Young Lions : The changing face of South African youth politics 1944-1994

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"Young Lions"

The Changing face of South African youth politics 1944-1994

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Abstract

The changing face of South African youth politics and the construction of youth identities in official discourse has always been an area of interest. During the struggle against apartheid, the youth category was contested by two diametrically opposed sets of discourse: the liberatory and the conservative.

This study is about Black youth politics from 1944 to 1994 with especial reference to the changes in discourses of liberation and the construction of youth within these discourses. It explores the role of young people in the liberation struggle, how they were constituted by others and how they constituted themselves.

This study posits a relationship between youth politics, the wider liberation struggle and the system of apartheid. In view of this interplay between structure and agency, this study adopts elements of both structural and post-structural theory. This approach provides an analysis of the structural forces in youth politics as well as a comprehensive account of young people's experiences of self-formation.

By reviewing a variety of historical and sociological literature, as well as organisational and government documents, this study explores the shift in discursive and non-discursive practices. For analytical purposes, the history of youth politics is periodised into four phases: the politics of the ANC Youth League (1944-1959); the construction of young people as units of labour and the rise of the student movement (1960-1979); youth politics after the Soweto uprising and the construction of young people as "youth" (1980-1989); the construction of young people as a "lost generation" in post liberation politics (1990-1994).

Research into the changes in the representation of youth will assist policy and youth organisations to develop a contextual understanding of youth issues in post-apartheid South Africa - a view of young people as active in self-formation and aware of their own history is fundamental to this process.

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ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
AZASCO	Azanian Students Convention
AZASO	Azanian Student Organisation
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BC	Black Consciousness
BCP	Black Community Programme
BPC	Black People's Convention
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DET	Department of Education and Training
JEP	Joint Enrichment Programme
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
NAYO	National Youth Organisation
NUSAS	National Union of South African Students
PAC	Pan-Africanist Congress
SACP	South African Communist Party
SASM	South African Student Movement
SASO	South African Student Organisation
SAYCO	South African Youth Congress
TRAYO	Transvaal Youth Organisation
UDF	United Democratic Movement

1 Introduction

The South African democratic elections in 1994 signalled the end of apartheid. The focus of liberation politics changed from revolution to the construction of a new society. A change in the role of young people was perceived as a foundation of the new South Africa. Youth organisations and institutions providing services to young people were asked to redefine their role and direct their programs to the immediate problems experienced by young South Africans (Commonwealth Secretariat Report on Human Resources for a New South Africa, 1992).

There is a general agreement amongst historians, social scientists and political commentators that Black young people have played a significant role in the liberation of South Africa. It is somewhat remarkable then, that very little research into the history of Black youth politics has been conducted (Seekings, 1992a, 1992b). Of the studies that have been undertaken in this area, most have focused on the later period of the liberation struggle, the 1970s and 1980s, whilst the early development of youth politics and the active role of young people in constructing their own identity as political activists has been inadequately researched.

This study is about Black youth politics from the inception of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in 1944 to the post-liberation period of the early 1990s. It documents the history of Black youth politics with especial reference to the discontinuities in the discourses of liberation and the construction of young people by those discourses. Reference is also made to the construction of an apolitical, criminal identity of Black youth by apartheid discourse. The study examines changes in discursive and non-discursive practices and how these were influential in reconstruction of the youth category through the four phases of Black youth politics. It explores the

role of young people in liberation politics, how young people were constructed by others, and how they constructed themselves.

Although not the first youth organisation in South Africa, the ANC Youth League was the first African youth organisation to be actively and significantly involved in liberation politics (Karis & Carter, 1972). The formation of the Youth League is widely represented in contemporary historical and social science research as a milestone in the history of the African National Congress (ANC) in particular, and in the national liberation struggle in general. Its profound influence on the ANC's approach to anti-colonial resistance is the key contribution of the Youth League to the defeat of the apartheid state.

The formation of the Youth League provided an opportunity for young people to express their political perspectives and to be actively involved in liberation politics. Since the 1940s young people have been highly visible in liberation politics. They have seen themselves as future leaders and regarded the liberation of South Africa as their responsibility. The ANC Youth League Manifesto states "African Youth must be united, consolidated, trained and disciplined because from their ranks future leaders will be recruited" (ANC Youth League Provisional Committee, 1978, p. 11).

The term "youth" was politicised and came to refer to young people who were politically active in the liberation struggle. The understanding of the self as political was a distinct feature of most Black youth activists, an image which was reproduced at organisational level. However, the process of self-definition was as inconstant as the history of youth politics.

Discursive and non-discursive practices inside and outside of the liberation movement provided the conditions for many young people to take an active role in liberation politics. For example, in the 1960s, the policy of armed struggle inspired large numbers

of young people to involve themselves in the politics of liberation. After the Soweto uprising and most of the 1980s, large numbers of young people also responded overwhelmingly to the ANC armed propaganda campaign (Nhlapo, 1991).

Political violence was regarded by most young people as a legitimate form of political resistance. Studies of Black politics in South Africa (Glaser, 1993; Lodge, 1983; Marx, 1992) found that the policy of armed resistance was more popular to young people than the policy of non-violent resistance. In 1959 and the 1970s the policies of non-violence pursued by the ANC and Black Consciousness constituted a political liability for these organisations in so far as the youth were disenchanted with such approaches.

Optimism about the future and the understanding of the self as a potential leader in a non-racial society formed the basis of active youth involvement in opposition politics. Explaining youth participation in the liberation struggle in the 1990s, Xolile stated that "We as the youth know that the future is in our hands because the old men.... will disappear because they are old. Therefore the people who are going to be responsible for the future South Africa will be the youth" (interview with Marks, 1995, p. 17).

Following the abolition of apartheid in 1994, liberation discourse shifted, pushing many young people to the fringes of society. The shift in power was attended by changes in the way young people were represented. Heroic identities constructed during the 1980s township unrest were supplanted by representations of youth as criminals and vandals. This metamorphosis of the youth construct demonstrates that knowledge and discourse can undergo abrupt and fundamental changes in the transition from one historical epoch to the next, leading researchers of youth to conclude that the category is merely a historical and political construct (Keniston, 1971; Kett, 1977; Musgrove, 1964; Springhall, 1984).

Power, language and the knowledge of the subject population played a major role in constructing the youth category. The nexus of the representation of youth with the wider political struggle means that the youth category can not be adequately analysed without a critical examination of the politics of liberation organisations, the system of apartheid and the political activities of young people.

Methodological approaches

In view of the nexus between youth politics and the historical structures of South African liberation politics, theory triangulation has been adopted by this study. Patton (1990, p, 187) explains theory triangulation as "the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data." This approach facilitates the investigation and documentation of diverse aspects of the subject.

Elements of both structural and post-structural theory have been combined in this study. Both approaches deal with the concept of power and examine shifts in historical and political relations. Post-structuralist analysis of history as disjointed epochs is not comprehensively inconsistent with the Marxist analysis, based on modes of production. Structural approaches are associated mainly with Marxist theories of emancipation, political economy and class analysis. The main focus of this approach is on the relationship between the individual and social structures. The concept of class analysis is presented as a universal and unchanging phenomenon (Kamenka, 1986).

Post-structural approaches have shifted from the emphasis of bi-lateral relationships to investigate the complexity of social relationships. As Best and Kellner (1991, p. 20) points out, post-structuralism "favoured instead a thoroughly historical view which sees different forms of consciousness, identities, signification, and so on as historically

produced and therefore varying in different historical periods." The distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism is largely one of emphasis. This study attempts to merge both perspectives without privileging either.

The combination of these two approaches provides for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between youth politics, social structures and the wider struggle, as well as accommodating discussion as to how young people were active in constructing their own identities. The focus of the study is based mainly on Black young people's interaction with the self, youth organisations, and the liberation movement.

Structural approaches.

Most literature in the area of Black youth politics in South Africa is based on the political economy of Marxist analysis. According to Marxism, class tensions play the pivotal role in the struggle for power. This analysis views political organisations, workers, the economy, the state and its machinery as constituting the field of power. Within this approach the lumpenproletariat category consisting of the unemployed and criminals are not regarded as part of the class analysis. They are seen as reactionary, a view which corresponds to the 1950s, 1980s and 1990s construction of the tsotsi (juvenile) identity in South African politics (Brown, 1984; Kamenka, 1986; Sargent, 1983). As Sercombe (1993, p. 8) points out "the tendency is to want to reduce all social inequality to class".

Structural studies in South Africa were common during the 1984-87 township revolts. The main area of study was the relationship between deteriorating material conditions in urban Black communities and the increase in political resistance. Since the economic situation of Black communities had an essential part in the liberation struggle, the analysis of this aspect is critical to the study of youth politics. The economic aspect was

highlighted in the early formation of the ANC as the basis of the struggle against colonialism (Meli, 1988). Coupled with the legalisation of racism in 1948, the deteriorating material conditions of Black communities provided the conditions for an overt confrontation with the state. The state, its apparatus and the bourgeois class were all constructed in liberation discourse as political targets.

This study views the history of youth politics and that of wider liberation struggle as inextricably linked - an approach which requires the examination of the interaction between structure and agency. The structural approach is helpful in analysing the interaction between youth politics, mainstream liberation organisations and the state.

On the other hand, this study attempts to transcend the victimological and reductionist aspects of structuralism. Victimology posits the subject as a powerless victim whose actions are directed by external forces, and fall short in acknowledging the power of the subject to initiate action and influence history. Traditional approaches to studies of youth operate within the paradigm of structuralist victimology. Springhall (1983/84) notes that young people "are seldom seen as active participants in their own history, more as passive recipients of adult authority" (p. 20).

Structural analysts present the struggle in terms of the oppressed versus the oppressor, and hence imply that both parties are monolithic entities. Lack of emphasis on the interaction at a micro level is a conceptual flaw in the traditional structural approaches. The limitation of structural analysis also lies in its conceptualisation of power as a phenomenon occurring only at the site of production. Changes in power relations are only explained in terms of developments in macro rather than micro levels of society. In the South African context the exercise of power through political resistance at all levels of society makes the structuralist analysis of power, by itself, inadequate.

Foucault post-structural analytics

In this study, post-structural approaches facilitate an analysis at the micropolitical level. Foucault asserts that the notion of micropolitics locates the struggle for power throughout society "where numerous local groups contest, diffuse and decentred forms of power spreading throughout society" (Best & Kellner, 1991, p. 56). As the politics of liberation evolved in South Africa, numerous autonomous organisations proliferated and dispersed the struggle throughout the nation. The struggle was fought in townships, rural areas, farms, shops, workplaces, public transport vehicles, schools, hospitals, prisons and homes. In the South African context the focus of the struggle was mainly based on bringing changes in the macrosystem.

According to Foucault (1970) contemporary history must be understood as disjointed periods characterised by discontinuities rather than continuities. The focus of contemporary history is based on distinct shifts in discursive practice. This approach was adopted in the current study and enabled the periodisation of the history of youth politics for analytic purposes. While focusing on discursive shifts, the study also makes references to non-discursive changes. Each period is analysed as a distinct point in history to determine discontinuities in discursive and non-discursive practices. The periodisation process is largely derived from the focus and purpose of individual studies.

Discourse formation and the constitution of the subject

The constitution of the subject population is a complex process and involves the consideration of a diverse set of social, political, historical and economic factors. According to Foucault, the production of power, knowledge and discourse at different points of history is central to the construction of the subject population. The formulation of discourse is entwined with the production of power. In Foucault's view, "power and discourse make up a unity" (Munch, 1994, p.17).

For Foucault, the construction of the subject population must be understood within a context of power, discourse, language and knowledge. The generation of discourse influences the way that the identified population is represented and treated in institutions of social control. Ideas about youth were embodied in the language of the milieu and informed discourses regarding youth. As the language and perceptions change so are the discourses that shape the identity of the subject population.

Foucault's concept of power as dispersed and productive provides a useful conceptual framework for understanding the process of self formation and the active involvement of young people in the liberation struggle. Foucault argues that

> power isn't localised in the State apparatus and that nothing in society will be
> changed if the mechanisms of power that function outside, below and alongside
> of State apparatuses, on a much more minute and everyday level, are not also
> changed (Foucault, 1980, p. 60).

The concept of power as "not localised in the State apparatus" and the dictum that change must come from below and within the subject itself were both ideas emphasised by Steve Biko (1978) during the rise of the philosophy of Black Consciousness and the student movement in the 1970s.

Paul Rabinow interprets Foucault as suggesting three modes by which "human beings are made subjects." These are "dividing practices", "scientific classification" and "subjectification" or self-formation (Rabinow, 1984, p. 7-11). This study focuses mainly on the first and third modes - the two are most relevant to the task of determining how young people were constituted by others and how they constituted themselves.

Dividing practices and the scientific classification.

The dividing and scientific classification modes are linked to structural theories in that they view the subject as not active in defining him/herself. Through dividing practices the subject "is objectified by a process of division either within himself [herself] or from others" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 8). In South Africa dividing practices and scientific classification instilled a culture of racial hierarchy in which Blacks were constructed as

inferior. These practices were the cornerstone of the apartheid system. As a university professor wrote

> One of the outstanding achievement of this volk is that in the midst of
> overwhelming barbarism, it succeeded in remaining white. This achievement
> can be ascribed... to its racial feeling in terms of which there is a clear dividing
> line between the races which must not be crossed (cited in Herbstein, 1978, p.
> 83).

However, South African discourses generated by the practice of division and scientific classification were inconsistent with the subject population's actions. Through resistance imposed identities were altered by anti-apartheid activists and used as instruments of mobilisation. The imposition of identities is analysed in this study in terms of young people's capacity to challenge, resist, subvert and negotiate officially constructed identities.

The implementation of dividing practices was facilitated by the generation of discourses concerning the subject population and supplemented especially by scientific classification discourse. These discourses were reproduced at an institutional level - in teaching institutions, hospitals and even churches. According to Bloom, studies of childhood in South Africa such as that of Lindell et al. (1991) criticised "clinical and psychometric biases of South African developmental psychology. which they assert supported negative views of African abilities and mental health, and that pathologise African children..." (cited in Bloom, 1996, p. 151). As Foucault explained discourse formation "must be seen as a major phenomenon of social power, and not simply a way of describing the world" (Jary & Jary, 1991, p. 166). It was through the process of discourse formation and categorisation of the subject that Black young people were subjected to particular forms of treatment.

Subjectification/Self-formation

The mode of self-formation alludes to the "way a human being turns him- or herself into a subject" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 11). The focus of this process is one of the main

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distinctions between structural and post-structural approaches. In this process the subject takes initiatives and constructs his or her identity. According to Foucault "This self-formation has a long and complicated genealogy; it takes place through a variety of operations on [people's] own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 11). It is a spiritual awakening process which involves self-definition and understanding. In South Africa, this process was most evident in the 1970s during the rise of Black Consciousness and the student movement.

In some cases the process of self-formation conforms to established patterns of power relations. However, as a subversive process it often conflicts with underlying traditional values. For example, young people's action to radicalise the liberation movement in the 1940s conflicted with the traditional power pattern within the ANC.

The self-formation process is manifested at different levels of the historical development of Black youth politics. Although there are marked differences between dividing practices and self-formation, the two modes are commonly identifiable in that they both construct the subject as the "Other". For example, in the process of self-formation young people classified themselves as different from "other" sections of the community and spoke of "we, the youth of South Africa" (Bundy, 1987, p. 310) However, as Rabinow (1984) argues, analytical distinction can be made between the two modes.

In the current study the two modes have been combined as analytical tools. However, the self-formation mode has a more significant analytic role in the second and third phases of this study than the first and the fourth phases. It is used to analyse the active role of young people in defining themselves and others during the rise of student activism and the proliferation of youth organisations in the 1970s and 1980s respectively. The self-formation mode is also used to assess the extent to which young people were active in resisting and inverting imposed identities.

While Foucault's theories of history and power are relevant to this study, they have limitations as well. Foucault's lack of emphasis on historical continuities and non-discursive practices limits the application of his analysis in some aspects of the South African context. Continuities are as critical as discontinuities in assessing the impact of perennial political problems and what they reveal about current and future social relations. In South Africa, continuities in the system of racism and in youth resistance are important factors in the analysis of youth politics.

For Foucault the question of power is not something that is pursued through physical force but through the generation of discourse and the construction of the subject within these discourses. The system of social control is developed and maintained discursively and not physically. While discursive forms of social control were critical in South Africa, physical force was the predominant strategy for maintaining apartheid. Power can be also gained by physical aggression and economic status. In the South African context these factors must be taken into consideration.

Foucaultian analysis is also not appropriate for analysing the interaction between the structure and agency. This makes it insufficient for analysing liberation situations in which the impact of structure must be analysed. Thus in the current study aspects of structural and post structural analysis were used. This provides a tool for comprehensive analysis which overcome the limitations of both types of approach.

Sources

The current study provides an analysis of written documentation. Sets of written material were categorised and analysed in relation to each phase. The data used in this study included material written by historians, social scientists, liberation organisations, the state, journalists and by young South Africans. These sources were obtained from libraries, Internet files and personal collections. As in all situations processed and unprocessed data raises questions of reliability. Compte and Goetz note that "absolute validity and reliability are impossible in any research model" (cited in Cobb & Hegemaster, 1987, p. 142).

The data from these multiple sources was cross-checked to establish consistency. Through the application of external criticism historical and social science sources were critically evaluated and cross-checked with original organisational documents. Internal criticism was also applied to determine the author's position in relation to the data (Bedolla, 1992).This extensive cross-checking was carried to marginalise the bias of organisational documents as well as the subjectivity of the researcher.

Limitations of the study.

The study was hampered by time constraint and the scarcity of literature on South Africa at the university library. Sources accessed elsewhere were patchy in that studies of youth were concentrated around the Soweto uprising and the 1980s. Very little information was available in regards to the early and late period of youth politics.

Also there was a notable lack of documentation of the role of women in the liberation movement. Past research (Biehl, 1994; Dawber, 1984; Glaser, 1988/89; Seekings, 1993) testify to the invisibility of women in this field. These studies found that although

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young women participated in the struggle, youth politics was associated mainly with young males.

Although an ANC Women's League was formed at the same time as the Youth League, it remained on the peripheral of opposition politics. As in all patriarchal systems, women's role in the struggle was relegated to issues relating to the family. As Bunlender et al. (1984, p. 34) point out women's organisational role mirrored that of wider society." Thus it may be accurate to explain the under-representation of women in liberation politics in terms of restrictions imposed by gender roles, cultural and political values of the observer.

Due to the under-representation of women in the documentation of liberation history, it was envisaged that the literature used in the current study would largely refer to males. The dependence of this study on existing documentation, means that this study also reproduces the inadequacies associated with the documentation of the history of women within the liberation movement. This is regrettable and will hopefully be remedied by future studies.

Content arrangement.

For analytical purposes, the fifty year period of youth politics covered in this study is periodised into four phases and each phase was analysed as a distinct historical period. This allowed the exploration of both discursive and non-discursive discontinuities in youth as well as in mainstream liberation politics. The first phase investigates the emergence of Black youth politics from 1944 to 1959. The second phase covered the 1960s and the 1970s period while the third phase examines the shift in the youth category after the Soweto uprising in 1976/7 to 1989. The fourth phase assesses the impact of the changes in the balance of power on youth organisational process and the reconstitution of the "youth" in post-liberation discourse - 1989 to the early 1990s.

Phase one: The emergence of the African National Congress Youth League: the rejuvenation of the ANC by the Youth League.

The first phase explores and documents the emergence of the ANC Youth League, the politics of its relationship with the mother body and the wider liberation struggle. The conditions under which the Youth League emerged, its philosophical framework and the kind of youth category it constructed are examined. Within this phase, the study briefly explores the institutionalisation of racism in 1948 and assesses its impact on youth politics.

In the 1940s a group of young intellectuals emerged in opposition politics. In 1944 they formed a youth wing of the ANC, the ANC Youth League. The Youth League was to rejuvenate and "remould the historic national organisation, the ANC" (Karis & Carter, 1973, p. 100).

Five years after the ANC Youth League emerged, it produced a Programme of Action which took the struggle to a new phase. The Programme of Action called for mass action. This represented a change in liberation discourse as the ANC had previously confined itself to constitutional approaches. Some members of the ANC old guard opposed the radical approach proposed by the document. This situation created a power conflict between the League and the old guard of the ANC (Johns & Davis, 1991; Pampallis, 1991).

In the mid 1950s the Africanist philosophical framework of the ANC and the Youth League was challenged by the new concept of multi-racialism. The adoption of the Freedom Charter and the abandonment of African nationalism in favour of multi-racialism in 1955 was followed by a major discursive conflict within the liberation movement. A split occurred, leading to the formation of the Pan-African Congress (PAC) in 1959. Developments in the 1940s and 1950s are significant in the study of

youth politics in that they suggest a power struggle between the generations. These developments also revealed the diverse political positions within the youth movement.

Phase two: The construction of young people as units of labour and the rise of the student movement

.This phase investigates developments in youth politics in the 1960s. After the split in the ranks of the ANC in 1959 youth politics took a new direction. The PAC was formed and its core constituency was youth most of whom were former ANC Youth League members. The PAC generated new discourses of liberation which were more militant and confrontational than those generated by the Youth League.

Through these changes a radicalised new generation of youth emerged and took the liberation struggle to a new political terrain. This chapter briefly explores the politics of the PAC and how it provided an alternative construction of the 'youth' subject. The 1960 Sharpeville massacre, the adoption of the policy of armed resistance and the subsequent state crackdown were distinguishing historical features of the 1960s period.

In the 1960s hegemonic and Protestant norms were institutionalised in the state's system of African education which was to become the principal device in the new system of social control. This new system was developed through the introduction of the policy of mass schooling and the implementation of the Bantu Education policy. The Bantu Education system functioned as a subtle form of social control and young people were constructed within this system as units of labour.

The Bantu Education system subdued political resistance in most part of the 1960s. However, the emergence of the Black Consciousness philosophy and the rise of the student movement challenged the hegemonic values enshrined in apartheid policies. Political resistance was renewed. The chapter examines how young people took

initiatives in defining themselves and how they constructed a political identity with the methods of Black Consciousness.

Phase three: Youth politics after the Soweto uprising and the construction of young people as "youth".

The third phase explores changes in youth organisational process after the Soweto uprising and analyse the affect of these on the formation of discourses concerning youth. Changes in the representation of youth in both liberatory and state discourse will be examined. Seekings (1993) found that in the 1980s two competing discourses about Black youth activists existed. The liberation movement represented young people as "heroes", "young lions" and "comrades". On the other hand, young people were represented in conservative discourse as "criminals" and "vandals". The study analyses the role of liberation strategies and youth activities in the generation of these discourses.

The chapter explores the conditions under which these discourses occurred, how young people were constituted by others, and how they constituted themselves. Political initiatives taken by young people during the struggle show that they were not merely passive object but were active in constructing themselves and others. In addition the chapter examines a number of developments in the liberation struggle that occurred in the 1980s. These include the emergence of liberation organisations that had been inactive since the 1960s, the shift from Black Consciousness to the non-racialist approach, the proliferation of autonomous political groups, the township revolts, the dispensation of the struggle and the escalation of violence during the campaign to make South Africa ungovernable.

Phase four: From liberation to formal party politics: Black youth politics and the construction of young people as a "lost generation".

The fourth phase focuses on the shift in the balance of power that occurred after the legalisation of political activity in 1989. The ramifications for internal youth politics are assessed. Following the change in state policy, exiled political organisations such as the ANC, SACP and PAC were re-established inside South Africa. A new liberatory language revolving around the politics of negotiation and formal organisational process emerged from the new milieu. Policies of violent resistance were jettisoned. These changes within the liberation movement led to changes in the representation of youth. Because young people resisted the shift from armed resistance to a negotiated political settlement they were constructed by the new discourse of liberation as a "lost generation" and "maginalised".

Phase four explicates the increasing tendency in South Africa to represent the "youth" in social rather than political terms. The depoliticisation of the youth identity is interpreted as an attempt to modify the field of power by institutionalising new values of social control.

2 The formation of the African National Congress Youth League, 1944: the rejuvenation of the ANC by the Youth League.

Introduction

There exists a virtual consensus amongst historical and political analysts that the formation of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) was of profound significance in the liberation struggle of South Africa. An analysis of the shift in the discourse of liberation that occurred in the 1940s and its political ramifications is required to understand how youth politics developed. The emergence of the ANC Youth League created the conditions for the representation of young people as "youth" in liberation politics.

The term "youth" was politicised and discourse of liberation such as the "new generation of political thinkers", "young blood" and "new breed" emerged. With these discourses, an identity of the ANC Youth League constituency was constructed. Young people represented themselves as "the brain-trust and power-station of the spirit of African nationalism" (Provision Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p.17). These discourses challenged established power relations within the liberation movement, and hence are regarded here as part of the broader struggle for power.

The history of black youth politics is punctuated by abrupt and fundamental developments, creating what Foucault calls historical epochs. Such paradigm shifts often attended changes in the apparatus of political repression. Yet it would be a gross distortion to view changes in youth politics as being purely contingent upon state discursive activities. Discontinuities in liberation politics are an essential component in the history of youth politics and in the construction of the youth category. Although it is acknowledged that state and the liberation movement policies are key influential

elements in the formation of discourses concerning the youth, this chapter focuses on the active role of young people in shaping their own history and identity.

This chapter explores and documents the emergence of the ANC Youth League, as well as the politics of its relationship with the mother body and the wider liberation struggle. The first section explores the formation of the African National Congress and the emergence of the philosophy of African nationalism. These two events provide a departure point for a study of the historical development of Black youth politics. The second section examines the formation of the ANC Youth League, its organisational process and its political activities. This includes a discussion of how the philosophy of African nationalism was translated into organisational practice, how the League challenged both internal and external patterns of power relations, and what kind of youth category was constructed. In the third section discursive shifts within the liberation movement and their implications will be explored.

The formation of the ANC and the emergence of the ideology of African nationalism.

In 1909 the British House of Commons passed the South African Act of Union that restricted the participation of Africans in political and economic processes. The Act was ratified by the South African Parliament in 1910 after "independence". Additional laws aimed at sustaining colonial power relations between Europeans and Africans were also passed. In response to the repressive legislature a group of professional African men began to mobilise Africans into an unprecedented organised opposition. Following this campaign and consultation with the African community, a national liberation organisation - the African National Congress (ANC) was formed and launched in 1912 (Meli, 1988).

Participation in liberation politics at this time was dominated by activists who were male, intellectual and of at least middle age. The rural masses were represented in opposition politics only by the co-option of traditional leaders into the ANC. Young people and women were largely excluded from opposition politics. Although the 1919

ANC Constitution opened membership to men over the age of 18 "belonging to the aboriginal races of Africa" and women as "auxiliary members", in practice young people and women remained invisible (Karis & Carter, 1973, p.101). This limited the support base of the ANC.

Due to insufficient popular support the ANC did not develop into a broadly based and responsive organisation. In 1941 Mbeki, an ANC member, wrote that "The Transkei is, to be frank, politically in midnight slumber." (Mbeki, cited in Meli, 1988, p. 88). A year later, another ANC representative gave a pessimistic report on the Natal province, stating that "Congress is dying in that province....There are no branches which are alive" (Calata, cited in Meli, 1988, p. 88).

As traditional African authority was undermined and invalidated by colonial power, the will to retain the right to self-definition became a central political issue amongst Africans in the 1800s. According to Meli (1988), the 1800s industrialisation drew large numbers of Africans to urban areas, where they lived and worked in poor conditions. This milieu made most people conscious of the power exerted on the African population by colonialism.

Inspired by discourses of national identity, a sense of commonality emerged and gave rise to the philosophy of African nationalism. Meli (1988, p. 2) observed that this development "was a prerequisite for an all-embracing African nationalism" and became the main theoretical framework upon which the African identity was discursively constructed. The aim of African nationalism was to reinstall African confidence, identity, authority and unity. While the philosophy of African nationalism was directed at uniting all Africans under one political identity, it did not retrench ethnic identities.

The resistance to colonialist perceptions of Africans was part of the self-formation process that characterises the history of resistance in South Africa. The philosophy of African nationalism formed the basis of liberation organisations such as the African National Congress and its youth wing. The spirit of African nationalism was imbued in organisations such as the Pan-African Congress (PAC), the Black Consciousness

Movement (BCM) and the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO). It was also reflected in the thinking of liberation philosophers such as Anton Lembede and Steve Biko (Karis & Carter, 1972; Marx, 1990). Like all discursive frameworks, African nationalism went through a process of development and evaluation. Its relevance, and its capacity to enable the people to assert their political position, was re-assessed by the ANC in 1955, who consequently forsook African nationalism in favour of other dogma.

Political strategies adopted by the early ANC were based around non-confrontational approaches and focused on challenging the legal and conceptual framework of various segregative statutes. The ANC presented itself as a pressure group working within the established colonial constitution to express the grievances of the African community, rather than as a liberation movement. Its approach, as stipulated in the 1919 constitution, was "to record all grievances and wants of native people and to seek by constitutional means the redress thereof..." (Karis & Carter, 1972, p. 78). Gcobo (1963) described the early ANC as "largely a grievance redressing body" (p. 1).

As state power became more pervasive in the period 1944-1961, radical developments occurred within the ANC including the emergence of a young generation of radical activists. The radicalisation of the organisation's strategic approach and the shift from Africanism to multi-racialism in the 1950s, were amongst the non-discursive and discursive developments of this period.

A number of historical sources consulted for this study refer to a lack of organisational and political effectiveness in the ANC prior to the 1940s. Troup (1972) writes that in " these confusing years the ANC, short of cash and disorganised, failed to give the people a strong, practical lead" (p.276). However, after its campaigns to recruit young people in the late 1930s and early 1940s, the ANC improved its status (Mzala, 1987).

Although there is a general agreement among historians that the formation of the ANC Youth League in 1944 provided the conditions for the revival of the ANC, some historians such as Meli (1988), argue that the process began in 1939 when a nation-wide political consultation was conducted by the ANC leadership. Karis & Carter (1972)

suggest that the process occurred at the time of the 1935-1936 campaign led by Fort Hare University Professor Jabavu in opposition to colonial laws that disenfranchised Africans. During this campaign university students, mainly young men, were drawn into opposition politics and "some of the men who were later to join the Youth League became active members of the ANC after 1937" (Karis & Carter, 1972, p. 99).

Historical background to the emergence of youth politics and the formation of the ANC Youth League.

In the 1940s, there was an increase in political activism amongst Black youth. Most of the young people who became politically active at this time were university students and young professionals. Their interests in politics developed through involvement in student associations. From there, many broadened their perspectives beyond campus politics.

Most of the young people were inspired by national and global political discourses associated with the fight against fascism in Germany and the rise of trade unionism and Leftist politics in South Africa. Italy's attack on Ethiopia in World War II was also critical in that it heightened African nationalist sentiment amongst South African young people. A number of these young people joined the ANC and also participated in the political activities of the radical and action oriented African Teachers Union. From these activities emerged a vibrant and radicalised generation of political activists (Benson, 1985; Johns & Davis, 1991; Karis & Carter, 1972; Meli, 1988; Troup, 1972).

Gcobo (1963) asserts that, because of their exposure to World War II politics, this new generation was more conscious about race politics than its predecessors. Consequently, they became disenchanted with the ANC leadership's attempts to effect changes through constitutional means. They felt it their responsibility as potential leaders to rejuvenate the national movement and give it a political meaning. The young generation "wanted to see his new approach articulated" and began to lobby for support within the ANC ranks (Gcobo, 1963, p. 1).

A pro-ANC youth movement emerged as an internal pressure group lobbying for political change within the ANC. At this time the ANC was politically marginalised and widely perceived by youth activists as ,"an organisation of the privileged few - some Professionals, Small Traders, a sprinkling of Intellectuals and Conservatives of all grades" (Provisional Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p. 16-17). Rather than developing as an opposition to the ANC, members of the youth movement pointed out that, "In response to the demands of the times African Youth is laying its services at the disposal of the national liberation movement, the African National Congress, in the firm belief, knowledge and conviction that the cause of Africa must and will triumph" (Provisional Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p. 16-17).

Following the lobbying of progressive ANC elders by young people to support the establishment of a youth league, the December 1943 annual conference of the ANC passed a resolution in favour of the formation of the league. The resolution was seen by many young people as a milestone in African politics and a triumph over traditionalism. The conference cleared the way for young people who were, according to African tradition, too immature and inexperienced to actively participate in public issues. Gcobo (1963) points out that the, "young men themselves were beginning to feel that their energies and fresh ideas and outlook were needed in the movement" (p. 1).

Some conservative ANC members opposed the formation of the youth league. For example, Champion argued that the league would undermine the leadership of the ANC. At the conference, he warned ANC President Dr Xuma "that his association with the youth will bring about his downfall from the ANC presidency" (Champion, 1943 cited in Mzala, 1987, p. 51). However, in his presidential address, Dr Xuma called on young people to become actively involved in ANC politics (Meli, 1988; Mzala, 1987).The conference also resolved to form a women's league.

Unlike the youth league, the Women's League remained under-represented in African politics, a situation reflecting wider patriarchal patterns. Bundlender et al., (1984, p. 25) asserts that the function of women in early political organisations such the ANC "was to organise catering and entertainment for ANC meetings. Nor did the formation of the

National Council of African Women, mainly concerned with welfare, take their political role further."

After the conference, a group of young people embarked on the process of establishing a youth wing of the ANC. On February 21, 1944, a deputation sought an audience with Dr Xuma to clarify constitutional issues. Drafts of the League's constitution and manifesto were presented and discussed with Dr Xuma. Although he expressed concerns about the radical approach of the League and its criticism of the ANC leadership, he gave his assent to the documents. In April 1944 the Youth League was launched as a formal political youth wing of the African National Congress (Mzala, 1987; Pampallis, 1991).

Although there had previously been a number of political youth groups, such as the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress, the Young Communists and the National Union of African Youth, the ANCYL was the first substantial African youth political organisation to exist in colonial South Africa (Karis & Carter, 1972). Many of the League's veteran activists became prominent figures in the ANC leadership from the 1950s to the 1990s.

The ANC Youth League and African nationalism.

Under the influence of Lembede- an advocate of Africanist ideology- the Youth League was set up to promote African nationalism and to act as a recruitment agent for the ANC. The manifesto states that the League, "must be the brains-trust and power station of the spirit of African nationalism; the spirit of African self-determination; the spirit that is so discernible in the thinking of our Youth" (Provisional Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p.17). African nationalism and anti-foreign ideological sentiments were strong amongst Youth Leaguers. These sentiments were expressed in verbal political discourses as well as in the League's documents. The CREED, a manifesto published by the League, emphasises the organisation's belief

> ...that the national liberation of Africans will be achieved by Africans
> themselves. We reject foreign leadership of Africa. "We may borrow... from
> foreign ideologies, but reject the wholesale importation of foreign ideologies
> into Africa (The Provisional Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p.
> 19).

The 1948 Basic Policy Document of the Youth League and the 1949 ANC Programme of Action document reiterate this position by stressing the need for Africans to define themselves and to lead their own struggle. In reference to sympathetic white liberals, the Basic Policy Document stated that their rhetoric "is negligible, and in the last analysis counts for nothing" (National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p. 26). Concerns about communism were raised earlier by the Provisional Executive Committee of the League. Members were warned to be vigilant "against Communists and other groups which foster non-African interests" (Provisional Executive Committee, cited in Karis & Carter, 1972, p. 100).

Although the South African Communist Party (SACP) had organised against the principles of colonialism and capitalism, it was still regarded as the 'Other'. Its allegiance to "foreign" ideologies caused the Youth League members to be suspicious of the SACP for a number of years. However, not all members of the ANC and the ANCYL shared this view. For example, in the 1920s the Transvaal ANC branch supported SACP and workers' political protests. Individuals associating themselves with Communists or groups not promoting the cause of African nationalism were often criticised and ostracised (Pampallis, 1991).

Concerns about communism in South Africa were expressed by Africanist activists as well as by the state. To Africanists the idea of communism conjured up an image of a 'foreign ideologue' who did not appreciate the notion of African self-determinism. Yet there was an apparent hypocrisy in the ANC's and the League's adoption of Christian and Western educational values. Furthermore, as Johns and Davis (1991) point out, in the 1940s and 1950s the ANC "continued the pre-Union practice of seeking backing from Britain" (p. 9).

The state's concerns about communism were rather different. State discourses about Communists developed during the Party's involvement in organising workers against what they described as capitalist and imperialist exploitation of the working class. Another factor which concerned the state was the non-racial egalitarian perspective of

communism. A Communist was defined in state laws as a 'bad' person engaged in subversive and terrorist activities. Mzala (1985) argued that the state created an image of a Communist as "anybody who opposes apartheid, whether this is done in the form of a sermon from the church pulpit, a funeral oration at the graveside or anti-apartheid campaigning in the cultural field" (p. 88).

The state feared not only communism but also the growing popularity and subversive ideology of African nationalism. As Troup (1972) observes "white fears of Black Nationalism had been spelled out with the apartheid policy in the election campaign" (p. 323). The popularisation of Africanism through the activities of the Youth League posed a challenge to the master/slave power dynamic that existed between Europeans and Africans. By its appeal to African nationalist sentiment, its rejection of the inferiority status and colonial authority, the philosophy of Africanism was subversive in its approach. In the early years of the Youth League's political activity, Africanism formed the power base and the identity of young people who were involved in the recruitment campaign. According to Mandela (1994), former League member, "African nationalism was our battle cry" (p. 114).

The social position of the Youth League organisers and their ability to articulate a radical political position attracted a substantial number of young people into formal opposition politics (Meli, 1988; Pampallis, 1991). Yet there were also limitations associated with the social identity of the League organisers. Their social status as intellectuals and their background in student activism confined the Youth League recruitment activities within particular boundaries (Glaser, 1988/89).

The recruitment campaign and the construction of the 'youth' category.

The ANC Youth League manifesto committed the organisation to establishing a mass youth movement. The League aimed to overcome the limitations of the ANC by creating a broad based youth membership. There was a strong emphasis on constructing a disciplined youth constituency that would promote the principles of the national

movement. The image of the youth category envisaged by the League was reflected in its manifesto: "African Youth must be united, consolidated, trained and disciplined because from their ranks future leaders would be recruited." (The Provisional Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p. 11). The League was to operate as a recruitment and training ground for ANC membership and leadership.

In pursuit of its goal to create a nationally unified youth movement, the League targeted existing youth groups and all young people who were exposed to racial segregation and state oppression. The League's Constitution states that membership is

> open to all African men and women between the ages of 12 and 40".... Young members of the other sections of the community who live like and with Africans and whose outlook on life is similar to that of Africans may become full members with [the same] age limits... (Provisional Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1973, p. 312).

In practice the League targeted educated urban Africans. Studies of the Youth League's early recruitment process (Glaser, 1988/89, 1993) examine the 'youth' category constructed by the League in the 1940s and 1950s. Literacy, urbanisation, discipline, gender and political association with the philosophy of Africanism appear to have been influential considerations in the recruitment process.

Glaser (1988/89) found that the recruitment network of the League in the 1940s was concentrated mostly around urban African locations in the Rand region. Glaser studied the heterogeneous composition of the youth population in this region and identified two distinct social groups that existed in the 1940s and 1950s. These were the school-going youth with a Christian background and the 'illiterate' or "...semi-illiterate, tsotsi dominated world which generally rejected schooling" (Glaser, 1988/89, p. 1). According to Glaser, the former constituted a minority of the youth population in the Rand region.

The term 'tsotsi' emerged during the influx of Africans to urban areas and the declining youth employment of the 1940s and 1950s. It referred to delinquents or 'street' criminals who developed distinct subcultural identities. The term was widely associated with unemployed urban African young males. Female delinquency was defined in

moralistic and sexual terms. For example, Mager and Minkley (1993) describe African female delinquents as those who "displayed a new aggressive sexuality and flagrantly violated the role of the respectable African woman". They added that the status of female delinquents "depended on a sexual relationship with a tsotsi or a group of tsotsis" (p. 241). Machismo and lack of education were also associated with the term tsotsi.

Discourses about the two youth social groups (the educated and uneducated) created a polarised youth population - 'Us' and 'Them'. Generally, tsotsis were critical of *izifundiswa* (the educated) and *bo excuse me* (middle class or Westernised Blacks). Previous studies (Bonner et al., 1993; Glaser, 1988/89,1993) show that the proliferation of tsotsis occurred in a context of historical, social, political and economic change.

As a part of the process of self-formation, most young people who were labelled as tsotsis or deviants developed alternative cultures. They were resentful of authority and avoided contact with disciplinary institutions such as schools. It is claimed that in the 1950s unemployed and out of school young Africans were increasingly drawn into tsotsi groups rather than to the ranks of the ANC Youth League (Bonner, 1993; Glaser, 1988/1989). Their activities ranged from informal political and cultural resistance, promotion of a group identity to securing an income through various 'illegal' means.

As Mager and Minkley (1993) show, tsotsis exercised a degree of autonomy from African culture and mainstream disciplinary institutions. Due to their unwillingness to make themselves available for discipline by traditional as well as colonial laws, they were regarded as anti-social and the 'Other'. They were despised by the African community and regarded by the ANC Youth League as undisciplined, uncontrollable, and almost completely apolitical.

While the tsotsi and non-student or unemployed constituted the majority of young people who lived under conditions of extreme economic deprivation, they were not classified by the League as constituting a potential political 'youth' constituency. In order to avoid the negative label of tsotsi being attached to the organisation, the League

dissociated itself from tsotsis. As Mphahlele points out, "meddling with tsotsis" was discouraged and criticised within the ranks of the ANC Youth League. According to Mphahlele, "Most ANC members recoiled from the idea [of politicising and recruiting tsotsis] because tsotsis couldn't be controlled..." (cited in Glaser, 1988/89, p. 11). Instead the League participated in anti-tsotsi activities aimed at ridding the townships of such 'criminal elements'.

League organisers preferred to concentrate on school-going youth. Due to their exposure to education, students were regarded as more amenable to politicisation and discipline. The League's stated aim of unifying and mobilising all African 'youth' was, in practice, translated into mobilising students.

Many young school attendees came from financially advantaged homes. Education in South Africa at that time was a privilege and did not attract large numbers of young people from poor families. Furthermore, there were limited school places for African children in the 1940s and 1950s (Hyslop, 1993). Thus, the ANC's focus on schools as recruitment grounds meant that it did not have a diverse and mass-based youth constituency.

Secondary schools on the Rand and Black universities such as Fort Hare became a traditional mobilising and recruitment ground for the ANC Youth League. Sympathetic teachers, and those who were members of the League such as Sobukwe, Pitje, Mothopeng, and Tambo, were active in politicising students in schools. By the 1950s, most Black secondary schools on the Rand had at least one or two sympathetic or politicised teachers who acted as recruitment agents for the League. However, this process was restricted by the hostility of school authorities to the politicisation of students in schools. Active political involvement could result in sanctions for teachers and students (Glaser, 1988/89).

In order to avoid detection, many teachers and students organised outside school. Other forms of covert political mobilisation in schools included the formation of student associations and the distribution of pamphlets. Political incentives, such as the

encouragement of new members of the League to establish autonomous Youth League branches, were also employed as a recruitment tactic. Most students were responsive to the ANC campaign and took an active role in the popularisation of the League's and the ANC's political cause (Glaser, 1988/89; Karis & Carter, 1973). Intellectuals and students became the 'youth' of the 1940s and 1950s. As students formed the core constituency of the emerging youth category, the distinction between 'youth' and 'students' became blurred, making it difficult to conceive of the youth as a distinct and static category.

The schools provided a climate conducive to the perpetuation of the intellectual culture and disciplined membership that had been main characteristics of the ANC. Aspiring students who displayed a high level of discipline rose to prominence in ANC politics. There were regarded by the League intelligentsia as part of 'Us'. On the other hand, those who operated outside the traditional ANC culture were identified as 'Them', and remained outside the Youth League organisational process.

The insider/outsider classification was expressed in discourses, such as "izifundiswa" (generally referring to those who attained Western education) and "uquqaba olungafundile" (the masses which had not been to school), that polarised the African youth population. While the "izifundiswa" were held in high esteem by some Africans, most were contemptuous of their association with Western culture. They were described as "abelungu abamnyama" (Black Europeans)- an identity that created unease between the uneducated masses and the League intellectuals (la Hausse, 1993). The League remained largely an intellectual based organisation and removed from the rest of the youth population.

However, following the institutionalisation of racism in 1948, shifts in discursive and strategic approaches began to show in Youth League politics. Under the leadership of Mda, the Youth League set up a programme to review its tactics and strategies. In the 1950s the struggle moved to a new phase when the League organised a defiance and mass action campaign against discriminatory laws.

The institutionalisation of racism and youth politics.

In 1948 the National Party was elected into office and introduced a formal system of racial segregation: apartheid. Through the use of executive, legislative and judicial powers, the new government reinforced the concept of racial and cultural superiority of Europeans over identified sections of the population (Troup, 1972; Johns & Davis, 1991).

A year after the introduction of apartheid, a series of discriminatory and repressive laws were enacted. These included the 1949 Prohibition of Mixed Marriage Act (which outlawed intermarriages), the 1950 Group Areas Act that classified South Africans into four racial groups - "White", "Native", "Coloured" and "Asiatics". In addition to the Group Areas Act, the government passed the Native Laws Amendment Act of 1952 prohibiting Africans from living in metropolitan areas and or close proximity to white areas. The Abolition of Passes and Consolidation of Documents Act of 1952 obliged all Africans aged seventeen and older to carry a reference book at all times. This book became known as a 'pass book' and contained detailed personal information. The Bantu Education Act and the Extension of University Education Act were passed in 1953 and 1959 respectively to provide a separate education system for 'non-whites'. The Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1953 criminalised political activity by classifying it within the sphere of law and order while the Public Safety Act, enacted in 1953, allowed the government the discretion to declare a state of emergency (Brookes, 1968; Marx, 1992; Benson, 1985).

The Suppression of Communism Act, enacted in 1950, was widely publicised and challenged by the liberation movement. Under this law, the Communist Party was banned and "...as amended in 1954, the Minister of Justice was empowered to ban individuals deemed by the Minister to be promoting any one of the aims of Communism" (Brookes 1968, p. 204; Johns & Davis, 1991; p. 22-24). Under this law, activities related to communism were classified as criminal rather than political offences.

The introduction of apartheid provoked discursive reforms within the ANC and the Youth League. The League developed the Basic Policy Document. The document ascribed to the League the task of "rallying and uniting African youth into one national Front on the basis of African Nationalism". According to the document, two streams of Africanism existed:

> One centres round Marcus Garvey's slogan - 'Africa for the Africans'. It is based on the 'Quit Africa' slogan and on the cry 'Hurl the White man into the sea'. This brand of African Nationalism is extreme and ultra revolutionary. There is another stream of African Nationalism (Africanism) which is moderate, and which the Congress Youth League profess. We...take account of the concrete situation in South Africa, and realise that the different racial groups have come to stay. But we insist that a condition for interracial peace and progress is the abandonment of white domination... (National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1978, p. 20)

In a letter to Pitje, Mda emphasised the need for racial coexistence and insisted that the ANC and the Youth League position on Africanism did not imply racial hatred. Mda stated that "...we only hate white oppression and white domination, and not the white people themselves!" (Mda, 1973, p. 321).

In the context of the publication of the Basic Policy Document and increasing repression under the new system of apartheid, a consolidation of democratic forces was envisaged. According to Troup (1972) and Mandela (1994) members of the Youth League began to establish political relationships with Indian and liberal white students. The ANC leadership was also forging political co-operation with members of the Communist Party who had gone underground. The Apartheid laws, such as the Suppression of Communism Act and the Group Areas Act, were meant to crush state opposition and divide the subject population, but actually became the cause of power and unity.

With frustration and mass action sentiment increasing among the African, Indian and Coloured communities, the Youth League developed a radical programme to challenge repression. The programme required the approval of the ANC Congress, and the Leaguers had to lobby support from conservative and moderate ANC members. Even though the ANC President Dr Xuma had earlier given his support to the Youth League,

he was opposed to boycotts and mass protests proposed in the programme (Karis & Carter, 1973; Troup, 1972).

The young people played their numbers and threatened not to endorse Dr Xuma as president in the December elections if he maintained his opposition to the proposed Programme of Action. Expecting the young people to interact with him in a traditional child/parent relationship, Dr Xuma was angry at being threatened and told them that they "were young and arrogant, and treating him without respect" (Mandela, 1994, p. 131).

Having failed to convince Dr Xuma, the Leaguers turned to Professor Matthews as an alternative candidate but were described by Matthews as "too radical...naïve firebrands [who] would mellow with age" (Mandela, 1994, p. 131). Eventually, Dr Moroko was endorsed by the Youth League and elected as president. The Programme of Action was adopted by the 1949 December annual conference. Two Youth League members, Sisulu and Tambo, were elected onto the ANC Executive Committee. Commenting on the Youth League's political manoeuvring, Calata stated that

> These Youth Leaguers were students and teachers and professional men - as
> petite bourgeois as their predecessors. They were men thrown up by the
> national struggle, and not the class struggle, and more significant still, although
> they were not communists when they initiated and carried through their militant
> policies, many of them were afterwards drawn towards Marxism and the
> Communist Party (cited in Meli, 1988, p. 118).

The adoption of The Programme of Action and the election of its members into ANC leadership enabled the League to have a greater influence in the ANC's decision making process. The aims and "principles of the Programme of Action were inspired by the desire to achieve National freedom" (National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1973, p. 337). The fundamental aspects of the Programme of Action emphasised principles such as self-determination, the promotion of self-confidence, and African identity. It rejected white paternalism and domination. Its call for " immediate and active boycott, strike, civil disobedience and non-co-operation" (The National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League, 1973, p. 338).

The shift from the ANC reformist approach to the mass defiance strategy, constitutes a significant historical break. These developments altered the organisation's composition, power structure, strategies and tactics. According to Mandela (1978), the changes, "laid the basis for the national campaigns of direct action and refusal to collaborate in structures provided by the government for blacks" (p, 30).

In 1950, the Youth League and the ANC began to implement the programme in co-operation with other organisations, such as the Indian Congress and the multiracial trade union- the South African Congress of Trade Unions. A number of mass political protests occurred in the 1950s prompting the enactment of countering legislation. Significant political actions included the National Day of Protest and Mourning and the Defiance Campaign (Pampallis, 1991).

The "Defend Free Speech" meeting, chaired by ANC President Dr Moroko, set the pace for mass protest and defiance campaigns. The meeting attacked the government for violating fundamental human rights and demanded the end of colour bar laws and the denial of freedom of speech and movement. It called for a general strike on May Day (International Workers' Day May 1) 1950. The police responded with brutality, killing eighteen Africans. As May Day was associated with communism, the strike was described by the state and some ANC members as being orchestrated by Communists. An ANC Youth League member criticised Dr Moroko for presiding over a communist organised protest and argued that "the May Day demonstrations were intended to be part of a world campaign engineered by the Communists to help advance the cause of Communism and not of the oppressed African" (Ngubane, 1973, p. 441). Although there was an emerging trend towards multiracial unity in the struggle for freedom, there was still scepticism amongst hard-line Africanists. In the late 1950s disagreements on the issue developed into an internal ideological conflict within ANC ranks.

The state responded to the May Day demonstrations by introducing the Unlawful Organisation Bill, which later became The Suppression of Communism Act. The state definition of communism, as mentioned earlier, extended beyond the Communist Party and its members. Many political activists felt threatened and supported a unified

approach against the Bill and other repressive laws. A joint emergency conference organised by the ANC was convened to mobilise political support against the Bill. The positive response to this call was regarded as an encouragement to the formation of a multiracial alliance (Karis & Carter, 1973; Johns & Davis, 1991; Meli, 1988).

A number of leading organisations attended the conference. They included the ANC, the Youth League, the South African Indian Congress, the African People's Organisation, the Communist Party of South Africa, and the Transvaal Council of Non-European Trade Unions. At the conference, Tambo argued that "Today it is the Communist Party. Tomorrow it will be our trade unions, ou r Indian Congress, ..., our African National Congress" (cited in Meli, 1988, p. 119-120). The conference described the Bill as leading South Africa to "a fully fledged fascist state" and pledged "to take immediate steps to mobilise all sections of the South African people to offer concrete mass opposition to this vicious Bill with the aim of defeating it" (Conference of Representatives of the Executive Committees, 1973, p. 442-443).

After consultations and joint planning, the leading organisations declared July 26 1950 as "The National Day of Protest and Mourning". Because of its political standing in opposition politics, the ANC and Youth League played a leading role in organising the national protest and in building the alliance. The ANC president issued a mass stay-at-home protest call and appealed for joint co-operation. According to Benson (1985, p. 132), "nearly three quarters of the African workers stopped work, Indian shopkeepers closed their shops..."

Prior to the protest, the Youth League leadership had expressed its support for a joint approach. It asserted that

> If Makana, Dingana, Khama and Sekhukhuni had defended their country
> jointly, Africa would have been served for posterity. Now, for the first time in
> the history of South Africa, the people intend to offer a joint National
> Opposition at all costs....The name of organisations can be banned, leaders can
> be imprisoned, but the spirit and aspirations of a people can never be subdued"
> (Central Executive Committee of the Transvaal ANC Youth League, 1990, p.
> 51).

The endorsement of a consolidated mass approach and a willingness to sacrifice and face imprisonment represented a radical non-discursive shift in the history of Black politics in South Africa. This was evident in the Defiance Campaign when many people, mostly youth, volunteered to violate the new laws with full knowledge that they could be persecuted or even killed. This became a new form of resistance and mobilisation against the state (Frederikse, 1990; Meli, 1988; Pampallis, 1991). According to the ANC seventy fifth anniversary statement, " The spirit of defiance engendered by this campaign produced, though indirectly, the riots of 1953 at Port Elizabeth, East London...and elsewhere" (1987, p. 9). Militant struggles in this campaign include the 1950s women's struggle against the extension of passes to women.

As the campaigns advanced, multiracial discourses became more common in political speeches and organisational documents. For example, in a statement on the Day of Protest, the League's Transvaal branch stated that "The African people have pledged themselves to liberate South Africa - black, white and yellow - and to that end the impending national crisis presages the shape of things to come" (Central Executive Committee of the Transvaal ANC Youth League, 1990, p. 51). Political actions were planned jointly with other political organisations. These actions included the defiance or civil disobedience campaigns against segregative laws, bus and train boycotts, and protests against the Bantu system of education. These campaigns enjoyed substantial support from young people, including the tsotsi youth constituency that was previously regarded by the League as apolitical (Glaser, 1988/89; Johns & Davis, 1991; Pampallis, 1991).

Although tsotsis became actively involved in campaigns organised by the League- such as the protest against the destruction of Sophiatown[1] and school and bus boycotts- the ANC Youth League did not formally endorse their mobilisation. The tsotsis maintained their autonomy and participated informally in most campaigns. Glaser's (1988/89) study on tsotsi youth shows that this category of young people were the "storm troopers" of

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[1] Sophiatown was an African township which was destroyed and African residents were forcefully removed under the Group Areas Act to give way to the development of "White" only residential zone (Troup, 1972).

boycotts in that they ,"identified closely with certain campaign issues and took their own initiatives to enforce adherence to boycotts" (p.11).

Unlike the school boycott and the Sophiatown protest, the Defiance Campaign of 1952 was a planned and disciplined activity. It was taken up by volunteers selected by a disciplinary process. According to Meli (1988), the campaign received support from Africans, Indians, Coloureds and the new pro-ANC white organisation- the Congress of Democrats. With the move towards formal alliance receiving popular support among moderates, the 1950s was marked by a shift in the discourse of liberation.

From Africanism to Charterism.

The ANC continued its commitment to the issue of multiracialism and the founding of a democratic alliance. In co-ordination with other anti-apartheid organisations, the ANC embarked on a nation wide consultation to solicit the people's views on the issue of democracy. Political, social and economic demands were collected from all sectors of the South African population and presented in the Congress of the People. Political discourses such as "togetherness", "multiracialism", "freedom", "peace", "equality and equity", were prevalent during the consultation process. Appealing for popular participation in the consultation process, a leaflet stated that

> ALL OF US TOGETHER - African and European, Indian and Coloured. Voter and voteless. Privileged and rightless. The happy and the homeless. All the people of South Africa; of the towns and of the countryside.
>
> LET US SPEAK TOGETHER OF FREEDOM. And of the happiness that can come to men and women if they live in a land that is free.
>
> LET US SPEAK TOGETHER OF FREEDOM. And how to get it for ourselves, and for our children" (National Action Council of the Congress of the People, 178, p. 47).

"Freedom" and "togetherness" were dominant themes of the consultation campaign. The concept of emancipation became the main focus of the liberation movement. The term "freedom" referred not only to political but also to social and economic emancipation. By the mid 1950s, it was obvious to most anti-apartheid activists that multiracialism was a viable approach to national liberation. The "Charter of Freedom" (later The

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Freedom Charter), entailing the doctrine of multiracialism , was adopted by a Congress of the People in June 1955. It was reported that about 3, 000 delegates representing all sections of the community attended (Troup, 1972; Karis & Carter, 1973; Mandela, 1978a, 1990b; Lodge, 1983; Meli, 1988; Johns & Davis, 1991). The preamble of the Charter states that

> South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no
> government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the
> people;...That our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people
> live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities...That only a
> democratic state, based on the will of the people can secure to all their
> birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief (Sub-committee of
> the National Action Council, 1978, p. 50).

The Charter of Freedom was widely accepted and became the ideological bulwark of the anti-apartheid alliance. With its liberal approach and its emphasis on civil rights, the adoption of the Freedom Charter was a critical juncture in the history of the liberation movement. Discursive approaches to the struggle for political, social and economic freedom shifted from the confines of African nationalism to the broader parameters of internationalism and multiracialism. The alliance was referred to in specific political terminology as the 'Charterist movement'. Led by the ANC, it became the symbol of the broadly defined 'anti-apartheid movement' (Pampallis, 1991).

When the ideology of African nationalism was abandoned by the ANC and the Youth League, the new political culture produced new political identities and strategies. Most League members began to relate to the principles of the Charter rather than Africanism. The Youth League became an advocate of the Freedom Charter and were represented in liberatory discourses as "Charterists". (Meli, 1988). This illustrates the impact of changes in organisational practice on discourse formation and the construction of the subject. As the discourse and organisational practice that construct the subject changes, so too the identity of the subject population (Foucault, 1965, 1977).

The economic policy entailed in the Charter, which called for the nationalisation of key industries and an equitable re-distribution of wealth, was received with enthusiasm by disadvantaged groups, but described by the state as well as liberals as a form of

communism (Lodge, 1983). Using the Suppression of Communism Act, the state arrested and banished prominent anti-apartheid activists "for having engaged in an allegedly communist-inspired conspiracy..." (Johns & Davis, 1991, p. 30). While those arrested were later released due to a lack of evidence, banishment orders remained, creating a crisis in organisational coherence. Yet this did not enervate opposition to the system. Instead the 1950s political trial was a cause of mobilisation (Sechaba, 1956, cited in Frederikse 1990, p. 70).

Although the ANC gained popularity as a result of the trial, internal conflict escalated with pro-Africanist young people opposing the shift to multiracialism and the alliance with the Communist Party. According to Ngubane (1964), the younger African Nationalists argued that these developments "reduced" the ANC "to a minority group in the alliance..." (p. 170). An anti-multiracial alliance campaign was launched, accusing the ANC of violating the principles of the Programme of Action. Pro-Charterist ANC activists were regarded as "self-confessed lackeys and flunkeys of the white ruling class and the Indian merchant class" (Meli, 1988, p. 137).

The rallying point against the shift in discourse of liberation was the principles of the Freedom Charter which regard South Africa as belonging "to all who live in it, black and white". The policy of the Freedom Charter on land, which states that "land shall be shared among those who work it", was another source of conflict. Pro-Africanist young people considered the land as a birthright and an essential part of indigenous African identity (Marx, 1992).

The concept of land as a symbol of African identity appealed to large sections of the rural community and was used to mobilise support against what was regarded as a threat to African self-determination. Lodge (1983, p. 202) claims that the appeal to nationalist sentiments created an "...ethnonationalist popular consciousness." The ANC persevered and defended its position on the land issue. At the Morogoro Conference in 1969 it argued that "The White people, who monopolise the land, have made South Africa their home and are historically part of the South African population and as such entitled to the land" (ANC, 1969, p. 9).

Organisational split and the emergence of the Pan African Congress (PAC).

In the context of this ideological conflict, a splinter organisation led by Robert Sobukwe emerged in 1959. Reflecting the aspiration of Africanism, the new organisation was called the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). The PAC founding members reiterated the ANC Youth League's earlier position that the struggle for liberation must be achieved and led by Africans themselves. It opposed the ANC's alliance with the Communist Party and adopted the name Poqo (going it alone) as its political identity (Gcobo, 1963). Most of the PAC's policies mirrored those of the Youth League. The PAC Constitution states that the aim of the organisation is

> To unite and rally the African people into one national front on the basis of African Nationalism. To fight for the overthrow of White domination, and for the implementation and maintenance of the right of self-determination for the African people...To wage the struggle...under the banner of the Programme of Action of 1949 adopted in Bloemfotein (PAC National Executive Committee, 1973, p. 524-531).

In his analysis of the PAC philosophical framework, Ngubane (1964) concluded that PAC was a reflection of the Youth League "...Because [it] set out to assert purely African initiatives as a dominant influence in South African political life" (p. 51).

At the launch of the PAC, Robert Sobukwe referred to the destruction of white supremacy as a precondition for democracy in South Africa. He asserted that "the illiterate and semi-illiterate African masses constitute the key and centre and content of any struggle for true democracy in South Africa. The African people can be organised only under the banner of African nationalism..." (Sobukwe, cited in Frederikse, 1990, p. 76). The construction of the "illiterate and semi-illiterate" categories was an attempt by the PAC to transcend the League's limitations by constituting the subject differently.

In its programme of action, the PAC set 1960 as the year for the liberation of Africa. Soon after the launch, it embarked on a major recruitment and mobilisation drive. Although it also used schools as a site of political recruitment, the PAC moved to new

terrain. It aimed to exploit the political potential of the unemployed township youth who had remained politically unorganised. With its rhetoric of armed confrontation, the PAC identified itself with the anger and frustration of many unemployed youth who were members of the tsotsi subculture (Glaser, 1993). Within three months the PAC claimed a membership of about twenty-five thousand, and a majority of young people. Comparing the ANC and PAC membership, Gerhart (1978) argued that

> without doubt, age and not class was the most distinguishing characteristic of the PAC's following. At every level of organisation, from the national leadership down to the least regimented non-card carrying supporter, the people associated with the PAC were at least a decade younger on average than those in the ANC (p. 221).

The formation of the PAC and its strategy of armed struggle provided an environment for the mobilisation of large numbers of young people. As tsotsis were drawn into formal political opposition, the liberation movement became more radicalised and militant in its approach. The radicalisation and militarisation of political activism brought the struggle against apartheid to a new phase. The production of political discourse formed the broader part of the construction and deconstruction of the youth category in Black South African politics. Several social control measures were developed by the state to depoliticise the youth constituency and minimise their political potential.

Conclusion

The main aim of this chapter was to document the emergence of the ANC Youth League and the politics of its relationship with the ANC and the wider struggle. The process of youth self-formation and the impact of the formation of the Youth League on liberation politics was examined. Shifts in the discourse of liberation in the 1940s and 1950s were more visible than were shifts in the discourse of youth. While Leaguers defined themselves as "the brain-trust and power-station of the spirit of African nationalism", the traditional perception of young people as "immature" and "firebrands" persisted.

The overt challenge to the traditional authority of the ANC old guard by Leaguers was part of the wider conflict between traditionalism and changes in organisational practice. Most of the League founding members were exposed to contemporary 1940s race politics and wanted to institute a radical approach to the struggle against colonial values. They regarded the liberal and reformist approach of the traditional ANC as overly passive and ineffective. The radical and assertive League transcended cultural and organisational boundaries within which young people and women had been constrained to a peripheral position in the political process. While young people (male) transcended these boundaries, women remained entrapped.

Some of the ANC old guard resisted the youth advance by opposing League initiated actions such as the 1959 Programme of Action. The formation of the League itself was received with caution. The conflict was not confined to a dispute between generations - young people too were polarised. This was evident in the 1950s when young people were divided by the issue of multiracialism.

The power conflict that characterised the 1940s and the 1950s can be understood in terms of Foucault's analysis of power. According to Foucault (1984), power cannot be monopolised or located in one site but must be understood as "the multiplicity of force relations." It is exercised "through ceaseless struggles and confrontations..." (p. 92). Foucault also argued that "where there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1984, p. 95). These Foucaultian principles are borne out by the political developments of 1949 and the 1950s.

Discourse formation plays a major role in the process of power and the constitution of the subject population. For example, dominant discourse that described students as amenable to politicisation and discipline was influential in the Youth League's construction of young people as 'youth'. The existence of these discourses meant that the ANC Youth League's goal to construct a broadly based youth organisation was, in practice, narrowed to a specifically identified subject population.

Studies of African youth politics in the 1940s (Bonner, 1993; Glaser, 1988/89 1993) show that large sections of the youth population who operated outside the Youth League political culture remained outside formal opposition politics. These sections include young women, tsotsis, the unemployed and the rural youth. The core constituency of the League was urban male students. Thus participation in youth politics in the 1940s was determined by intellectual, urban and patriarchal prerequisites, a process representing a continuity in ANC organisational practice.

This chapter also examined the organisational discursive and non-discursive discontinuities that occurred after the introduction of apartheid. The radicalisation of the anti-apartheid movement was evident in the 1950s when the ANC Youth League organised a campaign against segregative laws. The Defiance Campaign, the shift from Africanism to multiracialism, and the political split of 1959, all changed the landscape of African politics. As African youth politics entered the 1960s period, the youth category was polarised into pro-Africanist and pro-Charterist or multiracialist activists.

3 Black youth politics in the 1960s and the 1970s: Young people and underground politics.

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the emergence of the African National Congress Youth League, and developments in the discourse of liberation and organisational practice. A number of changes within the liberation movement and the Youth League occurred after the institutionalisation of racism in the late 1940s, including the radicalisation of the ANC's strategic approach by its adoption of the Programme of Action in 1949. The shift from Africanism to multiracialism and the split within the ANC and Youth League's ranks were two further watersheds of the 1950s.

Changes in the discourse of liberation in 1955 and 1960 also had a major impact on youth politics. Following the adoption of the Freedom charter and the formation of the multiracial alliance, the Youth League abandoned the philosophy of African nationalism. The emergence of discourse of armed resistance in the early 1960s marked a strategic shift within youth politics and the liberation struggle generally. Such discourses had more influence on the youth constituency than any other section of the population (Glaser, 1993; Lodge, 1983; Meli, 1988).

Since the formation of the ANC Youth League, youth politics was directly related to the liberation struggle: developments in youth politics were responses to changes or perceived stagnation in the liberation movement. At the very start, it was the lack of change in the ANC reformist approach to political resistance that precipitated the Youth League.

Youth politics were also influenced by discursive shifts within the apartheid system. In the 1960s, large numbers of young people, including unemployed and tsotsi youth, were

mobilised into formal opposition politics. The visibility of Black young people in anti-apartheid activities meant that they became an issue for social policy makers. Discourses about youth which described them as "loafers", "juveniles", "out-of-works" and "out-of-school" were generated by state institutions of social control (Glaser, 1993). These discourses informed the policies of the Bantu mass schooling programme that was introduced in the 1960s. As we shall see, the state policy of mass education had diverse ramifications for youth politics.

This chapter examines the process of change experienced by the liberation movement, the political context of this process, and its influence on the constitution of the youth category in the 1960s and 1970s. First, the chapter explores the prolonged campaign against apartheid laws in 1960 that culminated in the Sharpeville massacre. Then, the crack-down on political dissent and the adoption of armed resistance will be examined. Thirdly, the paradoxical role of Bantu education in South African politics will be investigated. Previous studies (Diseko, 1990; Herbstein, 1978; Hyslop, 1993) show that the system of Bantu education became one of the main pillars of apartheid in the 1960s. Yet it was in this same milieu that young people were socially remobilised. Finally, this chapter explores the rise of the student movement and Black Consciousness in 1969 and the ensuing decade.

Anti-Pass Laws campaign

The growing popularity of the PAC and its radical Africanist rhetoric among urban youth was thought by the government to underlie incidents of militancy and criminality amongst the youth population. State laws, such as the 1952 Pass Laws, were designed to constrain the movement of the subject population and were vigorously enforced. As mentioned in Chapter One, the Pass Laws required all African adults over the age of sixteen to carry a reference book or 'pass' at all times, and to produce this item whenever government officials or employers required them to do so. As the 'pass' contained comprehensive personal information, it functioned as a surveillance device (Johns & Davis, 1991).

Due to the high rate of youth unemployment, most young people moved from place to place in search of employment, making them vulnerable to 'pass' related police harassment, and reinforcing their opposition to the Pass Laws themselves. Mager and Minkley (1993) found that tsotsis in particular "were quick to join any action or to react to police violence" (p. 239).

Pass Laws were often defied by individuals or in organised protests. The restrictions imposed by these laws on the growing African urban population made them the main theme of the 1960 anti-apartheid campaign, which involved large numbers of people. In view of the persistent and collective opposition to the Pass Laws, the ANC declared March 31st 1960 a national day of "Anti Pass National stoppage of work" (Pampallis, 1991). In a case of political rivalry, the ANC was pre-emptied by the PAC: a protest rally was called by PAC President Robert Sobukwe ten days prior to that scheduled by the ANC. Sobukwe issued a statement calling the people to gather outside police stations in their respective areas on 21st March in protest of the laws (Meli, 1988, p. 140).

Sharpeville township, where a large population of young people provided a stronghold for PAC, responded positively to the PAC call. According to Lodge, in 1959 "Sharpeville's population comprised nearly 21 000 children, nearly 7 000 adult women and 8 600 men. It was therefore a predominately youthful population..." (cited in Glaser, 1993, p. 308).

When Sharpeville residents- women, children and men- gathered peacefully outside the police station to express their opposition to these laws, the police responded with gunfire, killing sixty-nine people. Sharpeville was the largest single massacre of Africans since the Battle of Blood River in 1838.[1] The massacre sparked a wave of revolts throughout the country. These revolts were represented in government propaganda as orchestrated by "Communists" and "criminal" elements (Pampallis, 1991). A State of Emergency was declared on the 30th of March, nine days after the

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[1] The Battle of Blood River was fought between the Zulus and the Boers in 1838. The Boers triumphed over the Zulus. (Manzo, 1992).

shooting, and more than 20 000 suspected "communists" and "criminals" were detained and isolated. By mid 1960 both the ANC and the PAC were banned under the Suppression of Communism Act (Meli, 1988; Pampallis, 1991).

International Consequences of Sharpeville and the construction of the communist and terrorist categories.

News of the unrest travelled quickly throughout the world, panicking the international stock market which slumped as foreign investors pulled out of the country in fear of a 'communist' insurrection or a revolt that enforced the PAC Africanist slogan, 'Hurl the white man into the sea' (Davis, 1987). Just a year after the PAC was launched it had established a strong presence among the unemployed and the militant urban tsotsi youth. It had issued a protest call of profound consequence that had changed the international perception of the struggle for freedom in South Africa. Commenting on the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre, Simons states that

> It was the shooting that made March 21st a red letter day. The shots echoed around the globe, caused a panic in ruling circles, sent the share market rocketing downwards, unleashed a storm of criticism of racial policies, produced the State of Emergency, precipitated the banning of the ANC and PAC, and changed life for many people (cited in Meli, 1988, p. 140).

Following these events the UN, for the first time in its history, resolved to intervene in the South African situation. Whilst the member states of the United Nations Security Council voted overwhelmingly for the UN's intervention in the political situation in South Africa, the two African colonial empires, Britain and France, abstained (Pampallis, 1991).

Meanwhile, severe measures of overt social control were taken under the State of Emergency. The institution of emergency powers was justified through the construction of the 'communist' and 'terrorist' categories. Although these terms have distinct denotations, they were used as synonyms in South Africa and the West. Anti-terrorist and anti-Communist writers such as Sterling and Netanyahu define these terms as "whatever seemed inimical to the West, Israel, the Judo-Christian tradition and

Goodness"(cited in Said, 1988, p. 48). The South African government's anti-terrorist/anti-Communist rhetoric thus found sympathy in the West during the Cold War era, leading to a relaxation in official Western criticism of racist South African institutions. Manzo (1992) asserts that the purpose was "to retain Western support for the regime by playing up the country's Western character and anticommunist orientation" (p. 72).

In the wake of the changing strategy and tactics of the ANC, official discourses emerged to constitute the 'terrorist' subject, keeping the regime's political practices closely aligned with those of capitalist Western powers. In Western capitalist countries, anti-imperialist struggles were represented in official discourse as terrorism. As late as the 1980s Western foreign policies were still dominated by ant-terrorist discourses. For example, in 1987 the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher claimed that "The ANC is a typical terrorist organisation" (cited in Nicoll, 1996, p. 11). Terrorism was constructed in Western discourse as "violent", "mindless", "barbaric" "irrational" and a threat to "civilised society" (Said, 1988). In twentieth century modernism, the "savage" is replaced by the "terrorist" and new forms of social control are invented to keep the activities of the subject population under control.

The publicity accorded to the 'threat of terrorism and communism' during the Cold War caused global panic and changed the global power relationships from mutual co-operation to hostility and mistrust. This shift was "a major factor in keeping South African social practices aligned with those of Western powers" (Manzo, 1992, p. 73). The constituted 'terrorist' and 'communist' subject in South Africa attracted the interest of security intelligence organisations such as the CIA and the South African Intelligence Service. Most of these organisations "devoted considerable energy to determining the extent of SACP [South African Communist Party] 'infiltration' of the ANC" (Dauth (1992, 4). In response the what was regarded as a social threat, the apartheid regime embarked on a crackdown operation.

The internal security crack-down.

Following the shooting at Sharpeville, spontaneous riots occurred in a number of towns in the country. Police violence escalated and the number of detained political activists increased. In response to this situation, the PAC led a march of close to 30 000 people in Cape Town to protest against state violence (Pampallis, 1991). The increasing popularity of the PAC, especially amongst young people, prompted the regime to respond with unprecedented force. A crack-down operation was conducted to 'clean the streets' of 'terrorists' and 'criminals'.

Both the ANC and the PAC were greatly affected by the crack-down. The State of Emergency gave the police power to detain suspects without trial or justification. The entire PAC leadership was arrested (Davis, 1991; Meli, 1988) devastating organisational coherence. The unemployed and tsotsi youth who formed the core constituency of the PAC were the principal targets of the police operation. *The Golden City Post* stated that

> Systematically and with massive forces of heavily-armed men, the police have raided their way through most of the densely-populated African areas in South Africa during the past week. They are not raiding for 'passes', the deputy commissioner of Police for the Witwatersrand, Colonel J.C. Lemmer, told the Post - they are trying to clean up 'out-of-works, criminals and loafers' " (*The Golden City Post* , cited in Glaser, 1993, p. 308).

Despite Colonel Lemmer's commentary, the operation functioned mainly to uproot the political base of the PAC and to criminalise young people. Police resources were concentrated in places such as Alexandra and Sharpeville, that were PAC strongholds and had large youth populations. Glaser (1993) asserts that "the timing of this crack-down could also suggest that the state perceived the extent to which the PAC had penetrated the wider youth constituency" (p. 309). The politicisation of urban youth was apparently a major concern of the state.

The youth category become a target in the struggle for power and social control in South African politics. It was a contested constituency amongst liberation organisations because of its size and its history of activism. It was feared by the apartheid establishment and subjected to control measures. This fear emanated from entrenched

stereotype of Black youth as inherently violent and prone to criminality. As in most multiracial and multicultural societies, delinquency and criminal behaviour in South Africa was explained not merely in terms of socio-economic status but also in racial, gender and cultural terms. According to Mukherjee (1985), "most of the theories of delinquency are based on the assumption that criminal behaviour prevails primarily among the young, urban and lower-class males" (p. 19). It is this assumption that propels criminological studies and social control policy makers to the category of youth as a subject of study.

Compared with the PAC, the ANC escaped the political onslaught despite a wholesale loss of its most senior leadership in a police swoop at Rivonia farm. The ANC established an external network in response to the new measure of repression. Tambo, the then ANC Deputy President and Youth League member, was entrusted with the task of establishing an international network (Johns & Davis, 1991).

The international network became a strong external support base for the ANC, especially in the Eastern Bloc and the newly independent African countries. Political solidarity was also established with anti-colonialist struggles in Algeria, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia. The ANC's experience as the longest running liberation organisation contributed to its survival. Its alliance with multiracial organisations was also crucial in establishing an underground and international network (Lodge, 1983; Meli, 1988).

The armed struggle and the Youth as a freedom fighter.

By the end of 1960 both the ANC and the Communist Party had been seriously considering the option of adopting armed resistance against state aggression. According to Lambart (1993), in its Annual Conference in December 1960, the Communist Party

> decided that existing forms of non violent resistance were inappropriate in the face of the full might of fascist repression: a new, more appropriate, form of struggle should be adopted. The form should be one of economic sabotage as a first stage, moving to full-scale guerrilla warfare (p. 288).

Almost a year later, in November 1961, the ANC leadership agreed that the struggle could not be advanced through non-violent resistance alone. The struggle was to move beyond the politics of non-violent protest to a policy of armed resistance (Mandela, 1978). While the adoption of the policy of violence was a product of discursive processes, it did not constitute discontinuity in the ideological framework of the organisation. The major discontinuity occurred within the strategic and tactical approaches of the movement.

After deliberations on the issue of armed struggle by Congress, December 16 1961 was chosen as the day of armed insurrection. December 16 was the day that the Afrikaners defeated the Zulus at the Battle of Blood River in 1838. The first armed insurrection operation was accompanied by pamphlets which outlined the policy of the newly formed armed organisation, Umkhonto weSizwe - MK (The Spear of the Nation) (Lodge, 1983). The pamphlet established that the policy of the military organisation was to

> carry on the struggle for freedom and democracy by new methods, which are necessary to complement the actions of the established national liberation movement, and our members, jointly and individually, place themselves under the overall political guidance of that movement (African National Congress, 1961).

The pamphlet also stated, that although the people had been patient and used only peaceful methods, their

> patience is not endless. The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future and our freedom...We are striking out along a new road for the liberation of the people of this country. The Government policy of force, repression and violence will no longer be met with non-violent resistance alone (Umkhonto we Sizwe High Command, 1961).

As part of the effort to confuse state intelligence, the name of the movement was not revealed in the pamphlet. It was disclosed by Mandela in a court statement in 1964 that MK was formed by some of the former ANC Youth League members together with a few Communist Party members. Mandela declared that

At the beginning of June 1961, after a long and anxious assessment of the
South African situation, I and some of my colleagues, came to the conclusion
that as violence in this country was inevitable, it would be wrong and
unrealistic for African leaders to continue preaching peace and non-violence at
a time when the government met our demands with force (Mandela, 1978,
p.160).

The launching of MK marked a radical shift in the ANC's strategic and tactical
approach which brought to an end a fifty year tradition of non-violent resistance. A
major historical break had been reached, as the MK manifesto states, "the methods of
Umkhonto weSizwe mark a break with the past" (Umkhonto we Sizwe High Command,
1961). This historical discontinuity was to change the perception of the ANC among the
militant urban youth constituency which had previously found the organisation's non-
violent approach incomprehensible and ill-conceived.

Compared to previous ANC structures, such as the ANC Youth League and the
Defiance Campaign Volunteers of the 1950s, the formation of MK and its immediate
impact on the system attracted a significant number of urban Black male youth to the
ANC. Recalling his early years of political activism, Dingake states that, following a
number of successful MK sabotage attacks, there was "an overwhelming response from
the youth" (cited in Glaser, 1993, p. 311). This response came mainly from the tsotsis,
unemployed young people and militant members of the South African Congress of
Trade Unions (SACTU). Mattera, an ex-tsotsi, stated that "ex-gangsters joined the
exiled ANC in large numbers during the 1960s". Mattera further commented that the

...influx of ex-gangsters into the ANC influenced the ANC from within and
moved the organisation in a more violent and militant direction. They
reinforced the policy of armed struggle. The violent arena was not new to the
gangster. He could kill now for a more worthwhile cause (cited in Glaser, 1993,
p. 311).

MK became the ANC structure with which most young political activists identified. It
represented an alternative rite of passage in that it provided an environment for young
people to grow and to be regarded by others and themselves as adults. Discourses of
armed struggle were generated and articulated in organisational propaganda. Within
these discourses students and tsotsis became guerrillas and freedom fighters. This

identity was taken up by young people and regarded as an honour. However, it reinforced the stereotype of Black youth as violent and hence justified measures of social control.

Increasing MK activity attracted a concerted response from the regime. The police, the army and the intelligence organisation developed plans to crush the organisation. MK was infiltrated by government spies. Legislative measures were passed to legitimate the operation. As Lodge (1983) points out "the police were also assisted by legislation which enabled them to detain people for long periods in isolated confinement without charging them" (p. 237). The sabotage campaign collapsed under the weight of state aggression and MK structures were decimated.

The high visibility of young people in political protest led to the youth population being seen by the state as a potent support base of the liberation movement. Accordingly, social control programmes designed to mute and disintegrate the liberation power base were developed. Prominent among these programmes was the introduction of mass schooling through the system of Bantu Education.

Bantu Education and youth as an object of labour

The term "Bantu" emerged in official discourse after the shift in state policy in 1948. After the introduction of the Bantu Authority Act in 1951 the term Bantu became widely used in state policies. Historically the term "abantu" (people) refers to a culturally defined group of Bantu speaking tribes (Curtin, 1978). However, in state policy the term was used in derogatory terms to connote an inferior subject population.

In the 1960s there was an increasing number of 'out-of-school' and politicised urban black youth. This was seen as a threat to the stability of the system, and became a major concern of the regime, which introduced a policy of mass schooling under the 1953 Bantu Education Act. Mass schooling was seen as a solution to the need for social control. The De Villiers Commission reported that

> A number of witnesses, including responsible municipal officials contended...
> that juvenile delinquency amongst Natives was assuming alarming proportions
> especially on the Rand, and that compelling all Native children of school age to
> attend school would reduce the incidence of delinquency (De Villiers, cited in
> Hyslop, 1993, p. 396-397).

In addition to its role of social control, the policy was also designed to precipitate a pool of cheap labour. For this latter purpose, Protestant and Euroethnocentric values were injected into the system of Bantu education. In its manifesto, the Institute for Christian National Education, which was entrusted with the task of developing education programmes for "Natives", stated that

> Native education should be based on the principles of trusteeship, non-equality
> and segregation; its aim should be to inculcate the white man's view of life,
> especially that of the Boer nation, which is the senior trustee.... Only when he
> has been Christianised can he and will he be truly happy and secure against his
> own heathen and all kinds of foreign ideologies which promise him sham
> happiness...we believe that he can be made race conscious if the principle of
> apartheid is strictly applied in education just as in his church life (cited in
> Herbstein, 1978, p. 84).

The imposition of Christian and Euroethnocentric values was part of the effort to manufacture a disciplined and 'civilised' subject population willing to collaborate in its own exploitation. Herbstein describes Bantu education as an education designed "as an assembly line for the production of black labour units" (Herbstein, 1978, p. 99). Previous studies (Diseko, 1990; Karis & Carter, 1973; Hyslop, 1983) all show that the system of Bantu education did not provide an environment for self advancement, but rather an environment for greater discipline. In the 1960s the policies of Bantu education enabled the growth of the juvenile justice control network into close knit sites of surveillance.

The Bantu Education system was to become the major form of social control by which the identified subject population ('out-of-school and unruly urban youth') was closely policed and controlled. The 1957 Van Schalkwijk report on the Abuse of Dagga stated that "the absence of compulsory education in towns...results in greater freedom from supervision of non-European juveniles" (Van Schalkwijk, cited in Hyslop, 1993, p.

397). The report exemplifies how social control policies are informed by the formation of discourses regarding the subject population.

The debate relating to the introduction of compulsory schooling therefore alluded to the imperatives of surveillance and control. The debate was based on the causal effect paradigm and assumed that juvenile crime would increase if "non-European juveniles" are left unsupervised. The system of mass schooling was seen as an effective means of policing 'trouble-makers' and 'loafers'. Studies of the practice of youth control show that policies directed towards mass schooling have "indirectly enabled a greater surveillance and regulation of youthful behaviour" (Muncie, 1983, p. 136). In South Africa the task of policing the "youth" was extended to Africans who were employed by the state as teachers, school administrators, local and regional school committee members.

In accordance with the Bantu Education Act and the requirement of industry, the school syllabus was developed to teach practical subjects. Emphasis was put on primary school education over secondary school education. The structure of the school syllabus aimed to ensure that a cheap, semi-skilled workforce was produced at minimal cost. Through the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in African schools, the system of Bantu Education was also directed at asserting the hegemony of Afrikaner culture.

Past studies (Diseko, 1990; Hyslop, 1993; Karis, 1973), found that the implementation of Bantu Education was made possible by the political and economic conditions of the 1960s. These include the unavailability of schools for blacks in urban areas, the increasing population of urban youth considered by the government as a social 'problem', the growing need for semi-skilled labour by the industrial sector, and the incapacity of the missionary institutions to absorb large numbers of African children into their schools.

The influence of the missionary institution as an authority of knowledge among the African community began to diminish in the late 1940s. Lack of funds due to state

subsidy cuts reduced the capacity of mission schools to provide adequate facilities. The economic situation of missionary schools was described by the De Villiers Commission as "financial starvation" (De Villiers, cited in Hyslop, 1993, p. 397). This situation forced many missionary schools to close down, thus ending the hegemony of the missionary institution in the sphere of knowledge production. Following this development, the number of African children who could not be accommodated in schools increased rapidly. School statistics (1952 estimates) revealed that on the Rand region 58 138 school-aged young people were attending school, whilst 116 276 were not (Hyslop, 1993, p. 396-397).

This situation enabled the government to gain support from provincial African schools administered by white officials who surrendered the administration to the central government. However, Africans were opposed to the policy of a separate education system (Herbstein, 1978). While the African community was concerned about the future of the education system, the government was more interested in establishing its monopoly over the sphere of knowledge production. This monopoly gave the government the power to structure the education system in accordance with Eurocentric and Protestant values. Verwoerd, the then minister of Native Affairs and architect of Bantu Education, stated that education for the 'Natives' "should be in accordance with government policy as seen in its broadest sense" (Verwoerd, 1953, p. 52).

Verwoerd explains his version of 'Natives' education

> Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the sphere in which they live.... Education should have its roots entirely in the Native areas and in the Native environment and Native community....There is no place for him [the 'Bantu'] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour....education should not clash with Government policy.... if the Native in South Africa today in any kind of school in existence is being taught to expect that he will live his adult life under a policy of equal rights, he is making a big mistake (Verwoerd, 1953, p. 48-51).

The use of the term "Native" implies that the identified subject population was conceptualised in official discourse as a homogenous entity. In developing the policy the government ignored the diverse needs of diverse African communities. The

confinement of Bantu Education to 'Native areas' reinforced the 1950 Group Areas Act policy that saw public areas reserved for particular races. It was to ensure that the 'Native', according to Verwoerd's argument, could only be allowed in European areas after demonstrating certain abilities compatible with Protestant values.

When the Bantu Education Act was passed in 1953 it was placed under the Department of Native Affairs and not the Department of Education, suggesting that this type of education was not regarded as a system of self advancement but one through which conformity to ethnocentric values could be taught. This was also evident in the teaching of non-academic subjects in Bantu education schools. For example, the Eiselen report recommended subjects such as

> Religious knowledge and attitudes... Literacy in one, or preferably, both European official languages to serve as a means of communication with Europeans, as a help in economic matters.... Knowledge of technical skills in agriculture.... Social patterns and values which make a man a good member of his community, a good parent and a useful member of society (Eiselen, 1968, p. 46).

Important parallels can be drawn between the system of Bantu Education and Foucault's analysis of the workhouse which developed in Europe during the great confinement period in the seventeenth century. Like the Bantu Education policy, the workhouse aimed at social control of the unemployed 'delinquent' youth population and the installation of a Protestant work ethos. The objective of moral based institutions is to create a panopticon system through which self regulatory practices can be instituted. According to Foucault (1965),

> In England, the w₍ ₎house regulations devote much space to the surveillance of morals an religiou   ʾucation.... workhouses - throughout Protestant Europe, fortresses of moral ᵒr ₋ᵣ were constructed, in which ['vagabonds'] were taught religion and whatever was necessary to the peace of the State" (p. 61-62).

In South Africa, 'the peace of the State' was perceived to require the absence of political resistance to the hegemony of apartheid. Bantu Education was to play a critical role in ensuring that 'the peace of the state' was maintained. Architects of the system believed

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that in order for 'peace' to be maintained, young people had to be 'kept off the street' and 'moulded' into "useful members of society".

As part of the apartheid government's agenda to expand the web of social control, entrench the system of Bantu education and to minimise education costs, local communities were given nominal control of schools. Herbstein (1978) points out that Africans' 'control' "meant the hard work of running the schools, without any say in the formulation of policy" (p. 86). Although the government subsidised Bantu Education schools, a large part of the financial burden was transferred to local communities.

The transference of Bantu Education to local and regional African authorities was received with mixed feelings and divided the African community on the issue of education. Some Africans welcomed this arrangement, whilst others opposed the entire system of Bantu Education. Students and teachers who protested against the system were intimidated and subsequently expelled from schools by the Native Affairs Department (Herbstein, 1978; Karis & Carter, 1973). These expulsions, and the absence of an alternative form of education, enabled Bantu education to establish itself. The 1960s period was therefore characterised by a decline in political resistance (Karis & Carter, 1973).

After early successes, the implementation plans were hastened and "by the end of 1963 the Bantu Education structures were firmly installed" and extended to rural areas (Diseko 1990, p. 119). With the crushing of the liberation movement, pro-Bantu education local school committees operated without fear of being challenged. The absence of political resistance enabled the system to flourish. According to Harson (1984) school intake doubled "from one million to over two million" (p. 63). Hyslop (1993) observes that "for the first time the state was able to draw the majority of black urban youth into its education system and to maintain their attendance at school for a longer period than previously" (p. 400). According to official labour market statistics, a massive number of semi-skilled 'graduates' of Bantu education were released into the economy in the 1960s (Diseko, 1990; Herbstein, 1978). This gave the government the

notion that the system had wide support among Africans. The youth became the main source of cheap labour for expanding industries.

An education that extended beyond the acquisition of skills necessary to perform semi-skilled jobs was regarded as the 'wrong type of education'. Verwoerd stated that he would reform the system of Bantu education "so that natives will be taught from childhood to realise that equality with Europeans is not for them. Race relations cannot improve if the wrong type of education is given to natives." He asked "What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice?" (Verwoerd, 1953, p. 50).

According to Brookes (1968), a minority of African young people were enrolled in secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Access to higher education was restricted by the limited number of higher learning institutions accessible to Africans. As part of the surveillance process, potential 'trouble makers' were identified and vetted from students who applied for tertiary admission. The Extension of University Education Act passed in 1959 entrusted the Minister of Education with the power to "refuse admittance to any person who applies for admission as a student of a university college if he considers it to be in the interests of the university college concerned to do so" (Parliament of the Union of South Africa, 1959, p. 62).

Writing on the system of Bantu Education, McConkey comments that

> Bantu Education is a unique system - the only education system in the world designed to restrict the reproductivity of its pupils in the national economy to lowly and subservient tasks, to render them non-competitive in that economy, to fix them mentally...and to 'teach them', in Verwoerd's phrase, that equality is not for them (McConkey, cited in Brookes, 1968, p. 57)

Although Bantu Education appeared unique, its type of social control is analogous with the compulsory and mass schooling in some Western countries. In most of these countries, the introduction of mass schooling was informed largely by fear of rising "youth" crime and social disintegration. The need to alleviate the 'threat' of juvenile delinquency and to enforce social conformity became the prime concern of mass

schooling policies. In his analysis of the education restructuring programme in Australia, White (1990) argues that the idea of compulsory mass schooling "was intimately tied to the wider project of fostering conformity and obedience in the interests of a status quo divided along class, gender and ethnic lines" (p. 78). A corresponding analysis is presented in Willis' (1970) ethnographic study in which he claims that continuous attempts in the Midlands secondary school were made to induce conformity, discipline and obedience. In South Africa, the violent identity of urban Black young people created the conditions for the implementation of the system of Bantu education in which the teaching of values, rather than self-advancement, were central.

The new site of struggle.

While the Bantu Education policy might have succeeded in perpetuating apartheid in the 1960s, it later created the conditions for the revival of political activism. In the 1970s, conditions in Bantu schools deteriorated at a rapid rate. Students together with parents and the African community expressed their concerns about the poor quality of the schools. Education became a new site of political conflict and came to be regarded by the urban African community as "an important terrain of conflict for the first time" (Hyslop, 1993, p. 398).

The struggle for control over the reproductive role of education, illustrates Foucault's view that power is not centralised but rather dispersed and exercised at every point of social relationships. The shift in power relations indicates that Africans were not passive recipients of state policies but were active in challenging them. As Foucault (1980) points out "individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application" (p. 98). The conflict also shows that "there are no relations of power without resistance" (Foucault, cited in Sercombe, 1993, p. 8).

The politics of Bantu education fermented for the rest of the 1960s, erupting in two events: the 1972-74 Black student university revolt, and the 1976-7 Soweto student uprising (April, 1988). These developments, the Soweto uprising in particular, are

important historic events in that they mark a revival of political resistance against the system of apartheid.

The policy of mass schooling, which in the 1960s saw a dramatic increase in the school retention rate, created the conditions for youth grouping and mass politicisation. Due to inadequate funding, the quality of education under the system of Bantu education continued to decline. This fuelled dissent within the African community and overt clashes with the state were inevitable. The struggle for control began in the 1970s when the government attempted to restructure the school syllabus to meet the changing needs of the industrial sector (April, 1988; Diseko, 1990).

The restructuring process was extended to tertiary institutions by the 1959 Extension of University Education Act. Under this Act, a separate education system for 'non-white' tertiary students was developed, encouraging 'non-white' professionalism. However, 'non-white' professionalism was to develop only within the established social order, to "find its highest fulfilment in the enrichment of its own social group" (Majority Report, cited in Ministry of Education, Arts and Science, 1968). Political commentators saw this Act as an extension of the system of Bantu education (Brookes, 1968; April, 1988).

The term 'non-white' developed from the pre-apartheid term - 'non-Europeans' which referred to Africans, Indians and Coloureds as an undifferentiated category. It emerged after the enactment of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 which outlawed interracial social interaction by reserving public places for whites and 'non-whites'. The term became part of the official discursive vocabulary used in policy development. Thus the separate universities policy was discursively developed within sets of discourses relating to colour and race. In accordance with the Extension of University Education Act, 'non-white' students were not permitted to study in White universities unless they were granted permission by the Department of Natives Affairs (April, 988). Under the Act, White students were also prohibited from studying in non-white institutions. The Minister of Education, Arts and Science argued that

It is fatal, and it will always remain fatal, to try to turn a non-White into a White and conversely to try to turn a White into a non-White. Consequently we must ensure that the racial groups are separated on a racial basis and that their education fits in with their own national character (Minister of Education, Arts and Science, 1959, p. 66).

The education system became a major instrument of social engineering and propaganda for the apartheid system. The schools and university were only allowed to teach syllabuses and use "textbooks which [projected] the white man's vision of the world" (Herbstein, 1978, p. 99). The purification and reproduction of the white identity was to be ensured through the process of separate education and control. Because knowledge produces power, the production of knowledge was strictly controlled and directed towards the maintenance of the established social order.

Non-white students were viewed in deficit terms and considered less intelligent than white students and therefore an education system that "fits" with their "character" was seen as appropriate. In the Minister's view equal education was "fatal" to the maintenance of the cultural ethos of apartheid. Ironically, it was inequality in education that proved fatal to apartheid.

A decade after the Extension of University Education Act was introduced, it became the object of intellectual and political struggle in 'non-white' universities. The 'non-white' identity and the policy of separate education was challenged and resisted by university students. April shows that not only was the system of education a focus of student protest but so was the entire cultural ethos of separate development. She states that students resistance extended to "wider structures of society, challenging the power relations on campuses, and articulating alternative vision of a university" (April, 1988, p. 11).

The inferior status of 'non-white' education as well as the issue of identity became a cause of political mobilisation. As part of the process of building an identity, 'non-white' students, Africans in particular, initiated a breakaway from the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) in 1969. NUSAS was a multiracial organisation dominated by white liberal students. Following the breakaway, African university

students, led by Steve Biko, formed an 'all-Black' organisation. In 1970 the derogatory label non-white was rejected and replaced by the term Black. The use of the term 'non-white' in youth politics was seen as "totally inconsistent with efforts to promote an aggressively positive self-image among Africans" (Gerhart, 1978, p. 277). The term Black was politicised in the 1970s and became a political identity for Africans, Indians and Coloureds.

The politicisation of this term began in the 1960s Civil Rights movement in the United States of America. It was more an intellectual exercise in self-consciousness than an ideological framework for political revolution. Gerhart observes that

> Transferred to South Africa through American writings and news magazines, the term 'Black' in its new sense of 'status-more-than colour' found rapid favour with a few African, Indian an Coloured intellectuals, but gained broader acceptance only gradually over the years from 1968 on. Among radical Africans it was not unusual to hear the term 'black' applied to Africans alone, and its use as a synonym for 'Africa' continued to be common, and a source of confusion, long after the wider meaning began to gain ground (Gerhart, 1978, p. 277).

In the 1970s the term "Black" became a model of intellectual development, self-formation and psychological emancipation for young people. Black pride, self-reliance and consciousness of the African identity replaced the negative connotations of the "non-white" label. It was from this self-formation process that the philosophy of Black Consciousness (BC) emerged, giving rise to the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM).

Black Consciousness and the rise of student radicalism.

The emergence of the student movement and the changing identity of 'Black as inferior' to Black as powerful marked the birth of a new political culture shaped by a process of mental decolonisation and self formation. Precedents of the Black Consciousness philosophy in South African politics are to be found in the 1940s and 1950s youth politics. While evidence on the development of Black Consciousness points to the influence of American literature, the philosophy of Black Theology and writers such as Fanon (1952) and Cleaver (1968), there are common links with the philosophy of African nationalism. The ideas of self-reliance, self-determination and critical awareness which formed the core discursive framework of BC was embodied in the philosophy of African nationalism.

On the other hand, distinctions are to be made between the two. First, BC was more inclusive than Africanism in that it opened its membership to Indians and Coloureds. Second, the philosophy of Black consciousness had an internationalist approach, while Africanism evolved around national and African politics. Sono (1993) notes that "African consciousness is rooted in Africa, while black consciousness finds its locale whenever whites were problematic to blacks" (p. 61). Biko's early writings assert that

> The surge towards Black Consciousness is a phenomenon that has manifested itself throughout the so-called Third World. There is no doubt that discrimination against the black man the world over fetches its origin from the exploitative attitudes of the white man (Biko, 1978, p. 49).

The emergence of Black Consciousness and its subsequent prominence in Black politics marked yet another discursive shift in South African liberation politics. Just as Africanist liberation discourse was influential in mobilising Pass Laws opposition in 1960, so too was Black Consciousness discourse in the 1970s anti-Bantu Education campaign. What then, is Black Consciousness and how did it influence the constitution of the 'youth' category in the 1970s?

The South African Student Organisation (SASO) Manifesto states that "Black Consciousness implied the awareness 'by the people of the power they wield as a group, both economically and politically'". It added that "Black Consciousness is an attitude of mind, a way of life" (cited in Sono, 1993, p. 42-47). Thus Black Consciousness can be understood as a process of self-formation in which the self is discursively constructed. The concept of knowledge as power was central to the philosophy of Black Consciousness.

The Black Consciousness philosophy underpinned the emergence of SASO in 1969. SASO was an all-Black university student organisation that began as a breakaway from NUSAS. It acted as a conscientising, spiritualising and intellectualising forum for Black young people. In the wake of the ban on Black political organisations, NUSAS was seen by African students as a potential political home. However, as NUSAS was based on White university campuses, most of its activities were inaccessible to Black students. The liberal ideological framework of NUSAS was a further cause of dissent. African students found the passive liberal approach adopted by NUSAS to be patronising, artificial and paternalistic (Biko, 1978).

By 1972 the South African Student Organisation (SASO) had grown in significance and disseminated Black Consciousness to schools. Gerhart (1978) argues that it was evident to many people that "SASO in a remarkably short period had become the most politically significant black organisation in the country" (p. 270). Like the ANC Youth League, SASO and BC suffered the constraints that resulted from concentrating the political campaign within the educated section of the youth population. Mkhatshwa, a former BC activist, recounted, "the movement 'only reached the educated and sophisticated segment of the population" (cited in Marx, 1992, p. 59).

Although BCM was largely seen as a movement of the intellectuals, it took limited initiatives in its self-reliance campaign to develop grassroots participation. Projects such as those carried out and sponsored by the Black Community Programmes (BCP) and the Black People's Convention (BPC), enabled the movement to extend its influence to cultural youth groups and youth clubs. Furthermore, the theological influence within

Black Consciousness attracted the interest of religious youth organisations such as the Student Christian Movement and the Young African Christian Movement which had been widely perceived as apolitical. The politicisation of the youth Christian movement was a remarkable development in the history of youth politics which neither the ANC Youth League nor the PAC were able to precipitate (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980; Sono, 1993).

The reconstitution of the subject population as an active participant in the construction of its own identity and history was the central theme of the BC vocabulary. Discourses such as "pride", the inner discovery of the "self", the rejection of the "inferiority" status and the assertion of "Black" identity, were seminal to the language of BC . BC aimed to construct a subject population unwilling to present itself to the system for discipline and control. As Biko explained

> At the heart of this kind of thinking is the realisation by the blacks that the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed. Once the latter has been effectively manipulated and controlled by the oppressor as to make the oppressed believe that he is a liability to the white man, then there will be nothing the oppressed can do that will really scare the powerful masters (Biko, 1978, p. 68).

Douglas observed that "The limits of tyrants is prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress" (cited in Mathabane, xiv, 1986).

BC's campaign targeted the mind rather than the body. Violence was rejected and the struggle was confined to the rediscovery of the Black identity through intellectual and spiritual awakening. Biko stated that Black Consciousness "seeks to infuse the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, their value systems, their culture, their religion and their outlook on life" (Biko, 1978, p.49). Black young people in particular were encouraged to think critically, to develop their own interpretation of the world, and to study and write their own history.

The campaign to raise consciousness succeeded in bolstering student self-esteem, activism and heightening awareness of political issues. The process of self-formation

and critical thinking prepared most young people for political action during the rise of the student movement. As Ramphele points out "We tried to lay the foundation for effective political action so that people could be aggrieved and be energised by it" (Ramphele, cited in Marx, 1992, p. 53).

Although the Black Consciousness philosophy was historically linked to radical African Nationalism, it now promoted unity amongst the oppressed population and promoted the notion of a non-racial South Africa. Like the early ANC Youth League, it sought to create a common identity and a mass based movement. As a BPC leaflet challenging the division of Africans, Indians and Coloureds stated

> we are not different from each other - it is only the white man who makes us
> feel this way by separating us and by paying us different wages. All Africans,
> Coloured and Indians alike, are affected by apartheid, Group Areas, Job
> Reservation... the injustices are endless. Our suffering is the same. WE ARE
> ALL BLACK PEOPLE. And in the eyes of the white oppressor we are
> KAFFIRS, COOLIES, BUSHES, etc. Our survival against the white man's
> oppressive laws DEPENDS ON OUR JOINT ACTION AS BLACK PEOPLE
> (BPC Leaflet cited in Nyameko & Singh, 1977, p. 37).

This approach undermined the state attempt to impose artificial ethnic divisions between Africans, Indians and Coloureds. However, like Africanist hard liners, BC rejected the inclusion of Whites in Black politics, adopting an 'all-Black' position.

The "all-Black" position caused tension between BC and Whites sympathetic to the Black cause. Critics of Black Consciousness accused the organisation of enshrining the same doctrine of separatism as the apartheid system itself. The *East London Daily Dispatch* stated that the promoters of Black Consciousness "are entrenching the idea of racial exclusivity and therefore doing the Government's work."(August 10, 1971).

Steve Biko defended the construction of a common identity among the oppressed, arguing that "what blacks are doing is merely to respond to a situation in which they find themselves the objects of white racism....We are collectively segregated against - what can be more logical than for us to respond as a group?" (Biko, 1978, p. 25). Biko claimed that, through structures such as Bantu Education, Black people had been denied

intellectual freedom and were conditioned to respond to the leadership and the world view of the white man. Black people's confidence and their intellectual ability to imaginatively project their own future had been eroded by years of colonialism and a version of history that described traditional values as superstitions and African heroes as savages. Biko argued that Black Consciousness restored that potential by encouraging self-reliance, critical awareness and intellectual independence - 'Black man you are on your own', 'Black Pride' and 'Black Power' became popular slogans within the Black Consciousness Movement (Buthelezi, 1991).

Explaining the concept of Black Consciousness, Biko stated that

> the first step...is to make the black man [and woman] come to himself [herself] with pride and dignity, to remind him [her] of his [her] complicity in the crime of allowing himself [herself] to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth. This is what we mean by inward-looking process. This is the definition of Black Consciousness (Biko, 1978, p. 29).

Black Consciousness' ultimate aim was the liberation of South Africa, but its immediate objective was to raise the consciousness of the people rather than engaging in direct political confrontation with the state. The self formation process as a "first step" to liberation was predicated on the notion that attempts to institute political change would fail without a prior change in common consciousness. According to Black Consciousness, revolution driven by 'false consciousness' is likely to slightly alter the make-up of entrenched values, while largely retaining the existing structures of power relationships.

Contemporary global political relationships between former colonies and colonists, between the wealthy Northern and the impoverished Southern hemisphere, demonstrate this point. Although formal colonialism ended in the 1970s, economic, political and social policies in former colonies are still shaped by colonial discourse of power. Most of these countries are locked in a perpetual cycle of dependence and, as Gerhart (1978) observes, "are now wrestling with problems of cultural and political identity" (p. 272).

During the 1970s, the defeat of colonial and imperialist powers in Mozambique, Angola and Vietnam inspired many young people and increased their impatience with the system. This global context, together with SASO's conscious raising campaign, provided the conditions for the Black Consciousness Movement to flourish in the 1970s (Marx, 1992).

In 1975 the Portuguese colonial power in Mozambique, backed by the South African Government, collapsed under the weight of the anti-colonialist insurrection waged by the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO). The events in Mozambique, as well as the defeat of the apartheid army in Angola in 1976, were influential in South African youth politics, as they functioned to undermine the myth of South Africa as 'Africa's superpower' (Deutschmann, 1989; Munslow, 1985).

These changes in regional power relations increased confidence and optimism amongst Black young South Africans. As BC leader Ben Khoapa commented, "We thought if [FRELIMO] can do it, so can we; it just needs another push" (Marx, 1992, p. 64). A militant generation emerged from the Black student movement and began to challenge the BC policy of non-violence. There were costs as well as benefits for Black youth politics resulting from the shift in the global and regional geopolitical landscape. The growing disenchantment with BC's non-violent politics created divisions and undermined BC's influence with the youth constituency. Furthermore, the overt solidarity with FRELIMO expressed through a rally organised by BPC in 1975, attracted the attention of the security forces. Some BC leaders and activists were arrested and BC activities fell under the gaze of security authorities (Nhlapo, 1991; Sono, 1993).

The harassment, arrests and trials experienced by BC activists antagonised the trend towards rhetoric more radical than that popularised by Black Consciousness. As Khoapa observed, young people "began to formulate their own description of what BC was" (cited in Marx, 1992, p. 65). Marx explains that in this event

> The ideology of BC was boiled down by these angry youngsters to an emotional core identified by the students as Black Consciousness, even if it only resembled the set of complex ideas that had been elaborated by the movement's leaders. The leaders subtle description of whites as historical oppressors who could be included in a post liberation South Africa was largely drowned out by the denunciations of whites as ascriptively distinct enemies...
> (Marx, 1992, p. 65).

This process of radicalisation and transformation resembles the 1940s transformation of organisational discourse in which League members took a radical approach that was inconstant with the ANC philosophy.

By the mid 1970s a portion of the BC membership were mooting armed struggle and an affiliation with the exiled liberation movement, calling for a programme of action to be formulated. This initiative is analogous with that of the ANC Youth League in 1949 in which a militant approach, albeit not violent, was adopted to move the struggle to a new phase. The philosophical basis of BC made it difficult for such a programme to be developed. The ANC and PAC, with their internal structures hardly in operation, were also not "in a position to provide the organisation for the youth." (Brooks and Brickhill, 1980, p. 80).

In 1974 economic recession changed the political climate in which BC operated. The Black population and institutions such as schools were hard-hit by the recession. This situation intensified the call of militant students and youth for more confrontational politics and a focus on the material conditions of Black people (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980; Gerhart, 1978).

The growing political challenge to BC led to a number of developments in Black youth politics in the mid and late 1970s. One such event was the development of a process that enabled the mobilisation and conscientisation of non-student young people. This was facilitated through the formation and strengthening of cultural, religious and social youth organisations. The "youth" category, as distinct from the "student" category, was constructed, and referred mainly to young people who had left school or university.

However, most former students who remained politically active continued to regard themselves as students and involved themselves in student politics. Due to the politicisation of the term "student", the student category was viewed by many young people as synonymous with political consciousness. Attempts to construct a distinct youth category did not succeed as most young people continued to seek their political home in student organisations (Seekings, 1993).

Another important development which occurred in the students politics of the 1970s was the redefinition of the student category to include students in primary and secondary schools. Through SASO's influence a school based student movement - the South African Student Movement (SASM) was formed and acted as a catalyst in the student uprising of June 16 1976 dubbed the "Soweto Uprising". Since the uprising was the first of its kind, it is an important event in the history of Black youth politics, and has been the subject of numerous studies, so there is no need to thoroughly examine the event here. However, the processes that culminated in the uprising will be briefly examined to show how students dealt with the limitations associated with the lack of planned organisational action within the BC movement. The organisational process was to provide the student movement with a political platform in which their opposition to the inferior system of Bantu Education could be expressed.

Youth and student organisational process and the lead up to the Soweto uprising.

Two closely linked but different organisations emerged out of the process to build an organised political protest - the National Youth Organisation (NAYO) and the South African Students Movement (SASM). The philosophical framework of these organisations was informed by BC rhetoric. Yet their strategy differed from that of BC in that they pursued a policy of mass action and direct confrontation with the state (Brooks & Brickhill 1980; Marx, 1992; Seekings, 1993). Due to the dearth of information on these organisations, there are conflicting accounts of their formation and

political orientation. For example, Seeking (1993, p. 24) argues that NAYO and its regional branches were "ANC-oriented" while (Buthelezi, 1991; Marx, 1992; Sono, 1993), maintain that SASO and BC were behind the formation of these organisations.

Brooks and Brickhill (1980) show that NAYO had developed links with the exiled liberation organisations. However, because of the diversity of NAYO's approaches, it is impossible to clearly establish which organisation it was oriented towards. Nevertheless, Brooks and Brickhill (1980, p. 84) point out that it, "is clear, though, that some NAYO members were connected with the ANC." Brooks and Brickhill also provide evidence of SASM links with the ANC. A SASM member states that

> In 1974 small organised groups of students were created which used to meet in secret places...they were initiated by the national liberation movement, that is, by the ANC...We in SASM did not actually think of forming such things. We were operating legally and tried to keep SASM as a broad legal organisation. But some of us listened to our elders from the ANC when they said we needed more than just legal organisation. Hence we founded these underground cells (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980, p. 87).

The ANC links were evidenced by SASM's adoption of the mass action approach and by NAYO's policy of armed struggle- both of which alluded to the ANC 1949 Programme of Action and the 1961 policy of violent resistance.

NAYO and SASM filled the vacuum created by the lack of formal organisation and mass action within the Black Consciousness Movement. They provided organisational leadership to young people as well as to primary and secondary students . NAYO was a broadly based youth organisation which aimed to unite existing youth clubs and to provide a political home for young workers, unemployed young people and ex-students. Its activities involved the construction of a radical and defiant Black youth population. The Constitution of the Transvaal Youth Organisation (TRAYO), a NAYO affiliate, exhibited this process by declaring, "no-allegiance and lack of loyalty to white structures, value systems, organisations and patronage" (cited in Brooks and Brickhill, 1980, p. 82).

The process of organising under the "youth" category became risky, mainly because of the government's perception of Black youth as 'delinquents' and 'trouble makers'. NAYO found itself under the constant gaze of security forces, and the target of arrests and constant police harassment. Many of its leaders were accused of planning acts of terrorism and were charged under the Terrorist Act of 1966 (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980; Seekings, 1993). NAYO's political development was limited by these repressive measures and, unlike SASM, "did not manage to become a national youth movement" (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980, p. 84). The organisation was isolated from the political scene, leaving SASM and SASO to provide a organisational home for youth activists.

As part of the campaign to redefine the student category to include secondary and primary students, SASO encouraged the formation of SASM in the early 1970s. SASM was part of NAYO, but developed as an independent organisation and focused its energies on the mobilisation of school students. The immediate concerns of SASM was a campaign against the imposition of Afrikaans as a compulsory medium of instruction for mathematics in secondary schools and a protest over the deteriorating conditions of Black schools. The imposition of the Afrikaner language was interpreted by students as an attempt to invalidate African languages and undermine the cultural identity of Africans. This sentiment was embodied by placards waved by students during the Soweto anti-Bantu education demonstration of June 16 1976:

DOWN WITH AFRIKAANS
BLACKS ARE NOT DUSTBINS - AFRIKAANS STINKS
AFRIKAANS IS A TRIBAL LANGUAGE
BANTU EDUCATION - TO HELL WITH IT!
(Brooks and Brickhill, 1980, p. 8).

Although there was evidence of a non-discursive shift within the student movement, Black Consciousness rhetoric of studenthood, unity, Black self-assertion and Black Power was more popular in 1976 than ever before. Students' anger exploded in a spontaneous uprising in June 16 1976 when police opened fire on demonstrators. This incident followed a student demonstration organised by SASM's Action Committee in protest against the imposition of Afrikaans in African schools - a protest mainly directed

at the segregative education policy. The June 16 crisis was a turning point in the history of Black youth politics and alluded to both discursive and non-discursive discontinuities, ending the sixteen year period of non-confrontational politics.

While the idea of mass protest conflicted with the BC philosophy, the demonstrators adhered to the Black Consciousness principle of non-violence. Young people who took part in the demonstration gave the "peace sign" and shouted "peace!", "We are not fighting", "Don't shoot" (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980). According to the Cillie Commission, before the procession to Orlando stadium where the rally was to be held, organisers appealed to students to keep the demonstration peaceful. They advised students not to react against police provocation. One of the leaders who addressed the demonstrators said

> Brothers and sisters, I appeal to you - keep calm and cool. We have just
> received a report that the police are coming. Don't taunt them, don't do
> anything to them. Be cool and calm. We are not fighting (Cape Times, 22/9/76
> reporting evidence given at the Cillie Commission of Inquiry into the Soweto
> uprising, cited in Brooks & Brickhill, 1980, p. 8).

The Government Commission of Inquiry into the Riots at Soweto and Elsewhere, reported a different account of the situation. It stated that

> According to the available evidence, they [the demonstration organisers] gave
> advice on what should be done if the police should dare to stop the marching
> crowds; the advice was not that they should disperse peacefully (The
> Government of the Republic of South Africa, 1980, p. 104).

The Government Commission also expressed concern about the 'freedom' of the demonstrators and stated that "such a mass demonstration would mean that schoolchildren would march unrestrainedly through the streets of Soweto with its street urchins and lawless idlers..." (The Government of the Republic of South Africa, 1980, p. 104). Similar concerns about "unrestrained" youth and the implicit criminalisation of Black youth activists as "urchins and lawless idlers" were frequent in early government reports such as the Van Schalkwijk Commission of 1957. The Van Schalkwijk report also expressed concerns over the lack of "supervision" for "non-European" youth. The

1950s and 1960s official discourses concerning Black young people remained influential in shaping government policies in the 1970s, right through to the collapse of the apartheid government in 1994.

The ideological continuity in the representation of Black youth in social policies reflects the state's earlier perception of Africans as inherently deviant and violent - a perception manifest in the government Report on the Soweto uprising in which the "Black Power" slogan was linked to 'acts of violence'. The Report stated that "It happened repeatedly that the Black Power cry was given by persons who were rioting and committing violence" (The Government of the Republic of South Africa, 1980, p. 509). The classification of young people into deviant and violent criminal categories in 1960 and 1976 legitimised the excessive use of state force against youth dissent on each occasion.

Because of the regime's association of youth dissent with criminality, what was planned as a peaceful demonstration on June 16 1976 turned out to be a bloody uprising when the armed forces responded with sheer violence. With thousands of youth deaths, the 1976 number of Soweto casualties surpassed that of the 1838 Battle of the Blood River and the 1960 Sharpeville massacre combined. Among those who fell were prominent student and youth leaders such as Steve Biko. Following the riot all student and youth organisations were banned and tens of thousands of young people were either incarcerated, banished or forced into exile (Mokoape et al., 1991).

Soweto inaugurated a culture of violence that persisted into the 1980s and the 1990s. Unlike the Sharpeville crackdown, the Soweto revolt proved impossible for state security to crush. Although not physically prepared to confront the regime's force, most young people were prepared to face up to state violence on an emotional and psychological level. The sense of unity, confidence and determination among young people to assert their rights provided the conditions for the sustenance and intensification of political protests.

Black Consciousness described the Soweto uprising as a demonstration of the young people's readiness to assert their emotional anger. Manas Buthelezi stated that the event

marked the transformation of Black Consciousness from "being an intellectual exercise for SASO, to a programme of action for the youth of 1976" (cited in Marx, 1992, p. 66). The uprising not only transformed the strategic position of BC but was a catalyst in the revival of the liberation movement, characterised by the ANC and the PAC, which had been dormant for a'most two decades.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed changes in state and liberation discourse in the 1960s and 1970s. The role of young people in opposition politics and how they were constructed by others and constructed themselves was examined. The 1960 Sharpeville massacre which precipitated the adoption of the policy of armed resistance by the liberation movement was a turning point in the history of youth politics. Through the generation of armed struggle discourses large numbers of young people including tsotsis were drawn into formal opposition structures. Within these discourses, young people were constructed as "fighters" and political "activists".

In response to the growing politicisation of the politically volatile section of the youth constituency, the tsotsis and unemployed youth, the state embarked on a massive crack-down operation. As part of the crack-down operation the policy of mass schooling was introduced and implemented under the system of Bantu education. This was seen by apartheid authorities as a viable form of social control through which internalised self-regulatory values can be instituted. It could be argued that the main aim of this policy was to mute and fragment the youth constituency which provided the support base of the liberation movement. Indeed this goal was achieved, albeit temporarily, as political resistance declined in the 1960s. Within the system of Bantu education young people were constructed as units of cheap labour.

However, in the 1970s the policy of mass schooling turned out to be a policy disaster for the government as it provided the conditions for young people to regroup. The emergence of the philosophy of Black Consciousness and the subsequent rise of the student movement was a watershed in the history of youth politics. Through the

teachings of Black Consciousness, the South African revolution was remade, culminating in the Soweto uprising and the revival of national political resistance in the 1980s.

Although the material base of the system remained intact after the Soweto riots, its political and cultural hegemony was undermined. The state attempt to create an internalised sense of Black inferiority via Bantu education was subverted by the Black Consciousness awakening campaign. The teachings of Black Consciousness continued to have an impact in youth politics in the 1980s. To many young people, Soweto represented the birth of Black power and an inaugural overt rejection of apartheid. Soweto also marked a paradigm shift in power relations, not only between the system and the Black population but also between the young people and their Black elders. The struggle for power was diffused, and occurred at both macro and micro levels of society. In a manner reminiscent of the 1940s and 1950s Black politics, the 1976 crisis elevated youth politics from a peripheral position to a key role in the liberation movement.

The students' initiatives and their active role in building their organisational structures can be understood in terms of Foucault's third mode of "subjectification", in which the subject actively initiates and defines his/her identity and situation. Foucault argues that this process entails an understanding of the Self. The process of "self-formation has a long and complicated genealogy; it takes place through a variety of 'operations on [people's] own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct'" (Rabinow, 1984, p. 11). This analysis corresponds with BC's teaching that the rediscovery of the 'Black' identity entails a long process of spiritual awakening, self-understanding and self-assertion. According to the philosophy of Black Consciousness, this process requires patience, awareness and an understanding of Black political history.

However, as the physical conditions of Bantu Education worsened, the patience and commitment to non-confrontational resistance waned amongst the new militant youth population. Growing disenchantment with BC's position of non-violent resistance became apparent in the mid 1970s and culminated in the Soweto revolt. The relevance

of BC to the politics of the day was critically evaluated and subsequently abandoned by many young people in the 1980s. Most young people felt that the political conditions under which BC emerged and flourished had changed and that new discursive approaches were required. BC's failure to respond to the changed environment resulted in SASM taking independent initiatives to institute a programme of action that led the student movement to Soweto. As more young people were exposed to alternative political approaches, massive depletion of BC's ranks occurred in the 1980s. This was reminiscent of the 1950s period leading up to the Sharpeville massacre when the ANCYL lost its influence among militant young people.

A number of abrupt political changes precipitated by escalating political violence occurred in the 1980s. Inspired by the discourses of liberation such as "People' Power" and "People War" large numbers of young people were drawn into the liberation struggle. Bantu education worked to the advantage of the subject population by providing conditions for young people to unite and develop a common political identity. MK, the ANC military wing which had lain dormant for over a decade, revived and gave rise to youth militancy in the 1980s. These developments, which are discussed in chapter three, were a radicalisation of Black people's unwillingness to co-operate with a racially divisive system.

The reconstruction of the subject population as "powerful" raised young people's confidence and gave them the courage to take an active role in building their own identity. It was this belief in Black as powerful and the rejection of the inferior identity that created the conditions for the demise of the apartheid disciplinary and control machinery in the early 1990s. Biko's argument of the 1970s was borne out by political developments of the 1990s. Biko argued that , "...white power would be lost as soon as Blacks asserted their unwillingness to abide by it, regardless of the intentions of those in power, or the balance of material forces controlled by the state and its opponents" (cited in Marx, 1992, p. 47).

4 Youth politics after Soweto and the reconstitution of young people as "youth".

Introduction

In the 1980s the political landscape of South Africa was altered by new developments in organisation and thinking that grew out of the student revolt of 1976. Young people became increasingly active in anti-apartheid politics and this allowed them to negotiate, resist and invert imposed identities. The will to institute violent resistance and changes in the perception of the self created a new political culture - a culture which was defiant of dominant values. Militant youth activities in the 1980s threatened the traditional power arrangement within the Black community as much as is it did the apartheid ethos that was its target.

With the shift in power relations between youth and state, Black elders felt they had lost their traditional authority, especially in respect to the younger generation. The "youth" identity of the new politics subverted the "child" paradigm of the old society. The prominent role of young people in the decision making process - a spectacle readily visible in the opposition politics of the 1980s - was inconsistent with the African cultural patterns in which political debates are largely entrusted to male adults. As Mager and Minkley (1993) observe, in order to become patriarchs, young people had to meet culturally defined rites of passage.

By the mid 1980s, discourses linking youth activism and social breakdown began to emerge from the townships. Bundy (1986) found that there was a pervasive concern amongst "disgruntled" elders and teachers with the seizure of power by students in schools (p. 54). Ramphele (1992) argues that

> once children were thrust 'onto the front-line', it became difficult to sustain
> traditional social relations between adults and children, and this had serious
> implications for family life. Children became used to power and control, and

refused to yield to the authority of adults whom they despised - their parents and teachers. Conflict became inevitable (p. 17).

Influenced by the Black Consciousness philosophy of self-assertion, the student politics of the 1970s created a generation that was more militant and defiant of adult and state authority than was its predecessor.

Official discourses dating from the 1960 state crackdown re-emerged in the late 1970s to dominate the representation of Black youth in government policies and conservative media. In the 1980s both the official discourse and the identity that it imposed upon youth were resisted and inverted by young people. Seekings identifies two diametrically opposed sets of discourse regarding pro-Congress Black youth - the "apocalyptic", which depoliticised and criminalised youth activities; the "liberatory", which elevated Black youth by representing them as "heroes" and "Young Lions" of the struggle (Seekings, 1993, p. 5-9). Both sets of discourse developed from the premise that Black young people were a homogeneous entity and passive in the formation of discourse.

In the context of the conflict in the 1980s that arose from the deteriorating material conditions of the Black community, this chapter combines a structural approach with Foucault's technique of understanding discourse formation as a source of power. Foucault's concept of power provides a relevant analytical framework for the 1980s period in which a multitude of autonomous youth and community organisations emerged. Through the emergence of these organisations, the liberation struggle was dispersed to different sections of the community.

Foucault's third mode of "subjectification", (Rabinow, 1986) in which the subject population actively participates in its own subjectification, is used here to examine the role of young people in the formation of discourses that constructed their identities. The structural approach explores the nexus between political practice and the formation of discourse. This will involve the investigation of discursive and non-discursive developments within the liberation movement. Therefore, this chapter explores political developments in organisational processes, the generation of discourses and the constitution of youth within those discourses.

Firstly, the chapter examines the historical background to the Soweto uprising and the emergence of official discourse which constituted the youth as criminal. Secondly, discursive changes within the system of apartheid and their implications are briefly examined. Thirdly, the chapter investigates the re-emergence of the student movement and the change in discursive practice within the liberation movement. The reconstitution of young people as "youth" and the transitional process from student to youth organisational practice will be examined.

Background to Soweto and the construction of the criminal identity within official discourse.

The disruption of schooling and the increase in state violence in 1976 and 1977 kept many students outside school boundaries. Scores fled the country. In Soweto, as in Sharpeville, the Soweto crack-down weakened political resistance. At the time of the uprising, the student movement led by BC was the only active internal anti-apartheid force. Its philosophy of identity awareness and its opposition to violence and mass action meant that it was relatively free from police surveillance for almost seven years.

Cultural and intellectual oriented organisations such as BC were tolerated and not regarded by the state as a threat to apartheid values. However, state attitudes towards BC changed after the 1976 revolt. It was alleged that BC was directly involved in instigating the uprising. Accordingly state tolerance of BC as a "tribal consciousness" movement was ended by the perceived threat to 'law and order'. The "student" identity was supplanted with a criminal identity (Gerhart, 1978; Marx, 1992).

During and after the Soweto uprising, student resistance was represented in official discourse as a consequence of external 'terrorist' and internal 'criminal' influences. In an analysis of official discourses that emerged during the uprising, Molteno (1979) cites Hitchcock's (a former policeman) account of the Soweto process in which Hitchcock states

> Within minutes of the first stones being thrown, the students....were joined by thousands of Soweto's roughnecks. Among them were big-time bandits, tsotsis, drug addicts, drunkards and won't-works. The 'rioters' were soon, amongst other things, looting bottle stores 'for hard liquor'. By the next day, 'the angry drunken mobs were armed with pick-axes, iron bars, shovels, sticks and the inevitable stones and half-brick' (cited in Molteno 1979, p. 58-9).

Similar representations of students were made in the governmental Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Riots at Soweto and Elsewhere. Reporting on the participation of 'youth' in the riots, the Commission states that

> Apart from staging marches they enacted barricades and participated in stone-throwing and violence. When they joined the scholars, the intensity of the rioting usually increased. Witnesses declared that they were responsible for the serious acts of violence such as looting and arson at shops and liquor outlets (Government of the Republic of South Africa 1980, p. 419).

This representation emanated from the conceptualised 'truth' that the subject population was inherently violent. It denounced the revolts, criminalising young people by describing them as 'mindless criminals', 'bandits' and a 'drunken mob'. The production and dissemination of wide ranging discourses enabled the state to justify the use of force against 'bandits'. In the 1980s other state measures were taken to control radicalism in schools and universities. SASPU reported that, "universities are threatened with subsidy cuts unless they crack down on militant students" (SASPU, 1988, p. 11). The perception of the student movement as one infiltrated and influenced by the 'lawless and violent youth' and "big-time bandits" became a seminal 'truth' that subjected the student movement to severe state repression.

The 'truth' that discourse produced was essential to the creation of laws and policies directed at regulating the activities of the subject population in the 1980s. Foucault argues that our participation in the production of truth makes us susceptible to the laws that truth creates. He argues that "In the end, we are judged, condemned, classified, determined in our undertakings, destined to a mode of living or dying, as a function of the true discourses which are the bearers of the specific effects of power" (Foucault, 1980, p. 94). In South Africa, the rationale of "truth" re-established emergency powers under which youth activists were judged and condemned.

State laws which had been in abeyance for more than a decade - such as the 1962 General Law Amendment Act (Sabotage Act), the 1965 Criminal Procedures Act and the 1967 Terrorist Act - were re-enforced. The Riotous Assemblies Amendment Act of 1974 and the Security Act of 1976 were responses to the perceived increase in 'terrorist' and 'criminal' activity. These laws, along with numerous other legislative measures passed in the 1980s, were meant to closely discipline the subject population. Law enforcement agents such as the police and the army were strengthened to contain what came to be perceived as a growing social threat (Brooks & Brickhill, 1980).

Post-Soweto politics and the reconstruction of the youth category in liberatory discourse.

The panopticon and the political reforms of the 1980s

In response to the developments of 1976-80, including the upsurge of political revolts and the spectre of international sanctions, the Botha government introduced constitutional reforms. These reforms were to 'modify' the political and economic systems by making them 'accessible' to the Black community. The reforms became a subject of political debate and created confusion both locally and internationally. Meli (1988) shows that as a result of this confusion the reforms were portrayed in international media and foreign policies "as belated 'benevolence' towards the blacks or as the end of apartheid" (Meli, 1988, p. 193). By this latest modification to the state system, the machinery of social control was to be dispersed to members of the subject population. The process was to create a panopticon effect that rendered the coercive powers of the state less visible.

In 1982 the government unveiled its constitutional reform package that pretended to enfranchise Indians and Coloureds. The reforms introduced a new parliamentary system known as the "Tri-Cameral Parliament". Indians and Coloureds were to participate as junior political partners in a racially designed parliamentary system. In keeping with the 1953 Reserved Separate Amenities Act which prohibited the interaction of different races in public areas, the tri-cameral parliament had three separate chambers reserved for the three racial groups.

Africans remained constitutionally disenfranchised as their participation in the political process was relegated to local community power structures known as township council administration. These structures were established under the Black Authorities Act of 1982. Under the council system, urban African residents were to elect community councillors whose main function was to administer the state infrastructure. The administrative role of these councillors included maintenance, rent and rates collection. They were also to co-operate and assist the security forces in maintaining law and order in the townships, not least by providing information about individual members of the community. These reforms were met with massive resistance from the anti-apartheid coalition organised under the United Democratic Front - UDF (Lodge, 1991; Murray, 1987; Seekings, 1982).

The reforms and the worsening economic conditions of the townships created the conditions for political violence. Black people who co-operated with, or were co-opted into, the state's social control machinery were regarded by anti-apartheid activists as representatives of the state. Deep divisions formed in the Black community as councillors and Black police came to be seen by political activists as "informers", "stooges" and "sell-outs" and were ultimately defined as 'enemies' of the people (Murray, 1987, p. 240). In the UDF ideology of 'People's Power', the term 'people' denoted pro-liberation and anti-apartheid activists.

The council system can be viewed in terms of the panopticon concept described in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977). Foucault describes the panopticon as a mechanism of social control in which members of the subject population are individualised and held under the invisible 'gaze'. The 'extension' of administrative power to the council made state control less visible and Blacks were expected to exercise self government. As in Foucault's panopticon, the township dwellers were individualised and kept under an invisible gaze. Lodge observed that the system was "trying to shift from an order based largely on coercion, to one where ideology, consensus, and incorporation could play rather larger roles" (Lodge, 1987, p. 4).

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The state's attempt to create a panopticon failed in that the councillors' role as invisible agents of social control was revealed to the subject population. As Seekings (1992, p. 18) points out "Councillors were increasingly seen as responsible for a range of unpopular state policies..." The system also failed in its attempt to institute an internalised form of self-regulation in which state physical intervention was to be minimal. The subject population remained defiant and active in resisting the system. Acknowledging its failure to institute an ideological form of social control, the state reverted to overt physical coercion by moving troops into the townships during the 1984-87 revolts.

The re-emergence of the student movement

Despite state initiatives, post-Soweto politics is characterised by increasing incidence of youth resistance. The power vacuum created by the Soweto crack-down was short lived as political regrouping took effect in 1979. When schooling returned to normal in 1978, school yards once again became mobilising grounds. The regrouping process involved the emergence of the Charterist movement, the student, the civic and youth organisations. The establishment of the United Democratic Front gave rise to a proliferation of youth congresses. The hidden agenda of the tri-cameral and council systems was exposed and became the target of political protest (Lodge, 1991; Seekings, 1993; Beinart, 1994; Johnson 1988).

The return to normal schooling in 1978 created a context conducive to the re-emergence of the student movement in 1979. Students who survived the 1976 uprising and remained inside the country regrouped under a new national organisational name - the Congress of South African Students (COSAS). Unlike previous student organisations, the new organisation moved beyond the politics of intellectual liberation to more materialistic discourse. Moodley (1991, p. 150) observes that "A focus on psychological liberation and 'blackness' gradually gave way to more talks of 'socialist', 'anti-capitalist' alternatives."

Many post-Soweto youth and student activists questioned the relevance of BC's emphasis on changing values and non-confrontational mass resistance to the changing

economic and political climate of the 1980s, in which they perceived a need to engage the body. Different forms of discursive and non-discursive practices were sought. As one of the student leaders put it

> BC was important. The people needed a psychological reawakening, but not as an end in itself. Then we needed a political strategy. BC was necessary for the previous generation due to the opposition having been crushed,... but for the generation growing up [in the eighties], at a time of mass resistance, the people already felt confident... BC was a foundation, a launching pad (cited in Marx, 1992, p. 103).

The student movement re-emerged with a broader political outlook. Its focus was not only on school issues but also on transforming youth politics to address broader community issues. Part of this shift in political focus was the active role taken by young people in the establishment of alternative community systems that functioned partly as undercover mobilisation devices and partly as agents of transformation. These systems - the civic associations, the defence street committees and the people's courts - became the power base of the liberation movement and gave rise to discourse in which young people were referred to as "young lions", "foot soldiers", "comrades" and "heroes" of the struggle (Bundy, 1987; Johnson, 1988; Seeking, 1993).

Organising within the Congress tradition, COSAS adopted the Freedom Charter as its ideological basis. Political approaches involving formal organisational process, mass action and defiance campaigns were adopted by the revamped student movement. COSAS was largely composed of post-Soweto activists who had links to the ANC. Immediately after the uprising, ANC political literature, including copies of the Freedom Charter, began to circulate in South Africa. Most student activists were inspired by the ANC philosophy of the Freedom Charter and MK 'armed propaganda'.[1] Zenzile, a student and COSAS leader, points out that "in 1979 already there was ANC literature coming up...there was an ANC vibe growing inside the country. ANC started

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[1] MK - the armed wing of the ANC started infiltrating guerrillas into South Africa in 1979 to build up its internal network. It carried out a number of attacks on economic installations. The biggest MK operation was on the SASOL oil-from-coal refinery in June 1980. These operations were "to acquire great symbolic and psychological importance" especially among the youth who identified themselves closely with MK (Lodge 199, p. 24).

intensifying 'armed propaganda'. Now this was helping to sort of change the mood" (Frederikse 1990, p. 168).

The concept of racism was not only understood in terms of apartheid but also in terms of BC philosophical opposition which excluded whites from the liberation struggle. As the ANC was gaining popularity among white youth, notably the multiracial National Union of South African Students, non-racialist discourse became a mobilising force and a source of political competition. Young people were constructed in pro-charterist discourse as the 'vanguard of non-racialism'. Non-racialist discourses were taken up by student and youth organisations such as COSAS, whose constitution states "we are striving towards a non-racial and democratic education...(COSAS, 1990, p. 168).

With the formation of COSAS, many of the young people returning from exile were exposed to the ANC liberation philosophy. Mokoape (et al., 1991) estimate that by the early 1980s "more than 60 per cent of the active members of BC organisations were to be found in the ranks of the ANC or MK". They point out that "approximately 60 per cent of the youth who were not necessarily members of these organisations, were indirectly influenced by them and finally found themselves also in the ranks of the ANC or MK" (p142). These students and young people were to play a fundamental role in the rebuilding of mass and armed resistance in the 1980s.

With the increasing popularisation of nonracialist rhetoric, the Freedom Charter was embraced by a wide range of inclusive organisations. Lodge (1991, p. 24) points out that "By the beginning of the 1980s, 'charterism' was generally understood to mean that the struggle was nonracial." The shift in political discourse was regarded by young people as a "breakthrough" and was linked to the 1955 shift from Africanism to multiracialism (SASPU, 1987, p. 7).

Although most COSAS members were ex-BC advocates, they saw the materialist and nonracialist approach of the Freedom Charter to be relevant to the political and economic conditions of the 1980s. Class discourses which had emerged in the mid 1970s became influential in post-Soweto youth politics. The ANC class analysis, unlike

the traditional Marxist analysis, viewed the youth category as consisting of many sub-categories. In its 1981 statement the organisation used the term "youth" to refer to "students", "young women", "rural youth", "young Christians" and "working youth". However, more emphasis was put on the "working youth" than the other groups (Seekings, 1993, p.7).

Along with the philosophy of non-racialism, the class analysis redefined and reconstructed the "enemy" in class, rather than racial terms. Jolobe, a founder member of COSAS, explains that before he was exposed to the concept of non-racialism he

> thought that the whites in South Africa are the enemy and as a result I said to one of the SSRC chaps, 'Why don't we give our parents who are working as domestic workers some poison to kill all the whites?' Fortunately I said that to a very progressive and clear person, because he said to me, 'But not all whites are enemies, you know - we have democratic whites'.... I...understood that not every white is an enemy, especially when he explained to me about the two opposing classes, the working class and the bourgeois class.... (cited in Frederikse, 1990, p. 168-169).

The shift from Black Consciousness to non-racialist politics did not occur without resistance within the student movement. Zenzile commented that "it was not as easy as that to introduce non-racialism - it now meant that COSAS had to start moving people away from Black Consciousness and start showing them the non-racial way" (cited in Frederikse, 1990, p. 168).

Young people opposed to the concept of non-racialism began to mobilise differently. A split between pro-BC and non-racialist youth occurred and resulted in the formation of a pro-BC student organisation - the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO). Conflicts and competition for political space within student and youth movements arose. This division reflected the diversity of political opinion within the student and youth movement. In a broader sense it was reminiscent of the 1950s split between Charterist and Africanist activists which saw the formation of the PAC.

Like SASO before it, AZASO concentrated its organisational activity in tertiary institutions. While COSAS constructed the youth in terms of non-racialism, AZASO's perception of the youth was based on the philosophy of Black assertiveness and psychological independence from white authority. Both COSAS and AZASO established high political profiles within student and youth constituencies and township communities. COSAS in particular drew a large membership from students and provided a political home for ex-students and unemployed township youth. The vigorous campaign conducted by both organisations to re-mobilise and conscientise students put the education issue back on the political agenda (Bundy, 1986; Frederikse, 1990; Lodge, 1991; Seekings, 1993).

In 1980 students in Cape Town boycotted classes to protest the deteriorating conditions of the school system. The boycott soon spread throughout the country and involved Coloured, Indian and African schools, colleges and universities. Although there were similarities between the 1976 and the 1980 school unrest, there were also remarkable differences. The 1980 school unrest was supported by different sections of the community. Bundy (1986, p. 52) points out that "hundreds of black teachers came out in public and organised support of the boycott" whereas in 1976 teachers were cautious about supporting student protest.

At the time of the boycott, MK had augmented its propaganda campaign with attacks on key economic installations. Many of the students who were arrested during the boycott were detained on suspicion of collaboration with 'terrorist' organisations. The main concern of the security forces, as one former detainee explained, appeared to be the presence of 'youth' or 'non-students' in COSAS leadership (Seekings, 1992, p. 34). The categorisation of the 'youth' under the 'terrorist' label subjected many young people to laws such as those of the Terrorist Act of 1967, which afforded the police wide ranging powers to detain suspects indefinitely.

However, the arrests did not act as a deterrent but instead worked to increase resistance. The 1980s period is characterised by a wave of school and township unrest. In the context of increased repression and the call for a unified non-racial approach, AZASO

jettisoned the BC philosophy. In a resolution of its July 1981 Conference, AZASO adopted the non-racialist approach to liberation and announced its support for the non-racial Charterist movement. The conference resolved that "Since the success of our struggle depends upon effective mobilisation of all people committed to democracy, we call for genuine unity of oppressed against the oppressive state" (AZASO cited in Frederikse, 1990, p.171).

Inspired by the policy of the Freedom Charter on education, COSAS and AZASO embarked on a discursive project to develop an "education charter" which became their campaigning platform (Lodge, 1991, p.36). The Freedom Charter states that " The doors of learning and culture shall be opened to all...Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children" (Sub-committee of the National Action Council, 1978, p. 52). The education charter was aimed at developing an alternative system of education via a process of self-assertion. It represented an evolution from protest to construction as students, along with the rest of the apartheid movement, were no longer solely concerned with the rejection of "gutter education" but were "now also saying 'Forward with People's education, Education for Liberation!'" (Sisulu, 1991, p. 339).

With the intensification of state repression during the 1980s and the changing attitudes of young people towards education, the school culture collapsed in 1986. Discourses promoted under the "Education for Liberation" campaign changed radically. A new, more militant generation of young people emerged after the 1984 revolt with new discourses of liberation. Campaigning under the slogan "Liberation before Education", formal schooling was deferred and students developed their own "street sociology" and pursued the "practical science of making a petrol bomb" (Bundy, 1987, 321). One youth activist commented upon formal education as not teaching them "the tactics and strategy of urban war, how to make petrol, acid, phosphorus bombs, etceteras, how to organise students effectively, how to run community organisations" (Bundy 1986, p. 52). A campaign "proclaiming 1986 as 'The Year Of No School'" was launched and supported by many young people (Johnson, 1988, p. 116).

Advancing the nonracialist approach, COSAS established political co-operation with the well resourced multi-racial students organisation (NUSAS) in 1980. In 1981 COSAS and NUSAS were joined by AZASO and the "non-racialist student movement" was complete (Frederikse, 1990, p. 174). With a refocussed approach the student coalition created a mass based approach to political resistance. The importance of the student movement in liberation politics was expressed by the NUSAS president in 1982 when he stated that he regarded

> ...the student movement as ....important. First it acts as a recruiting ground for activists...The second reason is that people involved in the education process; in thinking, analysing, questioning... Students see things that the rest of society doesn't see...I think a lot of the progressive analysis that the trade unions and the community organisations have assimilated actually originated in the student movement... (Lodge, 1991, p. 37-38).

The above analysis shows how young people were active in creating an identity and a power base that distinguished them from the wider community. Through the practices of self-formation, young people were able to differentiate themselves and to express independent thoughts.

This overt assertion of power created tension between loosely organised movements, such as the student movement, and bureaucratic organisations which promoted the idea of a disciplined working class as a vanguard of the struggle. Seekings (1993, p. 30) found that, "The belief among students that they could serve as a political vanguard was diagnosed [by the elders] as a mistake." This was expressed as

> dangerous and reactionary 'theories' [which] have been embraced by a tiny section of the South African youth... All South African youth must be mobilised and made to understand the policy, strategy and tactics of our movement... Only this way can we ensure that our youth does not allow itself to be deceived that it has any important role to play outside the national liberation movement (Sechaba, 1981, p. 11).

Terms such as "dangerous", "reactionary" and "tiny section" are usually deployed to constrain and prohibit the expression of thought that contradicts organisational procedures. Munch (1994, p. 19) asserts that "prohibitions close out objects, certain times and people from discussion... Anything that threatens the organised life within the

power system is treated as ['reactionary']. It therefore needs controlling." The process of self-formation is subversive and poses a constant danger to established power relations.

The reconstruction of young people as "youth".

With a view to creating an organised "youth" movement, the ANC campaigned for the formation of youth congresses. In 1980 the use of the term "youth" was promoted in liberation politics to denote a political, rather than a sociological or psychological meaning. "Youth" came to refer mainly to young people who had left school and remained politically active. Age was not an issue, but rather the political potential of "youth" to challenge the system.

As early as 1980, the ANC promoted the image of the 'youth' rather than that of the 'student'. Commenting on the school boycott of 1980, ANC president Tambo referred to 'youth' rather than students (Tambo, 1981). The ANC designated 1981 as "The Year of the Youth". Emphasising the need for discipline, Tambo stated that "The youth must be drawn in even greater numbers into the ANC and Umkhonto we Sizwe, inside and outside the country, to become part of the disciplined vanguard forces of our revolution" (Tambo, 1981, p. 11).

Youth and the United Democratic Front.

Tambo concluded his speech on the declaration of the Year of the Youth by calling upon the anti-apartheid movement to "smash the institutions of separate development including the community councils and the local management committees" (Tambo, 1981, p. 13). His call was taken up - mostly by township youth - and the council system became the target of township political protest in the mid and late 1980s. As youth organisations and alternative community structures proliferated in mid 1980s, township politics entered a state of ferment. The situation erupted in 1984 when localised issues over living conditions became a national issue (Murray, 1987).

The United Democratic Movement, the Civic Associations and the South African Youth Congress were among the organisations formed in the early and mid 1980s. The mass action and militant approach adopted by these organisations influenced the formation of liberatory and state discourses regarding youth. In the South African context, the formation of discourse about young people is inextricably linked to organisational practice and youth behaviour. As the struggle intensified during the 1984-1987 revolts and the 1989 'ungovernability' campaign, young people became highly visible in political violence and defiance campaigns. Named by liberatory and conservative discourses, the youth identity once again became contested.

The majority of the 1980s youth activists were of a post-Soweto generation that had little organisational and political experience outside the school terrain. Most of them were politicised mainly through their participation in student politics. Since the emergence of the student movement in the 1970s, schools and universities were "liberated territories " and hives of youth political activity (Bundy, 1987, p. 304).

The transition from an established political terrain to one less familiar was a challenge to youth activists. With the support of COSAS, ex-student young people involved themselves in trade unions, as well as community based and political organisations such as the civic movement and the United Democratic Front (UDF). The history of such organisations and their role in the struggle has been extensively documented in a number of studies and will not be explored here. However, the conditions of their inception and their role as a post-school organisational home for youth will be briefly examined.

In 1983, the United Democratic Front (UDF) was launched as a national pressure organisation to oppose the tri-cameral constitutional reforms and the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982. Under the slogan, "Apartheid Divides, UDF Unites", the UDF mobilised a large number of politically and racially diverse organisations into a united front (Swilling, 1987, p. 28). This directly undermined the system's attempt to divide the subject population by introducing minimal political reforms.

The reaction to the proposed reforms demonstrated the ability of the subject population to invert certain forms of control to its own advantage. The government's attempts to institute a subtle form of coercion and its resort to overt physical control had the effect of enhancing the organisational solidarity of the anti-apartheid movement. Commenting on the reforms , a UDF leader stated that "The Tri-Cameral Parliament proposals were a blessing. They gave us the opportunity to politic since the state wanted a broader base... All of us who were opposed to the tri-Cameral parliament were united..." (Mohamed, cited in Marx 1992, p. 116).

By mid 1980s UDF membership had risen to an unprecedented level. While there were numerous organisations affiliated to the UDF, its membership was predominately students and youth. The active role of young people in community and trade union organisations made them highly visible in UDF ranks and activities. Many of the community based organisations affiliated to UDF, such as the civics and people's committees, were initiated by young people. Swilling (1987) observed that by 1984, out of the 600 UDF affiliates, 316 were youth organisations and 47 were student organisations. Youth were regarded as "the most radical elements within the UDF" (SASPU, 1987 p. 7).

The UDF developed as a loosely organised movement with a decentralised decision making process. This enabled youth and other affiliated groups to maintain their organisational autonomy. Members were encouraged to think critically, to take initiatives, and to play an active role in the UDF national decision making process. The UDF came to be seen as "a movement spurred from below rather than pulled from above" (Collinge, 1985, p. 3). UDF provided the precedents for the development of youth organisations and the active participation of young people in liberation politics, and thus created a culture that allowed young people to actively define themselves and their role in the struggle.

Township uprising and the construction of the 'youth' as violent.

The linguistic problem associated with the definition of the 1980s political unrest reflects the complexity of the situation that developed during this period. Different descriptions of the situation have been given by different commentators. Some refer to the situation as civil war and others analyse it in terms of an uprising, unrest or revolt. The terms "civil war", "uprising" and "revolt" were commonly used to describe the situation in the mid and late 1980s. Generally, the term 'civil war' refers to armed political insurrection where the warring factions are members of the same nation (King, 1990).

The problem of using the term in this context resides in the issue of whether South Africa was a one nation state or a two nation state. The ANC Youth League Basic Policy Document of 1948 states that "South Africa is a country of four chief nationalities, three of which (Europeans, Indians and Coloureds) are minorities, and three of which (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) suffer national oppression..." (National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League). The United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity both referred to South Africa as single nation. Alternatively, the two nation thesis was developed out of a consideration of the nature of the political conflict that gave rise to the violence (Theodoropoulos, 1987, p. 24).

The term "uprising" denotes a temporally and geographically discrete event that exhibits a degree of organisation. Participants in uprisings are mainly civilians who regard themselves as "excluded from the political process" and who "believe that they can only satisfy their demands by removing those in power or changing the system" (King, 1990, p. 61). Township violence in the 1980s usually took this form of conflict. In attempting to depoliticise the conflict, the government described township uprisings not as political but as social issues. Media coverage reflected official accounts that portrayed the people taking part in uprisings as criminal and irrational.

This study interprets the upsurge in uprisings in the 1980s as a consequence of the lack of alternative forms of political expression available to young people. As Scott (1987, p. 7) asserts, "political violence ...occurs in response to the failure of constitutional or

non-violent direct action." Contrary to official explanations and various studies of youth violence, this thesis examines the political character of violence by analysing its historical conditions, including the self-perception of youth at the time. The understanding of the self as political played a central role in the justification of political violence. Gurr (1968) argued that political violence is instituted by a politicised rather than an apolitical subject population.

Young people understood themselves to be the future leaders of South Africa, and this provided the ethical justification for participating in political violence and politics generally. As Xolile explains

> We as the youth know that the future is in our hands because the old men,
> Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo, will disappear because they are old. Therefore
> the people who are going to be responsible for the future South Africa will be
> the youth (interview with Marks, 1995, p. 17).

A year after the formation of the UDF, township and school revolts erupted in the Vaal Triangle. The mood of defiance spread to the rest of the country, provoking the declaration of a State of Emergency in July 1985. The revolts revolved around the implementation of the Black Authority Act and the tri-cameral parliamentary system. The school boycott was sparked by the deteriorating quality of education in Black schools, the school age limit of twenty, and the policy that denied students representation by a democratically elected Student Representative Council (Lodge, 1991; Johnson, 1988).

The introduction of the age limit laws in 1981 by the Department of Education and Training (DET) was seen as an attempt by the state to minimise political activity in schools. According to student activists, "the age limit law has hampered activists from organising in schools for equal, compulsory education and better conditions because the authorities now use another weapon to kick students out of schools" (Amandla, 1985 p.13). A student placard summed up the student demands

NO to:

DET

AGE LIMIT LAWS

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

CORRUPT TEACHERS (Amandla, 1985, p.14).

While different uprisings were sparked by different issues and were initially geographically confined, they rapidly became a national concern. Township civic organisations united with youth and student groupings in pursuit of their demands. Influenced by the UDF rhetoric of unity, students conceived of education, community and industrial issues in broader political terms. This discursive shift found expression in political meetings and pamphlets. On one demonstration, a COSAS pamphlet carried a message to trade unions which read; "Our struggle in the schools is your struggle in the factories. We fight the same bosses' government, we fight the same enemy" (Bundy, 1986, p. 54).

As the struggle intensified, the definition of the "enemy" began to include Black councillors and municipal police who were accused of collaboration. Due to their proximity to members of the anti-apartheid movement, the 'collaborators' or 'informers' popularly known as *impimpis*, were perceived as a more serious threat than the white representatives of the system. They were subjected to the laws and disciplinary measures of the townships' alternative penal structure dubbed the "People's Court" (Scharf & Ngcokoto, 1990).

Although educational issues were still a prime theme of student protest, broader political issues came to dominate student and youth politics. These issues included rent, bus fares, consumer issues and unemployment. Campaigns on issues such as rent, bus fare and high education fees were popularised through the use of the *Asinamali* (We have no money) slogan, which expressed the economic conditions under which many Black people lived. Consumer boycotts of white-owned shops were established. These boycotts were meant to weaken the support base of apartheid by demoralising the petty

bourgeois constituency. Such boycotts were monitored by people's committees established by young people. (Mashinini, 1987).

The 1984 revolt had popular support from students, youth and other sectors of the community. An unprecedented number of students taking part in political protests clashed with police in what became a regular occurrence. Murray (1987, p. 249) estimates that "By October, nearly one million black students had taken part in school boycotts and other forms of mass action." The strong support for school and township protests created a fear and panic in white communities that was used to justified the militarisation of South African politics. Civil war was imminent.

The military occupation of the township became yet another source of political solidarity and mobilisation for UDF and its affiliates. An era of consolidated mass and violent resistance emerged. Trade unions, community, youth and students supported mass political action to protest against the army occupation of the townships. Youth were in the forefront of these protests, engaging in open battles with the army, police and vigilantes (Bundy, 1987). They defied the adults who warned of severe consequences and pointed to the Sharpeville massacre of 1960. Some youth activists argued that the 1980s generation was different from that of the 1950s and 1960s. They claimed "that people would not run away as they had in 1960" (Lodge, 1991, p. 76), and that state violence would only antagonise them.

As political violence intensified in the townships, a militarised youth subculture mobilised under the 'comrade' identity and new tactical approaches became evident. The stone was supplemented by the petrol bomb. In response to the militarisation of the political conflict through the intervention of the army and the rise of private apartheid armies young people developed local power systems such as the Defence Committees and the People's Courts. Under the people's panel procedure, varying degrees of punishment were accorded. These ranged from whipping to public execution by

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"necklacing".[2] The penal system and its forms of punishment were legitimised by discourses about *impipis* and vigilantes as counter-revolutionaries.

The development of alternative structures signified the complete breakdown between the state and the Black community. The state criminalised the operation of the alternative structures and used emergency powers to restrict public debate and research on the subject. According to Scharf and Ngcokoto (1990, p. 343), the restrictions "severely limited what can be legally written about people's courts. Thus far only the State's delegitimation of these structures has been forcefully inserted into the public domain."

Despite the state's attempt to delegitimate these structures, they continued to proliferate at an increasing rate. Public retribution and participation in political violence was legitimised by the 'comrades' as part of the process of constructing a revolutionary, disciplined population and minimising the obstruction of police and informers. As Zola, a Diepkloof youth, asserts; "To kill a policeman is to mean we are closer to our freedom because we are getting rid of some of the obstacles of our struggle" (Interview with Marks, 1995, p.14).

The people's courts not only dealt with political cases but as well with moral and disciplinary issues. As "defenders of the community", young people felt morally obliged to use persuasive and coercive measures to construct a subject population that would conform to the political and moral ideals of people's power. Thandi, another Diepkloof youth, states that;

> The comrades solve a problem. Other boys they don't understand, they need
> help. But other boys they didn't understand when the comrades talk, so that's
> why the comrades have killed them. If a comrade tell a person what is bad and
> they don't understand, she must kill them because she is going to do bad things

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[2] Execution by necklacing involves the placing of a tyre drenched with petrol around the convicted person's neck and setting it alight. Public execution was not only practiced by the 'comrades' but also by the police and vigilante groups who used guns, spears and machetes to execute the 'comrades'. However, the publicity accorded to necklacing overshadowed police and vigilante practices. Although the 'comrades' were represented in official rhetoric as associated with 'necklacing', such practices were also used by vigilante groups such as the Impis.

like killing my grandmother and stealing money from my sisters" (Interview with Marks, 1995, p. 21).

The " body as the major target of penal repression " re-emerged in South Africa. Like the agents of mainstream justice, young people saw the subjection of the body to pain as a way of protecting the political ideals of the struggle from "sell-outs" or *impipis*. Yet, due to its immediate and overt retributive measures, the system of street justice became highly controversial and received more widespread criticism than the official system.

As political violence increased, the apartheid infrastructure in the townships was destroyed, creating a climate conducive to the ungovernability campaign. According to the New York Times (cited in Murray, 1987, p. 241), this situation forced the state "to admit it had lost control of many townships and declared a state of emergency in July 1985" (Swilling, 1987, p. 30). A month after the introduction of the state of emergency, COSAS was banned and the education system in most Coloured and African areas was shut down. In 1986, the entire apartheid power structure in the townships showed signs of imminent disintegration. This situation precipitated the declaration of the second state of emergency (Bundy, 1986; Johnson, 1988; Beinart, 1994).

The impact of the state of emergency on youth politics
The years leading up to the political negotiations between the ANC and the regime were marked by an increase in political violence, detention and banishment. In 1986, the state reintroduced emergency measures to confine activists to prison and house arrest. This was reminiscent of the 1950s and 1960s when political activists were banished under the Native Administration Act of 1927 [3] and the 1960 state of emergency. As in 1960, the intention of the emergency regulations was to restrict political activity, movement and collective gathering.

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[3] Under the Native Administration Act of 1927, the government had the power to remove and banish individuals or groups of Africans from any location in the country. This Act was used in the 1950's to banish and confine political and union activists in remote rural areas (Carter Karis Collections).

It was during this context of political restriction and unrest that a national student organisation, the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO), emerged in March 1987. The ban imposed on COSAS and the collapse of the school culture meant that the school as a traditional mobilising ground for youth politics was no longer available. Many COSAS members moved into SAYCO ranks thus completing the transition from 'student' to 'youth' organisational process. Autonomous SAYCO affiliates proliferated, dispersing the struggle to all sectors of the South African society. Like the UDF, SAYCO had no centralised structure. It was a forum for the expression of a plurality of political perspectives. Reagon explained that "SAYCO is not structures 'up there;'.... SAYCO is street committees and defence committees... In these street committees we are able to take control of our own lives" (Sechaba, 1987, p. 7).

Three months after the formation of SAYCO, a new state of emergency with finer measures of social control was introduced. In the same year it was estimated that "more than 1 300 youths under the age of 18 were detained in terms of the emergency regulations... with more than half of the 234 detainees aged 17 years or younger..." (Cape Times, 1988, p. 38). Most of them were charged with criminal offences ranging from crime against property to murder and terrorism.

The introduction of wide ranging powers under the state of emergency gave police the power to detain political activists indefinitely and to restrict activities relating to stayaways, consumer and rent boycotts. This impacted heavily on UDF, SAYCO and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) (*Argus*, 24/2/1988, p. 2). The *Cape Times* (25/2/88) reported that "The government moved rapidly against leading anti-apartheid activists... slapping restriction orders on at least seven senior UDF office holders, after severely curtailing the activities of 17 extra-parliamentary organisations" (Cape Times. Feb. 25. 1988).

By 1988, SAYCO's entire leadership together with some of UDF and COSATU leaders was either detained or banished. In 1987 about 5 000 people were detained each day

(*SA Barometer*, 1988, p. 37)[6]. Although the state of emergency was precipitated by political unrest, youth activities in particular were depoliticised and young people were treated as juveniles (Lodge 1991).

Utilising its regional structures, SAYCO regrouped within a short period of time. Adopting an anarchist approach, the most immediate priority of SAYCO was to sustain and increase the political pressure on the state through loosely organised militia groups. This did not mean that the organisation had no political direction, as was implied in official discourses. Anarchism was construed in South Africa and elsewhere in the world in terms of 'mindlessness', 'terrorism', 'disorganisation', 'barbarism', 'savagery' and 'criminality'. As Leach points out;

> Anarchism in the public mind conjures up an image of the bomber or terrorist under a black flag. The reality is that the term 'anarchism', meaning 'no government', covers several belief systems and modes of action besides this violent stereotype (1988, p. 195).

Anarchists regard the state, together with its structures and representatives, as the legitimate enemy. Their activities are organised by small, communal power systems. In South Africa this involved the development of "Peoples Communes" or "Peoples Committees" which acted as dual power systems at a local level. These committees "functioned as organs of insurrection for the forcible armed overthrow of [the] old political order" (Mashinini, 1987, p. 5-6). As SAYCO's membership intensified the direct 'insurrection' action against the armed forces in 1989, the state realised that its monopoly on violence was breaking down. Like power, violence is distributed and instituted at every point of society. As violence became widely dispersed, the conflict escalated into a civil war.

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[6] The validity of some of these statistics are questionable as they were compiled by official agencies such as the Bureau for Information and the Department of Law and Order. They may reveal more about the governmental measures to maintain 'law and order', than they do about the process of political resistance.

Township conflict and the construction of Black-on-Black violence.

As the infiltration of MK guerrillas into South Africa proved difficult, militant township youth became the "foot soldiers" of the "people's war" declared by the ANC in 1986. The slogan ran "from armed propaganda to people's war" (Work in Progress, 1988, p.3). The "people's war" strategy was implemented through the mobilisation of the people into rural and urban units of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Defence Committees were established in most Black townships and youth militancy was seen as crucial in this ultimate stage of the anti-apartheid struggle.

The youth took virtual control of the political situation as they engaged in street confrontations with the army, police and vigilantes. Again, the escalation of violent resistance was seen by the state as being "orchestrated by communists; it was only supported by a minority of blacks, while the majority wanted the restoration of law and order..." (Straker, 1992, p. 20). In his 1986 parliamentary speech, President Botha stated that "the violence against which the police have to react is perpetrated by ruthless and unscrupulous people who make use of savage and barbaric methods to achieve their goals" (Bureau for Information, 1986, p. 29-30). In justifying the renewal of the State of Emergency, the government claimed that the regulations were required to "protect law abiding Black South Africans and uphold civilised life in South Africa" (Bureau for Information, 1988, p. 1).

The polarisation of the Black community as "law abiding" versus lawless, "barbaric" and uncivilised "criminals" was central to the government strategy of depoliticising the conflict. Through the polarisation process the conflict was dispersed to sections of the Black community. This was an attempt to make state involvement in violence less visible. The "law abiding Black South Africans" were armed and transformed into apartheid private armies. They engaged in battle with the 'comrades' or anti-apartheid youth activists. In review of its policy on violence, the ANC stated that "it was finding it difficult to distinguish between civilian targets and enemy personnel because the government had organised civilians into paramilitary units..." (ANC, 1987, p. 4).

The conflict was represented in official discourse and conservative media as 'Black-on-Black' violence. It was defined by the state as a "confrontation between two groups in Black communities - those who favoured evolutionary reforms and revolutionaries committed to violence" (The Bureau for Information, 1988, p. 1). The polarisation of the people was reminiscent of the 1960s stratification of Africans into 'good Natives' and 'bad Natives'. In the 1980s language the 'bad Native' was reconstructed as a "revolutionary committed to violence". State measures were applied to control the reconstituted subject. Botha warned that those who "did not renounce violence, [would] inevitably face the full power at the disposal of the State" (Botha, 1986, p. 27). The reconstructed 'violent' identity made political activists susceptible to overt state violence.

Youth militancy was viewed much differently by the liberation movement. Young people's participation in political violence against the armed forces was regarded as heroic. Means of popularising the reconstituted heroic youth identity were developed through what Garfinkel (1972, p. 203) refers to as "ceremonies of investiture and elevation". Eulogistic terms such as the 'young lions' and 'comrades' were constructed to represent young activists in liberatory discourse. The 'young lions' were called upon by the ANC to "act as the yeast, to energise and dynamise the people as a whole" (Tambo, cited in Seekings, 1993, p. 6).

Straker (1992) found that, as mass confrontation and state violence intensified in the late 1980s, young people saw this period as

> a time of euphoria as well as terror. They had a new-found sense of power and vision for the future. They saw themselves as leading the older generation to freedom. Liberation was believed to be in sight and they were to be the authors of it (p. 19).

This period saw the emergence of a popular youth political culture, expressed in a militaristic dance dubbed the "Toy-Toy", the incantation of political slogans, and in

freedom songs sung at all political events including funerals.[4] The toy-toy in particular gained wide popularity among young people and drew large numbers into political activism. According to a number of social researchers, most young people participated in collective political activities not only to pursue political objectives but also to develop a sense of identity and belonging. According to Sisi, a youth activist, some comrades

> joined for their own enjoyment - not really out of real understanding of the issues... They were attracted by the slogans and the songs. They enjoyed the toy-toy and the singing and throwing stones and the running away from the police. They liked action and they were not real keen on spending hours in meetings listening to the problems of the community and strategising how best to approach them (Straker, 1992, p. 30-31).

The development of the political subculture and a loosely structured organisational process was part of the self-definition process that challenged values of the dominant culture. The rise of the toy-toy subculture provided the means by which youth activists could express themselves. In the context of state censorship of written political material, it was slogans, songs, dance and street theatre that built young people's self esteem and disseminated political information. Meetings and rallies were often punctuated by cries of *Amandla Ngawethu!* - Power to the People, and *"Mayibuye iAfrica* -Free Africa from colonialism! (Mzamane, 1982).

The political youth subculture was rooted in opposition to what it saw as essentially colonial ethnocentric values. According to Gramsci, a new culture presents problems to the dominant culture in that it challenges entrenched fundamental assumptions. Most people find popular culture more expressive and inspiring than dominant culture "...because it is the result of their own free initiative" (Gramsci, cited in Holub, 1992, p. 113). As demonstrated in the toy-toy subculture, the optimistic aspects of popular culture stand in contrast to the pessimistic and defensive framework of dominant culture.

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[4] As the unrest intensified, funerals became almost a daily occurrence. They were transformed from being just mourning events into sites of political 'rallies' and mobilisation. 'Don't mourn - Mobilise!', was the slogan of the time.

While the political potential of young people was widely acknowledged within the liberation movement, the shift in the field of power relations within the Black community became a matter of controversy. Marxist activists argued for a movement led by the working class and Black elders expressed the need for the maintenance of cultural power relations, such as the child/adult relationship and the patriarchy system that relegated women to family issues. Dipuo points out that "When it comes to going out and discussing issues that affect the community, that is said to be the duty of men" (cited in SASPU National, 1987, p. 17).

Young people were regarded as politically immature and in need of "correct" direction. According to Dube, "It is only the working class which has got the most advanced theory... which can lead our revolution... Students cannot bring about a revolution by occupying school buildings..." (1985, p. 26). An elderly resident of Alexandra states that

> These kids have changed many things, the truth is that. Like now we are not
> going to carry the *dompas* - it is because of the children. But they are some
> things I don't like. A child is a child. I am an elderly person . Children are right
> to battle for freedom, but they must respect older people. People's courts are
> not the right way (Johnson, 1988, p. 119).

While young people were seen as having a special role in the struggle, they were not expected to transcend culturally established patterns of power. The concept of a disciplined youth who conforms to established cultural patterns and organisational procedure, formed an essential part of the constitution of the youth in liberatory discourse. However, this proved to be difficult construct to promote during the campaign to make South Africa ungovernable.

Ungovernability and the construction of the 'comrade' and comtsotsi identities.

The process of ungovernability began with the rejection of the municipal administration system and was officially endorsed by the ANC in the late 1980s. In response to the political developments of the late 1980s the composition of the youth category changed and new identities were constructed. Yet these changes did not affect the representation of young people in apartheid discourse. Opposition political activities continued to be defined within the concept of law and order. Nevertheless, new strategic approaches were adopted by the security forces in response to changes in opposition politics. These included the extension of the policing system to restore the authority of council structures. A municipal police force dubbed the *greenflies* was established (Lodge, 1991; Murray, 1987; Seekings, 1992).

The front-line position occupied by young people in liberation politics throughout the 1980s enabled them to be more active in defining themselves. Through their active involvement in different liberation structures, young people were able not only to initiate a self-formation process but also to negotiate and invert certain forms of representations. This trend was prevalent in the advanced stages of the "ungovernability" campaign in 1988 and 1989. During this period the process of self-formation gave rise to a number of identities such as *inyamazane* (insurgents), *amaqabane* (comrades) and *com-tsotsis* (Lodge, 1991).

The *com-tsotsi* identity incorporated the comrade and the traditional tsotsi identities in recognition of the political potential of the tsotsi youth. These identities became a mobilising strategy for different political projects. The 'inyamazane' identity, which alludes to the image of an energetic and aggressive guerrilla, was mobilised to militarise, radicalise and draw young people into the ranks of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Inspired by the escalation of the Umkhonto insurrection, the heroic *inyamazane* became a role model for militant young people during the 'ungovernability' period. In the militaristic culture the 'comrade' or *amaqabane* identity became a symbol of unity, belonging, co-operation and solidarity.

While the *amaqabane* or comrade identity was a unifying term that referred mostly to Black youth activists, it also distinguished charterist from non-charterist political activists. The term was used as a political and combat identity during violent township clashes against the *impis* (Inkatha Freedom Party vigilantes) and *greenflies* (Mngayi & du Toit, 1990). Closely associated with the 'comrade' identity were terms such as the 'youth', UDF, ANC, SACP, MK, SAYCO, COSATU, Freedom Charter, 'people' and 'community'. The 'comrade' identity became a political tag during the ungovernability era which could either protect the wearer from political violence, or act as a target for it. Contrary to Johnson's (1988) comment that the term 'comrade' "came to be used to refer to any black youngsters engaged in resistance" (p. 118), the term did not apply to an undifferentiated Black youth population.

The intensification of political violence saw the comrades joined by the tsotsis who battled their traditional foe - the police. The com-tsotsi identity was constructed to mobilise tsotsis or 'street criminals' into formal opposition. The term 'tsotsi' was imbued with partisan political meanings. The politicisation of tsotsis was perceived as an essential political project during the "ungovernability" campaign. As in most civil conflicts and wars, political actions during this period were dominated by men and provided the conditions for the assertion of the macho status. Political violence was conceptualised and expressed in masculine discourse.

As a traditional male terrain, participation in political violence was monopolised and jealously guarded by the male 'comrades'. Young women were considered too weak to fight and kept invisible in most actions involving violence, a practice reflecting the sexual division of labour. Young men considered it their responsibility to 'protect' women. However, as Ramphele (1991) observed discourses about women as 'weak' and needing 'protection' were used to conceal men's fear that

> they would be left to tackle domestic chores, including taking care of babies, which they were uncomfortable to be seen doing. There was genuine fear that the women would not survive the brutality of the police... and there may have been some fear of women succeeding where males had failed (p. 224-225).

Because of the general perception of tsotsis as violent and experienced in confrontation with the police, they were regarded by some youth activists as valuable comrades in arms. Although it emerged in different political conditions, this was reminiscent of the PAC attempts in 1959/1960 to politicise and mobilise the tsotsi youth constituency.

The participation of tsotsis in township politics gave rise to a variety of interpretations. According to Cross, "Gangsters can do things like throw petrol bombs and hijack cars that normal people must be first taught to do, so there was a real space for the expression of gang culture in the struggle" (cited in Seekings, 1993, p. 66).

Mkhondo (1993) expresses a different opinion of the comtsotsi category. He states that

> The comtsotsis ('comrade ruffians'), as they are called in township slang,
> formed gangs which contributed to the rise of violence in the townships, posing
> a serious problem for the ANC. They terrorized the townships in the name of
> anti-apartheid groups or falsely claimed that their actions were being authorised
> by anti-apartheid forces, although most were not affiliated to the ANC or to
> other political organisations (p. 137).

Similar opinions are expressed by Johnson (1988) who refers to comtsotsis as 'apolitical', 'undisciplined', 'unruly', 'lawless youths' and 'self-serving thugs' who "damaged the inchoate relationship of trust and mutual respect which had been nurtured between the youth and adult" (p. 118). Harding (1991, p. 16) also states that "criminal elements, mainly among unemployed youth began to set up 'roadblocks' to steal from commuters, which criminalised the reputation of the 'comrades'."

Such views mirrored dominant state rhetoric which polarised the Black community into 'law abiding' citizens and 'lawless thugs'. In this respect, the comtsotsi identity, rather than deviant acts, became the focus of the evaluator. This representation ascribed a generalised and inherently deviant role to the tsotsi youth. Tsotsis, according to these commentators, will always be tsotsis - a view that defined their participation in youth politics in terms of "damages" and "problems". Tsotsis appeared to have acquired an irredeemable social status which undermined efforts to alter their total identity. This is consistent with the notion of 'master status' (Hughes, 1945; Merton, 1938). According

to Hughes, this status "tends to overpower, in most crucial situations, any other characteristics which might run counter to it" (Hughes, 1945, p. 357).

The attempt to politicise and draw tsotsis into formal opposition politics provoked a backlash. Allegations about comtsotsis extorting money from community residents were popularised in media and propaganda material. Both the 'comrade' and the 'comtsotsi' categories came to be represented in white and black conservative discourse as synonymous with crime, violence and terrorism. The government Bureau for Information explained that "Loosely known as 'comrades', some owe allegiance to the ANC; others have been exploited by revolutionary groups within South Africa; yet others are criminal elements or, simply, undisciplined vandals" (South African Bureau for Information, 1988, p. 5).

The negative representations of these groups exposed them to state and vigilante violence. In Natal (the home of the Inkatha Freedom Party) in particular, where the term 'comrade' or 'comtsotsi' conjured up an image of an 'enemy' and a 'criminal', young people so labelled were exposed to collective forms of political violence. For example, the Weekly Mail (8/5/92, p. 3) quoted witnesses to violence against the 'comrades' as saying that the identified attackers were "Inkatha members, police and hit squad members".

While comtsotsis participated in political violence during the ungovernability period, it is not clear how much their activity contributed to the rise of township violence and the tension between youth activists and African elders. The general representation of the comtsotsis and comrade youth categories obscures the political and social diversity that existed within those categories.

Despite the conservative view of youth as homogenous, the youth category consisted of multiple identities. These were evident in political differences, organisational affiliations, tactical and strategic approaches. Belonging to the 'comrade' or 'comtsotsi' category did not imply absolute sympathy or participation in violent and criminal activities. Similarly, membership of the ANC did not necessarily mean agreement with

that organisation's policy on violence. However, in defining ANC members, labelling theorists have often concentrated on the individualised 'terrorist' image of the organisation perpetrated by the state and its supporters. Consequently, all ANC members and those aligned with it were regarded as terrorists. The limitation of the social labelling thesis is that it concentrates on organisational or structural processes and neglects the self-formation process that testifies to the diversity of any given social or political grouping (Anleu, 1991).

While ideological practices were essential to the reconstruction of the youth category in the 1980s, non-discursive practices, such as youth physical activities, changes in organisational process and liberation strategies, also provided conditions for the deconstruction and reconstruction of the youth category. Indeed, changes in the representation of youth and the formation of discourse were largely responses to just these non-discursive aspects. Still, in order for the identity construction process to obtain political and social meaning certain procedures had to be followed. Cooper shows that the process can only gain public acknowledgment by certain rituals "determining the conditions under which discourses were spoken, and who would be allowed to speak them" (Cooper, 1981, p. 68).

The denunciation of the old identity and annunciation of the reconstructed youth category was facilitated through the circulation of discourse in the media, official and liberatory propaganda structures. The public position assumed by these structures, and their identification with the witness audience, qualified them to speak these discourses. Garfinkel (1972, p. 204) refers to the "conditions of successful degradation ceremony" in which the total identity of the subject population is ceremoniously transformed.

It can be argued that the ANC's lack of interest in the tsotsi youth constituency created unfavourable conditions for the transformation of the 'tsotsi' image into a political identity. As an authority and a qualified speaker of liberatory discourse, the ANC and other liberation organisations did not commit themselves in support of the public transformation of the criminal stigma of the tsotsi subculture. Despite the reference to tsotsis as 'com-tsotsis', their public image was not altered and they continued to be

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regarded as tsotsis. Although in the early years of the ANC Youth League efforts were made at an individual level to politicise tsotsis there was "no systematic attempt to organise and 'convert' the far larger, and culturally pervasive, constituency of tsotsi youth gangs" (Glaser, 1988/89, p. 1).

The status degradation process that altered Black youth identity and replaced it with a lower social status follow similar procedures as "ceremonies of investiture and elevation" (Garfinkel, 1972). However, ceremonies of investiture were empowering and aimed towards the elevation of the political image of young people, who were mobilised for particular political projects. During the 1980s conflict young people were seen as a special category with a central role to play in the struggle. Youth identities such as "young lions" were constructed as an honour and in acknowledgment of young people's role in the struggle.

Like the degradation ceremony, this process subverted and replaced the total identities of young people. After the 1980 school boycott, the ANC de-emphasised the term 'student' in reference to youth politics. The ANC actively promoted the use of the term 'youth' as a political identity for 'politicised' young people and declared 1981 as "The Year of the Youth". In the 1990s the "young lions" identity accredited to young people during the township revolts was degraded and replaced with the "lost generation" identity. The relationship of discontinuities in the perception of the youth category to changes in liberation politics, suggests that the deconstruction and reconstitution of the 'youth' identity "formed part of much broader processes of transformation in opposition politics" (Seekings, 1993, p. 21).

The transformation of youth politics since the inception of the ANC Youth League in 1944 had been characterised by rapid, radical shifts in discursive and non-discursive practices. In most cases these discontinuities were responses to changes in broader political, social and economical circumstances. Foucault argues that the formation of discourses is constrained, not only by the role of the individual, but also by circumstance. Both factors combined to change the youth category in South Africa,

giving rise to innumerable discourses regarding youth at every juncture in the history of opposition politics.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the extent to which identities were shaped by discourses regarding the subject population and how such discourses were constructed in disciplinary language and used as a source of power. These discourses shaped state policies and determined the treatment of young people who were exposed to social control measures such as the state of emergency. The representation of youth activists as 'loafers', 'criminals' and 'undisciplined vandals' in official discourse during the state of emergency was instrumental to the banishment, incarceration, execution and confinement of thousands of young people.

The 1980s period was distinguished by an increase in political violence on both sides of South African politics. The question of what counts as political violence has been hotly contested in political and sociological disciplines. Political violence has been described as action pursued by forces opposed to the state. Such descriptions imply that the state's use of force is legitimate - merely an act of self defence. Thus , state violence such as police violence is rationalised by "legitimist discourses" (Du Toit ,1990, p. 89).

Gurr explains political violence as "...all collective attacks within a political community against the political regime, its actors - including competing political groups as well as incumbents - or its policies" (Gurr cited in King, 1990, p. 41). In Gurr's explanation, the state seems a victim of political violence rather than an active participant. Studies such as those by (Marks & Anderson, 1990; Scott, 1977) describe the state as an active participant in political violence. Nieburg provides a comprehensive explanation of political violence which includes

> ...acts of disruption, destruction, injury whose purpose, choice or targets or
> victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation and/or effects have
> political significance, that is, tend to modify the behaviour of others in a
> bargaining situation, that has consequences for the political system (King,
> 1990, p. 41).

Political violence in South Africa was implemented, not only to "modify the behaviour of others", but also to alter the field of power. Violence was used by the state to destroy the power base and to stop the opposition from advancing its political goals while the liberation movement used it as a tool for social change to overthrow the incumbent regime. To young Black South Africans, violence had revolutionary as well as moral connotations - revolutionary because the disruption and destruction of the apartheid state and its replacement with "People's Power" was sought; moral because young people felt ethically bound to use violence to defend the "people" from state sponsored violence. Anti-apartheid activists were constructed as "people" and those obstructing the cause of liberation as "enemies". These discourses formed part of the everyday political language in youth politics and demonstrate that young people were active in constructing others as well as themselves.

Though violence is described by Foucault as non-discursive, it is essentially a discursively constructed phenomenon, and is legitimised and justified via discursive processes. During the township unrest, discourses such as "oppressive and violent state", "real liberation is not possible without bloodshed" and "youth as moral defenders of the community", were used to legitimise young people's participation in political violence (Marks, 1995, p. 5).

The aim of this discussion is to understand how the formation of discourses and identities influence the way in which the subject population is perceived and treated, and how this contributes to the shift and production of new fields of power relations. By using Foucault's analysis of subjectification, this chapter has attempted to demonstrate the active role of young people in defining and shaping their own identity. The political and social implications associated with this process was examined. While the process of self-formation is explained in Foucault's theory as discursively informed, in the South African context the process was inextricably linked to non-discursive practices as well. Political ideologies, organisational process and political strategies formed an essential part of the process. It can be concluded that the youth category in South Africa was historically and politically, rather than socially and psychologically, constructed - a conclusion that is favoured by the analyses presented in this chapter and previous ones.

5 From liberation to formal party politics: Black youth politics in 1989 and the early 1990s.

Introduction.

A year after the imposition of the second state of emergency in 1988, youth organisations and trade unions regrouped in defiance of the restrictions imposed by the emergency laws. Although severely affected by the crack-down, the youth movement quickly regained its profile in opposition politics and cemented its relationship with the Congress of South African Trade Unions. The South African Youth Congress (SAYCO) membership grew rapidly and by 1988 the organisation claimed to have more than a million registered members. The slogan was, "You can ban us but you can't silence us!" (Sechaba, 1988, p. 1).

As part of the regrouping process, a strategy of mass defiance was developed to undermine the state of emergency and the segregation laws such as those contained in the Separate Amenities Act. Combining with international pressure, the mass defiance campaign of ungovernability and similar strategies made it increasingly difficult for the state to contain the challenge to its racially based political system.

Following the second Tri-Cameral elections in 1989, the ANC reiterated its commitment to its "...multi-pronged offensive, including its armed component to overthrow the regime of racist tyranny" (National Executive Committee of the ANC, 1989, p. 2). In the late 1980s, the armed wing of the ANC - Umkhonto we Sizwe - escalated its sabotage of economic and military installations. These operations had political rather than military significance in that they increased the ANC's internal support, especially amongst young people (Marx, 1990).

Despite the intensification of state violence, political resistance mounted and involved large numbers of people at all levels of South African society. Young people were clearly visible in all political campaigns. Youth organisations and trade unions both re-emerged from the crack-down as potent opponents of the system. Confronted with an economy increasingly diminished by consumer boycotts, international sanctions and strikes, the state resolved to modify the field of power. In late 1989 and early 1990, the Pretoria regime made preparations for discursive changes within the system.

Even though there exists only inconclusive analysis of the changes in the youth category, there is growing evidence suggesting a shift from political to social representation of young people. As developments regarding this process are still tentative, this chapter will discuss some of the issues pertinent to this shift. To provide a context for this shift, this chapter will briefly discuss the emergence of negotiation discourse in South African politics. Changes within youth organisational process following the unbanning of anti-apartheid political organisations will be explored. The chapter focuses on the process of transition from SAYCO to the ANC Youth League in order to emphasis the relationship between organisational practice and the generation of discourse.

The emergence of negotiation discourse

In the late 1980s, the discourses pervading the liberation movement and apartheid camps still centred around armed revolution and hegemony respectively. However, during the height of the township revolts, negotiation discourses began to develop amongst government officials and ANC activists (Adam & Moodley, 1993).

Secret talks between the government and the incarcerated ANC leader Nelson Mandela started as early as 1985. These talks progressed to the lead up of the second tri-cameral elections in 1989. Mandela points out that "the crisis freed" him to open dialogue with the regime (cited in Sechaba, 1990, p. 14-17).

The 1989 tri-cameral elections produced comprehensive changes in the political landscape. The new National Party President F.W. de Klerk began to test the waters for transforming the political and social landscape of South Africa. Seven prominent political prisoners incarcerated since 1963 were released in October 1989. While the exiled ANC leadership welcomed this "important victory", it went on the offensive and called for the unconditional release of Mandela and other political prisoners and detainees, the lifting of the state of emergency, the unbanning of anti-apartheid political organisations, the withdrawal of troops from the townships and an end to political executions (ANC October 18 Statement, 1989, p. 2).

In what is widely acclaimed as a 'watershed speech', on the 2nd February 1990 de Klerk unbanned all anti-apartheid organisations including the Communist Party and repealed the Separate Amenities Act. Nine days later, Mandela was unconditionally released after spending twenty seven years as a political prisoner (Sechaba, 1990). By the time of his release, Mandela had a high profile in local and international politics. The 'prisoner' and 'terrorist' identity was ceremoniously replaced by the new identity of 'statesman'.

Following these developments, the international community - Britain and the United States in particular - were anxious to reward the Pretoria regime by lifting economic sanctions. The then British Prime Minister Thatcher "...argued strongly for the loosening of the screws on South Africa in recognition of reforms so far undertaken or pledged..." (Laurence, 1990, p. 1).

While the political developments of October and February represented rapid historical discontinuities, the significant modification of the power relationship between the state and the subject population was a much more gradual event. A number of obstacles were to be surmounted before political negotiations resumed. The ANC insisted on the observation of the Harare Declaration adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1989. The declaration demanded the repeal of the State of Emergency, the cessation of political executions, the unconditional release of all political prisoners and detainees, and the removal of troops from the townships (OAU Ad-hoc Committee, 1990). A dialogue between the liberation movement and the regime required mutual

political compromise, as the government for its part insisted on the denunciation of armed struggle as a precondition to negotiations. These compromises were achieved only after a shift in the ideological and strategic positions of both parties.

Youth politics and negotiation discourse.

The shift in apartheid policy occurred in the context of deteriorating political conditions and the deepening economic crisis of the late 1980s. Continued political violence undermined investor confidence in the state's ability to provide a stable climate for economic investment. These changes were also attended by the end of the Cold War, which caused a shift in global power relations. Following the collapse of the Eastern bloc in 1989, the foreign policies of Western super powers placed less emphasis on the 'threats' of communism and 'international terrorism'. The maintenance of anti-Communist regimes such as the apartheid government became less important to Western powers. The Pretoria regime reassessed its tenure in the new global context.

The anti-apartheid movement also reviewed its ideological and strategic position as it could no longer rely on former communist countries for material and political support. As Marx (1992, p. 226) notes "...the devolution of the cold war had begun to redraw international alliances, diminishing both Soviet support for the ANC and Western interests in maintaining the white rule."

Although mass action and armed insurrection remained fundamental liberation strategies, a negotiated political settlement became a central aim in the struggle for political change in South Africa. Pragmatism and the discourses of negotiations emerged and were largely shaped by the 1990s shift in global politics (Manzo, 1992). These discourses begun to supplant the rhetoric of armed revolution and class analysis. Adam and Moodley (1993, p. 40) observed that the liberation "elites, no longer constrained by dogma, were free to be pragmatic as they adjusted to new realities."

Changes in global power relations and in apartheid policy prompted political analysts such as Owen (1990) to conclude that armed struggle and socialist ideological

approaches failed to provide viable solutions to the South African problem. In the wake of these changes, the perception of the working class as a vanguard and young people as heroes of the struggle was changed and an intellectual elite became the major player in the new political dispensation. In the 1990s, pragmatism became a common philosophical approach, especially amongst older and intellectual activists. Yet many young activists remained committed to revolutionary approaches. An ideologically and strategically polarised anti-apartheid community emerged and competed for political space.

The relevance of armed revolution was increasingly questioned by political analysts and the higher echelons of the liberation movement. The armed struggle was subsequently suspended in 1990 in favour of a negotiation process. In 1990 the *Star* newspaper quoted the then ANC Secretary General Nzo saying that MK "...does not have the capacity within South Africa to intensify the armed struggle in any meaningful way at a time when it sees a tactical need to do so" (cited in Ottaway, 1990, p. 40). Militant activities were suspended as a result of these changes in the discourse of liberation.

However, MK continued to have a significant political impact by creating an element of insecurity within the apartheid camp. Also, MK remained an effective mobilising strategy for the ANC as young people continued to swell MK ranks. As Hani (1991, p. 11-12) stated "We are under tremendous pressure from young members of the ANC and Youth League to provide them training." A military subculture consisting mainly of pro-MK youth emerged in the 1990s to express their opposition to the suspension of the armed struggle. Youth in MK styled military gear carrying home-made models of AK47 rifles became a common site in many rallies and demonstrations.

The suspension of MK activities in 1990 and the escalation of state violence created a sense of disillusion within the pro-ANC youth constituency. While the ANC committed itself to a process of negotiation, the PAC and the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) remained supportive of armed struggle. In a manner reminiscent of the 1960 mobilisation of the militant youth constituency, the PAC rhetoric of armed struggle attracted the interest of many township youth. Ottaway (1990, p. 32) observed that

"There was substantial evidence in early 1990 that the idea of continuing the armed struggle, the position taken by the PAC and AZAPO, was more attractive to many youths than the concept of negotiations."

Faced with continued state and vigilante violence, many young people held the belief that armed insurrection was the only means through which the political system could be changed. Musi argued that

> Violence is needed in our country so that we can remove all the bad things that are there. This present regime is like a sickness that must be destroyed violently so that better things can exist and the society can be more healthy. So violence is necessary... (cited in Marx, 1995, p. 13).

Such sentiments may exhibit a disbelief that non-violent strategies can achieve fundamental changes in power relations. Militant young people envisaged radical transformation rather than incremental reform.

The preference for armed struggle expressed by youth was no longer shared by older activists who typically supported negotiations over armed struggle. Their political perspective was very different to that of the post-Soweto generation that grew up and operated in a militarised climate. Much of the ANC leadership was ageing and had spent many years in exile or in prison. Survey data shows that by late 1990,

> The majority of adult blacks prefer negotiations to violence... [although] most blacks would probably still resort to violence and non-violent direct action to protect themselves in an atmosphere of danger, especially if they believed the security forces were no longer in control (de Kock, cited in Bulbring, 1991, p. 3). .

The ANC's decision to suspend armed struggle was therefore consistent with the view of adult blacks.

Although youth militancy was supported by the liberation movement during the campaign to make South Africa ungovernable in the 1980's, it began to lose its political meaning in the 1990s. Liberation discourses about the 'youth' as a problem emerged.

Youth radicalism was now perceived as a threat to the negotiation process and there was a hurried move to resocialise or re-orient young people into post-liberation politics. According to Seekings (1996),

> Political leaders played a major role in developing the notion of a 'youth problem'. ANC leaders were worried that their organisation was still too weak on the ground, and the youth might restrict the ANC's space to negotiate constitutional changes (p. 105).

The conceptualisation of youth issues was moving away from the political arena to economic and social contexts. ANC economic spokesperson Mboweni argued that South Africa "...needs an emergency national youth programme aimed at education and employment generation" (cited in Financial Mail, 1993, March 5, p. 48). Under the draft youth policy, the ANC Youth League proposed to set "in place a juvenile justice system aimed at rehabilitation of young offenders, within the context of drastic reduction of crime levels and effective community policing" (ANC Youth League, 1995, p. 4).

Like the apartheid regime of the 1960s, the ANC saw the school as a possible solution for the 'problem' presented by the 'youth' to the new political dispensation. Mandela stated that if, "the National Party created the necessary conditions,... the ANC and allied organisations would appeal to the youth to discipline themselves, go back to school and concentrate on their studies" (cited in Seekings, 1996, p. 106). School yards were no longer perceived as sites of political mobilisation and activism but as mechanisms of social control and discipline. The president of the Azanian Students Convention (AZASCO), Maseko, expressed concerns about the depoliticisation and demobilisation of the youth/student constituencies, lamenting that "The black student community is currently largely apolitical, demoralised and individualised" (Bundy, 1994, p. 49).

The responsibility of 'resocialising' Congress youth was entrusted to the Youth League. The League was to act as an 'civilising influence', disseminating the ANC policy to League membership. Willis (1993, p. 94) writes that the civilising influence process "...keeps irrationality in check with individuals not actively creating social lives but the

products of external society." As the organisational process changed from autonomous to bureaucratic structures, the emphasis was put on centralised administration and discipline. Lekgoro, head of the ANC Youth League's Organising Department, states that

> Different from the call they were trained under - that they must render the homelands and town councils unworkable - they were now called to be disciplined. They should not barricade streets during stay-aways. We are building the Youth League in an era where the youth had to reorient their approach to struggle (Lekgoro, 1992, p. 33).

The League was expected to provide a centralised body which would discipline, transform and carry young people into the post-liberation era. However, the League was unable to live up to expectations, and failed to provide a 'civilising influence'. Its support of armed struggle was criticised by advocates of the negotiation process, who claimed it was inconsistent with ANC policy. The League warned of the implications that the suspension of armed struggle might have on the militant youth constituency. It stated that "The major component of MK is youth and experience of other struggles teaches us that neglect of armed cadres can be a destabilising factor in any political process" (ANC Youth League, 1991, p. 24).

In response to the League's views on armed struggle, some critics emphasised the ANC's historical preference for non-violent strategies. For example, an ANC official argued that "Those organisations which demand a military victory of the ANC have misunderstood the approach of the ANC in the first place" (Lekota, cited in Adam & Moodley, 1993, p. 50). Others pointed to the limitations of discourses of violence - "... the insurrectionary orientation has itself tended to become an elite conspiratorial fixation at the expense of developing a broad-based youth programme" (Cronin, cited in Makwetla, 1992, p. 34).

Youth politics in transition: From decetralisation to bureaucracy.

Internationally and internally, the ANC had developed a strong symbolic status as the credible South African anti-apartheid organisation. This status meant that the ANC exerted a powerful influence over other anti-apartheid groups, especially after political organisations were unbanned. This influence was manifested in changes made to the internal administrative organisation of these groups, especially the major charterist groups such as the UDF and SAYCO, who were compelled to merge with ANC structures. A chief cause of the ANC's organisational superiority to other groups was the bureaucratic organisational patterns that it had developed whilst exiled. This organisational feature distinguished the ANC from internal micropolitical organisations such as the UDF and SAYCO which had decentralised structures (Ottaway, 1990).

After the Sharpeville massacre, the ANC Youth League became a dormant force in liberation politics. However, an exiled ANC Youth Section began the process of reviving the League in 1989. This involved negotiations with SAYCO's leadership to merge all charterist youth congresses into a united structure. The process continued after the unbanning of political organisations and the ANC Youth League was subsequently launched in October 1990. The new organisation effectively subsumed SAYCO, whose members were invited to join the ANC Youth League (*Horizon*, 1991).

The transformation had a huge political cost for SAYCO who had to collaborate in its own dismantling. A majority of SAYCO membership expressed concerns about the implications of a merger to a structure linked to a formal political party (Seekings, 1993). Although SAYCO resolved to adopt a unitary structure in its first legal conference in April 1990, it failed to reach a decision regarding the relationship between SAYCO and the ANC Youth Section. The dissolution of SAYCO in favour of the revival of the ANC Youth League was delayed until further political consultation and the reconstruction of ANC internal structures was complete (Work in Progress, 1990).

Most delegates argued that SAYCO had not adequately addressed concerns and fears raised by the membership regarding "...those youths to the left of the ANC [who] would be left without a political home". Some felt that the "...merger was being foisted on the ANC by an impatient SAYCO leadership" (Work in Progress, 1990, p. 3). This was interpreted as demonstrating a lack of consultation at the grass roots level - a failure which was attributed to organisational methods developed by an underground organisation that were no longer appropriate in a context of legality.

Bureaucracy and pragmatism began to supplant the tendencies of the 1980s youth congresses such as militancy, spontaneity and decentralised autonomy systems. Since the ANC Youth League was formally an ANC wing, its policies and organisational structure were expected to reflect those of the mother body. This expectation conflicted with the tradition of organisational autonomy which characterised youth politics in the 1970s and 1980s (Ottaway, 1990; Work in Progress, 1990).

The adoption of a centralised bureaucratic process presented obstacles for the transference of SAYCO membership to the ANC Youth League. Two years into the transition, the constraint of bureaucracy impacted heavily on the autonomy of individual young people and the youth movement. Lekgoro, (1992) noted that under the new process and contrary to previous practice,

> No person can just declare himself or herself a member of the Youth League...
> For a youth to be a member, the recognised structure must first issue a
> membership form and card. In addition, you also pay to be a member... Now to
> be in the leadership or to be an active member, you must read and articulate all
> the many documents of the Youth League and the ANC (documents ranging
> from constitutions to debates on federalism) (p. 33).

This meant that a large number of post-Soweto youth who had not attained a high education level due to the continued disruption of schools in the 1980s were excluded from the ANC Youth League. As a result of bureaucratic procedures, many young people were demobilised and drifted to the fringes of society.

The ANC/Youth League relationship during the negotiation phase.

By 1991, the ANC Youth League had re-entered formal opposition politics. The rebirth of the Youth League was marked by ambiguities in its relationship with the mother body and the loosely defined roles of youth politics the negotiation process. Debates on organisational independence and the League's role in negotiations developed between the Youth League and the ANC. Disenchantment with the relegation of youth to a subordinate political position mounted. According to a *Mayibuye* report, a cartoon decorating one of the National Youth Committee's offices depicted the problem arising from the parent/child power relationship between the ANC and the Youth League. "The cartoon shows an unhappy baby (the Youth League) on its mother's back (the ANC) with the baby saying : "I'll stop acting like a kid if you stop treating me like one".(African National Congress, 1991, p. 32).

Most young people were opposed to the negotiations between the ANC and the government and felt that, as T.P. points out,

> the ANC is over-compromising compared to the regime. You are giving up
> nationalisation... I am afraid that if you don't have a backbone and stand by
> your beliefs and policies you will lose support among the youth (T.P., 1991, p.
> 2).

Responding to the power-sharing arrangement endorsed by the ANC and the government in 1993, League president Peter Mokaba warned that

> the aspiration of the youth should not be ignored in the negotiation process.
> Young people are being relegated to 'Codesa watchers'[1] and feel the process
> for which they fought is no longer their property. No one can do anything
> properly without consulting the youth. We say that for negotiations to succeed
> they must involve all the people who will be affected (cited in Financial Mail,
> 1993, p. 48).

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[1] Codesa - Convention for a Democratic South Africa was an all party body established in 1991 to map out the transition process from apartheid to an inclusive democratic system.

Disagreements between the ANC Youth League and the ANC can be traced back to the formation of the League in 1944. As in the 1940s, the 1990s ANC old guard were wary of the League developing into an independent ANC body. Responding to the League's draft constitution which states that "The ANC Youth League shall be organisationally autonomous", an ANC diplomat challenged this proposition. He argued that instead of pursuing the issue of independence, the League "...should be strengthening the ANC ...; helping to discipline the youth to assist the ANC in solving the problem of violence" (Masondo, 1992, p. 28).

As in the 1940s, major elements of the ANC conceived of the League as a disciplinary agency and recruiting operation for the mother body. In the 1940s young people who initiated radical approaches were labelled by the ANC old guard as politically immature, "young and arrogant...impractical [and] naïve firebrands" (Mandela, 1994, p. 131). In the 1990s young people who continued to operate within radical and militant political perspectives were represented in post-liberation politics as 'undisciplined', and 'deviants', belonging to a 'lost generation'.

Discipline, control and youth resistance.

The re-launching of the ANC Youth League allowed the ANC to regulate and discipline youth organisations in a way which had not been possible since the suspension of ANCYL in 1960. The ANC maintained the ANCYL's position as a subordinate wing of the parent organisation. Mbeki (1996, p. 5) asserted that the primary task of the ANC Youth League "is the promotion of the political and organisation agenda of the ANC. At no stage can the ANC Youth League take political positions which are separate from those of the ANC. Politically, the League is the Youth League of the ANC."

The reinstatement of discipline through the ANCYL allowed the ANC leadership, which consisted mainly of older men, to regain authority and control over the decision-making process. This was important because the ANC had now renounced armed

resistance and was guided by the exigencies of negotiation. Members of affiliated youth organisations that persisted to use violence were perceived as a threat to the credibility of the ANC. Ottaway (1990) points out that "To white conservatives, any stone-throwing incident in a township for example is now seen as a manifestation of the ANC's decision to continue the armed struggle until specific conditions are met" (p. 3 0).

The changes in the position of young people met with some resistance. The resistance took different forms, including the refusal of many individual young people and youth structures to take up League membership. According to an ANC Youth League official, little progress was made in building relationships between the League and other youth organisations. Makwetla states that, "The Youth League has not succeeded in getting all members of SAYCO to join its branches" (cited in Mayibuye, 1991, p. 32). The League Eastern Cape Secretary for political education, Joyisa (1992), expressed concerns about the decline in youth activism, reporting that "Some branches have repeatedly failed to have their AGM's because members fail to turn up at meetings" (p. 30).

Other forms of resistance included continued political violence and the proliferation of gangs in townships. The young people's unwillingness to make themselves available to the League for discipline frustrated the ANC's agenda of social control. Makwetla noted that "Six months after the launching rally of the Youth League, we have been unable to impact on the discipline of the youth" (cited in Mayibuye, 1991, p. 32).

The ANC's suspension of the armed struggle and the denunciation of violence in favour of a negotiated political settlement created widespread disenchantment amongst Black youth activists. With escalating police and vigilante violence and a lack of youth inclusion in the process of political negotiations, most young people saw their role in South African politics as unchanged. As Sello, a Diepkloof youth resident, puts it:

> The youth have the same role today as in the 1980s. At that time the ANC told us that we should make the country ungovernable. So today I don't think that thing it is still the same precisely because the government tyrants are ungovernable themselves. It is the same problems as before (Marks, 1995, p. 8).

After the assassination of the former MK Chief-of-Staff, Chris Hani, in 1993, there was renewed political violence committed by young people and the threat of civil war echoed through the country. A month before Hani's assassination, Youth League President Peter Mokaba warned that "...frustrated youth posed a greater threat to S. A. 's stability than either the Right or a reactionary bureaucracy" (cited in Financial Mail, 1993, p. 48).

The upsurge in violence was denounced by the ANC, apartheid officials and the conservative media. On the day of Chris Hani's funeral ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa denounced "the thousands of youth battling police outside the FNB stadium with his chilling "agents provocateurs" statement." (Marais, 1993, p. 10). While the conservative media was quick in denouncing youth violence, it also criticised the ANC's lack of control over the 'youth'. The Sunday Times stated that the ANC

> ... feeds the beast. It continues to glorify anger rather than self-discipline, destruction rather than constructive effort, emotional excess rather than dignity, and aggression rather than conciliation. Even if we concede that the cause of peace may be served by the glorification of violence, it is not at all clear how the ANC leaders hope to contain the passions to which they invite crowds to give free rein. At best it is a terribly dangerous and uncertain strategy (18/04/1993, p. 2).

But what is regarded as constituting violent behaviour and who has the authority to define certain behaviour as violent? Does the "glorification of anger" imply the approval of violence? These are the questions which make the concept of political violence problematic not only in South Africa, but in any country experiencing internal political conflict. As Skolnick puts it

> Violence is an ambiguous term whose meaning is established through political processes. The kinds of acts that become classified as 'violent' and, equally important, those which do not become so classified, vary according to who provides the definition and who has superior resources for disseminating and enforcing his decision (cited in Cohen, 1976, p. 114).

In South Africa, the state, media and the liberation movement pooled their resources to disseminate discourses such as the "lost generation" and "youth violence".

The construction of the 'lost generation' and the deviant youth category in post liberation politics.

Despite the dearth of written material concerning recent representations of youth in South Africa, there are good reasons to suspect that the youth were increasingly represented in welfarist rather than political terms. Liberatory discourses of youth such as "young lions", "comrades" and "politicised youth" were apparently replaced by conservative perceptions of youth as "deviants", "loafers", "barbarians" and "juveniles". In the new political framework, youth militancy and radicalism seem to be viewed as a liability to the anti-apartheid movement. Due to widespread youth opposition to the negotiation process young people were constructed as a "lost generation" who needed direction and control.

Seekings (1996) observes that discourses about the so-called 'lost generation' were "becoming widespread in political and policy-related circles" (p. 111). The term 'lost generation' emerged in the context of the 1990s political changes and youth resistance to the process of political negotiation. As young people continued to be highly visible in liberation related activities, such as political violence, they were regarded by both the state and the ANC as a generation out of control (Bundy, 1994; Seekings, 1996; Sisulu, 1992).

Different research projects were set up and consulted by government officials and the ANC to assess the potential 'youth threat' and to develop methods of alleviating such a 'threat'. The government inquiry into this issue recommended that the 'youth' "be taught the value of sustained, honest, hard work, self-discipline, study and regular exercise..." (Seekings, 1996, p.105). The Joint Enrichment Project (JEP) launched in 1986 by pro-ANC church organisations focused on the 'youth problem' by developing strategies of getting 'marginalised' youth back to classrooms. According to the JEP, 'marginalised' youth are young people "who are alienated from their families or job or school, who are out of touch with, or hostile to, the changes taking place in South Africa" (cited in Bundy, 1994, p. 50). The liberation movement and the state shared a

common perspective to what they regarded as a 'youth problem and threat' to negotiations.

Both local and international media were instrumental in popularising the 'lost generation' discourse. The composition and 'anti-social' activities of the 'lost generation' category featured prominently in crime news. According to Seekings (1996), the US *Time* magazine of February 1991 gave its version of the 'lost generation' category as consisting of

> ...as many as five million young people, from their early - 30s down to perhaps 10, mostly school droupouts who are unable to get jobs and unprepared to make constructive contributions to society. They are the deprived, activists, layabouts or thieves... (p. 110).

Seekings (1996) quotes a Sunday Times article in which the 'lost generation' is described as

> schooled only in the street battles and callow rhetoric", "uneducated and undisciplined and angry. They were threatened by peace, and 'obsolete in their own struggle'. Their 'natural leader' was Winnie Mandela (p. 111).

Winnie Mandela's popularity amongst the youth, coupled with her radical political approach, was seen in most conservative and patriarchal circles as inconsistent with the 'motherhood role'. In most studies and media coverage, her role in the struggle is either overlooked or associated with deviancy. The amplification of the imposed deviant status by the media saw Winnie ostracised from the 1990s political dispensation. As Feminist writers (Faludi, 1992; Summers, 1975; Wolf, 1994) show, the vilification of Winnie Mandela in conservative and patriarchy discourse was not an isolated case but part of the world-wide "undeclared war against women" waged by patriarchy.

Although the depoliticisation and criminalisation of Black youth political activities existed alongside political representation of young people in the 1980s, it came to dominate post-liberation discourse regarding youth. According to (Marias, 1993; Seeking, 1993), in the 1990s sympathetic liberatory perceptions of youth were

outmoded by hostile conservative perceptions. The 'Young Lions', 'comrades' and 'foot soldiers' of the 1980s insurrection became the 'lost generation', 'children' and 'criminals' of the 1990s. Gibson point out that Black youth are often described as

> earmarked for failure...(T)hey are uneducated, jobless, without saleable skills or social credentials to gain access to mainstream life. They are rendered obsolete before they can even begin to pursue a meaningful role in society (cited in Mokwena, 1992, p. 31).

In the evolving political conditions, Black youth lost their political status as activists and fighters. Marias (1993) observes that "In the imaginations and rhetoric of progressives, youth have 'mutated' from heroes (Young Lions) into victims (Save the Children) into the demons (Lost Generation) of today" (p.10). The use of concepts such as "victims" and "children" tends to represent young people as powerless subjects needing adult protection and leadership. In the attempt to re-establish the authority of the adult, young people were dichotomised into 'disciplined children' and 'undisciplined and out of control delinquents'. The latter were perceived as "...a serious threat to the stability of a future non-racial democracy..." (Mkhondo, 1993, p. 137).

Commenting on youth violence in the 1980s Johnson (1988) wrote that "elements of the new youth activists were out of control" (p. 119). However, as Straker (1992) found such representations are inconstant with young people's self-perceptions. Views delineating youth activists as "out of control" were repudiated by many young people. According to Straker (1992), many young people "felt rather that their contribution at the forefront of the struggle was being undervalued, that they were not sufficiently recognised as partners in the negotiation process" (p. 135). The most visible aspect of the "youth" in the 1990s political dispensation was a criminal identity.

Criminalising the youth.

Radicalism was seen by the new ethos of liberals and pragmatists as outside the new parameters of meaningful political struggle. Black youths' militancy and their continued involvement in political violence was denounced and criminalised by representatives of the system as well as by sections of the anti-apartheid community.

The spread of crime to white communities after the repeal of the Group Areas Act and continued political violence within Black communities caused public panic. The subject population, previously represented as a homogenous entity, was now differentiated and defined in terms of potential threat to personal and public values. Increasingly, dangerous behaviour came to be associated with Black youth, particularly those Black youth who had been politically active. Seekings noted that "... it is feared that militancy and violence is flowing into crime and gangsterism in a struggle no longer against the 'system' but against 'society' itself". (Seekings, 1993, p. 3). Stereotypes belonging to conservative whites had conventionally associated images of the criminal or savage with the Black population in general. However, in the 1990s, the association was narrowed to militant Black youth and the traditional tsotsi subculture.

Both Becker (1963) and Schur (1971) argue that the labelling of deviance is predicated on the reaction of 'mainstream' society. That is, the definition and redefinition of the subject population as deviant is shaped by the production and dissemination of deviant discourses. Rotenberg and Liazos challenge the label theory's failure to conceptualise "...deviance and social audiences to larger social, historical, political and economic contexts" (cited in Anleu, 1991, p. 36).

Applying the "lost generation" and comtsotsi stereotypes, the social deterministic theory that emerged in the black community accommodated perceptions of youth as deviants. The media's sensationalisation of these stereotypes resulted in a consensus in public opinion on juvenile delinquency. Marais (1993, p.9) noted that "... the public imagination in South Africa today is able to picture youth collectively as a homicidal

pestilence. Too often in the South African paranoid imagination, each black youth embodies the potential eruption of collective assault (mass revenge?)."

The media coverage accorded to youth crime amplified the situation, creating widespread public panic. As Young (1973) points out

> The media, then - in a sense - can create social problems - they can present them dramatically and overwhelmingly, and most important, they can do it suddenly. The media can very quickly and effectively fan public indignation and engineer which one might call 'a moral panic' about a certain type of deviant (p. 37).

Since the first democratic elections in 1994, public and media attention has focused on the involvement of youth in criminal activity rather than political activity. The theme of political instability as a major threat to economic growth has been upstaged by the spectre of crime. South Africa is represented in local and international media as a 'crime city'. For example, Margo (1996, p.1) states that "The new republic has become the most violent country in the world outside a war zone..."

Crime in South Africa is largely understood in relation to Black 'youth'. Politicians, the police, social workers, teachers and priests now view the situation in welfarist rather than political terms. Alternative systems of social control, such as the home, are being promoted to curb what sensational media describe as the 'carnage'. *The Weekend Australian* quoted Duarte as saying that

> ...the long term solution to such youth hijackings lay in the home, with parents. I know in Alex [Alexander Black township], kids leave the house with a 9mm in their pockets. Their mothers know they have it, their fathers know they have it, but they do nothing to discipline the children (15-16 June 1996 p. 1).

Sensational media headlines which feature such terms as 'carnage', 'car hijacking', and 'youth crime' have become common not only in South Africa but in international coverage of South Africa. The headline in *The Weekend Australian* (15-16/6/96) that read "CARNAGE: How organised crime is hijacking South Africa's Recovery" provides just one example of this phenomenon.

The transition from a political to a social youth category and the increasing visibility of young people in media crime reports made the concept of 'youth' even more problematic. The political definition of the 'youth' category is losing its meaning, so that the question of who constitutes the 'youth' in contemporary South African society is an issue for further investigation.

Conclusion

Youth militancy, which received the support of the liberation movement in the 1980s, was regarded as a threatening deviation in the new political dispensation. The "lost generation" category emerged as a label for an identified subject population which had not 'evolved' or 'adapted' to the politics of negotiation. As the liberation movement's old guard became more powerful in the 1990s, the "young lions" were expected to assume their traditional role as 'children'. Discourses concerning young people were now phrased in welfarist rather than political terms. Young people were demobilised and their participation in national politics was restricted.

Parallels can be drawn between the relegation of young people to children's roles after the civil war in South Africa and the relegation of women to domestic roles after the Second World War in Western countries. Rowland (1989, p. 97) notes that during World War II, women played a significant role in maintaining the economy but their new role was not regarded as part of the war victory. Instead "...women experienced pressure to return to the home, and many did." It is not yet clear whether the young people of South Africa will return to the role of children, but it is evident that the image of "young lions" is being gradually retrenched. Currently, the "lost generation" discourse is dominant and seems set to create a context for increased social control of young people.

The changes in the representation of youth activists in an evolving political climate can be understood with the Foucaultian notion that shifts in ideological practices can reshape the identity of a subject population. According to Garfinkel (1972), the process of reshaping identities does not entail the alteration of the old identity but "...the

destruction of one social object and the constitution of another... It is not that the old object has been overhauled; rather it is replaced by another. One declares, 'Now, it was otherwise in the first place'" (p. 204). Young people's response to the reconstituted youth identity has been varied, and is a matter that requires further research.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to examine the history of Black youth politics from 1944 to 1994 with especial reference to the changes in discourses of liberation and the construction of youth by those discourses. Discursive as well as non-discursive changes were examined to locate discontinuity in the representation of young people in official discourses. How young people were constituted by themselves and others is the main theme of this study.

Both structural and post-structural approaches were instrumental in analysing the relationship between liberation organisations, state and youth politics. In turn, this analysis provided the foundation for an investigation into the generation of official discourses and their significance in the construction of youth identities. The construction of youth identity was part of the broader political development of this epoch and was subject to abrupt and significant changes.

Analysis of the four historical phases of Black youth politics shows that, as the political climate and organisational practice changed, so did the representation of young people in official discourse. Young people had a major influence in determining the generation of these discourses. For example, militant approaches adopted by young people in 1976/77 and the political protests of the 1980s were influential in the formation of liberatory discourses such as "heroes", "comrades" and "young lions". Such developments were also influential in the generation of apartheid discourse that depicted Black young people as "criminals", "vandals", "loafers" and "violent". In the 1980s in particular the representation of Black young people was highly contested. At a structural level the contest occurred between two diametrically opposed sets of discourse - the liberatory and the racist. As Seeking (1993) shows the former was sympathetic while the latter was hostile to youth activities.

This study found that changes in youth identities were not only shaped by structural representation but also through practices of self-formation. Self-formation was evident

throughout the four phases of Black youth politics discussed in this study. The imposition of identities were examined in terms of the subject's capacity to challenge, resist, negotiate and subvert reconstituted identities.

The liberation movement's perception of what constituted "youth" was politically and ideologically determined. Young people were constituted as "youth" in the discourse of liberation according to their political potential at that time. The ANC Youth League's manifesto, adopted in 1944, targets an undifferentiated constituency of young Africans for recruitment. In practice, only students and young professionals were politically constructed as "youth" by the League. Such selectivity in the construction of the "youth" category by the Youth League was predicated by its perception of students as amiable to its political culture and its vision of a disciplined and politically conscious youth constituency.

In the 1940s the term "youth" was politicised and came to connote "disciplined", "educated" and "politically conscious" young people. Young people, such as tsotsis, who operated outside the League's established political culture were not included in the category of "youth". Accordingly, tsotsis remained outside formal liberation politics. The Youth League's definition of "youth" in the 1940s, and the subsequent alteration of that definition, demonstrates the ambiguity of the term: "youth" is not a universal category but one that is determined by context.

In South Africa, both the state and the liberation organisations competed over the construction of the youth category with the constituency itself. Individuals were excluded or included in the political opposition, according to the formulation of the "youth" category at any give. In 1960, tsotsis were included in the youth category formulated by the PAC. The liberatory discourse of the 1970s constructed a youth category that was dominated by the student identity. In the 1980s the ANC redefined the youth category by including politically active ex-student young people, and then all pro-charterist youth.

As part of its revision of the youth category in the 1980s, the ANC declared 1981 as the Year of the Youth and promoted the "youth" over the term "student" as the political identity of young people. In accordance with the ritual for the alteration of total identities, the changes were publicly and officially announced. This shift occurred at a time when the ANC was building its internal support base after almost two decades of political inactivity. The aftermath of the Soweto uprising and the high rate of youth unemployment created a volatile situation, providing a conducive climate for recruitment. Informal attempts to recruit tsotsi youth into formal liberation politics and to alter their traditional criminal identity were made by pro-charterist youth or 'comrades'. However, due to the ANC's lack of concern about the politicisation of the tsotsi constituency, such attempts proved unsuccessful, provoking a backlash. Tsotsis were seen as always tsotsis and were used as a scapegoat for society's ills.

The 1980s also saw a change in the representation of young people in official state discourse and the media. State and media discourses represented young people in social rather than political terms. The term "youth" was attributed to the postulate of an undifferentiated Black youth population who were violent, criminal and rebellious.

This study has analysed the changing representation of young people with Foucault's mode of dividing practice, discourse formation and Garfinkel's principles of conditions of successful degradation ceremonies. These theories posit that identity is imposed upon the subject, and that there exist certain conditions under which an identity can be successfully imposed. In Garfinkel's theory, one such condition is that the speaker of discourse must be a public figure and must identify with a particular audience. According to Foucault, the process of discourse formation is also constrained by certain conditions.

In the South African context both the liberation movement and the system were qualified speakers of discourse with differentiated audiences. Their perceptions of youth gained acceptance from both the liberation and apartheid audiences. Through the process of discourse formation and ceremonies of elevation and degradation, heroic and

unheroic youth identities were constructed and institutionalised. Different authorities constructed youth differently.

Throughout the liberation struggle, young people demonstrated that identities may be used as a source of political solidarity and resistance. This study has established that the construction of identities is a decentralised process which is spread throughout the microlevels of society. As Pettman (1992) shows certain categories can be rejected or seized by the subject population in pursuit of their own interests. This notion of self-formation is an essential part of the post-structural approach.

In the 1970s, young people seized upon the categorisation of Blacks as "non-whites" to build political solidarity among Black communities: Africans, Indians and Coloureds. The connotation of inferiority associated with the term "Black" was replaced by a positive connotation. The term Black was politicised and a self-constituted identity was promoted by the student movement. 'Black as powerful' as opposed to 'Black as inferior' became a political slogan.

This study's examination of Bantu Education shows it to be a significant development in social control and a profound influence on the practices of self-formation in youth politics. Further, this study has established Bantu education as a crucial factor in the re-emergence of political activism on a massive scale in the 1980s. In the 1970s and the 1980s young people played a significant role in reviving the liberation movement. The relationship between the emergence of Black Consciousness, the Soweto uprising and Bantu Education is central in the development in Black youth politics during this period.

Bantu Education and Black Consciousness culminated in Soweto - an event that was a turning point in the liberation struggle. As one youth activist commented in the late 1970s "BC was a foundation, a launching pad" for the revolution to come (cited in Marx, 1992, p. 103). Although the policy of mass schooling introduced under Bantu Education was designed to create an internalised system of social control, it proved to be a disaster for apartheid, providing an environment conducive to the remobilisation of the fragmented youth constituency. The backlash to Bantu Education provides an

analogy for the Foucaultian concept of power as not only repressive but also productive (Foucault, 1984).

Foucault's concepts of power, history, discourse formation and practices of self-formation provide the analytical framework for this study. The concept of discourse formation as a process of power is a particularly relevant concept for youth workers, policy makers and researchers alike. As the balance of power shifted in South Africa after the 1994 elections so did the discourse and treatment of youth. Although there is a dearth of information on the representation of young people in post-apartheid discourse, it appears that liberatory perceptions of youth have been replaced by conservative perceptions.

This study shows that throughout the phases of youth politics, young people took an active role in the political processes of the liberation struggle. In a context of extreme repression, young people at no point surrendered their autonomy. They did not regard themselves as merely leaders of the future, but also led the way in the 1970s and the 1980s. South Africa's revolution was begun by youth but was presided over by a less idealistic generation. In the new political order, the "Young Lions" found themselves pushed to the fringes of society, culminating in the demise of youth politics.

In the 1990s the balance of power was significantly altered, resulting in changes in organisational practice, and the formulation of the youth category. Discourses of a "marginalised" and "lost generation" emerged in the early part of the 1990s, referring to "school drop-outs" and "out of control" militant "youth" (Seekings, 1993; Straker, 1992). These developments are the latest discontinuities in the category of youth.

The approach taken by this study- a combination of structural and post-structural approaches- is particularly relevant to the task of developing a new framework for youth policy in South Africa. Studies, such as this one, which examine the historical development of youth politics, and how young people are constituted by others and themselves, should provide the basis for youth work and policy development in the new South Africa. Despite the dominant view that the structural and post-structural

frameworks are irreconcilable, a hybrid methodology is possible. In the South African context, the relationship between structure and agency is of profound significance to youth politics. An analysis of structural matters is necessary in understanding the process of self-formation and the role of young people in liberation politics. Although not co-ordinated by a central structure, the shifts in the construction of the youth category and the changes in the level of youth participation in politics were responses to wider structural changes.

Gender analysis within the youth category was restricted by the dearth of documentation on women's role in formal liberation politics. As Budlender, Mentjes and Schreiner (1984,) found, there is a serious lack of documentation of women's participation in the liberation struggle. Young women were made invisible in formal liberation politics as well as in most studies on South African history. The under-representation of young women in formal liberation politics is explained by the restrictions imposed on them by gender roles and the selective documentation of the struggle which distorts any role they may have had. It is important to develop historical accounts of women's roles which avoid the prejudices of patriarchy: history is incomplete without her story.

The tentative but frequent conclusion of post-liberation historians is that women made significant contributions to the liberation struggle (Ramphele, 1991). My future studies will aim to provide more substantial insights into the role of young women in the liberation struggle and contemporary South African politics. I shall also investigate how young women resisted and negotiated patriarchal based gender identities.

This study offers insight into a polity dominated by apartheid conformist discourse which represented young people as "criminals", "loafers" and "vandals". Such a polity focuses upon the issue of social control to the detriment of the issues of self-advancement and empowerment. Policies such as the Bantu education policy were developed according to the constituted identity of the subject population. In order for young people to define their own experience and to determine their own value system, youth policy makers must jettison the doctrines of conformism and victimology, as these doctrines represent the subject as a "recipient" or "beneficiary" waiting to be

rescued. In South Africa, there is now a tendency to represent youth as politically "lost" and "out of control" which is attended by their exclusion from the 1990s political process. Despite the end of apartheid, official discourse continues to construct young people as needing control and leadership.

The challenge for policy makers working in the youth sector is clear. As the study demonstrates, there is great danger in perceiving young people as victims, or in some way powerless in determining their futures. The use of such approaches is problematic in that policy is derived from official discourses and stereotypes, rather than from information based on the active participation of the subject population. Thus most policies reflect the perceptions of policy makers rather than the experience and needs of the subject population. The problem with discourse driven policies is that they are often inconsistent with perceptions held by young people of themselves and fail to reflect the diversity within the youth category. In most cases, as demonstrated in the introduction of mass schooling in the 1960s, changes in discourses often leads to changes in social policy and the treatment of the subject.

As this study has highlighted, youth have been represented as problematic in apartheid state policy. Although information is still sketchy, similar views are being expressed in current state rhetoric. During the liberation, issues pertaining to young people could remain unacknowledged as they were kept occupied in the struggle. However, in the 1990s the current government has inherited the legacy of a socially polarised subject population and will need to adopt inclusive approaches which recognise the experience and qualities of young people. The situation could be approached through a variety of ways all of which acknowledge the difficulty for young people in relinquishing the power they held during the struggle and also the contribution they are able to make to the new South Africa.

The development of youth programs which are at the grass roots level will ensure the active involvement of young people thus bridging the gap between the official discourses and the practices of self formation. Such approaches should involve the critical analysis of the historical and current role of young people in the transformation

process of the South African community. Providing young people with the opportunities to participate in policy making will assist those working with youth to transcend the limitations of working within victimology and dividing practices. An analysis of existing youth policies, programmes and models of youth work practice in South Africa is recommended.

The changing face of youth politics in South Africa, the identity and the role of young people in the liberation struggle, has been of great interest to me for many years. These factors were of great significance, not only in the history of young people, but to the wider struggle for freedom. Young people had helped to orchestrate the revival and the intensification of the liberation struggle whilst operating within two sets of constraints: that of the traditional power structures and that of the liberation organisations. In the context of the struggle, young people were given adult status to prosecute the agenda of the liberation movement, with the tacit understanding that they were not to violate the established values of traditional communities. Most elders felt that it was possible for young people to challenge and fight the system without subverting traditional authority. This misconception on the part of the elders resulted in a generational conflict.

During the 1980s young people were treated as heroes and presented in the discourse of liberation as "Young Lions". Contemporary representation of young people is dominated by the "lost generation" discourse. Within one decade, the Young Lions were required to roar, but then silenced by the new political dispensation. The fate of the Young Lions remains a topic for future research.

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