the comparative studies they conducted: the organised working class appeared as a key actor in the development of full democracy almost everywhere (1992:270). In all regions, however, they argue that pressure from the organised working class alone was insufficient to bring about the introduction of democracy: it needed allies (op. cit.). The same argument has been proposed by Valenzuela (1989) and others and is confirmed in the South African case. The building of the tripartite alliance came about as a consequence of the closure of both the electoral and the corporate channel. Rokkan (1977) argues that the "separation of the Siamese twins" (labour movement and labour party) was, and is, generally a consequence of differing opportunities in the electoral and the corporate channel. In South Africa, however, they were both closed through the 70s, and when the corporate channel opened up in 1979, the roots of the alliance had already been forged.

The South African trade-union movement did not bring about democracy *alone*. It had strong allies in civil society, in the ANC abroad and in the international trade-union movement, which provided funds as well as support and lobbying of national governments for the imposition of international sanctions. However, while political restrictions, states of emergencies etc. increasingly limit and silence other groups, trade unions are generally far more difficult to restrict owing to their power base in the economy and on the factory floor. Against that background, the emerging alliances with the employers' organisations and big capital through the latter part of the 80s undoubtedly played a role in bringing about political change.

In assessing the significance of trade unions, we usually consider the impact of wage and employment levels, the operation of labour markets, economic growth and income distribution. Simultaneously, labour can also have a profound influence upon the legitimacy and functioning of the political system as such. In South Africa, labour, and COSATU in particular, was the vanguard of the political struggle in the late 70s and 80s. Through collective action, as well as through the bargaining channel, labour contributed to the redistribution of both political and socio-economic resources and hence put additional pressure upon the regime.

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On this basis, the role of unions as agents for political change in South Africa is confirmed. Moreover, it fails to support general assumptions about and "models/stereotypes?" of African labour movements as unrepresentative supporters of authoritarian regimes. Even where the trade-union movement is seen as representative of broader interests than those of a small number of trade-union leaders, it is still regarded as representing only its members (and their economic interests) at the expense of the broader population and (very often) the majority, which is outside the formal sectors of the economy. Our South African "story" contradicts such a stereotype of African labour and portrays instead a trade-union movement which has adopted broad political goals and national interests.

There is, however, also another dimension of trade unionism which is generally overlooked, namely the role of unions as schools and laboratories for democratic change. Marx suggested that unions could only generate union consciousness and that the levels of production of labour power, on which wages and living standards are based, are historically determined through struggles between classes. This thesis has demonstrated that democratic behaviour accrues from experience in democratic decision-making and for most people the main place for gaining such experience is the trade-union movement.

The social composition of the UDF, which emerged in the early 80s, reflected the expansion of urbanised youth and working-class culture, which had emerged in the townships after 1976 (Campbell 1987:153). Campbell argues:

> " the techniques of organisation and mobilisation, graphic posters, pamphleteering, films, videos, mass meetings and selective use of the media also corresponded to the new skills and confidence of black workers and their allies".

On this basis, democratic theory should give more focus to the role of economic institutions and trade unions in particular as agents and laboratories for democratic change.

13.4 Democratic culture and citizenship

Of concern for the stability of democracy is the formation of citizens and of political culture. Being a citizen entails not only voting but also engaging in a much broader range of activities that distinguish one as a member of a political community to which one feels loyal. These include political participation, civil activities and public service and participation in voluntary or interest organisations. Different citizenship profiles constitute different sorts of civic identities and ways of public life.

Given the social fabric of South Africa, with its astonishing racial divisions and its lack of a basic consensus about national symbols and identity, many have questioned whether the potential for a single nation and a single citizenship exists at all (James 1989). Under the apartheid system blacks had been seen as belonging to a different nation, with identities and characteristics fundamentally different from those of whites. Furthermore, they were seen as objects for control and paternalistic discipline, as permanent potential enemies of the state (James 1989:2).

What is important for newly born democracies is the development of a citizenship amongst whom there is a balanced mix of participation versus passivity, legitimacy and trust versus blind loyalty or alienation and high expectations versus the will to compromise. In fact, the distinctive property of Almond and Verba's civic culture is not its orientation towards participation but its *mixed* quality. In this respect South Africa's new democracy seems to have got off to a promising start. Participation is high and so is trust in democratic institutions, political parties and leaders. While expectations of what democracy should deliver are high, there is also a relatively strong will to compromise and to use democratic means for resolving conflicts. The crucial question is whether and how active participants in resistance politics in South Africa can be turned into active, supportive citizens of the new regime. But while such a high degree of involvement in resistance politics would be a challenge to representative democracy in any country, the need to bring resistance fighters into formal channels is facilitated by strong organisations and general support and legitimacy for organisational participation in political decision-making.

Political culture and social organisation are intermediate variables between economic development and democracy. In South Africa, culture and participation also seem to be able to play their own independent roles in democratic consolidation. Yet, to the extent that political culture is treated as an independent variable in research on democratic consolidation, it is *elite* culture that has been focused on. Although much recent

treatment of consolidation processes has recognised the importance of a moderate, accommodating style of political behaviour, it has generally neglected or completely ignored mass culture (Diamond 1994:11). In this respect, this thesis has added new information about the causes and content of values and behaviour that are crucial for democratic development.

Furthermore, in Diamond's opinion (op. cit.) students of democratic culture focus mainly upon behaviour and little on the complex processes by which behaviour sheds its contingent, instrumental quality and becomes rooted in enduring values. This thesis has attempted to throw some light upon the process of participation and show how, in the South African case, it is no longer just an instrumental process aimed at furthering self-interests but has become a collective exercise with political change and democracy as its goals.

There is, in Bratton's (1989) opinion, a crisis of political authority in Africa that is just as severe as the well-known crisis of economic production. Loss of legitimacy is reflected in several ways: official corruption; disregard for the rule of law, manifested in crime and banditry; and poor economic performance, which undermines political legitimacy.

Prominent theories of democracy have asserted that it requires a distinctive set of values and orientations from its citizens in order to survive. This thesis shows that democratic culture is shaped and reshaped by a variety of factors: by political learning from historical experiences, by institutional change and political socialisation and by political participation itself. A crude stereotype of political culture sees in it a causal determinism, whereby political culture more or less predetermines both political structures and political behaviour (Diamond 1994:8). However, this thesis suggests that political attitudes and behaviour are involved in a more complex, interdependent relationship. To what extent attitudes concerning democratic change in South Africa will be internalised into enduring values, or whether they *express* such enduring values, is difficult to say on the basis of our study. Surveys in the period going back to the very beginning of the 90s as well as up to the middle of 1996 reveal, however, enduring, sturdy trust in and legitimacy for democracy. In spite of the failure of the system to deliver many socio-economic benefits, people still support democracy as the most legitimate system for decision-making and resolving conflicts.

To Durkheim culture was collective consciousness and to Comte it was consensus.[512] The results of this thesis indicate that it may seem as if South Africans are determined to prove them both right. We have also seen some of the institutions that help create, reinforce or carry forward such a collective identity and consensus – in particular unions and civil society. There must, however, also have been a collective identity and consciousness there to begin with, stemming from the African ubuntu tradition and/or from a feeling of collective unity created by apartheid repression.

Some have argued that the participatory bodies that came into being in the 80s did not acknowledge the moral legitimacy of political differences and that their pyramidal structure reflected a view of the community as an organic unity with consequent competition, violence etc. To some extent, there may be a conflict between people's support and respect in principle for opposing and competing political views on the one hand and the violence and intolerance which erupted in some of the townships in the early 90s on the other hand (see Chapter 3). However, the latter was also to some extent a product of the "divide and rule" tactics of the apartheid state. What our study does indicate is that in the areas best organised by civil society, tolerance was at its highest. Furthermore, in the post-apartheid setting, political violence is almost non-existent.

13.5 Rational choice and culture

In the 70s and early 80s, the rational choice and public choice model became the cutting edge of political science. In the early 90s, however, the field reopened to studies of political culture.[513]

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[512] Eckstein (1996) refers to Durkheim and Comte. He argues that Durkheim never used the concept of culture, but "collective consciousness" came to mean the same thing.

[513] Diamond (1994) argues that one of the reasons for the renewed legitimacy of cultural theory lay in the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, which showed the world that political developments (and people's political attitudes) could not simply be derived from economic developments.

Three to four million man-days were lost in strikes in South Africa every year through the late 80s and early 90s. Millions of workers, students and others were likewise involved in politically motivated stay-aways. People turned up in their hundreds of thousands to demonstrations, boycotts, political marches and meetings. At the same time, political activities were severely restricted and sanctioned. South Africa is, as we have seen, one of the most thoroughly organised countries in the world: people take part in civics and residence committees, youth and students' organisations, women's groups, *stokvels*, etc. So how can we explain this pattern of escalating collective action?

Street argues that in order for political culture to have an explanatory force in relation to action, it must do more than simply fill out the details of political action; it must shape or determine the character and intentions of that action, and it must do so more persuasively than materialist or rational choice theories (Street 1993).

Under apartheid, blacks in South Africa had three options: escape, protest or imitation, or in Hirschman's (1970) words: "exit, voice and loyalty". The most "rational" strategy might have been either to "exit" or to show some degree of "loyalty" to the regime. It was hardly rational to go on strike or participate in stay-aways in a country with no strike funds where retrenchments were the likely outcome. It was hardly "rational" to engage in collective actions threatening one's own life and those of one's family and friends. But that is exactly what people did in their thousands.

The micro-oriented rational choice theory has not been too interested in studying *where* our values come from.[514] Moreover, while rational choice theory may on its own be insufficient to predict social outcomes in South Africa, political socialisation theory is, with its focus primarily upon childhood learning in the family and schools, likewise unable to successfully explain the learning process behind the development of political culture. Both theories offer fruitful perspectives, and analyses using only one or the other have often focused only on one form of explanation. But social action is guided by *both* consistent rationality on the one hand and identity, social norms and values on the other hand. In

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[514] While structural theories look at preferences as directly following from structures, rational choice theory focuses on the process by which people choose. However, although they presume that values and attitudes explain our choices, they treat them as external and beyond interest and explanation (Selle & Berntzen 1991)

order to understand the former, we need to examine the development of the latter. This is particularly important in non-Western societies and in societies undergoing major political transitions where goals, preferences and identities may change equally rapidly.

This thesis has indicated that amongst the sets of influences (which were to some extent competing sets of values) that people had around them, it was the African ubuntu and industrial as well as opposition civil society cultures that had the greatest impact. On the basis of the former collective action became "rational", but it was only through the latter two that the "rationality" of collective action and democratic ideals was interpreted, given direction and carried forward. Mbigi and Maree (1995) argue that "South Africa owes the birth of its nation to the emancipating spirit of Ubuntu", and to some extent I would agree with that. The extent to which people express democratic trust and the attitudes and behaviour revealed in the surveys explored in this thesis are hard to understand in any other way.

13.6 Political cleavages: race and class

The structure and intensity of political cleavages will have an impact upon the stability of the new-won democracy in South Africa during transition. Ethnic cleavages have generally become one of the most important cleavages in nation-building all over Africa. In South Africa, ethnic cleavages were cited as one of the bases for legitimising apartheid, "separate development" and the establishment of "homelands" as well as the principle of "divide and rule", which was generally employed towards blacks. At the same time, race rather than ethnicity is the main factor explaining variations in political expectations, attitudes and behaviour. Johnson & Schlemmer (1996:92), referring to race, argue that:

> "given the recent controversies in the social sciences in SA about the continued relevance of 'ethnicity' as opposed to social class factors, it is worth pointing out how far ethnic factors appeared to swamp material interests in the SA context. Thus, the most euphoric group in the population consisted of unemployed Africans (with over 75 per cent excited or happy about the elections) and the most fearful group consisted of unemployed whites, with over 93 per cent fearful or unhappy".

Many would expect Africans to be the most politically alienated. Under apartheid they were not able to take part in formal political channels; they were subject to the Bantu educational system, which was based on the idea of segregation and measured human worth according to skin colour; and they were denied most political, social and economic dimensions of citizenship, which in turn would be expected to affect their self-confidence and self-image. Yet, Africans are surprisingly politically conscious, confident and active. They feel well informed, confident and capable of influencing politics and hold attitudes to redistribution and the collective spirit which are congruent with, and an important part of, nation-building. There is also a difference in political activity between women and men. Male workers participate more actively in politics than women. And while more black women than men participate in *stokvels* and the Church, men's domain is the civics and the unions. However, while pre-industrial structural cleavages are the most important ones in South African politics, these cleavages overlap to a large extent with social class, income and labour organisation. It is first and foremost the semi-skilled and skilled male, organised black workers in manufacturing who constitute the political activists in South Africa.

The working class has been our main object of study. This "narrow" focus is, however, legitimised by the escalating mass action which was led by the militant democratic trade-union movement through the 80s, and by national, comprehensive surveys which confirm high activity patterns amongst the working class.[515] Industrial societies do indeed create, as stated by Dahl (1971), a system of dispersed inequalities under which actors who are badly off with respect to one kind of political resource stand a good chance of having access to some other and at least partially compensatory political resource.

But how do cleavages emerge that cause collective action in the first place? According to Marx and Engels, collective action was rooted in social structure and, more specifically, in the process of capitalism, which forced people into large-scale factories in which they lost the ownership of their tools but gained the resources and capacity to act collectively. This capacity was built up through an emerging class-consciousness and trade

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[515] The IDASA surveys from 1994 and 1995 confirm that the degree of political activity is higher amongst the formal workforce than amongst other groups.

unions. The "rhythm" of socialised production in the factory would pound the proletariat into a class in its own right and the unions would give it form (Tarrow 1994:11).

Lipset (1959) states that political extremism originating amongst the lower classes is to be found not only in low-income countries but also in newly industrialised countries. The reason for this, he and others argue, is that through rapid industrialisation the roles and hence interests of large numbers of people change, thus destroying existing norms and values.[516]

It has been argued by many students of democratisation and nation-building that "if there is no bourgeois, there will be no democracy" (Moore 1966). Yet, it seems to be more accurate to say that if there is a working class but no economic organisation, there will be no democracy. Yet, the problem remains of why unions and the working class in South Africa mobilised for collective action when the working class in so many other countries remained passive under authoritarian rule. Lafferty (1989:104) argues that the notion that the industrial working class would lead political revolution has been proven so definitively wrong as to warrant no further explanation:

> "there is virtually not a single country which has experienced a revolution from within where industrial labour has provided crucial leadership".

Marx explained the lack of working-class leadership in revolutionary activities with the development of false consciousness. Others have highlighted the fact that capitalist developments in themselves divided the working class and thereby prevented a united working-class revolution. Yet, in the South African case, industrial labour *did* provide the crucial leadership in the political change that came about through the 80s and early 90s. Part of the reason may be that the South African working class remained united because it was politically repressed as a "race". Furthermore, apartheid also implied that the black working class would

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[516] Bull (1922) was the first to introduce these hypotheses on the basis of his analysis of intra-Scandinavian differences in working-class radicalism. Galenson (1962), Lipset (1959) and Lafferty (1979) have analysed this further. Rokkan & Valen argued in 1960: "... the more sudden the growth of industry and the more of its labour force has to be recruited from agriculture and fisheries, the more leftist the workers, and the more revolutionary the party" (quoted in Lafferty 1979).

be kept in unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled positions and hardly ever recruited to management, professional occupations etc. because of their skin colour. This also prevented occupational divisions of the black working class. Furthermore, the black working class experienced economic *and* political repression at the same time. The initial waves of migration into urban areas very quickly brought black workers into contact with political, social and economic restrictions as part and parcel of their working life.

Gramsci (1971) introduced into Lenin's theory of a vanguard revolutionary party the dimension and power of culture by arguing that the political movement/agent for change had to become an intellectual collective, whose message of change had to be communicated and taught to the masses through intermediary leaders (Tarrow 1994:12). A new emphasis was given to culture and the creation of consensus and a collective identity amongst workers, which would create the capacity for autonomous initiatives and collective action and simultaneously build bridges to other classes.

Explanations of collective action in South Africa must take into account both the individual interests pinpointed by rational choice theory and cultural theories explaining individual behaviour in terms of socialisation. People who joined unions and engaged in collective action organised by the unions did so out of self-interest. A large proportion of workers argue that they joined unions in order to improve their own wages and living conditions; and indeed, during the 80s their relative wage gains were far higher than those of any other group, including white employees. Olson (1965) argues that people would prefer to free-ride in economic associations rather than becoming involved themselves in collective action and that the larger the group or organisation, the more people prefer to free-ride on the backs of others. While Taylor (1987) would argue that smaller, or decentralised groups, would be able to develop norms and strategies to withstand such free-rider problems, others have argued that professional organisers may play a role (Tarrow 1994 and McCarthy & Zald 1987).[517] In this sense, South African trade unionism, with its heavy emphasis upon a strong shop floor, internal democracy and well-trained union organisers and shop stewards, becomes important.

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[517] Tarrow (1994) refers to criticism of Olson's "free-rider" argument.

Still, workers participate in collective action not only out of self-interest but also because of collective political motivation or deeply held ideas. The workers in our Gauteng study firmly believe that unions should be involved in politics and that the Tripartite Alliance should be maintained. Furthermore, they will take part in collective movements and action because of the "desire to socialise with and support others as well as because they themselves understand the "Olsonian dilemma".[518] In fact, large majorities of workers believe that it is important to take part in political activities and collective action in order to improve their own living conditions *and* in order to improve the quality and standards of living in the community. In fact, we can go even further: "rational actors" do *not* go out on strike and/or stay-away out of economic self-interest when there is no strike fund or financial assistance and when the most likely outcome is retrenchments.[519]

In many ways the union movement, civil society and the collective action that escalated through the 80s remind us of the "social movements" that emerged in many European countries during this century. All modern theories of social movements are built upon the same three elements: the cleavages in society that create a mobilisation potential, the structure and organisation of movements that are necessary to structure it and the cultural foundation necessary to build a broad consensus.[520] In South Africa, race constituted the mobilising potential and the movement was structured as a loose alliance, but with strong power at the local level which provided new leaders and organisers every time the regime imprisoned, banned or silenced the old ones. Finally, the necessary cultural foundation and the support for democracy were there to build broad consensus.

Some will argue that social movements do not fit into Olson's theory at all. Tarrow (ibid:15) argues, for example, that while in economic associations the measure of success is marginal utility, clearly defined and generally understood, the reason for people's affiliation with a social movement is not necessarily marginal utility (not even when the concept is

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[518] Tarrow (1994) correctly points out that people themselves are aware of the free-rider problem, namely, that if everyone free-rides, there will no benefits.

[519] Other things being equal, workers are also most likely to go on strike during economic booms rather than in depressions, such as in South Africa in the 80s.

[520] Tarrow (1994:13) summarises this as the main foundation of theories of social movements on the basis of Marx's, Lenin's and Gramsci's theories of class action.

broadened beyond its economic meaning). People associate with groups for a whole variety of reasons: from the desire for personal advantages or the desire to be part of a group, to commitment to a cause or group solidarity. Furthermore, while the proportion of members who participate in collective action is a critical measure of the strength of an economic association, it is not necessarily so for a social movement. Tarrow argues that social movements are often still in the process of formation when they appear publicly and they draw on several other resources apart from size. Finally, the transparent, bimodal relationship that Olson sees in economic associations is largely absent in social movements.

I would argue, however, that in many cases, it becomes hard, if not impossible to distinguish between interest associations and social movements. Interest associations often engage in issues and action that closely resemble those of social movements. Furthermore, interest organisations often build strategies and alliances that are so closely connected with other parts of civil society that it becomes artificial to draw comparisons or distinctions between them. Finally, marginal utility is the main, but hardly the only, measure of success for a trade union and the numbers involved in collective action are not the only critical measure of the unions' strength either. The *absence* of collective action may in fact also be an indicator of strength of a trade-union movement. In South Africa, the black trade-union movement, which emerged through the late 70s and 80s, was indeed far broader in its goals, strategies and organisation than an "economic association".[521] Though not a social movement in itself,[522] it was certainly the vanguard and instrument of the social movement which escalated in cycles of collective action through the 80s.

Cultural changes and cleavages reflect the socialisation of enduring habits and attitudes. Once established, these orientations have a life and momentum of their own and may act as independent autonomous influences on politics and economics long after the events that gave rise to

[521] With so many trade unions pursuing broad political goals and not simply narrow economic interests for their members, it undoubtedly becomes questionable whether such a narrow definition of "economic associations" as put forward by Olson (1965) and elaborated by Tarrow (1994) is a fruitful characterisation of the trade-union movement.

[522] First and foremost because of its inclusiveness of members. A social movement will not exclude people from membership. Indeed it is not membership as such which characterises social movements, but "followers" and support.

them (Knutsen 1985). While structural cleavages have received the main bulk of attention from social scientists concerned with political change and nation-building, some scholars have more recently looked at ideological cleavages that determine political behaviour, electoral support and attitudes (see Knutsen 1985). As structural cleavages became less important in the Western world, many academics argued that deep-seated values shape and reshape political behaviour and attitudes in significant ways (Knutsen 1989:221). While ideological conflicts *are* important in South Africa, they reflect the importance of race and structural cleavages and are in that sense not *ideological* cleavages.[523] There has, however, been little focus upon cleavages emerging from activity and participation in civil society itself. The degree of participation in civil society or political activity *can* be traced back to structural or ideological cleavages, but the background factors and relative importance of structural and ideological cleavages in causing people to participate in civil society become *too* complex to single out! While political socialisation theory has been concerned with value changes, and political resource theory has been concerned with changing patterns of participation, little emphasis has been given to the cleavages emerging out of civil society participation and cycles of collective action by social movements in themselves.

13.7 Culture: inconsistencies and lack of constraint?

So far, we have analysed worker culture assuming that it is consistent and associated with a high degree of constraint and we have discussed unions and civil society assuming that they are constructed and put together by unidimensional and unambivalent interests. Furthermore, we have high-lighted the role unions and civil society organisations play in influencing workers' culture, while workers' culture and interests simultaneously form and influence the role and image of these same organisations. The relationship between workers' interests and attitudes and their organisations' profile is a complex one, which often, but not always, overlaps.

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[523] Ideological cleavages are those that cannot be traced back to structural conditions, or where the combination of structural conditions or causes becomes too complex.

The problem is, however, that unions and civil society organisations also receive contradictory signals from their own members. Workers are divided *and* contradictory. They are collectively oriented, yet individual and instrumental in their expectations regarding their own living standards. Workers have confidence in democracy but also expect to influence the course of democracy themselves. Workers want unions to be involved in politics, but almost half the workers want unions to concentrate more upon bread-and-butter issues in the future. A majority of workers say that how far you get in life and what you achieve is first and foremost dependent upon your own personal work and resources. Others believe that where they come from, luck and coincidence or who they know has shaped their destiny. Only a small minority say that their achievements have been influenced first and foremost by their skin colour or by belonging to organisations. One out of four says solidarity is the least important part of democracy. Close to 20 per cent believe freedom is most important. These are the workers whose co-operation employers will need in order to generate economic growth. These are the workers who will be the watchdogs of the new democracy. The strategies and goals of labour will have to be based on a fine balance between *representing* and simultaneously *shaping* the interests of workers. The challenges of the nation-building process and of the role of labour can be illustrated by a comment made by one of the workers during the survey:

> "Yes, I have big dreams. But dreams depend completely on yourself. No-one else can achieve them for you. But you need as an individual the freedom to achieve. You can't let other people restrict you. I sympathise with the ANC and praised them for fighting the system. But it's not just for me, it's for all the people who want to challenge themselves and improve and have a better stake in society as a whole. That was the whole point of fighting apartheid because it limited you. So why now go for an ANC system that will possibly have some sort of limitations imposed on individuals. The success and rewards belong to us!"

Bourdieu (1985) goes beyond the Marxist concept of class as a system of property rights and introduces a more complex notion of class that takes account of different forms of capital, that is social and cultural as well as economic. He positions actors in a social space according to economic, social and cultural characteristics. With a broader view of class determinants than the "ownership of the means of production", we also

achieve a more complex understanding of the content of and constraint in class-consciousness. Working-class consciousness in South Africa is influenced not only by working conditions but also by living standards, cultural background and, not least, race and apartheid repression. Furthermore, rapid economic and political changes during the last decade have also been accompanied by mixed and contradictory signals from the environment as well as by an uprooting of people's traditional sets of values and value-setters. The complex relationship between individualism and collectivism and between liberalism and socialism, which is reflected in the quotation above, illustrates this.

Johnson and Schlemmer (1996) argue that there is a complex and contradictory content in black culture. Survey results suggest to them that there is a quite a considerable degree of contradiction in African attitudes, with the majority of people being radical on some issues while moderate on others. They illustrate how complex and varied the interplay of political attitudes amongst South Africa's new voters are, with survey results demonstrating mass support for both redistribution and reconciliation, for both more trade-union and civics influence on government and for opposition to mass actions, and for both black "entitlements" as compensation for the injustice of apartheid and for protection of cultural and linguistic minorities.[524]

Similar "contradictions" have been found in other African countries in transition. Bratton and Liatto-Katundu (1994:17) suggest that there exists a political constituency for political reform in Zambia. However, proto-democratic values are by no means universally shared by all nationals, or even consistently held by individuals. They argue that:

"preliminary analyses indicate that popular political knowledge, attitudes and behaviours do not hang together into a coherent cultural 'syndrome'. Instead they seem to display a thoroughly hybrid political culture which mixes 'subject', 'parochial' and 'participant' cultures".

[524] The contradictions portrayed are based upon 55 per cent or more of respondents endorsing one "radical/progressive" view while 55 per cent or more of respondents simultaneously endorse a contradictory "moderate/conservative" view (Johnson & Schlemmer 1996:89).

In the face of dissonance and inconsistencies in political values, between values and attitudes, and between values, attitudes and action, we are led to endorse Eckstein's (1988:796) expectation that "in postcolonial tribal states...changes in political cultures that occur in response to social discontinuity should initially exhibit considerable 'formlessness'". Ngulube (1989:161-162) agrees in his discussion about Zambia that many Zambians are now caught in the web of cultural ambiguity and that they have one foot in the traditional, which is dying very fast, and another in the modern, in which they cannot yet function adequately. This is "*the nature of a crossroads*" (Bratton & Liatto-Katundu 1994:18). Crossroads have also been described in similar ways in a European setting (Lafferty 1971,1974) .

"Constraint" is, as mentioned before, central to Converse's theory of belief systems (1964). What he means by this is the degree to which one can predict other ideas and beliefs of an individual on the basis of knowledge about one specific attitude. We may, on the basis of what is written above, suggest that constraint in black culture is low. However, we must in non-Western settings also remember that the background and what keeps values and attitudes together (or constrains them) may simply be different from what holds values together in a Western setting. Therefore, what we perceive as contradictions may simply be "constraints of a different type and form". To give one example, workers will genuinely support the need for collective solutions and co-operation between workers and management almost as readily as they support the need for workers' solidarity and collective solutions and action based upon trade-union organisation. This may be inconsistent in terms of Western "left-right" dimensions of political attitudes, but not if we divide people according to "collectivism-individualism". Likewise, people's simultaneous support for redistribution and reconciliation, for increased influence of civil society in government while opposing mass actions, and for black "entitlements" while protecting cultural and language minorities may all carry practical difficulties for policy-making and organisational strategies, but may also be reflections of a culture of consensus-making, collectivism and direct democracy rather than one of inconsistencies and lack of constraint evaluated in Western terms.

13.8 Democratic consolidation and nation-building

Democratic backsliding can occur in several ways (Haggard & Kaufman 1994). Revolutions, civil wars or military coups are not the only forms of

democratic collapse. Democracies can be drained of their content by an increase in political cynicism and apathy and by a decline in effective political participation. Likewise, Haggard and Kaufmann (1994) point out that democratisation may be reversed indirectly through an increase in crime, strikes, riots, civil violence and anarchy and through the polarisation of groups at opposite ends of the political spectrum. The struggle in South Africa was not about democracy as an end in itself, but as a means for achieving equality, prosperity and a better life. Simultaneously, the establishment of democracy in itself is unfortunately not sufficient to achieve these goals. Schmitter (1994) argues that there is no simple choice between regression to autocracy and progression to democracy, for at least two other options are available: a hybrid regime that combines elements of autocracy and democracy and a persisting, but unconsolidated democracy.

The challenge to the new democratic government will be to turn the representatives of opposition black political culture into loyal citizens, supportive of the new government and to turn the more alienated, passive representatives of white culture into active participants in the new democratic South Africa. Mattes and Thiel (1998) argue that citizens in South Africa do not yet feel a widespread attitudinal commitment to democracy, nor do prospects for creating such a commitment appear bright, given the continuing consequences of the country's history, the state of the economy and present institutional arrangements. Their argument follows two lines. First, they argue that commitment to democracy has decreased amongst whites and Indians. Furthermore, they argue that Africans had little experience with formal democratic procedures in the past, thereby making them less committed to such procedures. In addition, liberation organisations had disseminated amongst their followers an economic rather than a procedural view of democracy. Therefore, commitment to democracy will be closely connected with what the infrastructure can deliver, they argue. This, together with low economic growth, a lopsided distribution of resources and a danger, as they see it, that blacks and whites will continue to see themselves as racial groups as a legacy of apartheid, will contribute to polarisation and thereby endanger democratic consolidation. Several comments should be made on this worrying outlook. First, this thesis has shown that the lack of experience with formal democratic procedures is in fact compensated for by a high level of participation in civil society organisations and democratic processes. And in fact, while expressing such a pessimistic view, Mattes and Thiel (ibid) also highlight the fact that

commitment to democracy has *increased* amongst Africans and coloureds. Furthermore, South Africans in fact demonstrate less identity with race than we might expect. While some have highlighted the "bi-communalism" of South Africa, equating it with the cases of Israel and Northern Ireland, where two communities lay exclusive claims to the same territory (Giliomee & Schlemmer 1989), the fundamental difference in the South African case is that the liberation forces, especially the Charterists, advocated an inclusive approach, with a place for all, irrespective of race, colour or creed in a democratic South Africa (Simpson 1994). Finally, while there are high expectations of what democracy will deliver, there is also a great deal of understanding for the economic and institutional barriers preventing the government from delivering. A recent survey by CASE (1998) demonstrates the continuing presence of a wide network of civil society organisations. The future is still to be seen. Yet, democracy in South Africa seems to be here to stay.

13.9 South Africa and Southern Africa
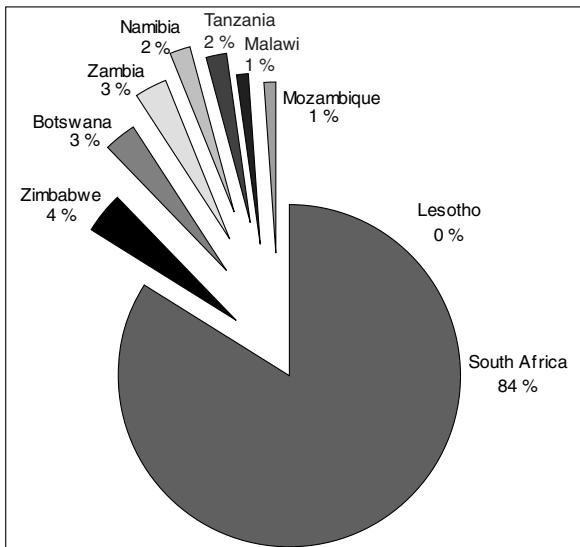
This thesis has demonstrated that civil society has, in *some* African countries, mounted a credible bid to obtain state power. Although there are examples of relatively strong civil societies or specific interest groups in other African countries, South Africa seems to be unique. Why is this? One of the main reasons seems to lie in economic developments in South Africa compared, for example, with the rest of the Southern African region. Figure 13.1 shows us that South Africa alone produces 84 per cent of the regional GDP.

The World Human Development Index (which is based upon literacy, expected mortality rates and income per capita) demonstrates yet again the role of South Africa as a locomotive in the region. While South Africa ranks number 95 in the world, the rest of the region ranks from number 130 and downwards.[525] Furthermore, the distribution of resources

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[525] The situation of Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland is slightly better, ranking number 108, 121 and 124 respectively. One should, however, also remember that the ranking of countries is based upon means and averages. Thus, while South Africa as a whole ranks relatively high, the situation of the black population ranks closer to (but still higher than) the rest of the region.
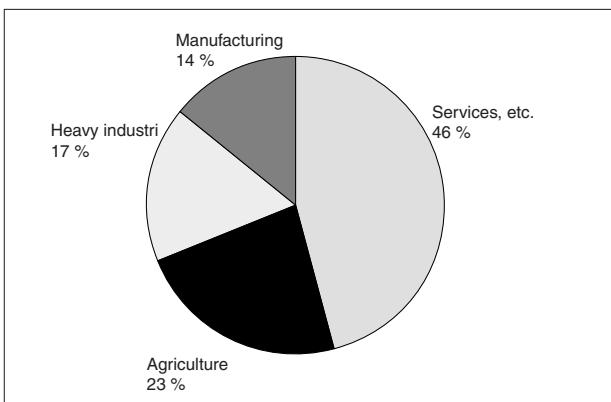
resulting from South Africa's policy of apartheid produced one of the largest gaps between rich and poor in the whole world. This in itself made people politically conscious and relatively easy to mobilise. The injustices were plain for all to see.

Figure 13.2: Combined Regional GDP by Country, 1993
(World Development Report, 1995)

Furthermore, South Africa experienced a relatively strong degree of industrialisation and urbanisation through the 60s and 70s. Figure 13.2 demonstrates that services and agriculture constitute the bulk of the regional GDP. In South Africa, on the other hand, manufacturing and mining account for a large majority of the national GDP.

Figure 13.3: Regional Gross Domestic Product by Sector
(World Development Report, 1995)

Economic development, industrialisation and urbanisation in South Africa in the 60s and 70s constituted the basis for the *organisation* of civil society. The economic problems and lack of growth in the 80s constituted, on the other hand, the basis for the *mobilisation* of civil society. Against this background, this thesis has sought to demonstrate that there are clear indications of complex national characteristics playing a role in the process of transition from authoritarian to democratic rule. We have also sought to demonstrate that more attention should be given to the role of civil society and political culture in democratic theory. The role of the labour movement in the democratisation process in Zambia in the past and in Zimbabwe more recently also serve to emphasise this point.[526]

13.10   Relevance for further research

The assumption that Western culture will spread all over the world either through "Coca-colonialisation" or through modernisation is, as Huntington writes in *Foreign Affairs* (1996), "misguided, arrogant, false and dangerous". While individualism remains a distinguishing feature of the West, other values are more important elsewhere. Cross-national surveys of individualism and collectivism highlight the prevalence of collectivism in non-Western settings, leading to the conclusion that the values that are most important in the West are least important worldwide (Huntington 1996:34). Karl Deutsch (1981), amongst others, remarked that what was distinctive about the Western world was "the rise and persistence of diverse autonomous groups not based on blood relationship or marriage".

The models we have within political science and sociology are mostly of European origin. The questions raised in this thesis concern the applicability of such models to non-Western settings. I have argued that political action in South Africa can most fruitfully be understood on the basis of rational choice theory *supplemented by* political socialisation theory. We must link rationality with identity, norms and the institutions that carry the norms forward. Democratisation, political culture and civil society are in this sense largely unexplored territory.

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[526] The role of labour in Zambia has been highlighted by Rakner (1993, 1995). In Zimbabwe, the trade-union movement was the key player in a wave of political protest against authoritarian rule in 1997 and 1998.

Furthermore, we need to combine macro-theory, concerning the impact of structures, and micro-theoretical studies of the goal-oriented, intentional or even behavioural individual with meso-oriented theory about the channels through which people act. This has implications for political socialisation theory and the need to focus upon adult political learning in settings where the family and education system as socialisation settings are either lacking or unstable. It also has implications for hypotheses concerning work and spill-over effects. Lack of support for political learning at work points out the need to look closer at characteristics of the national setting and national culture in order to identify important learning areas for politics and democracy. And finally, more focus upon the intermediate structures, channels and networks of collective action is important in order to find out how single conflicts become social movements and reinforce collective identities, which in turn may shake whole political systems.

One of the white workers in our 1994 survey responded with the following question when asked to say how many people worked in his company:

"Do you count blacks as well?"

I wonder what he would say in 1998! Hopefully what one of the other workers expressed:

"I just wish the world would change to a new South Africa."

14 Implications for policy-making

While many have argued that broad-based movements of a popular alliance type can restore democracy to a country run down by dictatorship (Nyong'o 1987), by the same token, fragile opposition coalitions of weakly organised interests are argued to have demonstrated little staying-power in Africa (Bratton 1989):

> "They remain highly vulnerable to repression by the new regime (Liberia under Doe); they are prone to dissipation of revolutionary enthusiasm (Ghana under Rawlings); and they are susceptible to internal ethnic fragmentation (Uganda under Museveni). It is therefore premature to expect civic organisations to mount a credible bid to obtain state power" (Bratton 1989:420).

In 1998, the trade-union movement in South Africa is stronger than ever before, with 1.9 million members in COSATU. FEDUSA and NACTU have also gained more members since 1994. While goals and strategies have changed since the days of the struggle and have turned more towards the representation of their members' economic interests, labour is still engaged in political issues and action. Labour participates in national institutions and bargaining about labour legislation as well as economic policies. One worker surveyed in 1994 expressed the hope of millions:

> "I just ask for peace and equality!"

Reconciliation and redistribution are not easy tasks when the rebuilding of institutions is having to take place at the same time as the building of a nation. While dissipation and fragmentation can hardly characterise South African labour, there are several challenges ahead for labour under the new political framework as well as for the reconstruction process as a whole. In the following, we portray some of the concrete challenges that face both the post-apartheid government and the trade-union movement on the basis of the analysis presented in this thesis.

Economic restructuring?

At the end of the day, a big burden is placed on the shoulders of the economy and business to satisfy the expectations of workers. The future of democracy is said to depend upon the economy (Huntington 1994). South Africa's democracy depends upon achieving a level of economic growth which is higher than the growth of the population.[527] Economic restructuring towards export-driven manufacturing for niche products as well as the stimulation of the national market for mass consumption are key areas of focus for the government. Will it be able to turn the economic tide towards growth, job creation and increased welfare? Will business manage to take advantage of the new possibilities offered to compete in international markets while remaining major suppliers of the national demand?

The apartheid economy was built on a systematically enforced racial division while simultaneously being a mixed economy with broad state engagement through regulation and public ownership. Private capital was concentrated in a few hands. Monopolies prevented free competition within both the public and private spheres of the economy. Economic restructuring within the new democracy raises questions of state versus market, regulation versus free market forces and business versus labour interests.

The key issues in debates about economic policy are concerned with the role of the state, the degree of regulation, public versus private ownership and privatisation of public corporations and parastatals versus nationalisation. In reality, several factors complicate the possibilities for an efficient restructuring policy from the public sector.[528] The government's *deregulation* in the area of trade is, however, now coupled with *reregulation* in the area of worker rights and protection.[529] Two thirds of black workers in our survey believe everyone will get a fair chance in the economy now after the elections. But although the majority of workers believe that a practice of equal opportunities and non-racism will be implemented, they

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[527] Population growth has been higher than economic growth most of the time since 1980. In 1994, they were more or less equal (about 2 per cent), and in 1995/ 1996 economic growth was slightly higher than population growth. Still, in 1996 with 3 per cent economic growth, no net jobs were created. In 1997, growth was estimated at only 1.7 per cent.

[528] Political controversies inside the ANC, in the government and amongst key constituencies.

[529] A new Labour Relations Act was implemented in 1996.

do not have much confidence that a more redistributive or socialist economy will be realised. Almost half the black workers believe that with the way the economy is organised, a small elite will continue to have all the power while the majority will be exploited.

Strictly speaking restructuring refers to shifts in economic policy, but more often it involves changes in the structure of industries and economic sectors and processes and organisational or product innovations within companies. Specific labour market characteristics are found to have a positive effect on economic restructuring (Deutschmann 1987). Workers are generally favourably disposed towards restructuring which builds upon skills already existing in the labour market and which, while possibly entailing shifts in the dominant economic activity from one sector to another, makes its easier for retrenched workers to find new employment. They may, on the other hand, be less supportive of restructuring towards capital-intensive production and technology which workers are not equipped to handle and where they are therefore in danger of being replaced by more skilled employees. South Africa has a relatively large manufacturing sector. But manufacturing must develop a greater capacity to produce capital goods and to compete in exports. Domestic markets have developed primarily to serve the needs of a small income elite. A large segment of workers consists of unskilled or semi-skilled blue-collar workers. While economic restructuring towards more capital-intensive and skills-intensive production will threaten the semi-skilled black worker, the potential for developing large-scale mass production for the home market may, on the other hand, secure his interests. The unskilled workers constitute the most vulnerable part of the workforce.[530]

Workers themselves seem by and large to have a positive attitude to restructuring. The large majority believes teamwork with management is possible. But they do have an ambivalent relationship with their employers. A large majority say they will never really trust them. In fact, they believe workers themselves should have far more influence over economic decision-making and strategies in the factories. A large majority believe workers themselves should run the companies.

[530] The extent to which domestic markets are opened to imports of cheaper, more competitive goods will also determine whether the jobs of semi-skilled workers are threatened.

Economic growth is related to making work itself more productive. High productivity, in terms of the number of items produced and value added to products, is found to result from increased work satisfaction. Training and empowerment is therefore important for economic restructuring. Workers themselves are, however, not too interested. In general, work satisfaction is low. Workers with relatively high pay are most satisfied with their working conditions. They more easily perceive training, development and responsibility as important. The worst paid workers, on the other hand, simply want a secure job paid at or above the minimum level. While high productivity is a result of new attitudes towards work, such attitudes are not to be had for free. Work satisfaction and interest in empowerment and development follow from improved wages, fulfilled job expectations and influence over working conditions. At best, an increase in production and employment in the competitive sector takes time. Expansion of plants, development of competence and entry into new markets are long-term processes. In the meantime, one option is to stimulate internal *demand* through improved buying power on the basis of decent wages. Increasing the loyalty of workers and using workers' knowledge to better advantage in production by granting them decision-making powers will benefit the restructuring process.

Redistribution or distribution?

Economic growth also depends upon the distribution of resources. Huge discrepancies between rich and poor are found to be less favourable to economic growth than a more equal distribution of resources (Ringen 1987, Castles & Dowrick 1988); and the distribution of resources in South Africa ranks as one of the most unequal in the world. People will not value democracy unless it deals effectively with social and economic problems and not least with social and economic injustice.

In order to bring about successful reconstruction and redistribution, public policies must aim both at repairing the damage of the past and preventing new damage in the future. Education, and above all equal access to education, is a prerequisite for social mobility. It influences people's opportunities in life and their capacity to change their social status. Public policies aimed at improving and equalising the education system for whites, Indians, coloureds and blacks will prevent or reduce the likelihood of such group-specific inequalities in the labour market and hence of large gaps in social status, income and wealth in the future.

However, there are already huge group-specific inequalities amongst people who have finished school. Millions of black workers have already been left far behind.

The repression and segregation of apartheid can be addressed by means of affirmative action, training, empowerment and new grading systems at work. However, even this will have a limited effect in moderating the existing differences in resources between rich and poor. And even if the government should manage to dramatically redistribute access to work and to such resources as education and health, inequalities in wealth and social status will remain. Promoting equality of opportunity by providing an equal school system, basic health care, protection against discriminatory work practices etc. does not in itself bring about a redistribution of resources or equal outcomes. A heavy emphasis upon the primary may ensure fair competition but fails to take account of the fact that disadvantages tend to be hereditary: if you are born of poor parents, you tend to end up poor or poorer. Income and wealth differentials have increased within the black population through the 80s and early 90s. At the same time, the poorest of the poor have become even poorer.

Other types of redistributive measures must be implemented in order to address the wealth gap. Progressive income taxation is one instrument of redistribution. Providing social benefits through political mechanisms instead of through the market is another. But the public sector is, and will continue to be, unable to meet the increased demands for education, health and welfare. This has caused the ANC and the government to maintain a system of private welfare for those who can afford it while concentrating upon meeting basic needs in health, welfare and education for the poorest and most vulnerable.[531] Simultaneously, money for the RDP is primarily to be drawn from a reorganisation of public sector spending and from savings achieved by making the public sector more efficient. Those who have the money to pay for "extras", such as private education, hospital care, etc. must do so on with their own resources. Political regulation of basic needs is developing for targeted groups, while the market is expected to address and satisfy the social needs and welfare of the large majority of workers.

It will always be more sensible in a short-term perspective to target scarce resources at those who need them most (FAFO:1994). There is on that basis no moral justification for offering universal social benefits which

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[531] Unemployed and people in the rural communities are targeted specifically.

benefit everyone. Universal benefits are, however, easier to administer, help to make the economy more predictable, are cheaper for the national economy because they reduce the needs of the middle-class for alternative, market-related arrangements and are subject to democratic debate and decision-making (Goodin 1989, FAFO 1994). National unity will be promoted by people's common interests and investments in the public sector and the delivery of public services (also for the poorest) improved by a common demand for quality.

Implementing social policy and welfare via the market will have limited or contradictory effects in addressing redistribution, whether it is within the commodity market or in the labour market. The social responsibility of those few inside the labour market will grow tougher or at best remain constant in the future. There is already an average of four to five people for each worker to take care of. The reality emerging out of current economic problems and political compromises places responsibility and care of the most needy in the political sphere, achievement in the market and redistribution in the private sphere and the family.

Building legitimacy and trust

People may become increasingly impatient in their struggle for a better way of life, if democracy fails to deliver what they expect it to. So does there exist a culture of patience and legitimacy for redistribution?

In practical life, two contradictions will accrue from what the workers say in the survey. First, while workers expect increased living standards and welfare from democracy, they are also willing to contribute themselves to help the worst off in society, which may in turn easily prove to be an obstacle to increased living standards for themselves. Second, they look primarily to the state for redistributive measures. They believe social benefits and welfare should be paid by the state, and not by people themselves or by the community or business sector. Simultaneously, there is a trend towards providing social benefits for workers via the market or through negotiations between unions and employers instead of through political agreements and regulation.

There are those who say that the gap between expectations and delivery will threaten the fragile stability of democracy in South Africa. The highest expectations, on the other hand, seem to be held by those who stand to gain the least if the government uses poverty or socio-economic factors to order its priorities. The workers who have the highest expectations are also those who are most easily mobilised for political

action and who maintain the most scepticism or uncertainty concerning political leaders and the system. Reactions or "threats" to the stability of the government are more likely to come from relatively well-organised interests and people with more resources than from those most disadvantaged by apartheid: the unemployed, illiterate and poor majority.

Research from newly democratised countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa shows that the question of distribution becomes most critical when it concerns not the poorest of the poor, but low- and middle-income workers and employees (Haggard & Kaufmann 1994). While meeting the desperate needs of the destitute should be the priority of governments, blue-collar and middle-class groups may be unlikely to continue supporting anti-poverty measures if they themselves have nothing to gain or stand to lose. The downward mobility of individuals within these groups may be a powerful impetus to anti-democratic forces (Haggard & Kaufman 1994). So where and when will political support for redistribution reach breaking point in South Africa?

At the point of departure, the new government enjoys enormous confidence and trust amongst workers, especially black workers. They believe in the integrity of political parties and of their leaders and the system as such. However, urgent steps need to be taken for the government to consolidate that confidence.

The big challenge for the government will be to develop a culture of legitimacy for redistribution. Workers, as surveyed here, are positive and willing to contribute to redistribution by accepting lower wage increases and higher tax payments. However, benefits must be shared and distributed more or less fairly, and benefits and public policy must be seen to benefit the poorest of the poor and thus at the end of the day result in increased and tangible welfare for the community. Furthermore, the burden of adjustment must be seen to be shared fairly. And finally, when only limited groups have their interests provided for by the state, tax tolerance and support for the public sector becomes more critical. Workers must therefore receive *some* benefits from the state in order to have more tolerance for their own contribution to redistribution and patience with their political representatives. The question remains how long and how far they will support a public sector that seems to give them little in return while they have to contribute to redistribution through wage moderation and increased social responsibility in the private sphere.

New democratic practices?

One of the biggest challenges for the government will be to channel the oppositional political energy of black workers, built on resistance politics over the past few decades, into more formalised activities. "Old" cleavages and conflicts concerning access to resources and maintenance of identity must be bridged and crosscut in the name of national consolidation. Both whites and blacks must be integrated and find their place in reconstruction. Simultaneously, political and economic compromises must not be seen to uphold the privileges of the past. Questions emerge concerning potential cleavages between those who have the wealth to buy private services and those who have not, between those outside and those inside the labour market, and between different groups of workers and employees. The wage gap inside the labour market may to some extent level out in the future, through new grading systems and training, while "hidden" wage differences in the form of fringe benefits may remain or increase. Class differences may easily turn out to be more important in generating cleavages than race. Interests and conflicts will grow less out of skin colour than out of possessing wealth or not, possessing a job or not and not least what sort of job one possesses.

In other newly democratised countries, the chief issue, in circumstances of economic and distributional conflicts, is becoming one of culture (Fukuyama 1995). Fukuyama (1995) argues that the battles that will determine the fate of democracy will take place in civil society and culture in the future. The political consciousness of black workers reflects collectivism and the democratic struggle. They cite joint decision-making or equality as the most important components of democracy. The liberal concept of democracy, which is built upon tolerance, protection of the law and freedom, gets less support. But on questions concerning respect for majority decisions and parliamentary supremacy, they believe they themselves should be able to influence Parliament's decisions. Thus, the extent to which they will respect the final decisions depends upon the degree to which these decisions reflect their own interests.

Workers' general political competence and democratic tolerance may to some extent be explained by the period in which the survey was conducted and the general feeling of liberalisation and freedom at the time. The peaceful process of the election supports that. Furthermore, most workers trust that their living conditions will change for the better. If their expectations are not met, workers' tolerance may wear thinner. Distribution conflicts may aggravate interest cleavages and democratic tolerance. Cleavages seldom die, but they can be moderated and managed so that

they do not threaten the stability and legitimacy of the new democracy. Organised and institutionalised conflicts tend to be less threatening to democratic stability.

Democracy is about managing conflict on the basis of consensus. The challenge is to build institutions with the legitimacy to achieve this consensus. There are tensions in any democracy between consent and conflict and between adequate representation on the one hand and effectiveness and governability on the other. Integrating key constituencies in institutions may help solve both these tensions by ensuring that conflicts and cleavages are resolved inside the system and not challenged from outside.

Structural economic reforms are more sustainable and far-reaching when pursued through a democratic process. Successful reforms require the support of political coalitions and in particular unions, which can mobilise support for and neutralise resistance to economic reforms. Tripartite negotiations have been important in reducing social tensions and easing the pain of economic and social transformation in several countries. Furthermore, democratic stability and legitimacy for institutions tend in themselves to be enhanced by people having their representatives present in the process of decision-making.

The government needs to incorporate organised civil society in the transition process. Mobilisation of civil society implies involving both individuals and their organisations in several levels of decision-making. If, on the other hand, the politically competent, conscious and active citizens feel that they are left out of the process, national consolidation and stability may be harder to achieve. From the government's point of view, therefore, it will be important to include organised interests, especially unions in the decision-making process. The establishment of the National Economic, Development and Labour Council for tripartite negotiations concerning economic and labour policies is important here.

A "pact" between labour, business and the state should, however, concentrate not only on macro-economic policy but also on developments on the shop floor. Management must respond to the need for economic restructuring by including workers and their unions in corporate development efforts. The new Labour Relations Act, implemented in 1996, provides for the establishment of Workers' Forums for negotiations and consultations at work. Workers' empowerment is enhanced through industrial democracy and real decision-making concerning the organisation of work. The knowledge of workers in evaluating the organisation of work is grossly underestimated. So-called "encompassing unions",

representing broad interest groups such as COSATU, are found to be most likely to respond positively and adapt quickly to industrial restructuring. Such increased co-operation between unions and management is, however, most favourable when based upon real gains and decision-making for labour rather than just on increased communication and gatherings in "green areas" for tea.

The state needs labour. The state needs the unions to create consensus and legitimacy amongst workers for necessary compromises, for reaching consensus on the priorities and mechanisms used to redistribute social benefits and welfare, and for co-operation around major economic restructuring: In this way more and better information can be generated for use in economic decision-making and the most active, politically conscious and potentially most critical and "watchful" citizens can be integrated in the transformation process. However, the combined and potentially contradictory needs of the state on the one hand and the needs and interests of its members on the other confront the labour movement itself with major challenges.

Union scenarios

The political power of unions and their interests in a stable democracy depend to some extent upon the willingness of unions to reach compromises. Still, workers have huge expectations of improved living conditions and trust and confidence in the ability of the unions to deliver. Workers are, on the other hand, a relatively privileged group compared with the millions of unemployed, informally employed or rural population. Lack of economic growth and the need to redistribute resources and alleviate poverty amongst rural people and the unemployed increases the pressure from the government upon labour to show restraint. But the "strike-wave" following the elections reduced hopes of labour showing one-sided restraint in the future. 1996 saw democracy's first countrywide protest of workers. Millions of workers heeded a stay-away call and 200,000 workers attended marches in support of labour's demands against the suggestion that the right of employers to use lockouts should be placed in the constitution. An underlying motive for this strike was, according to Webster and Adler (1996), labour's deep dissatisfaction with the transition process in South Africa.

The first dilemma the union movement needs to resolve is whether unions should act as private interest organisations, concerned exclusively with their own members, or whether they should identify with a broader

constituency. The other dilemma is how far they should go in framing and pursuing the interests of their members in ways which exclude other constituencies. Their third dilemma concerns how to reconcile internal differences of interests.[532] The role of the union depends, amongst other things, upon the degree to which they have loyalty and support from their own members. A critical factor for the consolidation of democracy and the strength of labour is therefore the internal consolidation of labour itself. The strength and integrity of labour determines the contribution it can make and how much it stands to gain. So what are the new challenges, potential strategies and scenarios of the unions?

Recruiting new workers or retaining old members

One critical issue for the unions is how to organise and recruit new members while devising strategies to retain old members. In certain sectors and areas where workers were excluded from full recognition in labour relations by apartheid politics union membership will continue to grow without major efforts from labour. Such areas are first and foremost workers in the former homelands and occupational groups such as domestic workers, farm workers and groups of public sector employees. Major mergers might also take place between COSATU, NACTU and the FEDUSA unions, or rather we may see the FEDUSA and NACTU unions leave their federations in order to join COSATU. In a longer-term perspective we may also see mergers between the union federations as indicated already by labour unity meetings.

Even with "automatic" growth in union membership, strategies are needed to balance the interests of new and old members and different occupational groups. Most current COSATU members are in mining and manufacturing. At the same time, membership has grown most in the public sector during the past few years, while both the relative and absolute number of manufacturing worker members is declining. The economic recession hit the manufacturing sector hard, with consequent widespread retrenchments. However, in spite of recession in the mining sector as well, the NUM has managed to increase its membership.

Unorganised workers quote intimidation from employers as one major reason for not organising. Promoting worker rights and giving practical weight to the right to organise are therefore important

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[532] See Hyman 1994 on the dilemmas of union movements.

instruments for further union recruitment; so is attacking the major obstacle of compulsory membership in employees' associations for white workers. The public sector and the service and commercial sectors constitute potential growth areas for the unions. Farm workers and domestic workers should be mentioned specifically. Other occupational groups are increasingly targeted as well, first and foremost white-collar workers and skilled and professional workers. COSATU states that its tradition as a blue-collar federation cannot be allowed to continue, for it regards the inability to organise all workers, including whites, as contributing to a divided working class (Secretariat Report 1994).

In order to build long-term strategies to achieve growth in membership, the trade-union movement must also recognise the fact that the population and the labour force is changing. The balance between genders, between age groups and between diverse educational groups in the population carries important implications for the labour market and for union recruitment strategies. In the course of twenty to thirty years, the population has nearly doubled. Although the growth curve has straightened out and declined in recent years, the population is still increasing, which implies that the labour force will on average become younger. The number of people of working age will continue to grow, and thus also unemployment.

More women in the labour market and a better-qualified labour force will change the profile of trade-union membership as well as its recruitment basis. Women want maternity leave and day-care facilities for children; youth want further skills and educational improvements; skilled and educated workers want higher wages, responsibility and improved work satisfaction. Targeted strategies to organise white workers, white-collar and skilled employees as well as public and service sector unions will also have serious implications for the future identity and priorities of COSATU. Different constituencies have different interests that the trade-union movement will have to confront and represent.

The image of a pluralistic and multi-faceted society with greatly differing interests does not imply that COSATU ought to have a separate policy for each sub-group. Rather, it implies that the unions will have to redefine their sphere of action, which presents an unavoidable dilemma for any organisation of interest groups. Union growth may not be the major problem for COSATU in the short term. Consolidating that growth and building strategies around new interest groups on the other hand may turn into a bigger challenge. There will be increasing demands from the government upon labour to show restraint and patience in the reconstruction

process. Simultaneously, large groups of workers approach work with the sole objective of earning a living wage, and they approach their unions with the major objective of achieving better living conditions.

Furthermore, different sectors and occupational groups have different wage interests. Expectations from the government of workers' moderation may therefore result in some difficult internal battles for labour. This survey has revealed a picture of black and white workers with different interests. Diverse occupational categories and groups employed in diverse sectors of the economy also differ in their wage demands, interests and degree of work satisfaction. The labour market is divided along the lines of colour, skills and occupations. These divisions are reflected in the labour movement. The priorities of the various income and racial groups seem to be very different. Whereas unions representing black workers function as political unions, white workers' unions function more as business unions. The extent to which such divergent interests can be combined in an efficient union movement with a loyal and united membership that is easy to mobilise across sector and wage barriers has been a continuous problem in other countries. How are such internal differences to be reconciled in the future? The more internal interests differ, the harder such fights may become. COSATU states that lack of qualitative service to members has reached critical levels and "while we have organised thousands of new members, thousands seem demoralised and may leave our ranks" (Secretariat Report, COSATU 1994). Two questions emerge on this basis. First, should the labour movement build strategies for membership growth or concentrate upon the consolidation of its own structures and upon representation of its own members? Second, which interest groups should form the constituency of COSATU in the future? Should COSATU consolidate its strength in breadth or in depth?

Welfare: politics or markets?

The ability of the unions to balance their responsibility towards the nation with the interests of their own members will be tested in their policies and strategies on social welfare issues, health and education.

Like everyone else, workers have a clear interest in improved education, health and social welfare for the population at large. Through these they will reap the benefits of improved living conditions for themselves and their dependants and generally improved standards of community life. Furthermore, welfare systems are also used to control the labour market, the entry and exit of workers and thereby employment

rates. The balance between age and educational groups in the labour force has strong implications for the labour market. Smaller batches of school leavers are the best remedy against youth unemployment. Broad improvement of educational levels is important not only for the quality of skills in the labour market at a later stage but also to control the number of people entering the labour market and hence unemployment levels. Likewise, pension systems, rates and retirement age are methods to control the size and composition of the labour force.

At the same time, workers also have specific interests in work-related benefits like health and safety measures at work, severance pay, health insurance, additional sickness benefits, etc. as well as vocational training and further skilling. Their qualifications will gradually become outdated and upgrading of skills may be a long-term investment in job and career advancement. Although the average level of education in society rises by improving primary education for everyone, so does the demand for competent staff in industry. Continuous upgrading and refining of skills must become part of an occupational career.

The question for workers and their unions is whether to choose a strategy of promoting universal benefits or only group-specific targeted measures and therefore whether to follow the strategy of using political mechanisms to provide social security or rather go to the market for benefits. It becomes to some extent a choice between supporting legislative political solutions or collective bargaining as a preferred strategy.

No union will readily declare itself prepared to show "social responsibility" unless it obtains social reforms and improved material conditions in return. Wage moderation by labour has in several countries been exchanged for pension arrangements, unemployment schemes, job creation or price control. However, it is also true that several labour movements abroad have encountered large problems in creating or enforcing legitimacy for such a "social wage" amongst their own members. "People will rather receive X in cash than a commodity that costs X" (Flanagan 1989 et al., Hippe 1995), the reason simply being that people would rather choose themselves what to buy for X. Furthermore, the more workers perceive their economic environment as insecure, the more they will prefer to get paid today rather than see the benefits tomorrow (when they may not be around anymore anyway).

Private and public welfare are clearly distinct categories with different effects in terms of economic redistribution and worker

solidarity.[533] Unions have often striven for a transfer of welfare benefits to the public sector and consequently removed such issues from settlements in the labour market. Strong unions are often perceived as supporters of state dominance in welfare provisions, while weak unions are forced to engage in market-based welfare. Traditionally, a united and well-organised labour force, which controls government through a separate labour party, will use political mechanisms to provide and regulate welfare. Unions may advance workers' short-term interests by concluding settlements with the state on a "social wage" or universal benefits for the whole population. Universal rights and benefits, in particular those anchored in legislation, also reduce the tendency of capital to regard worker rights as a competition factor and concentrate production in "low-pay" areas or plants. In a long-term perspective, however, a strategy of universal rights may undermine the recruitment strategies and strength of organised labour. With universal benefits, all workers may "free-ride" on the deals concluded between labour and the state without joining unions. Universal rights may also tend to lose their redistributive character and hence undermine a substantial goal of labour. The "free-rider" problem implies here that organisations will easily prefer specific job- or union-related benefits and negotiations in the market because they will serve as extra incentives to secure their own membership bases.

National considerations will put pressure on labour to show moderation and rather promote the universal model of social security. While workers obviously support the idea that the state should provide and pay for social security, they simultaneously look to work and unions for such benefits. In a short-term perspective the political choice of the government will be one of broadly increasing the number of people being covered by primary school qualifications, basic health care etc. Further upgrading of skills and qualifications and more specialised care and welfare will be for the few who can pay, either through work or otherwise. Occupational or work-related benefits may therefore easily contribute to increasing differences between those inside the labour market and those outside in the future. Furthermore, different groups of employees may have different perceptions and priorities when it comes to types of benefits and remuneration extended and this may therefore contribute to internal cleavages in the labour movement.

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[533] I have borrowed heavily from Hippe (1995) in this section on unions and welfare issues.

Politics or production?

Diamond (1994) argues that civil society must be autonomous from the state to be able to check and balance state power in a transition process and that therefore *corporatist style pacts* pose a serious threat to democracy in transitional or newly emerging constitutional regimes.

Regulation of the market, redistribution and stimulation of the "demand" as opposed to the "supply" side of the economy has boosted crisis-ridden economies before and created favourable conditions for reconstruction. A tripartite forum – the National Economic and Development Council (NEDLAC) – was launched in 1995 to take over from the National Manpower Commission and the National Economic Forum. Simultaneously, with political controversies and insecurities, an increasingly open economy, a relatively fragmented union movement, huge unemployment and low economic growth, there are reasons to approach *corporatism* or tripartism with caution. Furthermore, support from workers for labour participating in national institutions may be limited. Finally, whereas "corporatist" Scandinavian countries have had relatively strong centralised states with popular legitimacy, a decentralised South African state may confront problems in implementing policy – i.e. "corporative agreements" – in a unitary way at the provincial level.

Institutions may be the crystallisation of specific political forces and power, but once established they have a life and reality of their own. On that basis, labour must ensure that institutions are transparent, focusing on clearly defined policy questions, and have a clear time frame and terms of reference in order to make it easier to withdraw, ensure independence and to justify actions to members.

Workers support the political engagement of the unions and their participation in national institutions. Workers express a general sense of collectivism in their strategic approach to politics as well as in the solutions they perceive. This collectivism is not necessarily a socialist approach. Their collectivism is expressed in their support for trade unions as collective instruments for empowerment, in their approach to teamwork and management in companies and in their approach to other population groups and to the need for nation-building and reconciliation.

Unions have worked as *agents* for democracy and democratic values amongst all workers more than just as political learning areas for their own members. Unions have contributed to a sense of grass-roots democracy in black society at large through locals and by contributing to building civics organisations and residence committees, students' organisations etc. COSATU developed into a socio-political popular union federation. The

pledge to represent working-class interests was defined broadly as the fight against apartheid. And the pledge to pursue their own members' interests was defined broadly as part and parcel of the interests of the whole working class. The unions' political struggle was thus perceived as representing not only their own members, but the black community as a whole. The historic role of labour and current external expectations thus also pose a serious challenge to the internal consolidation of labour.

Internal consolidation or external power?

Labour will to some extent have to take the "national interest" into account during a transitional reconstruction period. Political involvement combined with centralised collective bargaining may also tend to centralise the internal decision-making structures of the unions. The paradox remains, however, that while negotiations at the national political level aim to address working conditions on the shop floor, such issues and strategies tend to turn the focus and influence away from the priorities of ordinary workers.

Internal democracy and the need to nurture a vibrant spirit of democracy on the shop-floor in order for workers to feel that they influence political priorities and labour issues has become a major challenge for labour. Centralisation and bureaucratisation of the union movement carry the danger of evolving protests and reactions from members on issues, including political issues, where unions are seen as unrepresentative. Keeping up activity and support at the shop-floor level may be achieved through strong union support for and involvement in worker participation in decision-making bodies at the workplace. And internal campaigns and capacity have to be developed in the unions to counterbalance the centralisation tendencies of union structures. The need for improved internal strength and communication becomes all the more pressing, given the possibility of stronger internal conflicts and cleavages within the union movement in the future.

The degree to which members feel loyalty towards and identify with the unions will depend upon the ability of the unions to deliver economic and social goods as well as on the overlap, or alternatively gap, between union goals and leadership on the one hand and shop-floor priorities and aspirations on the other hand. The response of organised labour to new challenges in balancing the short-term needs of its membership against the long-term needs of national stability and institutional peace is of decisive importance for the nation-building process in South Africa. The workers

represented in our survey have a high degree of confidence and trust in their unions. Unions function as an institutional and political resource to the workers.

The future may see the advent of stronger ideological and economic conflicts within labour; between economic sectors, between big and small unions, between the public and the private sector and between different wealth and income groups of workers. The cleavages between different income groups, genders and sectors which emerge from this survey are only the beginning. There may be new and harder struggles over union identity in the future. Cleavages may occur between ideological groups who were united by the struggle against apartheid. New questions as to political affiliation, independence and political involvement per se may easily revive old discussions and cleavages. The 80s saw internal disagreements in COSATU between those who argued that unions should concentrate upon shop-floor issues and traditional union issues and those who felt that it was impossible to separate the economic struggle from the broader political struggle. The old fight between "workerists" and "populists" and more recent disagreements concerning political alliances in the union movement have been balanced and dealt with *within* the union movement. But labour needs strong internal and organisational resources to balance such conflicts in the future.

There are two immediate dangers for COSATU. One is the pit-fall of becoming more oriented towards industrial or sectoral unionism. This will reduce the political influence of COSATU at the national level. The other danger is that successful industrial, sectoral or radical unions competing with COSATU may make inroads into its membership. On this basis, the greatest danger may be connected with following *one* strategy or pursuing *one* scenario at the expense of others. To some extent, COSATU will have to continue as a multi-interest, all-embracing organisation which follows several strategies at the same time. Internal consolidation has, however, become a pivotal issue. Unions will have to meet the expectations of their members by achieving increased living conditions and improved wages. Internal consolidation and external power, however, become more difficult with increasingly divided internal interests and groups of constituencies; and the more centralised the organisation, the less tolerance/understanding for lack of success.

The issues outlined above raise urgent choices for labour about how to deploy its limited organisational resources and which goals and strategies to choose. In reality, it may become a choice between continually trying to recruit amongst new occupational groups or achieving internal

consolidation; or between collective bargaining at the national level or local bargaining in the company. One critical factor for labour's role as an agent of democracy, and indeed for labour's strength and survival in itself, is connected with the ability of both the government and labour to maintain the delicate balance between workers' demands for decent wages on the one hand and their acceptance of a "social wage", including pensions, health and services on the other hand. The most difficult, but also urgent issue to be resolved is therefore that of internal consolidation. In a society characterised by rapid change, unions face an increasing number of contradictory choices and dilemmas. But maintaining the fight for improved living conditions for workers and redistribution is necessary in order for the unions to retain the loyalty of their members in the future.

Appendix 1:   Background on South Africa

The population of South Africa has been estimated to be approximately 37.9 million, of whom around 76.1 per cent were classified as African, 12.8 per cent as white, 8.5 per cent as coloured and 2.6 per cent as Indian.[534]

Apartheid segregation was associated with huge differences in services, infrastructure and general local government expenditure between localities. White local authorities delivered high-quality services, while black local authorities delivered low-quality services, if any at all, to people badly affected by unemployment and poverty.[535] Mapping black and white residential areas therefore also indicates racial discrimination in the distribution of access to housing, quality of services, etc. Table 1 shows access to various types of shelter by race.

Although they differ in terms of income, education and skills, informal and formal households are similar with respect to many other socio-economic characteristics. Contrary to common assumptions, there are no big diffe-rences in unemployment figures, formal/informal employ-

[534] The population figures are from the 1996 Census (Central Statistical Service [CSS] 1997). Previous CSS projections had estimated the population to be 42.1 million in 1996 on the basis of a 1991 demographic model taking the 1970 census as the starting point for population growth rate projections for Africans and 1980 as the starting point for the other population groups. The CSS 1997 argues that the urbanisation rate in the 1991 projections was underestimated and therefore the fertility rate overestimated, causing an overestimate of the total population. The final estimates of the population by race, age, education, occupation, income etc. were not yet available at the time of writing. The racial and socio-economic breakdowns in this thesis will therefore be based upon the October Household Survey from 1994 and 1995.

[535] Jurisdiction over already established commercial and industrial areas and over their rates, taxes and service charges was allocated to white authorities only. In contrast, black authorities relied upon service charges paid by residents. State subsidies were far from sufficient. In addition, lack of delivery and lack of legitimacy for the authorities prompted a series of rent boycotts in black areas.

ment patterns, age distribution and household structures between shack dwellers and formal residents (Urban Foundation 1991).[536]

Table 1   Residential Allocation by Race and Shelter Type, 1991
            (RRS 1993/94:322)[537]

	African	Coloured	Indian	White
Formal				
Detached or semi-detached house	9,082,151	2,664,061	789,296	4,191,616
Flat	242,544	314,814	158,795	561,268
Retirement unit[538]	74,046	8,365	3,125	79,190
Boarding house/ Hostel	1,551,943	52,222	5,850	188,945
Informal				
Traditional hut	7,270,534	37,786	1,034	6,433
Shack	2,727,825	95,122	6,048	3,047
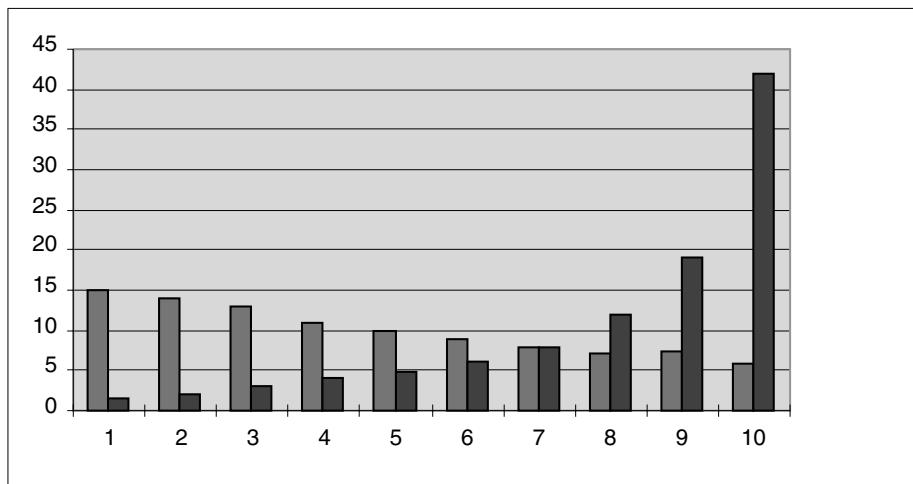
Low-income groups spend a greater proportion of their budgets upon basic necessities, such as food, clothing, personal care and household utilities. The Employment Research Unit (ERU 1992) found that black households spent approximately 29 per cent of their monthly budget on food, 11 per cent on transport and about 15 per cent on clothing. Households at the Minimum Living Level (MLL) spent as much as 56 per cent of their budget on food, 17 per cent on clothing, 7 per cent on energy, 6 per cent on transport and as little as 5 per cent on housing (Hall et al. 1993). African households spend around 10 per cent of their budgets on supporting relatives and other dependants (ERU 1992).

[536] Excluding the so-called independent homelands. Based on the 1991 Census.
[537] Room in old-age home included.
[538] The educational and skills profile of the formal resident is, however, higher than the profile of shack dwellers. 50 per cent of informal dwellers have less than Standard 5 in schooling and only R 411 in average household income per month (Sapire & Schlemmer 1990).

Figure 1   Inequalities in Expenditure (RDP 1995:7).

Apartheid put its mark on the present situation, and not only through social differences and differences in living standards. Although the regional distribution of the population to some extent predates apartheid, it was largely brought about by the structures, laws and institutions of apartheid from the 60s onwards. Table 2 shows the regional distribution of the population.

Sixty-eight per cent of the African population is under the age of thirty-five; the corresponding figure for whites is 58 per cent, for coloureds 74 per cent and for Asians 69 per cent (CSS 1991). In fact, more than half the African population is under the age of twenty-one. Furthermore, a disproportionate number of children and youth live in poverty.[539] Sixty-one per cent of children under the age of sixteen are considered poor.

[539] Poverty rates in families with many children are higher than amongst the rest of the population.

Table 2   Regional Distribution of the South African Population[540] (in percentages)

Province	African	Asian	Coloured	White	Percentage of total population
Eastern Cape	87.6	0.2	6.6	5.6	15.5
Mpumalanga	88.7	0.4	0.6	10.3	7.0
KwaZulu-Natal	82.4	9.3	1.3	7.0	20.3
North West	91.1	0.2	1.1	7.6	8.0
Northern Cape	31.3	0.2	52.4	16.1	2.0
Northern Province	97.1	0.1	0.1	2.7	10.9
Free State	84.1	0.03	2.7	13.2	6.5
Gauteng	63.0	2.2	4.1	30.7	18.9
Western Cape	17.2	0.8	58.4	23.6	10.9
Percentage of total population	76.4	2.5	8.5	12.6	

Table 3   Age Distribution of the South African Population (RDP 1995:13).

Age groups	Population share (in percentages)
0-5	13
6-15	26
16-64	57
Over 64	5

Table 4 shows educational levels amongst South Africans according to race.

[540] The Orange Free State was renamed Free State, the Eastern Transvaal was renamed Mpumalanga and the Northern Transvaal was renamed the Northern Province after the elections. The province borders remained more or less the same with the exception of Pretoria being transferred from Mpumalanga to Gauteng. The figures on population distribution as a whole are taken from the 1996 Census (CSS 1997), while the distribution figures by province are taken from the Race Relations Survey (RRS) 1994/95 (with data from 1994) – at the time of writing the CSS had not yet released breakdowns of the 1996 census data.

Table 4   Highest Educational Attainment, by Race (in percentages)
           (CASE 1995 analyses of October Household Survey)

	Whites	Indians	Coloureds	Africans
No education	10	15	20	28
Primary	12	25	37	39
Secondary	60	55	41	32
Tertiary	18	5	2	2

With the Dutch Reformed Church being highly supportive of the apartheid system, we might expect its members to be less tolerant than the more open and integrated Anglo-Saxon Churches. However, the Dutch Reformed Church was segregated according to race and the coloured and African Churches of the Dutch Reformed Church became characterised by strong opposition to apartheid. Table 5 displays the religious groupings in South Africa.

Table 5   Religious Affiliation in South Africa (in percentages, 1991)
           (October Household Survey 1994).[541]
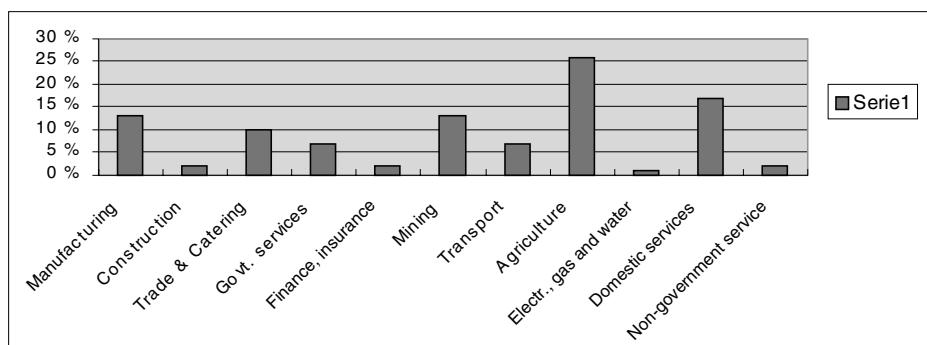
African Independent Churches	17.3
Dutch Reformed	10.4
Roman Catholic	7.6
Methodist	5.9
Zion Christian	4.9
Anglican	3.8
Lutheran	2.5
Apostolic	3.1
Presbyterian	1.3
Other Christian Churches	9.7
Hindu	1.3
Islamic	1.1
Jewish	0.2
No religion	1.2
No response	29.7

[541] These figures do not include the approx. 7 million people living in the former "independent" homelands.

The Labour Market

Living conditions and employment are closely linked, and so are poverty and *un*employment. The CSS October Household Surveys found an unemployment rate of 33 per cent in 1994, which had decreased to 29 per cent by 1995.[542] blacks and women are most heavily affected. Further-more, unemployment in rural areas is almost twice as high as in metropolitan areas (Duncan 1995). The economically active population numbers about 14.3 million (OHS 1994), which includes unemployed (4.7 million) and informally employed (1.6 million), while the remaining 8 million work in the formal labour market regulated by the Labour Relations Act and/or other legal dispensations. This must still be seen against the background of major changes in employment patterns over the past twenty years.[543] Figures 2 and 3 below show developments in employment patterns from 1950 to 1993.

Figure 2   Sectoral Composition of South African Employment,
            1950 (Crankshaw 1996:9).

South African trends in employment patterns display the following characteristics: first, a steady growth in manufacturing from 1950 until the mid-80s, after which the service sector took over as the main driver of
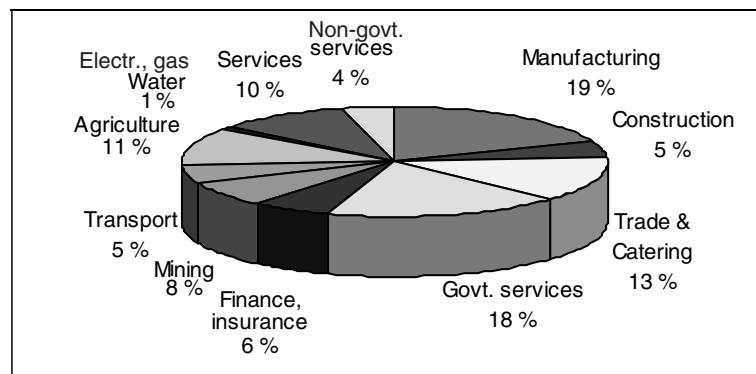
[542] The unemployed include both those who are actively seeking work and those who would like work but have given up looking. The unemployment rate has, however, been contested because of the sampling procedures of the CSS and the *SALDRU/World Bank* data. The ILO argues that unemployment in South Africa is closer to 20 per cent (Standing et al. 1996).

[543] In other words major changes *within* the labour market, while formal employment itself grew little between 1985 and 1995.

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employment. Manufacturing has declined since the early 80s. Following this pattern, there is also a growing demand for skilled labour, while there has been no growth in jobs for unskilled labour in the past twenty years. There has, instead, been long-term relative growth in employment amongst professionals and semi-professionals, amongst managerial, supervisory and routine white-collar workers and in other non-manual occupations (Crankshaw 1996:10). The demand for jobs for unskilled and semi-skilled workers and artisans has shrunk, relatively speaking, over the past twenty-five years (ibid).

Labour markets are highly segregated as a result of the policy of apartheid, bantu education, discriminatory practices in permitting access to resources like education, employer practices and most notably legal discrimination through the Job Segregation and Job Preferences Acts. Legal provisions on *job segregation* and "*colour bars*" specified which population groups should work in which sectors and occupations, while specifications on *job preferences* determined that certain population groups should be given preference in specific job categories and sectors. The province of Western Cape was, for example, specified as a "coloured preferential area", which made it extremely difficult for Africans to find employment there. The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 made it possible to reserve almost any position for exclusive occupation by whites. The cumulative impact of these factors was to place blacks on the bottom tiers of the occupational pyramid. Table 6 shows the overall impact on the occupational structure of the labour force.

Figure 3   Sectoral Composition of South African Employment, 1993
             (Crankshaw 1996:9).

A careful estimate indicates that at least 1 million, or about 13 per cent of African workers, fall into the category of unskilled labourers, whereas only a tiny group of less than 1 per cent of whites, or about 7,000 people, have unskilled occupations.[544] Likewise, the great majority of artisans, for example, are whites – i.e. close to 70 per cent in 1989 (Holdt 1993).

Table 6   Racial Distribution of Occupations, 1960, 1980 and 1995
(percentages) (Lipton 1986:404; duToit 1995:311)

Occupation	Year	Whites	Coloureds	Indians	Africans
Professional/	1960	67	7	2	23
Technical	1980	57	8	4	31
Managerial/	1960	87	1	3	9
Administrative	1980	91	2	3	4
Clerical	1960	88	3	3	6
	1980	60	8	6	25
Sales	1960	61	6	14	18
	1980	44	8	8	40
Service	1960	7	13	2	78
	1980	11	10	1	78
Agriculture	1960	7	7	1	85
	1980	5	8	–	87
Production/	1960	19	11	2	68
Labourer	1980	16	13	3	69

Labour markets are even further segmented as a result of apartheid and its creation of more than eleven labour administrations and many different labour laws. Different labour laws were established for the various traditional "homelands" and the rest of South Africa, for different occupation groups and for private and public sector employees. The result is that whereas bargaining and worker rights for blacks have generally

[544] These figures are included for the sake of racial comparisons of the labour market. The data are based upon the 1991 census after adjustments for undercounting (Valodia 1993). However, the 1991 census does not cover the old "homeland" areas. Furthermore, it should be noted that unskilled workers here are employed in production-related occupations. Unskilled workers in the farming sector, domestic and other services, mining, etc. are excluded.

been recognised in the private sector in South Africa since 1979, such rights were more rarely granted to public employees or to workers in the old "homeland areas".

Gender segregation across racial divisions segments the labour markets even further. The gender gap is reflected in the occupational profile. A large proportion of women are unskilled workers. Thirty-five per cent of women are unskilled whereas only 16 per cent of men fall into this lowest educational as well as lowest paid category. Men, and especially black men, are mainly semi-skilled or skilled workers. On the other hand, a relatively large proportion of white-collar workers and professionals, like nurses and teachers, are women. In other words, women work in the so-called caring professions, whereas men are engaged in production.

In 1991, COSATU demanded R1,200 per month as the minimum living wage. Few workers have, however, reached this level of income. Wages are racially based but also depend upon gender, sector of employment, education and occupational group. Whereas a large proportion of women work in services, health and education, more men work in mining, manufacturing, construction, etc. Services in the private sector, which include the commercial and catering businesses, are the lowest paid sectors. The construction sector is also poorly paid. The public sector is currently subject to considerable dynamism, change and uncertainty. About 1.5 million people are currently employed as public servants. Forty per cent of state expenditure is needed to cover public sector wages.

Political developments after 1995
In May 1996, the final Constitution was adopted by Parliament.[545] The next day, the NP left the Government of National Unity (GNU), which basically broke up the idea of a GNU, leaving the field open almost exclusively to the ANC. New elections will take place for Parliament in 1999.

Useful information
One (1) ZAR (South African Rand) is approx. NOK (Norwegian Krone) 1.5 in 1997, while in 1990 it was approx. NOK 2.5.

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[545] By all parties except the IFP, which abstained.

Appendix 2:   South African terminology

South Africa developed a multitude of crosscutting and overlapping terminology to describe its political realities. Semantics became a minefield and in a sense it was not only a Constitution and a new political dispensation that had to be negotiated in the period leading up to the 1994 elections, but also the meaning of the crucial terms themselves. Whites, for example, used to be called "Europeans" although many of them had never set foot on European soil. Africans were referred to by some as "blacks" and by others as "Bantu". In addition, the terms blacks or non-whites were sometimes used to refer to all those suppressed by apartheid – i.e. Indians and coloureds as well as Africans.

In many cases a host of different political terms, abbreviations and buzzwords were used to denote the same thing. One example is the "Bantustans", which were also known as "homelands" or "nations". In other instances, the same word continued to be used, while the definition changed, like apartheid itself, which was initially defined as "segregation" and later as "separate development". In other cases, different legal frameworks were used to give concepts different interpretations. The Population Registration Act, for example, defined coloureds as one group, whereas the Group Areas Act split coloureds up into Asians and several subgroups like Cape Malay, Griqua, etc. As a result of the apartheid tendency to create new terminology and concepts whenever the old ones became old-fashioned, attracted too much attention or grew unpopular, a multitude of institutions and a huge bureaucracy were established to administer new, old or changing realities. The democratic opposition was also forced to change its name or create new organisations whenever the existing ones were banned, restricted or silenced by the regime. This has altogether made it difficult to keep all the South African names, concepts and definitions straight in one's mind![546]

Apartheid in this thesis refers to the institutional system that developed in South Africa from the 50s under the NP. Racism and repres-

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[546] A list of South African abbreviations is therefore given in Appendix 10.

sion had existed before that, but apartheid as we know it today was implemented in the 50s and was based upon the Population Registration Act (which classified people into various races or population groups); the Separate Amenities Act (which granted the right to reserve amenities for specific groups) and the Group Areas Act/Land Act (which stipulated which areas were to be reserved as living areas for each group) as its main legal pillars.

The population was divided into the following four main categories or *population groups*: whites, Asians, coloureds and Africans. The classification was based upon political and economic criteria and did not overlap with religion, language, etc. Religion, ethnicity, culture and language were, however, used to *legitimise* the separation of blacks and whites. Sometimes, the classification followed more pragmatic considerations: Japanese and Taiwanese, for instance, were classified as "honorary whites", while Chinese were classified as coloureds in the apartheid hierarchy.[547] In this thesis, population groups are referred to using apartheid terminology. These groups have specific socio-economic characteristics, have acquired a common identity and share a common history as defined by apartheid. According to the law, blacks in the apartheid era were Africans. However, following a common South African practice, I use "black" to refer to all South Africans not legally classified as "white" – i.e. to collectively embrace Africans, Indians and coloureds. When it is necessary to distinguish between people legally classified in different groups, I use those terms. One should be aware, however, that the joint advantages and interests of whites during apartheid hide one important cleavage of religion, language and "national identity" – namely, that between English- and Afrikaans-speakers. Likewise, Africans as a group embrace nine different language groups, of which Zulu and Xhosa are the largest. While the groups distinguished by apartheid have a lot in common in terms of social, economic and political interests, we should not forget that there are also large internal differences within the groups. The term "non-racial" refers to anyone who rejects racial classification. The term became important in all the alliance, or Charterist structures.

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[547] The preferential treatment given to Japanese and Taiwanese was due to the extensive trade relations between South Africa and their home countries.

Democracy

Democracy refers to a system of community government in which, by and large, the members of the community participate, or may participate, directly or indirectly in the making of decisions that affect them all (Cohen 1970). It is a system that is applicable to all communities, organisations and levels of decision-making. We should bear in mind, however, that although the focus in this essay is upon the stability of political democracy at the government level, democracy is understood in a wider sense to apply also to other areas and institutions. Democratisation simply refers to the process of extending formal decision-making rights *and* real participation in a community. It refers to the infusion of popular control into the structures and processes of political governance.

The idea of popular control is absolutely central to any theory of democracy. However, most will agree that this has to be specified further. In Lipset's (1983:27) opinion, democracy is:

> "a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office".

This implies a number of specific conditions: (1) a political formula or body of beliefs specifying which institutions – i.e. political parties, a free press, etc. – are legitimate; (2) one set of political leaders in office; and (3) one or more sets of recognised leaders attempting to gain office. Bollen (1990) argues that political rights and liberties are two dimensions of democracy. Political *rights* exist to the extent that governments are accountable to the people and each individual is entitled to participate, while political *liberties* exist to the extent that people have the freedom to express opinions and participate in any political group.

There are two main streams of democratic thought concerning both descriptions of what democracy *is* and normative assumptions about what democracy *ought to be*. A "representative" or "competitive democracy"

model refers to a system of government where the elite competes for the votes of the electorate and on that basis makes decisions and governs without the interference of the electorate.[548] Participatory democracy, on the other hand, is a system of government based on people actually take part in making decisions that affect them (Rousseau et al.1968). The ideal is a more direct form of democracy. Furthermore, whereas the competitive or representative model portrays democracy as an *instrument* or as an institutionally arranged *method* for arriving at political decisions, the participatory model regards democracy as an end in itself.

Almond and Verba's *Civic Culture* follows to some extent the model of liberal representative government: "democracy is the political method whereby individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote" (1963). Periodic electoral participation is crucial in ensuring that political elites are responsive to citizens; inter-electoral pressure-group activity and other actions aimed at influencing governments are a supplement to this (Pateman 1980). The tradition of participatory democracy argues, on the other hand, that citizens should not only vote for representatives through elections but take part in actual political decision-making. Democracy involves both contestation and participation, which are both crucial concepts in Dahl's realistic democracy or polyarchy.

With this mapping of democratic thought as our point of departure, what then is democratisation other than a process towards democracy? Linz and Stepan (1996:3) use the following definitional standard to determine how far a country has gone towards completing a transition to democracy:

"A democratic transition is complete when sufficient agreement has been reached about political procedures to produce an elected government, when a government comes to power that is the direct result of a free and popular vote, when this government de facto has the authority to generate new policies, and when the executive, legislative and judicial power generated by the new democracy does not have to share power with other bodies de jure".

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[548] Schumpeter (1943) is generally assumed to be the architect of this model.

They argue on this basis that we need to distinguish between democratisation and liberalisation. Liberalisation may entail a series of policy changes, such as the lifting of the political ban upon organisations like the ANC and the PAC. Democratisation is wider and a more specifically political concept. Democratisation requires, in their opinion, open contestation over the right to win control of the government, which in turn requires free competitive elections. However, transitions may begin that are never completed. Furthermore, we must be attentive to the "electoral fallacy" – i.e. that the existence of free elections is seen not only as a necessary but also as a sufficient condition of democracy. The definition suggested by Linz and Stepan (1996) above is argued to guard against these dangers.

Many scholars, in putting forward definitions of consolidated democracies, enumerate characteristics that will improve the overall *quality of democracy*. Linz and Stepan (1996:5) favour a more narrow definition and enumerate the characteristics of a consolidated democracy as "a political situation in which democracy has been the only game in town". While this does not necessarily seem more narrow, they follow this up by arguing that:

> "- Behaviourally, a democratic regime in a territory is consolidated when no significant national, economic, political or institutional actors spend significant resources attempting to achieve their objectives by creating a nondemocratic regime or turning to violence or foreign interventions to secede from the state.
> - Attitudinally, a democratic regime is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern collective life in a society such as theirs and when the support for anti-system alternatives is quite small or more or less isolated from the pro-democratic forces.
> - Constitutionally, a democratic regime is consolidated when governmental and nongovernmental forces alike, throughout the territory of the state, become subjected to, and habituated to the resolution of conflict within specific laws, procedures and institutions sanctioned by the new democratic process".

O'Donnell (1994) distinguishes between consolidating and enduring democracies and argues that there are several newly installed democracies that are not representative democracies but that still meet Dahl's criteria of

polyarchy. He labels them "delegative democracies" (1994:56). They show neither institutional progress nor much governmental effectiveness in dealing with social and economic crises. They rely upon the elected government to rule as it sees fit, irrespective of the programmes or promises that brought it to power. Delegative democracies are strongly majoritarian, and they are more democratic, but less liberal than representative democracies.

Political culture

Political culture is the aggregate expression of people's political knowledge, values, attitudes and beliefs. We usually distinguish between political ideology, values, attitudes and beliefs. *Ideology* is most often characterised as a set of shared beliefs, or a set of beliefs and ideas commonly held by several actors (Dunlop 1958, Gordon 1996, Crouch 1996). This definition can be called minimal. Others have a broader definition of ideology. An ideology is, according to them, a shared system of beliefs and perceptions which both reflects the material circumstances of a social group or class and informs its action (Hyman 1996). Political *value* systems are fundamental and basic, normally underlying and determining our attitudes, priorities and behaviour. "A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposed mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (Rokeach 1973, ref. in Knutsen 1986). Values are prescriptive beliefs, which tell us how to behave and what kinds of attitudes we should have towards specific objects and situations. Ideologies include both prescriptive political values and a cognitive aspect concerning whether the individual is characterised by "ideological thinking" or not (Converse 1964, Knutsen 1986). Values are enduring and determine beliefs and attitudes. Our aim is to trace attitudes, activities and priorities and on that basis to obtain a glimpse of the values behind them.

Political influence and power

The notion of politics and political authority often presupposes that words like control, influence and power have a definite meaning, but in fact their meaning is often ambiguous, elusive and complex (Dahl 1976). Dahl argues that there are three fallacies in the analysis of power, influence, etc. One is that power and influence are often thought of as a single, solid, unbreakable lump that can be passed from one person to another but never shared. The strategies and priorities of organisations and unions are, for example, influenced by the priorities of their members. But the worker collectivity and their unions also influence workers. Second, resources confound power and influence. Unions may, for example, have high membership figures without this necessarily being translated into political power. The third fallacy is that power is confounded with rewards and deprivations.

Political influence or power is used describe the relationship between and among human actors, or between individuals and organisations. Dahl clarifies the notion by using words like "cause", "bring about", and "induce" to describe influence. Nagel (1975) proposes the following definition:

> "Influence is a relationship among actors such that the wants, desires, preferences or intentions of one or more actors affect the actions, or predispositions to act, of one or more actors".

The question of union influence is in reality more about the power of unions as opposed to other actors than about the relationship between unions and the apartheid state. The apartheid state changed, but whether this was brought about because of union activities is impossible to say without taking into account the political actions and attempts of all the other actors in the political arena.

How are we then to explain the relative influence of different actors in a political system? In other words, how can we support the hypothesis of this thesis that trade unions have made a greater contribution to political change in South Africa than other actors? First of all we must state that although we presume in this thesis that unions are influential, we do not expect them to be influential in all areas. The domain and scope of trade-union influence is restricted to those sectors in which they have resources and may exercise sanctions. Second, influence may be both manifest and latent. If employers or the state act in a specific way because of how they expect unions to respond, unions exercise manifest influence. The question is no longer whether trade unions influence the political process, but rather

how much political change or stability has been effected by the actions and predisposition of the unions. This leads us to the question of how it can be measured. The difficulty, in Dahl's opinion, is that there does not appear to be a satisfactory objective way for measuring the scope of influence.

Political participation

While participation refers to "taking part or having a share with others in some action", political participation may be a bit more difficult to define (Parry 1972). Political participation refers to taking part in some political action, but even this does not necessarily make it much clearer. "Political" actions have been defined very widely according to how one defines "political".

For an act to be described as political participation, there must, in Parry's view (ibid), be a direct relationship between the act and the outcome. The participant must, in other words, have a reasonable expectation of influencing the policy decision or at the very least of making his or her voice heard in the deliberations leading up to it. Parry offers the following minimal definition of political participation as "taking part in the formulation, passage or implementation of public policies" (1972:5). In order to be more specific, however, he suggests we need to look closer at the "mode" of participation, the "intensity" of participation and the "quality" of participation.

The "mode" of participation would refer to the form of participation. Parry argues that "it is only by establishing precisely how decisions– or kinds of decisions – are reached that one can assess the nature of actual participation and the degree of realism of those who aspire to increase it". (1972:6). The intensity of participation refers to who participates and with what frequency. It refers to the proportion of the population that takes part in political activities. The "quality" of participation, finally, refers to how effective the participation is and how far it is "real" as opposed to a façade. Political participation may be taken to be at its most effective when the policy outcomes are those intended by the participants and the direct result of their action.

Crucial theoretical differences have arisen over the purposes of participation, and the modes, intensity and quality of participation are closely related to its purposes. Most theories of participation may be subsumed under two broad headings which Parry terms "instrumental" theories and "developmental" theories. Instrumental theories would be those that see political participation as a means to some more restricted

end such as the better defence of individual or group interests. They see individuals as the best judge of their own interests and assume that everyone who is affected by a decision has a right to participate and that governments that fail to recognise this right are not legitimate. "Developmental theories" see political participation as an essential part of the development of human capacities. It is seen as part of a process of political and moral education.

Appendix 4:   Informant interviews

Several people made themselves available to share their information and experiences of the issues focused on in this thesis. The following is a tentative alphabetical list of all the people interviewed during work on this thesis. However, a lot of information has been gathered through informal discussions with numerous friends, many of whom are also listed below.

- Ray Alexander, activist in the FCWU and thereafter FOSATU
- Jonathan Arendse,
  COSATU, Western Cape regional office, interview August 1992
- Jane Barrat, interview November 1992
- Jeremy Baskin,
  General Secretary PPWAWU, thereafter Director Naledi
  (COSATU's research institute) from 1993 to 1996.
  From 1996 Director Labour Relations, SA Department of Labour
- Johnny Copelyn,
  General Secretary SACTWU until 1992. From 1994 in Parliament.
- Philip Dexter,
  General Secretary of NEHAWU until 1994. Thereafter in Parliament.
- Frene Ginwala,
  ANC Research Department, Speaker of Parliament from 1994
- Karl von Holdt,
  editor of the *South African Labour Bulletin* until 1995.
- Martens Jansen, Education Officer CWIU
- Dave Lewis,
  active in the Western Province Workers Advice Bureau and the GWU,
  Chair of Labour Market Commission
- Max Madlingozi, NEHAWU, Port Elisabeth
- Johann Maree,
  Department of Sociology (UCT), lecturer and writer of several books
  on industrial sociology and trade unionism.

- Zora Mehlomakulu,
  SACTU background, ex-General Secretary and organiser of the
  Western Province Workers Advice Bureau and the GW U
- Govan Mbeki, ANC and SACP stalwart, leader in Parliament
- Thembinkosi Mkalipi, COSATU, Port Elisabeth
- Dorothy Mokgalo,
  Gender Co-Ordinator and thereafter Head of Organising
  Department COSATU
- Jay Naidoo, General Secretary of COSATU 1985-1994.
- Jayendra Naidoo,
  SACCAWU, negotiations co-ordinator COSATU and Director
  NEDLAC from 1995
- June Rose Nala, Workers College Durban
- Cunningham Ngunana, General Secretary NACTU
- Martin Nicol, NUM
- Sisa Ntsikelana, ANC Research Officer 1992-1993
- Blade Nzimande,
  Director Education Policy Unit, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg
- Dullah Omar,
  Chairperson UDF Western Cape, member of Parliament and
  Minister of Justice from 1994
- Mark Orkin,
  Director CASE until 1996, thereafter Director CSS/StatsSA.
- Ebrahim Patel,
  Assistant General Secretary SACTWU, Labour Co-ordinator in
  NEDLAC from 1996
- Alan Roberts,
  Regional Co-ordinator COSATU ,Western Cape 1988/90
- Michael Savage, University of Cape Town
- Adrian Sayers, Education Officer NUMSA, Western Cape 1988
- Connie September, SACTWU, Vise President COSATU
- Rich September, ANC
- Ari Sitas, University of Durban
- Eddie Webster, Swop, University of Witwatersrand
- Francis Wilson, SALDRU, University of Cape Town

Appendix 5:   Our worker sample: the 1994 Gauteng Survey

Gauteng: the land of gold

The five sub-regions of Gauteng differ. There is a tendency for similar types of industrial and economic activities to be clustered in particular localities. The sub-regions, therefore, have different sources of economic income and thus provide information on different parts of the labour market. Pretoria has a relatively large proportion of government and administration employment. Manufacturing in this area is dominated by the metal and automobile sectors. Private services, trade and finances dominate Wits or Central Johannesburg, while manufacturing there is devoted mainly to the production of wooden furniture. East Rand is engaged mainly in the manufacture of metal products and machinery. West Rand is overwhelmingly a mining area. Vaal is also a predominantly manufacturing area dominated by the chemicals sector and by production of basic metals, fabricated metal products, machinery, etc.

Furthermore, average incomes differ between the various sub-regions of Gauteng. Racial disparities are, for example, lower and average incomes higher in central Wits than in the region as a whole – i.e. 30 per cent higher than the Gauteng average (CSS 1985). Around 31 per cent of African households in Johannesburg lived below the Minimum Living Level (MLL) in 1991 (Hall et al. 1993) compared to almost 29 per cent in 1982 and approximately 21 per cent in 1973 (Pillay 1984). Data from the 1991 Census estimate that the percentage of households living with incomes below the MLL in the West Rand is 42 percent, in the East Rand 36 per cent, in Pretoria 35 per cent and in the Vaal Triangle 50 per cent. The median household income in the Vaal is the lowest in the metropolitan part of the region, while the incomes received by households in the Pretoria statistical region are the highest (Hall et al. 1993).

Formal townships are also in many respects different from the informal, or squatter, areas. Average household incomes in formal settlements have, for example, been estimated to be twice those in the

informal areas (Sapire & Schlemmer 1990, Hall et al. 1994). Informal areas are dominated by more recent "immigrants" to Gauteng, with consequent implications for political affiliation, urban culture association, etc.
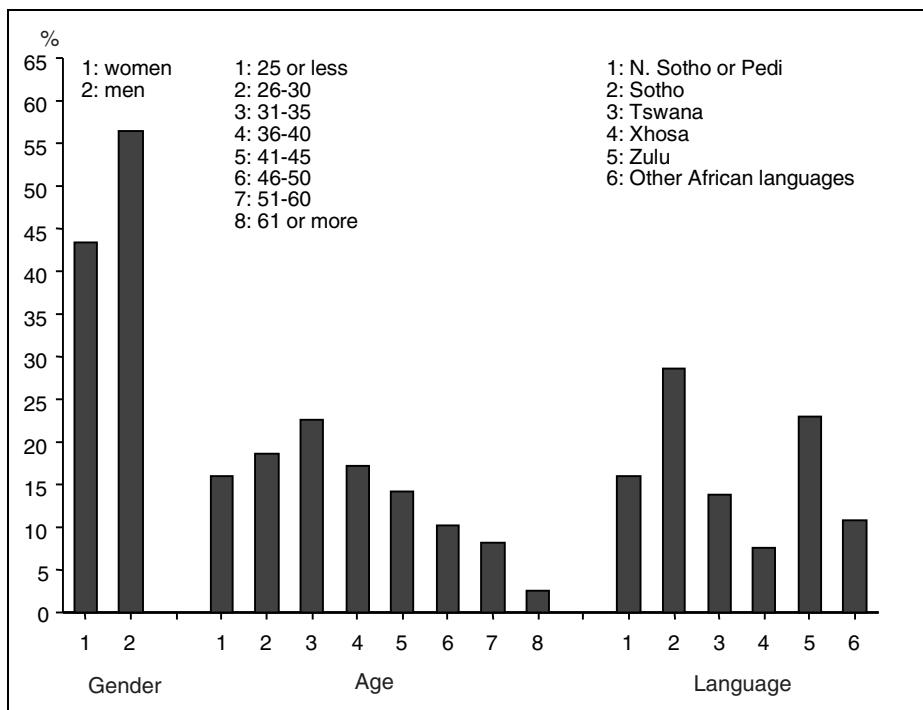
The workforce in Gauteng is, in some respects, different from that in other parts of the country. Although the relative importance of mining and manufacturing in Gauteng is steadily losing ground to services and administration, 37 per cent of the formal labour force is still employed by such large-scale industries (Mabin & Hunter 1993). Furthermore, the personal disposable income is higher in Gauteng than elsewhere in the country and the racial disparity in income appears less extreme. Still, the majority of the blue-collar workers are African, while whites constitute the bulk of white-collar workers, artisans, supervisors, managers, professionals etc.

The working population covered by our survey comprises all five sub-regions of Gauteng. Approximately 28 per cent of the workers live in townships in the Central Johannesburg sub-region, 25 per cent in the East Rand, 18 per cent in the Vaal, 13 per cent in the West Rand and the remaining 16 per cent live in the Pretoria sub-region. The majority of African workers (65 per cent) live in formally regulated townships, whereas a minority of workers (35 per cent) live in informal areas dominated by shacks.[549] One out of four (24 per cent) of our workers live in a standard square township house, while a few more (34 per cent) have been able to upgrade or renovate their houses by building on extra rooms or facilities. One out of three (34 per cent) workers, however, live in a shack made out of cardboard, aluminium plates or left-over materials from building sites, garbage waste areas, etc.

The age spread of the population is more even in Gauteng than in other areas because the fertility rate amongst Africans is lower and immigrants tend to leave children and older relatives in the areas of origin. Figure 1 shows that about half the black workers are under the age of thirty-five.

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[549] Other estimates may suggest that there is an under-representation of the informally housed population in our sample caused by the use of the 1991 Census for the population figures as a basis for sampling. The census underestimates the informally housed population, which by others is broadly estimated at approx. 50 per cent of the population. However, the census was the only source providing the detailed population figures for each township that were needed for sampling.
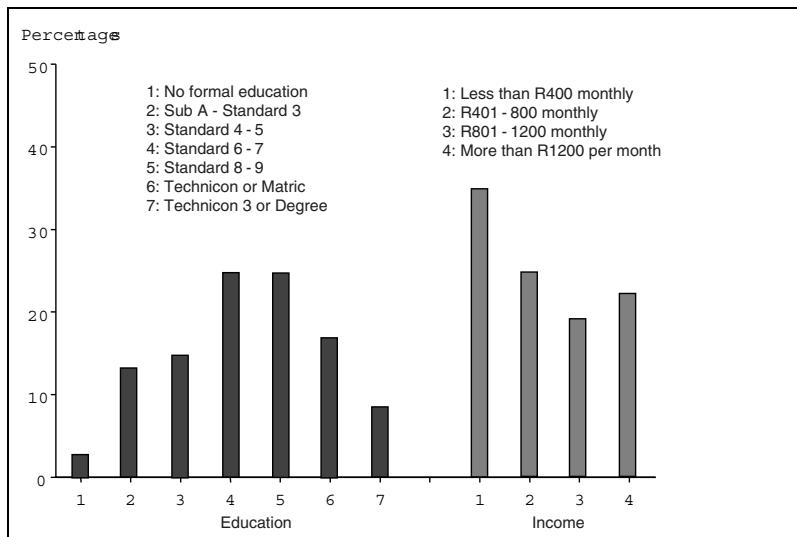
Figure 1: Demographic Profile of the Gauteng African Worker (n 861)

Sotho-, Zulu- or Tswana-speaking workers coming from nearby areas or from old "homelands" like Bophuthatswana dominate Gauteng. Gauteng, however, reflects a relatively stable migration or living pattern. Only one out of three (30 per cent) of our black workers have lived in their neighbourhood for less than three years. Twenty-six per cent have grown up in their neighbourhood – i.e. they have lived in their area for twenty-one years or more. An overwhelming majority of 79 per cent of the workers have grown up in Transvaal, and a big majority of 67 per cent grew up in a formal township. The Urban Foundation reports (1991) likewise that those of urban origin outweigh those of rural origin in Gauteng and that half the informal housing occupants were born there, with another 22 per cent coming from other metropolitan or urban areas. The workers' family backgrounds show that the majority of their fathers belong(ed) to the lowest and worst paid parts of the labour force, with 6 per cent being unemployed, 7 per cent farm-workers, 20 per cent unskilled workers and 27 per cent semi-skilled workers. A relatively large proportion of the workers (12 per cent) do not seem to have known their fathers well,

or at least not their father's occupation. Most of the workers' mothers were housewives (42 per cent) or domestic workers (23 per cent). Figure 2 shows the education and income profile of the black workers.

Figure 2:   Education and Income Profile of the African Worker.
(n 861)

The household subsistence level for a lower-income family (of six people) in Pretoria and the Vaal Triangle in 1993 was about R870 per month and in Johannesburg about R930 per month.[550] According to census information from 1991, 21 per cent of the total population and 32 per cent of the African population in central Wits live below the MLL of R1,000 per month. Survey information from *Social Surveys* indicates that Africans in Gauteng break even with R800 a month for an average household of five to six people, but with negative effects upon nutrition levels, quality of life, etc. The "deep poverty" is concentrated in the free-standing squatter settlements rather than in backyard shacks and outbuildings (Sapire & Schlemmer 1990). Our survey confirms differences in income levels between shack dwellers in informal areas and people living in formal townships. Workers living in shacks in the informal areas earn a

[550] The household subsistence level for a lower-middle income family is calculated to be higher.

net average of R880 per month whereas people living in formal areas in standard township houses or outbuildings earn more than the average of R1,100 net a month.

Almost half of Gauteng workers (40 per cent) have attended high school and achieved Standard 6, 7 or 8 as their highest educational qualification. An additional third of the total number of workers has had higher education. Almost one third of the workers have, on the other hand, only Standard 5 or less – i.e. primary school – and half of these (15 per cent of the total) are functionally illiterate, with only Standard 3 or less as their highest educational qualification. Income data reveal that the median income received by African households in the main metropolitan areas of Gauteng is around 20 per cent of that received by white households (Hall et al. 1993). Thirty-eight per cent of our sample of African workers earn less than R800 a month – i.e. net take-home pay after all deductions and before overtime.[551] The *average net income* for our formal workers, however, is approx. R1,100 per month.[552] On their gross income, they have first paid an average of R600 in taxes, medical aid, pension contributions, etc. In addition to their own income, most households have additional incomes from spouses, pensions and other sources. Their household net income averages R322 per week or R1,545 on average per month.[553]

Income correlates clearly with gender, sector of employment, occupation, education and unionisation.[554] Figure 3 shows the main

[551] The state and employers deduct payments to medical aid schemes, taxes etc. from gross income. The tax burden (slightly progressive) on a gross income of between R5,000 and R10,000 a year will be an average of R386 or about 5 per cent (*Salary Survey* 1994; *Business Times*, 18 September 1994). Married women used to pay substantially higher tax rates than men. The tax system was, however, equalised in 1995.
[552] The Employment Research Unit estimated the average gross income per month in the formal sector to be R958 in 1992. AWARD looks at wage agreements in the third quarter of 1993 and first quarter of 1994 and estimates that the average gross weekly wage for labourers is R229 (LRS 1994).
[553] The Employment Research Unit (1992) estimates gross household income at R1,436 per month.
[554] A regression analysis including race, gender, size of the company where workers are employed, sector, occupation, age and education will altogether explain 51 per cent of the variation in income in the sample. All these factors have significant effects upon wages. Race has the strongest net effect. Education, occupation and gender follow (in that order).
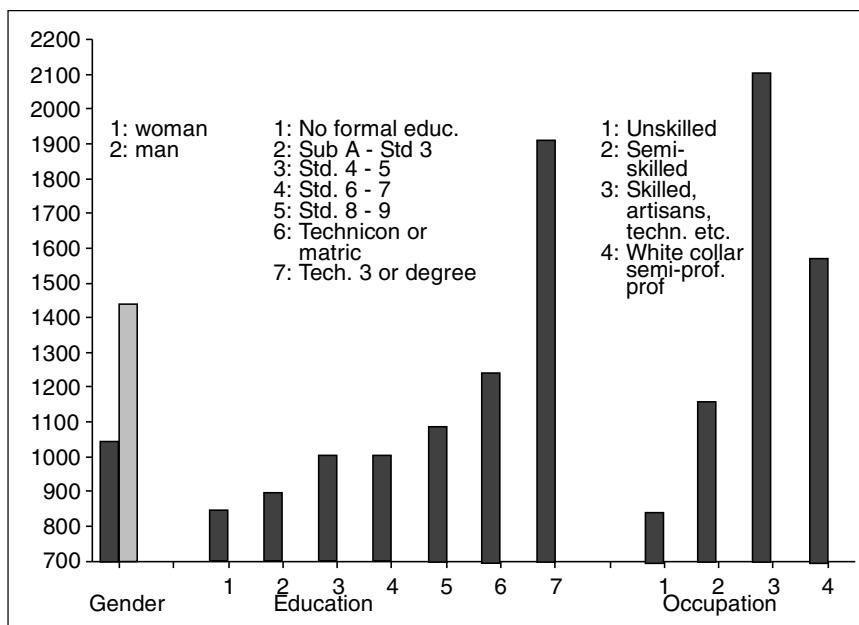
determinants of income differences amongst black workers. The highest income differences amongst African workers are based on education, occupation and gender (in that order). Occupation and education are, however, strongly interlinked factors when it comes to their influence on income: the higher the level of education, the higher the occupation and the higher the wage. Those with no formal education have an average monthly wage of about R850, whereas workers with degrees or technicon diplomas more than double their incomes with an average wage of about R1,900 a month. Production skills or degrees in education, health and services are good investments.

Figure 3   Income Determinants for African Workers[555]
            (n 861)

There are also relatively big income differences between organised and unorganised workers. Whereas black organised workers have an average monthly pay of about R1,290, unorganised workers are paid approximately R970 on average per month.

[555] Average (to closest R50) monthly net income according to gender, education and occupation

Class and colour in conclusion

The typical profile of a black worker is as follows: he or she is thirty-eight years old on average, has passed Standard 5 or 6 in a school marked by Bantu education and poor quality of resources. He or she earns about R1,100 per month, has three children, but altogether five or more people to support. He or she belongs to the evangelical, apostolic or one of the African independent churches, is a member of a *stokvel*, but does not otherwise take much part in cultural life, sports or social clubs.

Our sample of white workers, on the other hand, come from a regulated industrial area on the East Rand called Germiston. They are slightly younger than the black workers, with an average age of thirty-five. They all live in proper houses or in flats in an area which for years was designated as a white area according to the Group Areas Act. They are relatively well educated and well paid. A large majority of them have passed Standard 9 or have a technicon education or more. The white worker receives an average wage of R 2,700 per month. He or she rents rather than owns a house and, more often than blacks, receives free or subsidised housing from his or her employer. Furthermore, whereas black workers support five other people on their income, white workers have often only two other people to support in addition to themselves. He or she is primarily Afrikaans-speaking, has an urban background from Transvaal, belongs to the reformed Churches, is married and has two or three children and shares the financial burden with his/her partner. More white than black workers are married and fewer are widowed. Their net monthly household income is R 3,900 and thus almost three times as high as the average income of the black household. Most of the white workers have a working-class background.

Although literacy and education levels as well as income are higher in Gauteng than in any other region of South Africa, we find, as in South Africa overall, a racial discrepancy. While more than one third of all the black workers earn less than R800 a month, two thirds of the white workers earn R2,000 or more per month. While poverty is not confined to any one racial group, it seems that poverty amongst whites is confined to people outside the formal workforce. Access to resources is in fact, not surprisingly, decided first and foremost by race. The income difference between white and black workers is significantly higher than the income differences between various educational groups, occupational groups or between men and women. Education and occupation significantly explain income differences between black workers, whereas they hardly do at all for white workers. Part of the reason for this is that it is hard to find low
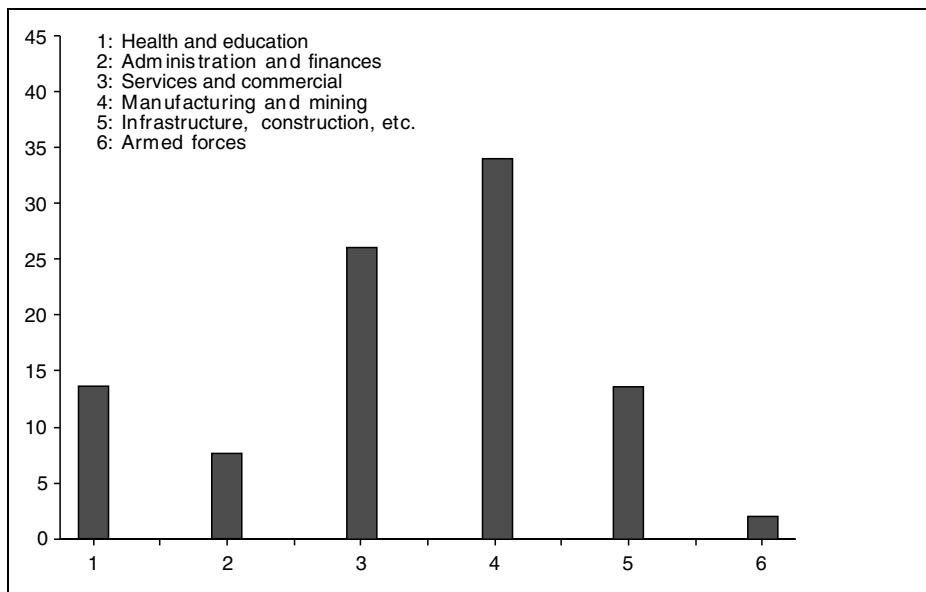
educational and occupational groups amongst whites. However, if we analyse the data more closely we find that gender has a far stronger effect amongst white workers than amongst blacks. Income differences are, in other words, higher between white men and women than between black men and women, even when we look at the same educational and occupational groups. Whether the workers are organised or not has more effect on income amongst black than amongst white workers. The black progressive or democratic unions have, in other words, been more successful in pushing for wage increases than the traditionally white unions.

The labour market

Figure 4 shows the sectors in which black workers are employed. A large proportion of workers is employed in manufacturing and mining. Health, education, the civil service, the police and the armed forces together constitute the core of the public sector workforce. General services, which is made up largely of commercial and catering services, employ close to 15 per cent of the workers and health and education a slightly higher percentage.

Workers in the formal workforce can be split into four occupational categories: unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled or artisan and finally white-collar, semi-professional or professional workers. Unskilled and semi-skilled workers are generally presumed to lack control and autonomy in their work. Their tasks are often repetitive, short-cycled, simple and involve minimal decision-making. Their pace of work is usually dictated by the assembly line or close supervision from above. The more skilled workers are responsible for tooling, machine-setting, maintenance work, quality inspection etc. or generally tasks which require that they enjoy a certain amount of autonomy and control of the job. Skilled workers, and to an even greater extent professional groups, have even more freedom and control. They also have formal qualifications and certificates, which increase their mobility in the labour market.

Figure 4   Sectors of Employment.
            Percentages of black workers in various sectors of employment (n 861)

Bar chart with y-axis from 0 to 45, and x-axis categories 1 to 6:
1: Health and education
2: Administration and finances
3: Services and commercial
4: Manufacturing and mining
5: Infrastructure, construction, etc.
6: Armed forces
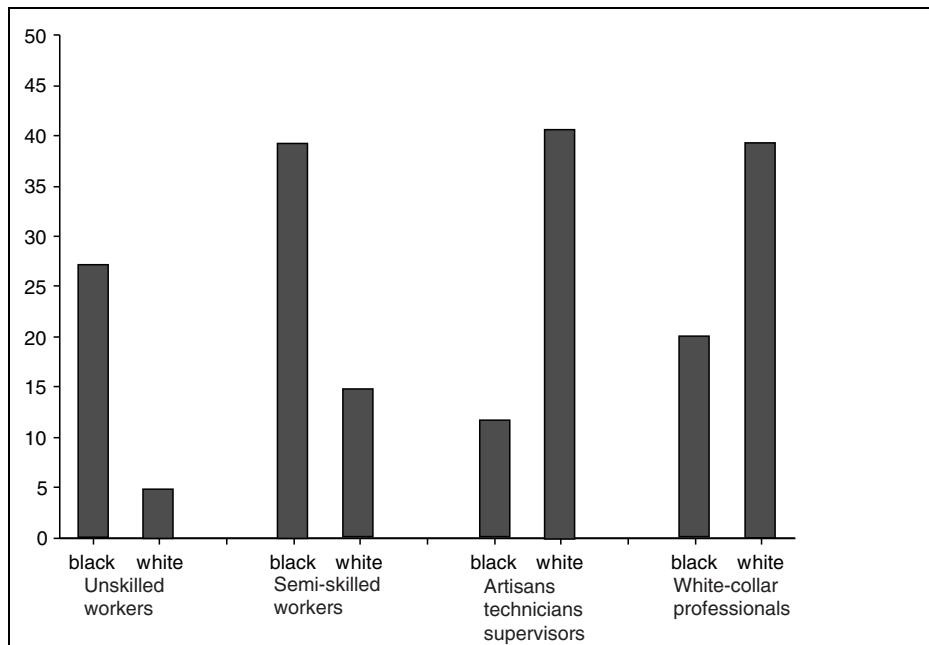
The racial division of the South African labour market is not surprising considering the history of apartheid and its legal mechanisms for job segregation and job preferences. A cautious estimate would indicate, for example, that at least 1 million, or about 13 per cent, of African workers fall into the category of unskilled labourer whereas only a tiny group of less than 1 per cent of whites, or about 7,000 people, are engaged in unskilled occupations.[556] Likewise, the great majority of artisans, for example, are whites – i.e. close to 70 per cent in 1989 (Holdt 1993).

A big proportion – i.e. two out of three – of our black workers are unskilled or semi-skilled workers. White workers, in contrast, to a larger extent occupy the upper status and income groups; they work as artisans,

[556] These data are included for the sake of racial comparisons of the labour market. The data are based upon the 1991 Census after adjustments for undercounting (Valodia 1993). However, the census does not cover the old "homeland" areas. Furthermore, it should be noted that unskilled workers here are employed in production-related occupations. Unskilled workers in the farming sector, domestic and other services, mining, etc. are excluded.

technicians, supervisors, semi-professionals, professionals or white-collar workers. Figure 5 gives a profile of the occupational background of the workers in our survey.[557]

Figure 5   Occupational Profile of the Workers.
            Percentages of black and white workers in each occupation. (n 861 & 141)

The labour markets are even further segmented as a result of apartheid and its creation of more than eleven labour administrations and many variations of labour law in the country. Different labour laws were adopted for the various traditional "homelands" and for the rest of South Africa, for different occupational groups and for private and public sector employees. The result is that whereas bargaining and worker rights for blacks have generally been recognised in the private sector in South Africa since 1979, such rights are more limited amongst public employees and in some of the old "homeland areas".

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[557] The white workers in our occupational profile are too few in numbers for us to make generalisations about the population of white unskilled workers as a whole. They have, however, been included for illustration.

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Gender segregation across racial divisions segments the labour markets even further. The gender gap is apparent in the occupational profile. A large proportion of women are unskilled workers: 35 per cent of women are unskilled whereas only 16 per cent of men fall into this lowest educational as well as lowest paid category. Men, and especially black men, are mainly semi-skilled or skilled workers. On the other hand, a relatively large proportion of white-collar workers and professionals, like nurses and teachers, are women. In other words, women are engaged in the so-called "caring professions", whereas men take care of production. (These two paragraphs are an exact repetition of Appendix 1! see pp. 363-364)

Pay and benefits
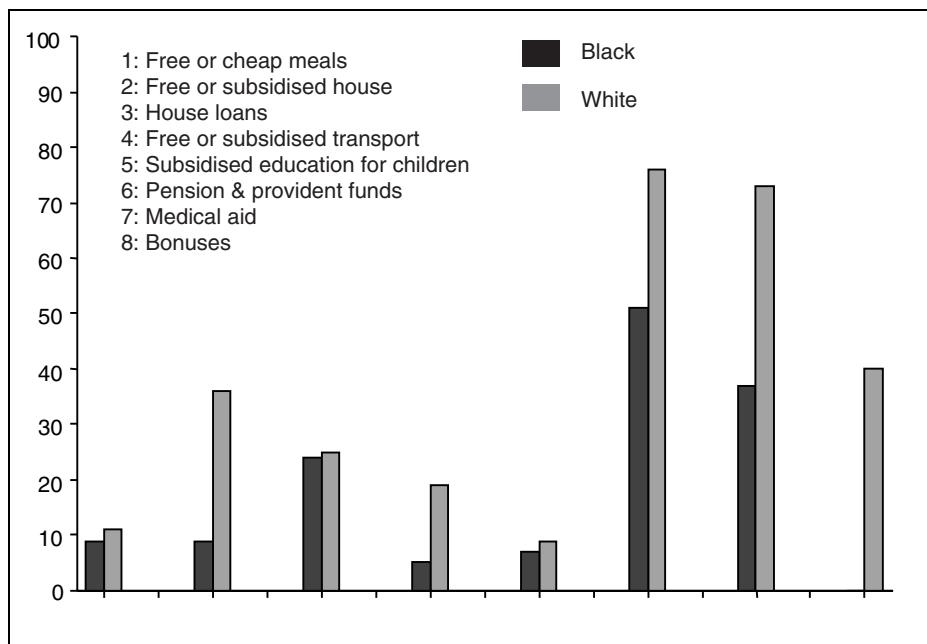
In 1991, COSATU demanded R1,200 per month as a minimum living wage. Few workers have, however, reached this level of income. The average net income for black workers is, as mentioned earlier, approximately R1,100. Wages increased by an average of about 10 per cent in 1993, which was just about equal to the rate of inflation. Wages are, as earlier described, racially based, but also depend upon gender, sector of employment, and educational and occupational group. Whereas a large proportion of women work in services, health and education, more men work in mining, manufacturing, construction, etc. Services in the private sector, which include commercial services and the catering business, are the lowest paid sectors. The construction sector is also poorly paid. Civil service employees, on the other hand, as well as black health and education workers are paid slightly above the average of R1,100. These workers are primarily employed in the public sector.[558] Relatively high wages for blacks in the public sector are surprising but must be explained by their relatively high educational and occupational background – these people work as teachers, nurses, etc. The manufacturing workers surveyed, on the other hand, are paid slightly less than average and mine workers more.[559]

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[558] In the public sector as a whole, average black wages were R 1,349 and are in general R500-R1,000 less than the average for white workers in any given category. The figures are for 1991 (Heinecken 1993).

[559] Mine workers are generally perceived as a poorly paid group of workers. However, hostel dwellers, the worst paid of the mine workers, are not included in our survey. This contributes to explaining why the average wage for mining workers is relatively high.

Most workers get additional benefits from their employers, which implies that social security coverage varies greatly between the employed and the unemployed, from one employer to another, in different occupations and according to which union workers belong to. Welfare benefits acquired through work may hence contribute substantially to the level of social security coverage and position of the individual. Figure 6 shows us the type and extent of benefits that are granted.

Figure 6   Additional Benefits to Workers. (in percentages) (n 861 & 141)

Social responsibility programmes often amount to a voluntary tax, but also cover benefits like house loans, bursaries for education etc. Although most workers get extra benefits in addition to their wages, the degree, type and contents of such fringe benefits varies between blacks and whites. Fewer black than white workers receive fringe benefits from their employers. More than 80 per cent of white workers and 60 per cent of blacks receive extra benefits like medical aid schemes, free or cheap meals, etc. However, the difference between blacks and whites is even larger than what is indicated by the number of workers covered, for the type and value of benefits differs greatly. Whereas white workers get free or subsidised houses, black workers get loans for houses. Free or heavily subsidised houses seem to be granted primarily to white workers in the mining sector.

Blacks get subsidised education for their children, whites get free or subsidised transport, medical aid, profit bonuses and/or a thirteenth month pay cheque at the end of the year. In other words, benefits for whites generally function as a wage increase or "wage top-up" thus making wage differentials between blacks and whites even greater than they appear to be.

Unions negotiate for pension and provident funds, medical aid schemes and housing. Organised workers are better covered by such arrangements than unorganised workers. This applies to both black and white workers. Furthermore, we find that skilled and white-collar workers are far better covered by benefits at work than unskilled and semi-skilled workers. Less than 40 per cent of workers in services and commerce are covered by pension and provident funds, whereas more than 60 per cent of workers in the civil service, health and education etc. are covered. Whereas less than 30 per cent of unskilled workers are covered by medical aid at work, more than half the skilled and white-collar workers are covered. More than half the workers in the public sector are covered by medical aid, but only one third of workers in the private sector.

Unions

A person's position in the union will affect loyalty to the organisation and political learning. It has frequently been noted that elected union leaders and trade-union officials become set apart from the rank and file in their lifestyle as well as in their perspectives and modes of thought. This perception is largely based upon the increased income and social status of union leaders and is thus more applicable to a Western European setting than to South Africa. South African unions, and COSATU in particular, applied strict principles and practices to ensure representation and accountability through the 70s and 80s. But as the union movement has matured and grown, its strategies have become more centralised, and the gap between the rank and file and union leaders has also widened. There is no reliable union information or other survey data on the total number of shop stewards in the major labour federations. However, altogether about 20 per cent of *our* organised workers hold or have held office for an average

period of four years.[560] Table 1 below portrays which union the workers are members of.[561]

Table 1   Union Membership among Workers

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
white unions	47	4.7	9.4	9.4
cawu	7	0.7	1.4	10.8
cwiu	5	0.5	1.0	11.8
fawu	30	3.0	6.0	17.7
nehawu	36	3.6	7.2	24.9
num	34	3.4	6.8	31.7
numsa	92	9.2	18.3	50.0
potwa	8	0.8	1.6	51.6
ppwawu	4	0.4	0.8	52.4
saccawu	45	4.5	9.0	61.4
sactwu	20	2.0	4.0	65.3
sadtu	22	2.2	4.4	69.7
sahrwu	4	0.4	0.8	70.5
samwu	16	1.6	3.2	73.7
tgwu	11	1.1	2.2	75.9
popcru	5	0.5	1.0	76.9
unaff	116	11.6	23.1	100.0
Total	502	50.1	100.0	

[560] 16 per cent hold, or have held, the office of shop steward. Furthermore, 7 per cent are, or have been on shop-steward committees and 7 per cent hold or have held office in local or regional organisations. There is obviously a considerable overlap between these categories. There is also a small group of trade-union officials (6 per cent) in our sample who are education officers, administrators, etc.
[561] It includes both current union members and a small sample of former union members. The reason for including past union members is that the socialisation potential is expected to be similar. Many union members have left the unions, not because they wanted to but because they have changed jobs and, for example, now work for employers who do not allow them to join unions.

Altogether, approximately 50 per cent of our workers are unorganised, 5 per cent belong to the traditionally white unions, 12 per cent are organised in unaffiliated unions or NACTU unions and 34 per cent of the workers are organised in COSATU-affiliated unions.

We also made an index of the degree of activity in the unions, composed of those taking part in union training courses, union seminars, election of shop stewards, local and regional union meetings, congresses and those who have held office either as a shop steward or as some other kind of union official. The number of black workers who have taken part in one or more of these activities are portrayed in Table 2.

Table 2   Organisational Activities in the Union (n. 861)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid none	484	56.2	56.2	56.2
1 or 2	95	11.0	11.0	67.2
3	75	8.7	8.7	76.0
4 or 5	96	11.1	11.1	87.1
6 or 7	57	6.6	6.6	93.7
8 or more	54	6.3	6.3	100.0
Total	861	100.0	100.0	

Political variables

We asked several questions about participation in political activities, such as strikes, stay-aways, political marches, political meetings, etc. An additive index on the basis of degree of participation was constructed. Table 3 indicates the proportion of our black workers taking part in various numbers of activities.

Table 3:   Degree of Political Activity (n. 861)

	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid .00	61	7.1	7.1	7.1
1.00	93	10.8	10.8	17.9
2.00	96	11.1	11.1	29.0
3.00	172	20.0	20.0	49.0
4.00	209	24.3	24.3	73.3
5.00	230	26.7	26.7	100.0
Total	861	100.0	100.0	

And the cumulative degree of activities in civil society organisations amongst black workers is displayed in Table 4.

Table 4:   Cumulative Degree of Activities in Civil Society Organisations
            amongst blacks

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	.00	54	6.3	6.3	6.3
	1.00	133	15.4	15.4	21.7
	2.00	246	28.6	28.6	50.3
	3.00	203	23.6	23.6	73.9
	4.00	109	12.7	12.7	86.5
	5.00	72	8.4	8.4	94.9
	6.00	30	3.5	3.5	98.4
	7.00	12	1.4	1.4	99.8
	8.00	2	0.2	0.2	100.0
Total		861	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 6: Sampling, analysing and interpreting the survey

Existing data

Knowledge is power. Reliable representative data are a crucial tool for future political planning and priorities as well as for the union movement's own strategies and organisational structures. However, social science documentation and knowledge has been widely regarded as inadequate and/or politically biased in South Africa. The government's *Reconstruction and Development Programme* (1994) itself states that there are no adequate instruments to evaluate and monitor poverty. Without underestimating the amount of valuable research being done, the provision of instruments for identifying key social and political problems and hence for policy-making and further research is hampered by problems and shortcomings.

There are relatively few independent sources of information and data in South Africa. Several contributions rely on each other for information, which means one should be careful about drawing too strong conclusions on their basis. Still, such data sources have been used in this report to present a broad-brush picture of profiles and trends rather than detailed conclusions. Available statistics and data are at best insufficient and at worst misleading. Statistics covering South Africa up until 1992, for example, may cover South Africa without the so-called "independent homelands" but include the so-called "dependent homelands", or they may exclude all the "homelands" or else include all these territories. In the last case, we often find even Namibia included in the statistics covering the period up till 1989. The ILO Country Report of South Africa (1996) points out several areas of statistics where insufficient sampling frames, contra-dictory questionnaires, etc. have led to confusing and misleading data. While the SALDRU/World Bank surveys (1993) and the October Household Survey (1994) indicate an unemployment rate of approximately 33 per cent, the ILO states that it is probably closer to 20 per cent. Strike statistics are likewise unreliable (Seidman 1994). During the 60s the government sometimes left "work stoppages" out of strike data on the grounds that they were caused by "misunderstandings" (ibid: 31).

Furthermore, it is difficult to acquire data sets which are presented according to consistent factors or boundaries. Some information is, for example, presented according to statistical regional boundaries whereas other data are available only according to administrative boundaries, which do not correspond with the regional ones (Regional Services Council areas). Furthermore, the borders of Gauteng have repeatedly been changed over the years. Finally, whereas some of the national data cover the population of the whole country, other data exclude people in the former "independent" homelands, or else people living in all (both "independent" and "dependent") homeland areas and, to make it still worse, some of the statistics gathered before 1990 also include Namibia.

Hall (1993) has likewise identified three problem areas regarding existing data and research on developments in Gauteng. First, there are problems emanating from deficiencies in current approaches to data gathering and research, like, for example, the lack of household data. Published data also pay disproportionate attention to the main metropolitan areas of South Africa in general and of Gauteng in particular. Key disaggregations, like gender, have furthermore been overlooked in the past. Second, while much research and data exist, access to such sources (including public sources) is restricted by confidentiality and commercial interests. Third, the racially divided, multiple levels and sources of authority operating in the region, and the numerous, often confused, definitions of their boundaries complicate the task of gathering region-wide statistics.

Sampling

Sampling depends upon what kind of information about the population is available and therefore encounters considerable difficulties in South Africa. First of all, there is no reliable source of information about how many people actually live either in South Africa or in the Gauteng area and who they are. Population estimates in Gauteng vary by 100 per cent or more. The 1991 Census is of limited use because it has (like all previous censuses) generally undercounted the population, especially the mainly African population in informal and, in previous years, illegal forms of residence (Mabin & Hunter 1993). There are no maps of several of these townships. Although, the shortcomings of the 1991 Census to a certain

extent have been corrected by later research,[562] the census should be used as indicative rather than factual information. However, there is no other source of information giving population figures for individual townships, which is needed for sampling. The April 1994 elections demonstrated well enough that earlier population estimates were "guestimates". The Independent Elections Commission confirmed this after the elections.

Problems with estimating the informally housed population have had a major influence on the reported population figures.[563] Such problems are related to high mobility of the informally housed population, land invasion of free settlement areas and the "demolition" of illegal structures. Furthermore, the number of informal backyard structures and occupied garages is particularly hard to estimate.

The sampling in this study has been based on the "best possible" instruments for population estimates, but they are not optimal. We have sampled on the basis of population estimates in formal as well as informal areas.[564] We followed a stratified random sampling procedure. Township residents make up the bulk of the workforce. The main part of the survey, and hence the sampling, therefore took place in the traditional black townships and not in the traditional white suburban areas.

The five sub-regions of Gauteng differ. There is a tendency for similar types of industrial and economic activities to be clustered in particular localities. The sub-regions therefore have different sources of economic income and thus provide information on different parts of the labour market. The Pretoria area has a relatively large proportion of government and administration employment. Manufacturing in the area is dominated by the metal and automobile sector. Private services, trade and finances dominate Wits or Central Johannesburg and manufacturing here is

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[562] The census did not cover all households and people in the black areas, but was a sample of areas and townships. The population estimate has in certain areas been corrected by air-photographs taken by the Transvaal Provincial Administration. The photos were used to count the number of stands in the area, which were then multiplied by the average number of people living either in formal houses or informal structures.

[563] Local authorities may also give inflated estimates to qualify for a higher grade of local authority and thereby receive more subsidies and loans from the Transvaal Provincial Administration or the Regional Services Council concerned.

[564] Sampling was done on the basis of population estimates in the PWV and the borders drawn for the PWV. After the elections in 1994, minor changes were made in drawing the borders of the new province of Gauteng.

dominated by wooden furniture production. East Rand produces mainly metal products and machinery. West Rand is overwhelmingly a mining area. Vaal, finally, is also a predominantly manufacturing area, dominated by the chemicals sector and by production of basic metals, fabricated metal products, machinery, etc. (exact repetition of appendix 4).

Furthermore, average incomes differ between the various sub-regions of Gauteng. Racial disparities are, for example, lower and average incomes higher in Central Wits than in the region as a whole – i.e. 30 per cent higher than the Gauteng average (CSS 1985). Around 31 per cent of African households in Johannesburg lived below the MLL in 1991 (Hall et al. 1993) compared to almost 29 per cent in 1982 and approximately 21 percent in 1973 (Nel in Pillay 1984). The 1991 Census estimates that the percentage of households with incomes below the MLL in the West Rand is 42 per cent, in the East Rand 36 per cent, in Pretoria 35 per cent and in the Vaal Triangle 50 per cent. The median household income in the Vaal is the lowest in the metropolitan part of the region, while the incomes received by households in the Pretoria statistical region are the highest (Hall et al. 1993).

Formal townships are also in many respects different from the informal, or squatter, areas. Average household incomes in formal settlements have, for example, been estimated to be twice those received in the informal areas (Sapire & Schlemmer 1990, Hall et al. 1994). Informal areas are dominated by more recent "immigrants" to Gauteng, with consequent implications for political affiliations, urban culture association, etc.

Social Surveys, a Johannesburg-based market research company, was responsible for the sampling. The sample was first stratified on the basis of the five sub-regions of Gauteng and on the basis of formal versus informal areas or squatter camps. Within each of the ten strata, we selected one area with a probability proportionate to the number of people living in the township. The principle followed was to make a cumulative list of areas according to the population figures. The selection of areas was done in such a way that the areas had a possibility of being selected according to the number of people living in the area. Big, or densely populated areas hence had a higher possibility of being selected than smaller areas. Population estimates for the townships were based upon the 1991 Population Census, Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) estimates

of the number of stands in specific areas[565] or in a few areas even on well qualified "guestimates". Where all we had was the estimate of the number of stands, we multiplied this by the average number of people living on each stand: 7.5 per formal house and 4.38 per informal household (Social Surveys 1994). The sample size in each stratum is proportionate to their respective population sizes. The areas selected and the relative numbers of workers selected are shown in the figure below.

Table 1

Region	Formal	Informal	Total
Pretoria	Mamelodi	Stanzaville	(16%)
	90	48	138
Vaal	Evaton	Orange Farm	(18%)
	101	54	155
West Rand	Mohlakeng	Munsieville	(13%)
	73	39	112
East Rand	Wattville	Daveyton	(25%)
	140	75	215
Johannesburg	Soweto Central	Mapetla/Doornkop	(28%)
	157	84	241
Total	561	300	861

Hostels were omitted from the sampling framework as a result of political instability running up to the elections.

Randomly selected co-ordinates determined the suburb/zone within each area and the starting point of interviewing. Two intervals were set, one for formal areas and one for informal areas. These were determined by aggregating the World Bank Poverty Study's PWV intervals (for formal and informal areas respectively). It was felt, in view of the inaccurate population figures available, that it would be circumspect to use intervals derived from population figures that the aforementioned study had had both the time and resources to source. As most formal settlements comprise 60 per cent houses, 25 per cent shacks and 15 per cent outbuildings, interviewers were required to quota control for these factors

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[565] For some townships where no population figures existed, we had to use figures from the provincial refuse collection companies which are paid by stand and therefore have registers of numbers of stands.

in settlements where there was more than one dwelling per stand (namely, formal areas). In informal areas, interviewers were requested to interview every nth household. Once a household had been selected, every formally employed household member was interviewed in order to ensure representation from all sectors of the working population.

In those informal settlements where up-to-date maps were not readily available (namely Orange Farm and Stanzaville), geographical co-ordinates were used to identify the points of commencement. Once again, an interval was used to allow for every nth structure to be sampled.

In cases where a household refused to be interviewed, was in mourning, away for the duration of the survey or suffering from severe illness, the household to its left (and if that failed, the household to its right) was selected as a substitute.[566]

The white workers, on the other hand, were selected as a separate, random sample in an area called Germiston in the East Rand area of Johannesburg. Our aim was to find a sample of people representing more traditional workers who would therefore be most comparable to our black workers. 141 workers were randomly selected. Because of the limited number of people in this separate sample, they have not been included in the analysis of the black workers; instead, the information provided on the basis of these interviews has been used as a comparison.

Validity, reliability and representativity

One of the main problems with conducting surveys, opinion polls, etc. is that they run the risk of selecting people in the sample who do not represent the population at large. While the aim is to generate information about the population on the basis of a small sample, we may, for various reasons, end up with a sample whose characteristics do not correspond to their proportion of the population.

All in all, our sample seems reasonably representative of the population of black formal sector workers over the age of eighteen as reflected in other information gathered on key social and economic dimensions. Below follows a comparison of data from our sample with that gathered from other statistics. The main scope of such a comparison of data is to gather an *idea* of the validity of our data. To measure the complete accuracy of our data is not possible on the basis of existing

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[566] The questionnaire took cognisance of substitution levels.

statistics. The main reason is that most other data covers the whole population and not only workers in the formal workforce, who we assume to be better educated, better paid and more male-dominated than the population at large.

The *gender* composition of our survey corresponds well with census data; 43 per cent of our workers are women compared with the census estimate of 39 per cent of workers in the formal economy being female in 1991 (the proportion of women taking part in the formal economy increases, however, at a rate of approx. 4.1 per cent yearly compared with an estimated increase of 1.6 per cent for men, RRS 1994). The *age* of the bulk of the Gauteng population seems to lie between twenty-five and thirty-four. The 1991 Census found that 22 per cent of the African population were between twenty-five and thirty-four years of age. This percentage is higher than any other ten-year cohort. In fact almost half the workers in our sample fall into this age category. Looking at the 1991 Census estimates for the African population between the ages of twenty and sixty, we find that the population between twenty-five and thirty-four is estimated to comprise roughly 30 per cent. We must, however, expect the formal workforce to contain a higher proportion of this age group, for this is usually perceived to be the most productive life phase.

The *educational* profile of our workers shows that almost one third of them have only achieved Standard 5 or less – i.e. primary school. About 40 per cent of the workers have finished Standard 6 or 7 (24%) or Standard 8 (16%) – i.e. secondary school – as their highest educational qualification. In a survey conducted by the Human Science Research Centre (HSRC) in 1987[567] about 17 per cent of household heads were found to have achieved Standard 8 or higher. The 1991 Census shows that 20 per cent of the African population had by then achieved Standard 8 or higher (Hall et al. 1993). The data from the Development Bank of Southern Africa, which looks at the whole population, shows in comparison that 33 per cent of the population in Gauteng had finished primary school in 1989, an additional 39 per cent secondary school and 7 per cent had finished tertiary education, while 21 per cent had no education at all (Mabin & Hunter 1994). The proportion of our workers who had achieved Standard 8 or more is far higher (48 per cent). The comparison, however, seems

[567] With a sample of 26, 293 household heads over the age of twenty.

reasonable seeing that we have included only workers in the formal workforce while other statistics also include unemployed and informally employed, youth, etc.

The *status* composition of our workers shows that 63 per cent of our workers are married, 26 per cent are single, 4 per cent are widowed and 7 per cent are divorced or separated. This corresponds roughly with data found by Schlemmer and Sapire (1989).

The 1991 Population Census estimates that the black workforce in Gauteng is divided as follows among economic sectors[568]: 14 per cent work in manufacturing, 5 per cent in construction, 4 per cent in transport and communications, 11 per cent in trade and retail, 9 per cent in mining, 1 per cent in electricity, gas and water (utilities), 2 per cent in finance and insurance and an estimated 26 per cent in services.[569] This data is not comparable with ours because of the different demarcations of sectors and the specific problems of separating public from private employment and trade from other services.[570] Furthermore, our survey is of *employed* workers, not the self-employed or people with their own small businesses. In our sample, 28 per cent work in the manufacturing sector, 7 per cent in transport and communications, 6 per cent in mining,[571] 9 per cent in health, 7 per cent in education, 5 per cent in the civil service and 11 per cent in other services, 6 per cent in construction, 1 per cent in electricity and 3 per cent in finance. We believe that it is essential to differentiate between public and private sector employment, both because of the different wage and benefit levels of public and private employees and because of the different nature of their work. An estimated 27 per cent of the whole sample of black workers work in the public sector, most of them in health and education.

Statistics on *income* levels are particularly difficult to generalise or use for comparisons. When asked in survey interviews, people themselves

[568] One of the main problems with census information is the relatively high proportion of people employed in "unspecified" sectors (about 20 per cent). Some, but far from all, the informally employed will be included in this category.
[569] An additional small group work in farming and agriculture (3 per cent).
[570] We used the same demarcation of economic sectors as was used by the World Bank in its Poverty Study in South Africa (1994). Coding of occupations followed the International Standard Classification of Occupation, ILO.
[571] Compared to 10 per cent in the Mabin & Hunter data. This may be explained by the hostel dwellers not being included in our sample.

generally tend to underestimate their incomes.[572] The existing data on income levels is limited in that it covers, for example, only information from selected employers, specific limited sectors or companies, regions or occupational categories. The 1991 Census did not ask questions on personal incomes. Finally, most income statistics cover gross incomes and not net take-home pay as ours did (which we believe is both more accurate and reliable).

The estimated average net income amongst our black workers is about R1,100. Mabin and Hunter (1993) estimated the average income to be approximately R2,100 in 1985. But their figures include self-employed, managers, etc. The Employment Research Unit estimates the average income at about R958 for the formal sector (ERU 1992), and the Labour Research Service estimates the average income at around R930 (LRS 1994). Gross income is estimated to about R2,250 for blue-collar workers in Gauteng (LRS 93). Minimum wages range from R400 a month to R1,982 (Levy 1994) and are estimated to be between R900 and R1,000 in the construction, trade and catering sectors (LRS 1994).

Misrepresentativity may occur because of bad sampling, mistakes made during the process of interviewing, faulty interviews or simply because certain groups of people are not willing to give interviews. So-called "refusal rates" must always be reckoned with. The important question is how big the refusal rate is and whether it is uneven or not – i.e. whether certain groups tend to refuse to give interviews more often than others. During the States of Emergency between 1986 and 1990, political sensitivity clearly made such surveys difficult, if not impossible. Even now, the problems, especially in the pre-election period, should not be underestimated. In South Africa one has to assume a refusal rate of around 30 per cent. This clearly becomes most problematic if the refusal rate is one-sided – i.e. dependent upon political affiliation or other background factors. Non-responses owing to people not being home at the time of interview etc. may be reduced by callbacks. Refusals for political reasons, or for fear of violence and intimidation in the area are more difficult to avoid. We chose a careful strategy and selected the areas and timing of interviews according to thorough evaluations of potential trouble spots. Townships and the extent of violence and trouble differ from week to week. While in one week violence may increase and the area may be

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[572] We asked them, however, to give their *net* incomes to minimise the underestimation.

considered a "no-go area", the next week it may be calm and safe. The refusal rate in our survey was approximately 20 per cent. (*Social Surveys* 1994). The large majority answered all questions in the interview. On questions of personal income, we had a small refusal rate of about 1 per cent for black workers (5 per cent for white workers), while on politics there was a group of about 12 per cent of the black workers (10 per cent of white workers) who did not want to name their party loyalty (plus 4.4 per cent).

Some of the questions posed to black workers were not given to the sample of white workers. Questions for example on the Tripartite Alliance and on which organisation they thought had been most instrumental in uprooting apartheid were cut out of the interviews or rephrased in order not to offend the workers or cause them to refuse to finish the interview.

Problems of inaccuracy or the risk of errors may also arise in the process of collecting data – i.e. in conducting the interviews. In order to reduce such problems or uncertainties, we had briefing and training as well as debriefing sessions with the fieldworkers in order to remove any uncertainty about the way questions were posed. Furthermore, the fieldworkers were selected according to race, gender and language in order to overcome the most well-known barriers to respondents. We can, however, never eliminate the problem of distorted responses. All survey results are influenced to some extent by the context in which they are asked. Responses reflect both short-term fluctuations, resulting from immediate economic, social and political events, and a long-term cultural component (Inglehart 1990:28).

The type of random sample that we use is simply a cost-reducing tool in our research. It is the whole formal workforce we want to talk about. However, since we talk only on the basis of a sample, there will always be a statistical margin of error. Surveys always entail a certain amount of uncertainty about their accuracy simply because they rely upon interviews with a sample of people instead of with the whole population. The uncertainty that arises is called variance and is measured by so-called standard error estimates. The amount of uncertainty we have to live with depends amongst other things upon the number of observations in the sample and how the specific characteristics we are studying are distributed amongst the population as a whole. Although the margin of error is not mentioned in the presentation of data results in this report, it should always be kept in mind. In the event that the answers to specific questions

differ very little between groups, group differences and hence the conclusions drawn concerning such differences will be associated with a large degree of uncertainty and mentioned specifically.

Limitations

It should be appreciated that the data presented here are based on a survey, not on a census. Our survey is thus only able to draw a picture of relative distribution of population and variables. It cannot give separate, exact and absolute numbers for variables like population, labour force, etc. Taking into consideration the fact that the population figures for Gauteng are highly disputed, the absolute results in our survey will also be somehow vulnerable to precarious estimates of the total population.

The Gauteng snapshot which we have presented here gives indications, but no definite facts, about the situation in South Africa as a whole. Gauteng differs in some respects from other parts of the country. Regional economic activity differs in that manufacturing as well as the finance and service sectors are more important while mining is less important than in the country as a whole. Personal disposable income per capita is 76 per cent higher in Gauteng than elsewhere in the country. In spite of high and rising unemployment and poverty, decline in real output, decline in manufacturing output and lack of any formal activity in the townships, Gauteng is considerably better off than the rest of the country.

Hostel dwellers in the area have not been included in the survey.[573] We intended originally to draw a separate sample of hostel dwellers in order to cover their specific political background and priorities. However, for political reasons, and especially because several of these hostels are dominated by the IFP, we were not given entry to these areas in the pre-election period. The survey result on which this report is based is therefore based instead on a random sample of workers within the townships.

A methodological problem in studies like this is that while quantities of bread may be easy to measure, the measurement of alienation or empowerment is harder. We have, however, trusted the workers' own subjective sense of influence and power as operationalisation of personal alienation and as a good indicator of objective influence.

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[573] There were an estimated 305,000 hostel beds in Gauteng in 1992 (Hall et al. 1993).

Furthermore, it has been one aim of this report to uncover the political learning at work and in the unions. There is a methodological problem about assessing learning, which is in essence a time process, whereas the data are gathered only at one point in time. Furthermore, it is difficult to assess whether unions have made workers more politically active or whether they were more active before they joined the unions. We have, on the other hand, tried to solve this problem by including control questions on workers' activity and membership of organisations before they joined unions and by comparing different groups of unionised workers.

Appendix 7: Survey questionnaire

This interview is to be conducted among people above the age of 18 years who are in a formal job. Does that include you? IF YES, we would appreciate it if you can give us some of your time answering these questions.

REGISTRATION OF INTERVIW: THIS PAGE IS TO BE FILLED IN BY FIELD OFFICER PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW.

NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES _____ 9-10

DAY OF INTERVIEW _____ 11

ADDRESS _____ 12

AREA _____ 13-14

INTERVIEWER'S INITIALS AND SURNAME_____ 15-16

CONTROL _____ 17

TO BE READ TO THE RESPONDENTS:

This survey is aimed at gathering information about your living conditions, work and your political priorities. The purpose of this is to give major decision-makers in South Africa a basis for choosing strategies in the future. Fafo institute for Applied Social Science is conducting the project.

The Norwegians have supported the struggle for democracy in S.A. for years. We are not campaigning for a political party or a union. Nor are we giving this information exclusively to any political party.

Your answers will remain confidential. They will be put together with all the others and it will be impossible to pick you out from what you say. The reason why we picked you is that this house was selected by the computer on a random basis from a list of residences in the area. We will be grateful if you answer to the best of your ability, even if you should be asked questions that seem unsuitable to you.

SECTION 1: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

1. What type of dwelling do you live in?
   (CAN BE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER)

STANDARD TOWNSHIP HOUSE		1	HOUSE	2
SHACK	3	TRADITIONAL HUT	4	
FLAT	5	HOSTEL	6	
OUTBUILDING	7			

2. Gender of the respondent:

WOMAN	1	MAN	2

3. How old are you?

_____

4. Marital status of the respondent:

DIVORCED/SEPARATED	1	MARRIED/PARTNER	2
SINGLE	3	WIDOWED	4

5. Are you living with someone?

PARENTS/FAMILY		1	WIFE/HUSBAND		2	
PARTNER	3	CO-WORKERS	4	ALONE	5	
OTHER (specify)					6	
NOT RELATED/CO-WORKER						

6. How many children do you have?

_____

7. How many people do you support on your income? (including yourself)

_____

8. Do you rent or did you buy the dwelling you are staying in?

RENT	1	BUY	2	STAY FREE	3

9. How many hours do you work per week in your ordinary job?

10. What is your (net) take home pay before overtime?

WEEKLY	1	....	MONTHLY	2	....

11. What is your average monthly household income? (By that we mean all income after tax and deductions from everybody in the household + pensions + any money from other sources)

WEEKLY	1	....	MONTHLY	2	....

12. What was the highest standard of education you passed?

NO FORMAL EDUCATION	1	SUB A OR B (GRADE 1 OR 2)	3
STD 1 – STD 3	3	STD 4 – STD 5	4
STD 6 – STD 7	5	STD 8	6
STD 9	7	NTC (TECHNICON) 1&2	8
MATRIC	9	NTC (TECHNICON) 3	10
POST MATRIC / WITHOUT DEGREE (teachers, nursing)			11
POST MATRIC WITH DEGREE			12
OTHER (Specify)……………………………………………………………			13

13. What is your home language?

ENGLISH	1	AFRIKAANS	2	NDEBELE	3
N.SOTHO/PEDI	4	S.SOTHO			5
SWAZI	6	TSONGA/SHANGAAN			7
TSWANA	8	VENDA			9
XHOSA	10	ZULU			11
OTHER (specify) ……………………………………………………………					12

14. What is your religion? (specify Church if possible)

15. How long have you been living in this neighbourhood for?

16. Where did you grow up?

On a white farm	1
In a rural area	2
In a formal township	3
In a squatter area	4
In a city town/suburb (not township)	5
Other (specify)……………………………………………	6

17. In which province or area did you grow up?

N.TVL	1	W.TVL	2	E.TVL	3	S.TVL	4
W.CAPE	5	E.CAPE	6	OFS			7
NATAL	8	CISKEI	9	TRANSKEI			10
BOPHUTHATSWANA			11	VENDA			12
KWAZULU			13	KWANDEBELE			14
LEBOWA			15	GAZANKULU			16
QWAQWA			17	KANGWANE			18
OTHER (specify) ………………………………………………							

18. What exactly does/did your father and mother do for a living most of their lives?
(WRITE BOTH THE OCCUPATION AND THE CODE BELOW)

Father's occupation: .... Code: ....

Mother's occupation: .... Code: ....

18   (1) Unemployed   (2) Housewife
    (3) Domestic worker   (4) Farmworker
    (5) Unskilled labourer   (6) Semi-skilled worker
    (7) Skilled/artisan   (8) Technician
    (9) Supervisor   (10) White-collar/clerical
    (11) Semi-professional   (12) Professional
    (13) Farmer   (14) Manager
    (15) Self-employed   (16) Other
       (99)   Don't Know

SECTION 2:   WORKING CONDITIONS

WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT SOME
OF YOUR WORKING CONDITIONS?

19. What exactly do you do for a living?
    (WRITE BOTH THE OCCUPATION AND THE CODE BELOW)

    Occupation: .... Code: ....

    (1)   Unskilled labourer   (2)   Semi-skilled
    (3)   Skilled/artisan   (4)   Technician
    (5)   Supervisor   (6)   White-collar/clerical
    (7)   Semi-professional   (8)   Professional
    (9)   Other

20. What sector of employment do you work in?
    (WRITE BOTH THE EMPLOYER AND THE CODE BELOW)

    Employer: .... Code: ....

    (1)   Manufacturing   (2)   Health
    (3)   Mining   (4)   Civil service
    (5)   Other services   (6)   Transport & communication
    (7)   Construction   (8)   Electricity & water
    (9)   Finance   (10)   Wholesale & retail
    (11) Education   (12)   Hotels & entertainment
    (13) Sports   (14)   Armed forces
    (15) Other

21. Do you work for the ....

PRIVATE SECTOR	1
PUBLIC SECTOR (state, regional, local government)	2
DON'T KNOW	3

21b. NAME OF COMPANY: ....

22. How many people do you think work in your company?

    _____

23. How many years have you been with this company?

    _____

24. Do you get additional benefits from your employer?

| YES | 1 | NO | 2 | DON'T KNOW | 3 |

IF YES, Which benefits?

FREE OR CHEAP MEALS	1
FREE OR SUBSIDIZED HOUSE	2
LOANS FOR HOUSING	3
FREE OR SUBSIDIZED TRANSPORT	4
SUBSIDIZED EDUCATION FOR YOUR CHILDREN/BURSARIES	5
PENSION OR PROVIDENT BENEFITS/FUNDS	6
MEDICAL AID	7
NO ADDITIONAL SERVICES	8
OTHER (Specify)	9

EVERYONE TO ANSWER

25. How much do you have to co-operate with others to finish your own tasks or jobs?

NOT AT ALL	1	A LITTLE	2	VERY MUCH	3

26. To what extent can you decide how fast you shall work and when to do your various tasks? (Today or tomorrow)

NOT AT ALL	1	A LITTLE	2	VERY MUCH	3

27. To what extent can you decide how your job is best done?

NOT AT ALL	1	A LITTLE	2	VERY MUCH	3

28. Does management or your supervisor ever ask your advice or consult you about how your work is organised?

NEVER	1	SOMETIMES	2	OFTEN	3

29. Are there any forums in your company where you can tell management your opinion about the work and your working conditions?

YES	1	NO	2	DON'T KNOW	3

IF YES, ASK

29b Which forums exist?

29c Of these forums that exist, which have you never participated in, sometimes or often participated in?

	Q29b	Q29c		
	FORUM	NEVER PART.	SOMETIMES PART.	OFTEN PART
Suggestion boxes	1	1	2	3
Grievance procedures (other than through trade unions)	2	4	5	6
Quality control circles	3	7	8	9
Consultation forums	4	10	11	12
Green areas	5	13	14	15
Staff/liaison committees	6	16	17	18
Through the unions collective bargaining	7	19	20	21

30. What do you think is most important in a job?
    CHOOSE ONE OR TWO

GOOD PAY	1
GOOD WORK MATES	2
LIGHT WORK	3
RESPONSIBILITY	4
TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT	5
FAIR SUPERVISION	6
JOB SECURITY	7
WORK SATISFACTION	8
FULL TIME WORK	9
HEALTH AND SAFETY	10
OTHER (specify)	11

31. What do you think is least important in a job?
    CHOOSE ONE OR TWO

GOOD PAY	1
GOOD WORK MATES	2
LIGHT WORK	3
RESPONSIBILITY	4
TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT	5
FAIR SUPERVISION	6
JOB SECURITY	7
WORK SATISFACTION	8
FULL TIME WORK	9
HEALTH AND SAFETY	10
OTHER (specify)	11

32. Which of these factors are fulfilled in your job today?
(ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	YES	NO
GOOD PAY	1	2
GOOD WORK MATES	3	4
LIGHT WORK	5	6
RESPONSIBILITY	7	8
TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT	9	10
FAIR SUPERVISION	11	12
JOB SECURITY	13	14
WORK SATISFACTION	15	16
FULL TIME WORK	17	18
HEALTH AND SAFETY	19	20
OTHER (specify)	21	22

SECTION 3:   UNION MATTER

We would also like to ask you about your relationship to the trade union movement

33. Have you ever belonged to a union?

YES	1	NO	2

34. If no in Q33
If you are not a union member and have never been one:
Why have you never belonged to a union?
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

POLITICAL REASONS	1	INTIMIDATION FROM EMPLOYERS	2
BECAUSE OF PRESSURE FROM WORKERS	3	TO IMPROVE WAGES & WORKING CONDITIONS	4
CHANGED WORK	5	REFUSED	6
OTHER (Specify)…………	7	GO TO Q54	

* WORKERS WHO ARE NOT, AND HAVE NEVER BEEN UNION MEMBERS,
  JUMP TO QUESTIONJ 54)

35. IF YES IN Q33
Do you belong to a union now?

YES	1	NO	2

36. IF NO IN Q35 ASK:
Why did you leave the union?
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

POLITICAL REASONS	1	INTIMIDATION FROM EMPLOYERS	2
BECAUSE OF PRESSURE FROM WORKERS	3	TO IMPROVE WAGES & WORKING CONDITIONS	4
CHANGED WORK	5	REFUSED	6
OTHER (Specify)…………	7		

ALL PRESENT AND PAST UNION MEMBERS TO ANSWER

37. If you are or have been a union member, which union or unions?

LIST MOST RECENT UNION FIRST

CURRENTLY (See Q.35)	……………………………………	1
PREVIOUSLY	A. ……………………………………	2
	B.……………………………………	3
	C. ……………………………………	4
REFUSED		5

IF CODE 2,3,OR 4 IN Q.37 ASK:

38. If you changed your union why did you do that?
ANSWER FOR EACH UNION MENTIONED IN Q.376.
(CHOOSE ONE OR TWO ANSWERS

	OTHER PREVIOUS UNIONS		
	A	B	C
BECAUSE OF POLITICAL REASON			
BECAUSE OF INTIMIDATION FROM EMPLOYERS			
BECAUSE OF INTIMIDATION FROM OTHER WORKERS			
TO IMPROVE WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS			
BECAUSE I CHANGED MY WORK/EMPLOYMENT			
REFUSED			
OTHER (Specify)…………………………………			

ASK EVERYONE WHO HAS BEEN A UNION MEMBER

39. How many years have you been/were you a union member?

40. What was/is your reason for joining this union?
    (CHOOSE ONE OR TWO ANSWERS)

	CURRENT UNION	PREVIOUS UNIONS		
		A	B	C
BECAUSE OF POLITICAL REASON	1	1	1	1
BECAUSE OF INTIMIDATION FROM OTHER WORKERS	2	2	2	2
TO IMPROVE WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS	3	3	3	3
BECAUSE OF WORKER/ UNITY/SOLIDA-RITY	4	4	4	4
BECAUSE I CHANGED MY WORK/EMPLOYMENT	5	5	5	5
REFUSED	6	6	6	6
OTHER (Specify)………… .	7	7	7	7

41. Do you presently, or did you in the past hold any of the following
    elected offices/positions in your union/s?
    (ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	YES	NO
SHOP STEWARD	1	2
SHOP-STEWARD COMMITTEE OFFICE BEARER	3	4
LOCAL OFFICE BEARER	5	6
REGIONAL OFFICE BEARER	7	8
NATIONAL OFFICE BEARER	9	10

42. IF YES, How many years altogether have you held an elected office?

43. Have you worked, or do you now work as one of the following trade union
    officials on a full-time basis?
    (ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	YES	NO
ORGANISER	1	2
EDUCATION OFFICER	3	4
ADMINISTRATOR	5	6
SECRETARY	7	8
OTHER (Specify)……………………………………………	9	10

44. IF YES, How many years altogether have you been a trade union official?

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45. How often during the last 5 years, have you participated or served as a delegate in:
    (ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER
UNION TRAINING COURSES	1	2	3
UNION SEMINARS	4	5	6
ELECTION OF SHOPSTEWARDS	7	8	9
SHOP-STEWARDS MEETINGS	10	11	12
LOCAL UNION MEETINGS	13	14	15
REGIONAL UNION MEETINGS	16	17	18
YOUR UNION CONGRESS	19	20	21
FEDERATION CONGRESS	22	23	24

IF NOT A UNION MEMBER CURRENTLY, GO TO Q.52!!

46.

	OFTEN	SOMETIMES	NEVER	DON'T KNOW
How often are decisions taken in your union by democratic debate and you giving mandates to leaders who will then have to follow them?	1	2	3	4
How often do leaders in your union make decisions on their own without consulting or asking the workers and you for your opinion?	5	6	7	8

IF PRESENTLY A UNION MEMBER ASK:

47. To what extent do you feel that you have influence over the union's decisions?

NOT AT ALL	1	A LITTLE	2
A LOT	3	DON'T KNOW	4

48. How often does your shop steward report to you about issues being discussed with management at the company level?

NOT AT ALL	1	A LITTLE	2
A LOT	3	DON'T KNOW	4

49. How often does your shop steward report to about matters being discussed in the union or federation?

NOT AT ALL	1	A LITTLE	2
A LOT	3	DON'T KNOW	4

50. How often do you contact your shop steward with ideas, complaints or suggestions?

NOT AT ALL	1	A LITTLE	2
A LOT	3	DON'T KNOW	4

51. How well does your shop steward represent your interests?

WELL	1	NOT WELL	2	DON'T KNOW	3

52. Were you active in any organisation before you got involved in the unions?

YES	1	NO	2

53. IF YES, which organisation/s?

_____

_____

EVERYONE TO ANSWER

54. What is the most important service/s you would like to see a union provide, except for improved wages? PROBE

_____

_____

_____

_____

55a What has been the MOST important improvement brought about by the union in your factory? (CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

	MOST
Improved working conditions	1
Improved race relations	2
Better wages	3
Better relationship between workers and supervisors	4
Better relationship between workers and management	5
Between workers themselves	6
Other (Specify) …………………………………………………	7
Don't know	8

55b. What has been the LEAST important improvement brought about
by the union in your factory? (CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

	LEAST
Improved working conditions	1
Improved race relations	2
Better wages	3
Better relationship between workers and supervisors	4
Better relationship between workers and management	5
Between workers themselves	6
Other (Specify) ………………………………………………	7
Don't know	8

56. Thinking about the last 3 years, do you think the unions have changed?

YES		1	NO		2	DON'T KNOW

57. IF YES, How? (Probe)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

SECTION 4:   POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW YOUR IDEAS AND OPINIONS ABOUT
POLITICAL PRIORITIES AND HOW YOU TRY TO INFLUENCE POLITICS

58. How often during the last four years have you participated in:
(ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	REFUSED
STRIKES	1	2	3	4
STAY-AWAYS	5	6	7	8
POLITICAL MARCHES	9	10	11	12
RENT BOYCOTTS	13	14	15	16
SCHOOL BOYCOTTS	17	18	19	20
CONSUMER BOYCOTTS	21	22	23	24
POLITICAL MEETINGS	25	26	27	28
LOCAL ELECTIONS	29	30	31	32

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	REFUSED
MEETINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT	33	34	35	36
PARENTS SCHOOL MEETINGS	37	38	39	40
CIVIC MEETINGS (squatter, residence meetings ...)	41	42	43	44

(DO NOT ASK AFRICANS THE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS) :

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	REFUSED
PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS	45	46	47	48
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS	49	50	51	52

59. How often did you participate in such activities before 1990?
(ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	REFUSED
STRIKES	1	2	3	4
STAY-AWAYS	5	6	7	8
POLITICAL MARCHES	9	10	11	12
RENT BOYCOTTS	13	14	15	16
SCHOOL BOYCOTTS	17	18	19	20
CONSUMER BOYCOTTS	21	22	23	24
POLITICAL MEETINGS	25	26	27	28
LOCAL ELECTIONS	29	30	31	32
MEETINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT	33	34	35	36
PARENTS SCHOOL MEETINGS	37	38	39	40
CIVIC MEETINGS (squatter, residence meetings ...)	41	42	43	44

(DO NOT ASK AFRICANS THE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS) :

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	REFUSED
PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS	45	46	47	48
PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS	49	50	51	52

60. Are you active in any organisation, like a ....?
(ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	NO	JUST PART	A MEMBER	HOLDING OFFICE
SPORTS CLUB	1	2	3	4
WOMEN'S GROUP	5	6	7	8
CIVICS	9	10	11	12
YOUTH ORGANISATION	13	14	15	16
CHURCH	17	18	19	20
CULTURAL ORGANISATION	21	22	23	24
SOCIAL CLUB	25	26	27	28
STOCKVEL/BURIAL SOCIETY	29	30	31	32
OTHER (Specify)……….	33	34	35	36

61. Have you tried to recruit or persuade others to support the political party you yourself support?

NEVER	1	SOMETIMES	2
OFTEN	3	DON'T REMEMBER	

62. Are you campaigning for a political party?

YES	1	NO	2	REFUSED	3

63. After elections, do you expect/want:
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

THAT THE PARLIAMENT WILL TAKE ALL THE DECISIONS WITHOUT FURTHER REFERENCE TO THE PEOPLE	1
THAT YOU YOURSELF WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE DIRECTIONS TO THE PARLIAMENT AND POLITICAL LEADERS	2
DON'T KNOW	3

64a. How important is it that people are involved in politics to improve their own or the family's living conditions?

IMPORTANT	1	NO SO IMPORTANT	2	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	3	DON'T KNOW	4

64b. How important is it that people are involved in politics to protect the interests of their own population group?

IMPORTANT	1	NO SO IMPORTANT	2	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	3	DON'T KNOW	4

64c. How important is it that people are involved in politics to improve the quality of life in the community?

IMPORTANT	1	NO SO IMPORTANT	2	NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	3	DON'T KNOW	4

65. Do you feel that your life and living conditions are changed because of decisions made by the state or region?

NOT AT ALL	1	SOMETIMES	2	OFTEN	3
DON'T KNOW	4				

66. Do you feel that you are well informed about the political negotiations that have taken place about the new constitution?

YES	1	NO	2	DON'T KNOW	3

67. How regularly do you read the political news in the newspapers or follow it on TV or radio?

EVERYDAY	1	OFTEN	2	SOMETIMES	3
HARDLY EVER	4	NEVER	5	DON'T KNOW	6

68. How familiar are you with the following institutions and their responsibilities?
(ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	GOOD KNOW-LEDGE	SOME KNOW-LEDGE	NO KNOW-LEDGE
1) The National Manpower Commission	1	2	3
2) The National Economic Forum	4	5	6
3) The Transitional Executive Council	7	8	9
4) The National Peace Secretariat	10	11	12

69. To what extent do you think that political actions and your own political involvement in particular have an effect on your own living conditions?
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

Has no effect	1	Only helps to a limited extent	2
I'm able to influence my own living conditions			3
Don't know	4		

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70. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

People like me cannot influence the course of events, only people in high positions can have such influence:

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

Our political leaders can be trusted:

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

I will never really trust people of other ethnic/population groups

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

Once elections are over, politicians will stop caring about what the people want:

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

We must always respect the decisions of the majority in the future, even if the majority does not represent my interests:

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

Politics is too complicated for me to follow what is going on:

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

It seems like our political parties have lost touch with the people:

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

No racial or ethnic groups should get special treatment in the future:

STRONGLY AGREE	1	AGREE	2	UNCERTAIN	3
DISAGREE	4	STRONGLY DISAGREE			5

Women can be as capable as men in politics and work:

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |
| DISAGREE | 4 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | | | 5 |

71. Do you prefer decisions affecting your life (for example welfare, hospitals, education, etc.) to be taken by central government, government, by regional government or by local government?

| The State (Central Government) | 1 | The Region (Regional Govern) | 2 |
| Local Government | 3 | Don't Know | 4 |

72. With the new government after elections, do you think your own living conditions will get better, stay the same or get worse?

| Get better | 1 | Stay the same | 2 | Get worse | 3 |
| Don't Know | 4 | | | | |

73. If the future government fails to improve your own individual interests and living conditions, what will you do? (CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

Vote for somebody else in the next elections	1
Turn to mass actions	2
Contact someone I know who can fix it	3
I will go and talk to them	4
There is nothing I can do	5
Don't know	6

74. Do you see yourself mainly as a:
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE) Specify for race

Worker/Labourer	1
(Read out race)…………………………… Worker	2
(Read out race)……………………………	3
Or just a person	4
Don't know	5

75. Do you see yourself mainly as a ....
(read out language group & specify for first two options)
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

...... (Zulu, Xhosa, Hindi, Afrikaans/English speaking, coloured	1
Or as both a South African and a .... (Read out language group)	2
Or mainly as a South African	3
Don't know	4

76. Some people say that running companies after the elections will be like a soccer game, where good teamwork (between management and workers) means success and will be to everyone's advantage. Others say that teamwork is impossible because employers and workers are really on opposite sides. Who would you agree with most?

Teamwork is possible	1
Teamwork can sometimes work	2
Teamwork is impossible	3
Don't know	4

77. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a) It is only if we workers stand together that we can protect our own individual interests and living conditions:

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |
| DISAGREE | 4 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | | | 5 |

b) Building unity amongst workers and a strong labour movement is not necessarily the best method to rebuild our country

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |
| DISAGREE | 4 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | | | 5 |

c) I will never really trust management/bosses in a company

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |
| DISAGREE | 4 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | | | 5 |

d) Workers should not run the factories:

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |
| DISAGREE | 4 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | | | 5 |

e) The way our economy is organised, a small elite will continue to have all the power and resources, whereas the majority working class will be exploited

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |
| DISAGREE | 4 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | | | 5 |

f) Our economic system will give everyone a fair chance after the elections:

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |
| DISAGREE | 4 | STRONGLY DISAGREE | | | 5 |

78. Would you be willing to take a lower wage increase in order to avoid retrenchments of workers in your company?

Yes	1	No	2	Don't know	3

79. Would you be willing to either take a lower wage increase or to pay more taxes in order to increase the welfare and benefits of those who are less well off in your community?

Yes	1	No	2	Don't know	3

80. It may be easy to agree that social services, health and education should be available to everyone in the future. But, who do you think should pay for most of it?
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

The State through taxes	1
The Employers through their profits	2
Individuals through their wages	3
The Community through funds	4
Don't know	5

81. Which one of these political parties do you:
a) SUPPORT (CHOOSE ONLY ONE)
b) ARE MEMBERS (CHOOSE ONLY ONE)
c) HOLD OFFICE AT (CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

	(A) SUPPORT	(B) MEMBER	(C) HOLD OFFICE
ANC	1	1	1
SACP	2	2	2
PAC	3	3	3
AZAPO	4	4	4
IFP	5	5	5
Conservative Party	6	6	6
Nationalist Party	7	7	7
Labour Party	8	8	8
Democratic Party	9	9	9
WOSA	10	10	10
Other (Specify)	11	11	11
REFUSAL	12	12	12
UNCERTAIN	13	13	13
NONE	14	14	14

82. Do you support an additional party?
(SPECIFY IF YES)

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83. Will you vote in the April elections?

| YES | 1 | NO | 2 | DON'T KNOW | 3 | REFUSAL | 4 |

84. IF NO, why not?

_____

_____

85. IF YES:
Which political party will you vote for in the elections?

_____

86. Why will you vote for this particular party: (PROBE)

_____

_____

87. Unions are increasingly sitting down with employers and the state to discuss workers'
issues in forums and national institutions. Do you think such a strategy is wise or do you
think unions should pursue a strategy of opposition and independence from state and employers?

UNIONS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN FORUMS	1
UNIONS SHOULD STAY OUTSIDE OF FORUMS	2
UNCERTAIN	3

88. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

a) Unions should not keep independent of political parties?

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |

b) Unions should concentrate more on "bread and butter" issues and less on politics in the future?

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |

c) Union leaders that get involved with politics and/or parliament will not continue
to represent workers interest?

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |

d) The alliance between COSATU, ANC and the SACP should be broken after the elections?

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |

e) Union leaders today continuously follow the mandates of the workers:

| STRONGLY AGREE | 1 | AGREE | 2 | UNCERTAIN | 3 |

89. How does violence affect your daily life, if at all?
(ONE ANSWER FOR EACH LINE)

	Yes	No
By direct attacks on me or my family	1	2
Violence makes it more difficult to get to work and hold union meetings	1	2
We are living in fear	1	2

90. In your opinion, which one organisation has been most important or instrumental in bringing an end to apartheid?
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

The Trade Union Movement		1	The Civics		2
The Youth Organisations		3	The Church		4
The ANC	5	The PAC	6	The IFP	7
Other (Specify) ……………………………………………………					8

91. In your opinion, which ONE organisation has had the strongest influence on your political ideas?
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

The Trade Union Movement		1	The Civics		2
The Youth Organisations		3	The Church		4
The ANC	5	The PAC	6	The IFP	7
Other (Specify) ……………………………………………………					8

92. Which of the following statements do you think is the most correct:

1) Unions will use strikes and stay-aways as easily and successfully in the future as in the past	1
2) Using strikes and stay-aways will be more difficult for the unions in the future because of their close relationship to the government	2
3) Using strikes and stay-aways will be more difficult for the unions in the future because governments will tend to be hostile to such actions	3
4) Don't know	4

93. Some companies have started programs of affirmative action to get black people access to positions that were closed to them in the past. Do you support such affirmative actions?

NO people in the future should be judged on the basis of their merits and not upon their skin colour	1
YES, such programmes are necessary to address the unfairness of the past	2
Don't know	3

94. Some companies have started similar programs of affirmative actions
to get women access to positions. Do you support such affirmative actions?

NO people in the future should be judged on the basis of their merits and not gender	1
YES, such programmes are necessary to address discriminatory practices	2
Don't know	3

95. How far you get in life and what you achieve is first and foremost decided by:
(CHOOSE ONLY ONE)

1. Where you come from (who you are)	1
2. Your skin colour	2
3. Luck and coincidence	3
4. Your own personal work and resources	4
5. Through organisational membership	5
6. By who you know	6
7. Don't know	7

96. Democracy is a word which can be interpreted differently by different people:

a) Which of the following would you say is the MOST important part of democracy?
(CHOOSE ONE OR TWO ANSWERS)

	MOST IMPORTANT
Joint decision making	1
Equality	2
Freedom	3
Solidarity	4
Tolerance	5
Protection by the law	6

b) Which of the following would you say is the LEAST important part of democracy?
(CHOOSE ONE OR TWO ANSWERS)

	MOST IMPORTANT
Joint decision making	1
Equality	2
Freedom	3
Solidarity	4
Tolerance	5
Protection by the law	6

PLEASE FILL IN AN ANSWER FOR EACH

Original Interview	1	Substitution Interview	2

PLEASE FILL IN AN ANSWER FOR EACH

Migrant Labourer	1	Permanent Resident	2

Thank you for spending this time with us. Do you have anything in particular to add to this interview which you feel has not been discussed?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name or description of respondent:

_____

Appendix 8: Methodological approach

Our predictors and dependent variables

We usually classify scales into nominal variable, ordinal, and interval levels of measurement. A *nominal* scale is one which simply categorises objects (e.g. apples, oranges and pears) or variables (e.g. gender, provinces and localities). An *ordinal* scale classifies items into categories and assumes the categories are arranged in some meaningful order. An *interval* scale requires classification, ordering and equal distances between the categories. The measurement scale of our variables will have implications for the multivariate techniques that we can use in our analysis.

Several of our variables are nominal scale variables, such as gender, race, occupation, etc.[574] Others are treated as interval scale variables, such as our variables on attitudes and political participation. Strictly speaking, these variables are only ordinal scale variables. Yet, for the purposes of statistical analysis, we presume that the variables are ranked on the basis of an underlying continuous dimension. Several social scientists have argued that it is possible to work using such assumptions without encountering too many problems (Knutsen 1985:V-32).

MCA analysis will be used often in this thesis to sort our variables and tentatively identify the most important independent variables in explaining variations in our political dependent variables. However, in our illustrations we will mainly rely upon simple bivariate cross-tabulation. We can use this to calculate the proportions of our dependent variables having different values or characteristics. In the following we give a brief description of the other methods used in this thesis.

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[574] Some of these variables, most notably race, were actually subjected to classification and ordering under apartheid!

Multiple classification analysis (MCA)[575]

In addition to the cross-tabulations used in the thesis, we also use MCA analysis for the more complex analysis involving larger sets of predictors in order to discover variations in political participation and attitudes. The main reason for using MCA instead of regression analysis is its ability to digest variables on relatively weak measurement scales such as our nominal scale variables as well as its ability to analyse non-linear relations.

MCA is a technique for examining the interrelationships between several predictor variables and a dependent variable within the context of an additive model. Unlike simpler forms of multivariate methods, the technique can handle predictors with only nominal measurement and interrelationships of any form among predictors or between a predictor and a dependent variable.[576]

The programme shows how each predictor relates to the dependent variable both before and after adjusting for the effects of other variables, and how all the predictors considered together relate to the dependent variable. Weak measurement (including nominal scales) on the predictor variables, correlated predictors and non-linear relationships are conditions which the MCA programme is designed to handle.[577]

The MCA technique overcomes some of the problems of attempting to apply either of the two more usual multivariate procedures to survey data (Andrews 1973:3-4). If analysis of variance is to be used, the problem of correlated predictors must be considered. If multiple regression or discriminant function analysis is to be used, we are faced with the problem of predictors that are not numerical variables but categories, often with scales as weak as the nominal level.

Correlation between predictors or our independent variables, such as, in our case, between education/skills and occupation, or between race and several of our other work-related predictor variables, is a problem in several other analytical techniques. Traditional analysis of variance requires that predictor variables are independent. A key feature of the MCA technique in comparison is its ability to show the effect of each

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[575] This description of MCA is drawn mainly from Andrews et al. (1973) Chapters 1 and 3 and Knutsen (1985)

[576] The dependent variable will still have to be interval scaled or a dichotomous variable with two frequencies which are not extremely unequal.

[577] In essence, it is the same as regression analysis with dummy variables (see Andrews et al., p. 2)

predictor on the dependent variable both before and after taking into account the effects of other variables.[578] In MCA, the predictors are always treated as sets of classes or categories, so the measurement scale does not matter. The MCA coefficients are all expressed as adjustments to the grand mean, not deviations from the single class, which must be excluded from each set when dummy variables are used in a regression analysis.

The MCA analysis will express "eta" as the "raw means" and thereby indicate the ability of the predictor, using the categories given, to explain variation in the dependent variable. Beta will give us the adjusted means rather than the raw means expressed by eta. Beta promises a measure of the ability of the predictor to explain variation in the dependent variable after adjusting for the effects of all other predictors.

Some limitations of the programme should also be mentioned. The sources of these are principally two-fold, according to Andrews et al. (1973): the basic analytical model and the procedure used to solve the equations implied by the model. In addition, there is a theoretical limitation, namely that the sample size be large enough, and a practical limitation, namely that the size of the problem should not exceed the allocated core space.

The most relevant limitation for us arises because the MCA method assumes that the data are understandable in terms of an additive model – i.e. that the average score for a set of individuals is predictable and can be obtained by adding together the effects of several predictors.[579] An important implication is that the results can be distorted by interaction – the programme is insensitive to interaction effects. There are several ways of reducing this problem if we suspect interaction effects or are uncertain about whether interaction effects are present. If we know that interaction

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[578] Other, simpler, traditional forms of multivariate methods, such as analysis of covariance, multiple regression and discriminant function, also do this, but they can only do it when the data are of a prescribed form. They usually require that all variables be measured on interval scales and that relationships be linear (or linearised). See Andrews et al. (1973:4-6)

[579] The problems connected with iterative procedure and its limitations are, as argued by Andrews et al. (1973:23), also connected with the problem of interaction. When intercorrelations among the predictors are too high, the iterative process used by the MCA program in calculating the coefficients (or adjusted deviations) may fail to converge or converge only slowly with oscillations (regression would signal trouble by producing large standard errors).

between the predictor variables is present, we can, for example, construct a combined variable, or a so-called pattern variable to overcome this limitation. Another possibility for handling interaction involves running separate analysis, or analysis of disjointed groups.

Factor analysis

Factor analysis[580] refers to a variety of statistical techniques whose common objective is to represent a set of variables in terms of a smaller number of hypothetical variables. Factor analysis presumes that the observed (measured) variables are linear combinations of some underlying source variables (or factors). It assumes the existence of a system of underlying factors and a system of observed variables. There is a certain correspondence between these two systems and factor analysis "exploits" this correspondence to arrive at conclusions about the factors. We can use factor analysis as an explanatory method or in order to confirm a hypothesis. Our use of factor analysis in this thesis will be primarily explanatory or inductive, as an expedient way of ascertaining the minimum number of hypothetical factors that can account for the observed covariation. We use rotated factor analysis. The rotated factor solution explains exactly as much covariation in the data as the initial solution, but what is attempted through the rotation is simplification. In most cases, we will use principal component analysis, a technique in which there are no "unobserved variables" included in the analysis and our simple aim is to explain, or decompose the total variation.

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[580] This section is to a large extent based upon Kim & Mueller 1978.

Appendix 9: Factor matrix

Political Knowledge and Confidence

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative
1	3.174	35.264	35.264	2.524	28.042	28.042
2	1.165	12.944	48.208	1.815	20.166	48.208
3	0.990	10.998	59.206			
4	0.925	10.278	69.484			
5	0.772	8.574	78.058			
6	0.681	7.572	85.630			
7	0.627	6.968	92.598			
8	0.424	4.713	97.311			
9	0.242	2.689	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotated Component Matrix[581]

	Component	
	1	2
POLCOMPL	−0.216	−0.614
READOFT	8.798E-04	0.758
TEC	0.831	0.203
NEF	0.819	0.128
NMC	0.623	0.300
NPS	0.781	0.271
WINFORM	0.256	0.570
PEOHIGH	−2.950E-02	−0.550
INFLOLIV	−0.230	0.122

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Political Trust and Democratic Consciousness

Total Variance Explained

Variable	Communality	Factor	Own value	% of Variance	Cumulative %
POLPARTC	0.52861	1	1.90338	27.2	27.2
TRUSTPOL	0.61996	2	1.15220	16.5	43.7
RESPMAJ	0.49376	3	1.01583	14.5	58.2
RACSPEC	0.65867				
CARPOL	0.61910				
POLTOUCH	0.58795				
TRUSTETH	0.56336				

Varimax – Kaiser Normalisation[582]

[581] POLCOMPL refers to "Politics is not too complicated for me to understand"; PEOHIGH refers to whether people agree with the statement "People like me cannot influence politics, only people in high positions can have such influence"; WINFORM refers to whether people feel that they are "well informed about the political negotiations"; INFLOLIV refers to whether people feel that they can "influence their own living conditions through political actions"; and READOFT refers to how often people "read newspapers or follow news on TV or radio". NMC, TEC, NPS and NEF refer to familiarity with the mentioned institutions. The coding will be found in the questionnaire enclosed in Appendix. 7.

[582] POLPARTC refers to whether people believe it is important to take part in politics in order to improve the quality of life in the community; TRUSTPOL: "Our political leaders can be trusted"; RESPMAJ: "We must always respect the

Rotated Factor Matrix

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
POLPARTC	−0.23759	−0.18001	0.66314
TRUSTPOL	−0.67684	0.07302	0.39562
RESPMAJ	0.27231	0.12286	0.63601
RACSPEC	−0.22369	0.77441	−0.09689
CARPOL	0.76898	0.13433	0.09867
POLTOUCH	0.76227	−0.03195	0.07146
TRUSTETH	0.25515	0.70342	0.05877

decisions of the majority"; RACSPEC: "No special group should get special treatment in the future"; CARPOL: "Politicians will stop caring about the people after the elections"; POLTOUCH: "Politicians have lost touch with the people"; TRUSTETH: "I will never really trust people of other ethnic groups". Coding can be found in the questionnaire enclosed in Appendix 7.

Appendix 10: Abbreviations and acronyms

ANC: African National Congress
APLA: Azanian People's Liberation Army
AWB: Afrikaanse Weerstandbeweging
AZACTU: Azanian Confederation of Trade Unions
               (joined CUSA and later joined NACTU)
AZAPO: Azanian People's Organisation
BCM: Black Consciousness Movement
CAWU: Construction and Allied Workers Union
CCAWUSA: Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union of
               South Africa
CNETU: The Council of Non-European Trade Unions.
COSAS: Congress of South African Students
COSATU: Congress of South African Trade Unions
CP: Conservative Party
CSS: Central Statistical Service
CUSA: Council of Unions of South Africa
               (joined AZACTU and later joined NACTU)
CWIU: Chemical Workers Industrial Union (COSATU affiliate)
DP: Democratic Party
FA: Freedom Alliance
FAWU: Food and Allied Workers Union
FEDSAL: Federation of South African Labour Unions
FEDUSA: Federation of Unions of South Africa
FF: Freedom Front
FITU: Federation of Independent Trade Unions
FOSATU: Federation of South African Trade Unions
GNU: Government of National Unity
HSRC: Human Science Research Council
ICFTU: International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICU: Industrial and Commercial Workers Union.
IFP: Inkatha Freedom Party
IMF: Internationaal Monetary Fund
LRA: Labour Relations Amendment Act

MDM:	Mass Democratic Movement
MLL	Minimum Living Level
NACTU:	National Congress of Trade Unions
NALEDI:	National Labour and Economic Development Institute
NEDLAC:	National Economic, Development and Labour Council
NEF:	National Economic Forum
NEHAWU:	National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (COSATU affiliate)
NMC:	National Manpower Commission
NP:	National Party
NUM:	National Union of Mineworkers (COSATU affiliate)
NUMSA:	National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (COSATU affiliate)
PAC:	Pan Africanist Congress
PFP:	Progressive Federal Party
POTWA:	Post Office and Telecommunications Workers Association (COSATU affiliate)
PPWAWU:	Paper, Printing, Wood, and Allied Workers Union (COSATU affiliate)
PWV:	Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vaal/Vereeniging region
RDP:	Reconstruction and Development Program
SACCAWU:	South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (COSATU affiliate)
SACCOLA:	South African Co-ordinating Committee on Labour Affairs.
SACOL:	South African Confederation of Labour
SACP:	South African Communist Party
SACTU:	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SACTWU:	South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union (COSATU affiliate)
SADTU:	South African Democratic Teachers Union (COSATU affiliate)
SADWU:	South African Domestic Workers Union (COSATU affiliate)
SAHRWU:	South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union (COSATU affiliate)
SANCO:	South African National Civics Organisation.
SALB:	South African Labour Bulletin
SAMWU:	South African Municipal Workers Union (COSATU affiliate)

SASO   South African Students' Organisation
SASBO: South African Society of Bank Officals
     (joined COSATU 1995)
TGWU: Transport and General Workers Union
     (COSATU affiliate)
TPA: Transvaal Provincial Administration
TUCSA: Trade Union Council of South Africa
UDF: United Democratic Front
UWUSA: United Workers Union of South Africa.
VAT: Value Added Tax
WPWAB: Western Province Workers' Advice Bureau, later trans-
     formed into the General Workers Union (Cape Town
     based) in 1978 and merged into the Transport and
     General Workers Union in 1986.

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The transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa was dramatic in more than one sense. At the political level, the transition made headlines all over the world and raised questions and hopes for remaining authoritarian systems around the world. But also to academia, the transition was traumatic, unexpected and challenged "old-established truths". Rather than focussing on structural changes, economic growth, or international sanctions, this doctoral thesis focuses on the contribution of civil society, the trade union movement and particularly the Congress of South African Trade Unions COSATU in the struggle towards democracy in South Africa.