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A NEW TERRAIN OF STRUGGLE: THE LIBERATION OF THE 'SELF'

An analysis of the narratives of the experiences of activists of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) about their circumstances in post-Apartheid South Africa, in the context of reconciliation and the post-Apartheid language of apology and forgiveness.

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature:

Signed by candidate

 Date: 30 July 2007

“Accordingly, as part of the efforts to liberate ourselves from apartheid and colonialism, both physically and mentally, we have to engage in the process of telling the truth about the history of our country, so that all our people, armed with this truth, can confidently face the challenges of this day and the next.

This labour of love, of telling the true story of South Africa and Africa, has to be intensified on all fronts, so that as Africans we are able to write, present and interpret our history, our conditions and life circumstances, according to our knowledge and experience.

It is a challenge that confronts all Africans everywhere – on our continent and in the Diaspora – to define ourselves, not in the image of others, or according to the dictates and fancies of people other than ourselves.”

(Address by President Thabo Mbeki at the launch of the Luthuli Legacy Project, 21 August 2004 as cited in Luthuli, 2006, p. VII – VIII).

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to explain and understand the behaviour of individuals who were involved in the anti-Apartheid struggle. These persons, more commonly referred to as activists, played key roles within various anti-Apartheid organisations between the period 1960 – 1994.

Further, the study examines, via the life experiences of seven (7) activists drawn from various ‘struggle’ affiliations, including the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC) Umkhonto we Sizwe, their role, behaviour and political proximity to the current government and the existing political status quo. Here, the study ties together key psychological factors, which cross discursively between two distinct political landscapes, that of Apartheid and the demands of a post-Apartheid South Africa. In so doing, the study reflects substantively on the psychology of activists during, and post, the Apartheid era and critically examines contextually emphasised notions of political activism, the complexity of forgiveness and remorse and the ever-increasing anxiety of reconciliation, nation building and development.

The study proposes that the activist of today is not the activist of yesteryears and that individual metamorphosis is closely tied to political transmutation and, in the South African context, the often burdening (but necessary) process of social transformation.

The research design for this study, evident in its findings, draws its theoretical gravitas and approach from a process of being lead by the informant base, their evidence, their data and its implied meaning. Here, the research understood both the sensitivity and intimacy of the life experiences of the informant base and selected a grounded theory approach as the most sensible and sensitive in dealing with the data and subsequent interpretations as set out in the thesis below.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to analyse the narratives embedded in the experiences of activists of the Mass Democratic Movement (hereafter referred to as the MDM), in order to understand their construction of meaning about their circumstances in post-Apartheid South Africa, particularly in relation to the concepts of reconciliation, transformation, and forgiveness. Therefore, this study examines activists' understandings of the transition in the meaning of their role as participants within the liberation movement to their current role in the context of reconciliation and the post-Apartheid language of apology and forgiveness.

Thirteen years have passed since the first democratic elections were held in South Africa on the 27th of April 1994. It is, therefore, fitting to take stock of the experiences of activists who contributed to this democracy by their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle. Yet, so much must have transpired for these individuals over the past thirteen years that warrants examination and that begs the question, "Where do activists find themselves in the 'new' South Africa today?" Therefore, this study, in traversing these two historic/time binaries aims to ascertain how activists' experiences in the struggle have shaped their experiences in the 'new' South Africa. More so, however, this thirteen-year period allows for a fairly appropriate benchmark against which to test activists' propensity towards reconciliation, transformation, and forgiveness, which were advocated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and which continues to be a priority on the current government's agenda.

We know that certain circumstances existed, at the time, which made activists 'buy-in' to the liberation struggle. This study, then, is concerned with the question of how these experiences (as activists) has led these individuals to either distance themselves from the current transformation process or, alternatively, embrace the process of transformation in South Africa. Explored through a psychological lens, these notions of 'binding in' and 'distancing' become critical in unravelling the role of activists in South Africa today.

1.1. Context of the anti-Apartheid struggle

While the inequality evident in South Africa has its origins as early as 1652 with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck and the Dutch East India Company in the Cape (Terreblanche, 2002), the period of inequality, which forms the backdrop to this thesis and to the ‘lived’ experiences of the informants of this study, is the period spanning 1960 to 1994. Below the context of this period is briefly sketched:

The 1960s ushered in, what Terreblanche (2002, p. 306) terms, the ‘survival crisis of white supremacy.’ This period was triggered off on the 21st of March 1960 by the Sharpeville massacre, during which 69 protesters were shot dead, and many more were wounded, by police during an ANC/PAC-led campaign against pass laws (Mphahlele, 2002; Terreblanche, 2002). The National Party government, in response to this nationwide protest, banned the ANC and PAC and called for the repression of African trade unions (Houston, 1999; Terreblanche, 2002). Left with no choice, but in a refusal of ‘letting sleeping dogs lie,’ the ANC and PAC went underground and it is from here that the ANC set up its military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe¹ (MK) and the PAC similarly set up Poqo, later renamed the Azanian People’s Liberation Army (APLA) (Frueh, 2003; Houston, 1999; Terreblanche, 2002). In July 1963, however, the leadership of the ANC were detained and sentenced to life imprisonment, when police raided the MK headquarters in Rivonia (Terreblanche, 2002). According to Terreblanche (2002), these dire circumstances in which the liberation movements found themselves rendered them to being largely inactive for the next ten years.

Events, however, changed in the mid-1970s, with the Soweto uprising on the 16th of June 1976. This illegal march, against Afrikaans as the medium of instruction within Black African schools, by thousand of school children in Soweto was ended violently by police (Terreblanche, 2002). This sparked off disturbances throughout the country and, according to Terreblanche (2002), this was the trend up until 1980. These disturbances were often sparked by, or linked to, the worsening poverty context in which Black Africans were entrenched due to various repressive labour policies introduced by the Apartheid regime, such as the Black Labour Act of 1964 under which individuals defined as ‘non-productive’ or ‘idle and undesirable’ were removed from urban to rural areas (Terreblanche, 2002, p. 322).

¹ A Xhosa phrase that when translated into English reads “the Spear of the Nation.”

In November 1982, the National Party approved the final constitutional proposals, which were to be implemented in 1984/5. This new constitution provided for a tricameral parliament, that is, “[i]t created three separate houses of parliament, for whites, Coloureds and Indians” (Lewis, 1987, p. 280). No provision was made, however, for a fourth chamber for Black Africans (Lewis, 1987). Many Black African and ‘Coloured’ political leaders rejected this tricameral system as they viewed it as, “... an attempt by the government to modernise and entrench, rather than abolish, apartheid” (Lewis, 1987, p. 281). It is this anger and rejection that gave birth to the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in August 1983 (Houston, 1999; Lewis, 1987; Terreblanche, 2002; van Kessel, 2000), which by November of that same year boasted a membership in size of approximately two million people (Frueh, 2003). During the 1980s, the UDF assumed the task of co-ordinating the internal struggle of the liberation movement and in so doing, “[t]his organisation provided a national ‘political form’ to popular struggles and filled the institutional vacuum created by the banning of the ANC and the PAC, and the destruction of the BCM [Black Consciousness Movement]” (Houston, 1999, p. 1). In addition, the formation of the UDF also offered those segments of ‘White’ South Africa, who were seeking a platform from which to voice their anti-Apartheid sentiments, the space in which to actively contribute to the struggle and in so doing, “... the UDF appeared to open up a world of opportunities for contact, in common cause, among all South African communities” (Lazerson, 1994, p. 251).

Prior to July 1985, the Cape Peninsula was relatively unaffected by the political and educational struggles being waged throughout the country (Bundy, 1989). It was the State of Emergency, declared in July of that year, which ushered in a surge of organised youth-based politics and as such, “[f]rom July to November, youth-student resistance (including the boycott, rallies and meetings, alternative education projects, and direct action to harry and thwart security-force movements) was the most dynamic element in local politics” (Bundy, 1989, p. 210). Many of the informants interviewed for the purposes of this study were active in student organisations during the anti-Apartheid struggle and it is within the context of the 1985 boycotts that many of them committed to the struggle and were then recruited into underground structures such as MK.

Bundy (1989), furthermore, asserts that 1985 was earmarked as significant within the political history of the struggle due to the fact that it brought with it an increased and sustained level of physical and violent confrontation by students and

unemployed youth against state power. It is these confrontations, which heightened these youths' political awareness and sharpened their actions to match their consciousness and as it were to produce 'youthful veterans.' As stated by Bundy (1989, p. 213), "[t]eargas, beatings, and detentions provide a crash course in class struggle. Thousands learned the practical science of making a petrol bomb; the street sociology of taunting armed soldiers; the pavement politics of pamphlet distribution; the geography of safe houses and escape routes; and the grammar of clandestine organisation." As will be shown later in this study, these youths acquired much of their political education via the structures of the 'struggle collective' and the MDM.

Between the periods of 1985 to 1987, the National Party government made several policy concessions due to both internal and external pressure and on the 2nd of February 1990, state president F. W. De Klerk announced the unbanning of the liberation organisations and the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners (Terreblanche, 2002). Furthermore, De Klerk announced the willingness of the National Party government to enter into negotiations with all political parties so as to ensure a peaceful transition to democracy (Terreblanche, 2002). The unbanning of the ANC, and the return of its leadership from prison and exile, left the UDF uncertain as to the role it was meant to play within the transition to democracy and this state of confusion led to the UDF being disbanded in 1991 (van Kessel, 2000). The negotiations process, however, finally culminated in the first democratic elections of 1994, which saw Nelson Mandela as the first president of a democratic South Africa.

In 1995, in recognition of the need to address the political history of South Africa, and the trauma associated with it, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established. The Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Bill, signed by President Mandela, became an Act of Parliament in July 1995, and it is this legislation that allowed for the establishment of the TRC (Allan & Allan, 2000; de la Rey & Owens, 1998; Leebaw, 2001). It was hoped that the TRC, with its objectives of truth, healing, and reconciliation, "... would restore the moral order of South African society, create a culture of human rights and respect for the rule of law, and prevent the past happening again" (de la Rey & Owens, 1998, p. 258).

The TRC not only provided survivors and families of victims of Apartheid atrocities with a platform from which to give testimony and a space in which to have their

traumatic experiences validated (via public acknowledgement and reparatory action), but the TRC, with its emphasis on restorative justice, also enabled the perpetrators to apply for amnesty (Allan & Allan, 2000; Lebow, 2001; Payne, 2004). However, Allan and Allan (2000) claim that the interaction between amnesty and reparation was, and continues to be, problematic. First, the reparation process occurred at a much slower pace than the amnesty process. All relevant criminal proceedings against successful amnesty applicants were suspended immediately and if they were in custody they were immediately released (Allan & Allan, 2000). By 2000, however, few of the survivors had received any compensation (Allan & Allan, 2000) and, as will be illustrated in this study, the issue of reparations remains a matter of contention for many anti-Apartheid activists.

1.2. Context of the individual

As will be argued in this thesis, the socio-political context sketched above, played a vital role in both the construction of activists and their experiences. Yet, this context did not operate in isolation of the individuals whom were steeped/located in it. As will be discussed in this study, many individuals opted not to involve themselves in the anti-Apartheid struggle, though they, too, were located in the same socio-political context outlined above. One must then ask the question as to what led individuals, such as the informant base of this study, to consciously decide to take a revolutionary stance against the Apartheid regime? In other words, what factors led individual activists to identify with a particular political ideology or cause? This identification process is referred to in the present study as the 'binding in' process.

The socio-political context at the time of the struggle was a brutal and dangerous playing field to navigate. Yet, in the face of this volatile playing field, activists, despite their fear, despite the resistance and alienation they experienced from their families, despite the torture and detention they experienced, and despite the comrades they lost in betrayal or death to the Apartheid regime, committed their lives to the cause and to the ideals and ambitions of the liberation movement on a daily basis. No study will ever be able to do justice to the experiences of these activists and to their contribution to the construction of the 'new' South Africa, and as such the least we can do, in acknowledging these exceptional individuals, is to attempt to understand what factors led them to become just that. This is what this study has attempted to do in tracking and exploring these individuals' experiences as activists during the struggle.

However, these individuals' lives did not come to an end in 1994, though for many, as will be shown in this thesis, it did come to a stand still for a while in the aftermath of the negotiated settlement. The demise of the Apartheid regime and the eradication of Apartheid ushered in a whole 'new' socio-political playing field for activists in which their skills and/or services as revolutionaries were no longer required. This change in social context must surely have impacted on these activists at an individual level: Where did they find themselves as individuals within the 'new' South Africa? What role did they play? More importantly, where do they find themselves today in relation to the political party and/or ideology they subscribed to in the struggle? In other words, what level of proximity exists between these individuals and the political party and/or ideology they subscribed to in the struggle?

As will be shown in this study, many of these activists have consciously chosen to dislocate themselves from political activity in the traditional sense of the word, in that they have chosen to distance themselves from traditional structures associated with the MDM, such as the ANC branch structures. This 'dislocation' process is referred to in this thesis as the 'distancing' process and attempts to explore and understand this need present in activists to reject or distance themselves from a particular cause or ideology.

In summary, then, the present study acknowledges that the socio-political context created by Apartheid, spurred many individuals on to involve themselves in the struggle so as to bring about change, which essentially incorporated a better life for all South Africans. Yet, this context, alone, was not sufficient to draw individuals into the liberation movement, though it was a strong pulling factor as will be shown in this study. Rather, as will be demonstrated in this thesis, individuals underwent experiences particular and specific to themselves, parallel to this socio-political context, which led them to assume their activist identities. Similarly, post-1994, within a changing socio-political context, activists have undergone, and continue to undergo, particular individual experiences, which have led them to 'distance' themselves from particular political ideologies and/or structures. These two processes are referred to in this thesis as 'binding in' and 'distancing' processes².

² Drawn, and adapted, from Milgrim's (1974) (as cited in Foster, 2000) 'situationist' thesis, which highlights two components: 'binding in' factors and 'distancing' factors. 'Binding in' factors are thought to produce obedience, conformity and subtle/covert rules, which render nonconformity difficult. For the purposes of this study, 'binding in' factors are also regarded as those factors, which have contributed towards activists' involvement in the struggle. 'Distancing' factors refer to the psychological distance perpetrators experience from their victims, which in turn serve to enhance the perpetrators potential for violence. For the purposes

Additionally, the experiences of activists may have led them to feel and/or think about the psychological elements of reconciliation, forgiveness, and transformation in a particular manner. These thoughts and feelings are explored here, too, and as this study will show, through the researcher's subjective observation, they have been less than encouraging, though genuinely realistic. It is important, too, to be cognisant of the fact that these experiences and feelings of activists, at the time of the struggle, were fundamentally located in the broader context of what was happening within South African society at the time, the effects of which were fought against by the national agenda of the MDM, which is also discussed in the body of this study.

1.3. Structure of thesis

Chapter 2 provides a review of the theoretical framework by which this thesis is informed and in which the analysis is grounded. In particular, this chapter explores relevant literature in relation to social identity theory, the psychology of political activism, and the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation in the aftermath of political conflict.

Chapter 3 sets out the methodological framework employed for the purposes of this thesis. Here, the objectives of the study are articulated in greater depth and in relation to the qualitative paradigm, in which this study is firmly located. Descriptions with regard to the data collection and data analysis techniques utilised in this study are provided here, as well as a description of the informant base and the sampling techniques employed.

Chapter 4 extends the technical or methodological process in constructing the study by providing a conceptual framework for the analysis of the meaning-making process. This is provided through the construction of a frame of analysis, which encapsulates the number of psychological dimensions discussed here in relation to the central focal point, which are the experiences of activists during this specific period. The frame of analysis draws together cyclical and interlocking themes and provides a useful departure point in understanding how various psychological constructs shape the experiences of activists.

of this study, 'distancing' factors are also regarded as those factors that have contributed towards activists 'stepping back' from their affiliation towards political organisations/structures.

Chapters 5-8 provide for an in-depth discussion of the findings in the thesis. As will be demonstrated in these chapters, five analytical constructs emerged from the analysis process, namely the family, the individual, the collective, the MDM, and society. The experiences of the informant base are dissected across these five analytical constructs, while simultaneously providing evidence for the intricate linkages between them.

Chapter 9, the final chapter, provides a summary and evaluation of the findings. The limitations inherent in the thesis are also discussed and the chapter concludes by offering a number of conceptual opportunities, which were illuminated in the course of completing this thesis.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter explores relevant literature in relation to social identity theory, the psychology of activism, and the practicalities of forgiveness and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. These concepts are critical considering the context in which this study is located. Firstly, the notion of social identity addresses the question of the relationship between individuals and groups. Social identity theory assists one in unpacking the complex, and often tension filled, relationship between the psychological notions of the self, the group, and society. Social identity is particularly relevant considering that this study has uncovered a substantive relationship between the role identity of individuals (informant base) and the, now famous, culture of the struggle collective³.

Moreover, the somewhat singular notion implied in the construct 'social identity theory' becomes increasingly lucid and multi-dimensional in the context of post-revolutionary transformation. Here, enters the socially complex interrelation between perpetrators and victims, the oppressors and the oppressed and, ultimately the political activist and the agent of the Apartheid state. Social identity then becomes the theoretical frame in understanding the unenviable process of truth telling, its interpretation and eventual impact on forgiveness and reconciliation.

This theoretical frame is contextualised within a substantive literature review, provided below.

2.1. Social identity theory

2.1.1. Understanding social identity in relation to key psychological 'binding in' and 'distancing' factors

Social identity theory is important in providing a nuanced understanding of an individual's behaviour, function and role in society. In this way, the theory acts as a mirror between society and the individual. An assimilated understanding of this is that the struggle collective, within the realm of social identity, acts in effect as the individual's society/community and, therefore, as his/her mirror. The actions of the individual vis-à-vis disobedience, intolerance and, in this case, military action and/or civil disobedience would be strongly informed and framed by the struggle

³ The concept of the struggle collective is often utilised by activists (the informant base) to refer to the manner in which individuals and organisations bonded together in their pursuit to overthrow the Apartheid state.

collective as an equitable dimension of society at the time. In other words, the struggle collective can be seen as a legitimate entity with its own mandate, ebb and flows and objectives, and was indeed embedded within society similar to the family, the church, and other relevant social institutions.

This dimension provides a platform by which members of society either decide to embrace (bind-in) or reject (distance) a particular cause, ideology and action. Within the context of the liberation struggle against Apartheid, it would be difficult to argue that these individuals' actions, and indeed that of the greater collective or group, was characterised by psychopathology. Alternatively, there is little support for the thesis that actions of violence result from psychopathology, dysfunction or deficiency within the individual; rather the 'situationist' thesis of Milgram (1974) (as cited in Foster, 2000) has come to hold the explanatory power in the latter half of the 20th century. Situationist views highlight two components: 'binding in' factors and 'distancing' factors (Foster, 2000).

'Binding in' factors are thought to produce obedience, conformity and subtle/covert rules, which render nonconformity difficult (Foster, 2000). 'Distancing' factors refer to the psychological distance perpetrators experience from their victims, which in turn serve to enhance the perpetrators⁴ potential for violence (Foster, 2000). As discussed in the introductory chapter, the concepts of 'binding in' and 'distancing' have been adapted, and adjusted, for the purposes of understanding the experiences of activists. For the purposes of the present study 'binding in' factors are regarded as those factors, which have contributed towards activists' involvement in the struggle and 'distancing' factors are regarded as those factors that have contributed towards activists 'stepping back' from their affiliation towards political organisations/structures.

According to Foster (2000), the distancing hypothesis is not new to the realm of psychoanalytic thinking, as it has been conceptualised in the notions of projection and projective identification. However, this hypothesis has been given fresh impetus within social identity theory in terms of the mechanism of categorisation, i.e. splitting into 'us' and 'them' (Foster, 2000).

⁴ It is important to acknowledge that the concept of 'perpetrator' as described by Milgrim (1974) is inconsistent with the views expressed by activists of themselves in this study.

Social identity theory, which is credited to the theorists Henri Tajfel and John Turner, in its development, was aimed at producing a non-reductionist social psychology of inter-group relations and group processes (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Abrams & Hogg, 2004). Central to this theory are the psychological concepts of 'categorisation' and 'self-enhancement,' which, "... [are] considered to give group behaviour its unique form manifested by depersonalisation, ethnocentrism and relative uniformity" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990, p. 2). Yet, this theory not only deals with psychological concepts, but with social processes too, and as such recognises that one's identity is by definition a social concept due to the fact that social processes within society influence it. These social processes are thought to encapsulate the struggle between groups for power, status, superiority, and material advantage and are thought to essentially shape the content of group behaviour (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Abrams & Hogg, 2004). This highlights the fact that the interrelationship between the individual and the societal context he/she inhabits is key to the analysis and exploration of social identity (Deaux, 2000), which is why this study explores the experiences of activists, in relation to their 'binding in' and 'distancing' from particular political ideologies, within the broader social (and ideological) framework of the MDM and South African society at large.

According to de la Rey (1991), social identity theory is comprised of three key concepts, namely: a) social categorisation; b) social identity; and c) social comparison. Social categorisation is meant to incorporate the processes individuals engage in when they cluster others into groups or categories on the basis of criteria that hold pertinence for them as the classifiers (de la Rey, 1991). The second concept, which, according to de la Rey (1991) is key to the theory of social identity, is the construct of social identity itself. The importance of the concept (or construct) of social identity is gleaned in the work of psychologists, sociologists and historians who often fiercely suggest that the need (and similarly the quest) for self-esteem is intrinsically linked to the psychology of social movements (Sniderman, 1975).

Tajfel (1972) (as cited in Abrams & Hogg, 1990, p. 4) defines an individual's social identity "... as the individual's knowledge that he/she belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him/her of the group membership." Individuals, however, do not subscribe or act under their respective social identities at all times, as there are times when it is preferable, and more advantageous, for individuals to act in the capacity of their personal identity. This

fluidity with regard to identity is acknowledged within the ambit of social identity theory as it acknowledges the fact that the construction, and continued reconstruction, of one's self-concept falls along a continuum of individuating characteristics on the one extreme and social categorical characteristics on the other (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). When one's social identity is salient, the group comes to be represented in one's individual self-concept. In other words, one's self-concept comes to be synonymous with that of the group's and it is this, "[s]elf conception as a group member, rather than interpersonal relationships within groups or explicit social pressure, [which] creates the uniformity and co-ordination [associated to] group behaviour" (Abrams & Hogg, 1990, p. 4).

This strength of individuals' self-conceptions as group members (i.e. as activists part of a collective) may have been tested several times over during the course of the anti-Apartheid struggle. At times, as this study will show, their self-conception as activists proved to stand the test of the brutality of the Apartheid regime in that they were able to remain loyal to the collective and their fellow comrades in the midst of interrogation and/or torture. In other words, during these times their social identities took precedence over their individual survival (Reicher, 2004). At other times, however, their self-conceptions were more geared towards the survival of the self/individual motivated out of fear and as such they 'distanced' themselves from the group and compromised the operations of the collective.

The third concept of social comparison is thought to be the process through which, "... the evaluative dimension of group membership is determined" (de la Rey, 1991, p. 44). In this process one's own group is compared with specific out-groups in relation to particular dimensions of comparison, which results in the establishment of a status hierarchy (i.e. 'a graduation of differences') (de la Rey, 1991, p. 45). Given that, "[a] central tenet of [social identity theory] is that individuals have a need for, and are thus motivated to strive for, a positive self-concept. It follows that if the outcome of social comparison bestows a negative social identity on ingroup members, these individuals will try to achieve some type of change so as to gain a positive social identity" (de la Rey, 1991, p. 45).

It would appear that this is indeed what activists did through their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle. Via the process of social comparison, it was inevitable that within the socio-political context of Apartheid, 'Coloured' and Black African individuals would come up second, and even third best, against 'White' individuals

and thus being accorded a negative social identity and that of a much lower status. Given the context of Apartheid, 'Coloured' and Black African individuals could either accept their fate and be relegated to an existence where their negative social identities would somehow become the norm or they could assert their energies to redefine the status hierarchy by questioning and challenging the process and criteria of social comparison utilised during the Apartheid era.

Alternatively, once low status groups perceive the social order to be unstable, they may engage in a number of social change strategies aimed at changing the position of the group on the status hierarchy and in so doing guarantee a positive social identity for in-group members (de la Rey, 1991). Social action is thought to be the most extreme of these collective efforts as it, "... includes action such as political protest, strikes and revolution specifically aimed at restructuring the social structure" (de la Rey, 1991, p. 46). As will be shown in this study, activists engaged in social action with the main aim of reorganizing the social structure, which they conceived to be the source of their and their communities' oppression. It was hoped that via political protest, strike action and boycotts, 'Coloured' and Black African communities would come to conceive of the social order, under Apartheid, as unstable and would, therefore, be mobilised into the restructuring of the social order, which would lead to the acquisition of a positive social identity for the groups involved. The MDM, was indeed this mass force of mobilised groups, which succeeded in its task of restructuring South African society to the benefit of all.

With regard to the above discussion, social identity theory also allows for the reverse to be true in that membership in a high status group may lead to the acquisition of a negative social identity (de la Rey, 1991). According to de la Rey (1991, p. 46), this is most likely to occur when the high status accorded the group is attributed to, "... principles, which are believed to be unjust and immoral." Where permitted, individuals may exit the high status group in favour of seeking entry into a group perceived to be positioned lower down the status hierarchy (de la Rey, 1991). During the Apartheid era a number of 'White' individuals dislodged themselves from the 'White' ruling class and attempted instead to seek direct relationships with marginalized, 'Black' South Africans (de la Rey, 1991) and, indeed, this study speaks to the experiences of one such an activist who took up membership in MK.

The acquisition of a social identity, and the identification with a particular social group, is neither a straightforward nor a trouble free process. More often than not, comparative processes between groups threaten the stability of individual group members' identity and their social cohesion to a respective group. This in turn, impacts dramatically on their positioning on the status hierarchy as well as their conceptions of self, which is discussed in greater depth below.

2.1.2. Social identity and the comparative process

As discussed above, individuals' attitudes and behaviours are, generally informed by the group membership they hold and, more particularly, by their position within the group and the position of the group on the social status hierarchy (Appelgryn, 1991; Hyman & Singer, 1968). In South Africa, empirical research conducted by Appelgryn in 1985, 1987 and 1988 as to the link between relative deprivation and attitudes towards out groups and militancy amongst dominant groups (Afrikaans and English-speaking 'Whites') and minority groups ('Coloureds,' Indians and Black Africans) yielded the following results (Appelgryn, 1991):

- Black Africans experienced more relative deprivation (on both a personal as well as a group level) in relation to 'Whites' than in relation to 'Coloureds' and Indians;
- 'Coloureds' experienced a greater level of satisfaction when the reference group was Black Africans than when the reference group was 'Whites' or Indians;
- 'Whites' did not experience a sense of deprivation in relation to Black Africans, 'Coloureds' or Indians. Furthermore, 'Whites' regarded the state of affairs (under the Apartheid regime) as fair and just; and
- Black African and 'Coloured' groups experienced their own group's economic, social and political situation (under the Apartheid regime) as unjust when compared to that of other groups (Indians and 'Whites').

The above findings clearly illustrate why so many Black African and 'Coloured' individuals joined the anti-Apartheid struggle. Given their sense of deprivation and dissatisfaction with their (and their group's) social situation and fuelled by the belief that their position was unjust and unfair, social action appeared to be the most feasible manner in which to restructure the social status hierarchy so as to establish a (deserved) place in the sun (so to speak) for everyone. The decision to place

oneself in the 'line of fire' (so to speak) requires particular examination. In other words, what psychological frame exists to platform political activism?

2.2. The psychology of political activism

When examining the experiences of political activists, it is critical that one poses the question as to what exactly led them on the path to activism. Here, the study briefly reviews prominent theories in the realm of the psychology of political activism and attempts to sketch as comprehensive as possible an answer to the question: Why, and how, do certain individuals become political activists? However, it is perhaps academically useful, in the first instance, to briefly explore studies in the field of activism and political participation, which have been conducted in the past twelve years.

An electronic review⁵ of the literature on political activism, revealed that much has been written on political participation, with regard to civic involvement and democratic political action, but that not much academic writing had been dedicated to political activism per se, which appeared to have been the focus of academic pursuits in the 1960s and 1970s, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. Nevertheless, these studies have been insightful in the manner, in which they have deepened our understanding of political participation and the divergent forms these activities can take, as well as the factors influencing this participation, and as such the key findings of a few of these studies warrant a brief discussion, presented below.

In a study to examine the relationship between extracurricular participation and political activity in early adulthood, Glanville (1999) found that participation in extracurricular activities (such as the involvement in youth, political, community, or educational organisations) does lead to increased political involvement in early adulthood. With regard to continued political involvement in later adulthood, Glanville (1999) is of the opinion that adult civic involvement does not have the same impact on political involvement in later adulthood that extracurricular participation had on political involvement in early adulthood. In other words, one's participation in extracurricular activities in one's youth may lead to increased political involvement in early adulthood, but civic involvement in later adulthood may not necessarily have an impact on one's later political involvement.

⁵ The review was confined to studies conducted between 1995 and 2007 and included the following search expressions: 'political activism'; 'political socialisation'; 'political activity' and 'politicisation.'

Fairbrother (2003) in a study examining the effects of state-imposed, political education on Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese university students' national attitudes, found that most students towed the line in terms of holding attitudes aligned to what their respective states desired. That is, Mainland students were patriotic and nationalistic in their attitudes toward the state, while Hong Kong students adopted a neutral attitude towards the state (Fairbrother, 2003). However, Fairbrother (2003) argues that those students who held attitudes to the contrary, did so as a form of resistance to 'state hegemonic political socialisation' (p. 605), which required critical thinking on their part so as to recognise and evaluate the state's intended efforts to dictate, and direct, their political attitudes via the education curriculum. The manner, in which South African students rejected the then state sanctioned, 'Bantu' education in the 1970s and 1980s, was a vehement form of resistance to the Apartheid regime's sinister methods of political indoctrination. There is little doubt that this resistance may have been a product of critical thinking spawned in the homes of these students, as well as by extracurricular participation (Glanville, 1999) in youth and community organisations active at that time.

In a study on the political participation patterns of the urban poor in the South Bronx of New York, Lawless and Fox (2001) found that an increase in economic hardship increased political participation⁶ by as much as 42%, spurred on mostly by the belief that the election of new government officials would bring about better economic policies for the poor. Cole and Stewart (1996, p. 136) in a study examining the meanings of political participation held amongst Black and White women, found that, "... those who are still politically active at midlife are those who are empowered by a sense of personal efficacy to create change, who feel a strong connection to the communities to which they belong, and who are concerned with making a lasting contribution to future generations." While the majority of the individuals in the informant base, utilised for the purposes of this study, are no longer considered politically active, in the traditional party political sense as they were during the struggle, they continue to define themselves as 'activists' and possess the same sense of 'groundedness' in their communities and similar altruistic characteristics to the those cohorts sampled in Cole and Stewart's (1996) study, and in fact, it is these characteristics which have led them to find 'new terrains of

⁶ Lawless and Fox (2001, p. 368) understood 'political participation' to include any one of the following activities: the casting of one's vote; participation in a protest rally or boycott; contacting a public official; working for a candidate; donation of money to a party and/or candidate; and wearing a political button.

struggle' within their communities and within their daily lives, as will be discussed in the analysis section.

The electronic review of the literature on political participation has revealed that not much work has been done on this topic within the South African context over the past twelve years, with much writing being dedicated to the importance, and the effects, of the TRC. In a study dating back to the early eighties, Nkomo (1984), who was interested in examining the nature of student culture and activism in African ethnic universities in South Africa, found that the culture of resistance evident at these universities could not be solely credited to the sub-standard educational curriculum, but that other factors, external to the curriculum, too, spurred on this culture of resistance. According to Nkomo (1984), these factors include the South African social system at the time, with particular reference to the class structure, which was racially motivated, the Black African household structure and the impact thereon by socio-economic factors, international events, in the form of student protest movements elsewhere in the world, and lastly, the academic environment. Like Nkomo (1984), this study, too, aims to show that political activism is not the product of a single factor, but that it is shaped by a number of factors, which are often interlocking in their nature.

In a study examining the life-course development of 'White' South African former student activists in the mid 1960s and 1970s, Gelman (1990) found that political consciousness is usually shaped within the childhood years with informants dating their first awareness of their political consciousness to between the ages of seven and fourteen. Additionally, Gelman (1990) found that political socialization has its genesis in the home, and more specifically within the family, as informants, in most instances, held similar political convictions to that of their parents. Similarly, this study, too, establishes a decided link between early political consciousness, as spawned within the family, and hitherto political convictions of the informant base.

In a more recent study on political activism within the South African context, Price (2002) explores the meaning that elderly activists have attached to their lives and found that for all informants their process of political 'radicalisation' began at an early age (similar to the finding of Gelman, 1990) and was often flared on by the political involvement of family members, educational settings in which they were located, and the visibility, at the time, of political organisations. The present study will also illustrate the importance of politically active family members, educational

settings, and political organisations in shaping and developing the political consciousness of activists during the anti-Apartheid struggle.

Price (2002) also found that with the demise of the Apartheid regime and the end of the struggle, a fundamental change occurred in the identity of activists. As will be illustrated, members of the informant base of the present study, too, speak of a sense of confusion and a 'loss of self' subsequent to the end of Apartheid. Furthermore, Price (2002) contends that this change in their activist identities did not retract her informant base from retaining a strong commitment to their political organisations. With regard to this study, however, members of the informant base remain committed to the ANC only in as far as their vote is concerned, as many of them have distanced themselves from political activity within organisations in which they were active during the struggle years.

In so doing, a sense of political dormancy permeates their current identity. This dormancy appears to remain overshadowed by their current reengineered social identity albeit that their historical role as radical activists is increasingly less obvious and that their current political behaviour seems far more restraint.

2.2.1. Compensation vs. competence: What kind of person becomes a political activist?

Traditionally, according to Louw-Potgieter (1991) (as cited in Price, 2002, p. 55), psychologists have attempted to unravel the intricacies of political behaviour by confronting the question of "what kind of person becomes a political dissident?" The answers to this question are inevitably confined to causal interpretations of dissidence thought to be located, and fixed, within the 'deviant' character of the individual, with no examination and/or critique of the social environment against which this 'deviance' expresses itself. Similarly, Lasswell (1948) (as cited in Sniderman, 1975) asserts that low self-esteem is the drawing card with regard to political involvement as the playing field of political life offers one the opportunity to assert power and win prestige and in so doing overcome feelings of personal inadequacy.

According to Sniderman (1975), the connection between personality and political leadership centers on the hypothesis first put forward by Lasswell (1948) in his classic study, 'Power and Personality.' "As Lasswell put it, 'Our key hypothesis

about the power seeker is that he pursues power as a means of compensation against deprivation. Power is expected to overcome low estimates of the self” (Sniderman, 1975, p. 7). Sniderman (1975) asserts that Lasswell’s work in actual fact incorporates the classic compensation hypothesis, which is the most widespread, and popular, psychologically oriented explanation of the drive for political leadership. However, the popularity of this theory might be exaggerated as Sniderman (1975) has found that the numbers of studies that confirm the notion of compensation and those that disconfirm it are more-or-less equal in number.

It is as a result of this discrepancy that Sniderman (1975) came to develop an alternative theory of the psychological motives that propel individuals into the realm of politics – the competence hypothesis. Whereas the compensation hypothesis asserts that an individual’s motives for entering into politics center on power as a means of restoring a damaged self-esteem, the competence hypothesis contends that an individual’s involvement in politics is dependent upon his/her history of success and failure in social interaction (Sniderman, 1975). In other words, interpersonal competence and, therefore, a high self-esteem, lends itself to an involvement in political activity, while interpersonal incompetence and, therefore, a low self-esteem, inhibits the tendency to participate in political activity (Sniderman, 1975).

Bay (1967) (as cited in Keniston, 1968) further obliterates the validity of the compensation hypothesis in lambasting social scientists for their reluctance to consider the possibility that some political views and/or activities may in actual fact be symptomatic of psychological ‘health.’ According to Keniston (1968, p. 317), “... many of the personal characteristics of activists – empathy, superior intellectual attainments, capacity for group involvement, strong humanitarian values, emphasis on self-realization, et cetera – are consistent with the hypothesis that, as a group, they are unusually ‘healthy’ psychologically.”

While Sniderman’s (1975) competence hypothesis predicts a positive relationship between self-esteem and political involvement, from the above discussion, it is evident that Laswell (1948) (as cited in Sniderman, 1975) puts forward what appears to be quite a reductionist (and dangerous) view regarding political behaviour in that not only are political activists portrayed as suffering from some sort of psychopathology (personal inadequacy), but the blame for social injustice is attributed to the internal (dys)functioning of the activist’s mind/personality, with no interrogation as to society’s contribution to this injustice. Here, in offering a more

holistic view of political activism, this study veers away from such reductionist and simplistic views of activism, by interrogating activists' experiences in a more holistic manner through the five interlinking themes of the individual, the family, the collective, the MDM, and society.

2.2.2. Political socialization as a familial process

In considering a more social explanation, Keniston (1968) posits that socialization is the key to understanding political behaviour. According to Keniston (1968), political behaviour is merely a replication of behaviours and attitudes that are learned from one's childhood environment and as such the family is viewed as one of the key socializing agents thought to encourage political awareness. This amounts to political socialization, which is defined by Merelman (1986, p. 279) as, "... the process by which people acquire relatively enduring orientations toward politics in general and toward their own particular political systems." Similar to Keniston (1968), Ichilov (1988) in a study amongst Israeli adolescents on the relationship between levels of family politicisation and citizenship orientations, found that a high degree of family politicisation is synonymous with a stronger sense of political efficacy and a higher degree of political involvement.

Furthermore, studies on political socialization in Latin America have also shown that the principal influence in the socialization process, for adolescents and young adults, is the family. Additionally, in late adolescence the political consciousness of young people is also informed by their respective peer groups, sometimes even to a greater degree than by the familial unit (Montero, 1986). This study, too, examines the role of the familial unit in relation to the activists' political 'awakenings' and will indeed show that the family provided the platform from which activists could develop and sharpen their political consciousness.

Haste (1992), however, asserts that while political socialization models simply deduce (in a linear fashion) that beliefs and values are transferred across generations, the cognitive developmental approach, of which she appears to be a proponent, has as its focus the citizen's developing understanding of socio-economic issues, of how political systems function and the citizen's relationship to, and interaction with, them. In other words, unlike the technical and rigid process which appears to be at the helm of other political socialization models, the cognitive developmental approach conceives of political development as a social process, with

an individual who actively constructs meaning within his/her social context as its focus (Haste, 1992).

The activists in the present study were not just mere objects of their parents and family members' political affections. As will be made evident in this study, these were individuals who did not just accept sentiments, values, beliefs and social rules at face value. They interrogated, analysed and critiqued the mundane social processes everyday life had to offer and actively decided to accept or reject certain values and beliefs and it was their active involvement and agency in these matters that came to form the raw material for their activist experiences.

2.2.3. Political activism as generation-specific

As an extension of the socialization perspective of political behaviour, Flacks (1990) explains youth activism in relation to Erikson's life-cycle theory of psychosocial development by linking the formation of political values in youth with identity formation. The adolescent stage, via educational settings, is characterized by, "... the intellectual exposure to fundamental issues and the daily opportunity for shared reflection and collective participation ..." (Flacks, 1990, p. 287), hence providing a fertile ground for the grooming of their political consciousness. The adult stage, on the other hand, renders the activist identity problematic as, "... the demands and perspectives of "normal" adulthood" (Flacks, 1990, p. 287) take effect. As will be shown in this study, activists have post-1994 dedicated their lives to an array of activities outside of the traditional political arena, ranging from academic pursuits, familial engagements, to career advancement outside of the political arena, in an attempt to negotiate and navigate the expectations brought on by adulthood.

In a study of people who were active in the student movement in America in the 1960s, Braungart and Braungart (1990) highlighted the impact of significant events and shared experiences within a specific age group growing up together during a specific historical period. According to Braungart and Braungart (1990, p. 250), a political generation was seen to materialize from this youth segment that had experienced societal breakdowns and upheavals during the 1960s, of which a key ingredient was the formation of, "... a generational consciousness, which occurs when an age group perceives itself as unique because of its distinct historical experiences and is at odds with older age groups who had qualitatively different childhood and youthful experiences with society and politics." Bundy (1989) refers

to this notion of a 'social generation' or 'generation unit' as one of the most significant and/or instrumental theoretical insights into radicalism in youth politics.

However, Braungart and Braungart (1990) point out that the formation of a political generation is not inclusive of all members of that generation and in fact members of a specific generation will not respond to the given political situation in the same manner and may indeed promote different solutions to the societal problems with which they are confronted. This contention is furthermore supported by Miller (1992, p. 54) who asserts that, "... how one thinks about political issues is influenced either by a perception that a particular issue has specific consequences for one's personal or economic well-being (instrumental belief) or by a socialized view of one's responsibility to the needs and concerns of others (symbolic belief)." This would explain why, during the Apartheid era, many members of South African society (especially from the 'Coloured' community) decided not to become actively involved in the anti-Apartheid struggle, even though they were born into the same political generation as were the informants in this study. For these individuals, it appears that neither their 'instrumental' or 'symbolic' beliefs were strong enough to impel them to respond to the politics of the day by taking up arms.

2.2.4. Youth politicisation: The South African case

At a local level, Bundy (1989) has found the following three components to be fundamental in the shaping, and informing, of youth political action in South Africa:

1. The debilitating impact of 'Black' education;
2. The substantial expansion of sub-standard 'Black' education during the Apartheid era; and lastly
3. The level of unemployment amongst 'Black' youth.

It is important to note that these components were not mutually exclusive in their shaping of political behaviour and action amongst the South African youth. Not one of these components in isolation can be credited solely with informing youth political action; rather the incremental nature of these components fuelled the fire behind young activists' political consciousness and/or action. After all, how could these youths not react if they were reminded on a daily basis that their educational attainment and career opportunities were limited? Therefore, these components should not be viewed in isolation of the broader social and political context at the time. The deficient education system orchestrated for 'Black' youths merely just,

“...reflect[ed] and reproduce[ed] wider relations of exploitation and dominance in the society” (Bundy, 1989, p. 208).

As a result of the defects evident in ‘Black’ education, ‘alternative education’ and ‘awareness programmes’ became the norm within ‘Black’ communities, which contributed significantly to the development and sharpening of these youths’ political consciousness (Bundy, 1989). During the 1985 schools boycott in Cape Town, and elsewhere in South Africa, these programmes of ‘informal education’ encouraged students and teachers, “... to turn classrooms into ‘zones of liberation’” (Bundy, 1989, p. 213) and in so doing challenge and oppose the tyrannical and hierarchical structures and procedures that were operational within schools at the time. Indeed, informants in this study spoke fondly about their experiences of teachers who took it upon themselves to develop the political consciousness of their pupils. As will be shown later in this study, the struggle collective later took it upon itself to become the entity through which ‘informal’ and ‘alternative development education’ was promulgated to political activists subsequent to their involvement in the struggle.

The collective, as will be shown, provided an overarching and all encompassing frame to ensure the disciplined execution of struggle activities. Post-Apartheid, this discipline appears to impact on the quality of South Africa’s transformation as far as forgiveness and reconciliation is concerned, as further explored below.

2.3. Forgiveness and reconciliation

In the wake of the ‘new’ South Africa, reconciliation has come to feature prominently on the current government’s agenda of social transformation, evident in the establishment of the TRC in 1995, amongst other transformation policies. To better interrogate the experiences of activists in relation to forgiveness and reconciliation, it is critical that one first gains an understanding of these concepts as well as the practicalities and implications embedded in them. However, a review of the studies conducted on these concepts within the past twelve years would perhaps better orientate us as to the practicality and usefulness of these concepts in everyday life, and as such a brief review of such work is presented below.

An electronic review⁷ of the literature on forgiveness and reconciliation revealed that much work had been done investigating the conditions conducive to, and the impact of, interpersonal forgiveness at an individual level and within intimate relationships, but that there existed only a few studies conducted within the past twelve years on the process, and impact, of (political) forgiveness and reconciliation in post-conflict societies. Nonetheless, a few of the findings of these studies examining political forgiveness will be briefly presented below.

Wohl and Branscombe (2005), in a study examining the impact categorization has on victimized group members' responses to contemporary members of a historical perpetrator group, found that categorization at the human level (as opposed to the inter-group level) led to greater forgiveness and lessened the expectations that former out-group members should experience the burden of collective guilt. It is in light of this, that Wohl and Branscombe (2005, p. 299) have concluded that, "... more inclusive levels of categorization may be an integral part of the process needed for reconciliation between groups." One needs to question whether in South Africa, we are able to view our fellow citizens as human beings, after a lifetime of having had to view them, and ourselves, as belonging to a specific racial group, as dictated (and entrenched) by the Apartheid regime?

Gibson (2004) in a study assessing whether South Africa's truth and reconciliation process has been effective, introduces the importance of interracial understanding as part of the reconciliatory process. According to Gibson (2004), 68% of the Black African respondents in his sample experienced difficulty in understanding 'White' people, while the majority of 'Coloured,' Indian/Asian and 'White' respondents experienced difficulty in understanding the cultural practices of Black African people.

This lack of interracial understanding can be directly linked to the low levels of interracial trust that Gibson (2004) found within his sample, which would then lead one to conclude that if South Africans are currently experiencing difficulty in understanding each others cultural practices and/or customs, we perhaps are not ready to categorize at the human level yet, as suggested by Wohl and Branscombe (2005). This would mean that, at least for now, South Africans are not ready to engage the practicalities required by the reconciliatory process as a number of

⁷ The review was confined to studies conducted between 1995 and 2007 and the following search expressions were utilised: 'forgiveness and reconciliation'; 'political violence and forgiveness' and 'activists and forgiveness.'

comments by the informant base in this thesis are illustrative of the fact that the racial divisions entrenched by the Apartheid regime have yet to be broken down before true reconciliation can take its course.

While categorization at the human level has been found to encourage sentiments of forgiveness, Tam, et al. (2007), in a study on the impact of inter-group emotions on forgiveness, found anger toward the out-group and inhumanization of the in-group to hinder forgiveness in the context of Northern Ireland. Tam, et al. (2007) define inhumanization as the tendency to bestow more human emotions and characteristics on the in-group than on the out-group. Inter-group contact was, however, identified as a vehicle for reducing anger toward the out-group and improving attitudes toward them, which would, in turn, render forgiveness to be a possibility (Tam, et al., 2007). In the South African context where individuals still have difficulty in engaging with one another devoid of their racial classifications, continual inter-group contact would perhaps be useful in opening the door, so to speak, for interracial understanding, interracial trust and, in the long run, forgiveness and reconciliation.

In the therapeutic realm, Staub, Pearlman, Gubin, and Hagengimana (2005) designed a theory-based intervention in Rwanda to promote healing and reconciliation, post the 1994 genocide. The intervention, which was comprised of various elements, two of which included understanding the concept of genocide and the effects of trauma as well as various healing processes, brought about a reduction of trauma symptoms in the experimental group and contributed to them adopting a more positive attitude towards the out-group (Staub, et al., 2005). According to Staub, et al. (2005, p. 325), this positive demeanour, "... indicates some degree of reconciliation, or at least increased readiness to forgive (if members of the other group acknowledge their actions and ask for forgiveness) and to reconcile."

Perhaps for many individuals who have survived political violence, trauma therapy is beneficial in aiding them to reconcile both internally, with themselves, and externally, with others. However, one cannot discount that many of these individuals experience great difficulty in fathoming that other human beings were responsible for their strife and their trauma. While theorists argue that we should categorize at the human level to render forgiveness possible, it is perhaps precisely because we are aware of the fact that it was our fellow human beings who brought this pain upon

us that we are unable to offer them our forgiveness and embrace them in reconciliation.

In the South African context, much writing on forgiveness and reconciliation has centred on the TRC and the impact it has had, and continues to have, on the psychological healing of the nation, with little being written on how anti-Apartheid activists and proponents of the Apartheid regime, have engaged, if at all, the practicalities of forgiveness and reconciliation in the post-Apartheid context. In one of the few in-depth studies of political activists and proponents of the Apartheid regime, Foster, Haupt, and de Beer (2005) suggest that their informant base was generally receptive to the notions of forgiveness and reconciliation, even though they harboured some ambivalence with regard to the processes thereof. This finding is contrary to that of the present study, where there exists a reluctance on the part of the informant base to engage the possibilities of forgiveness and reconciliation in the current South African context, as they appear to be of the opinion that the 'White' segment of society has done very little in rectifying the wrongs of the past.

Suppose (as could be understood) that this contention is widely held by 'Black' South Africa, does it not then make forgiveness socially redundant and reconciliation politically infeasible, as is further discussed below.

2.3.1. What place for forgiveness and reconciliation in the political realm?

According to Philpott (2006), reconciliation, as entrenched in religious texts and ancient languages, is an old concept, which refers to the restoration and/or re-establishment of relationships. However, within political discourse the concept of reconciliation is a fairly new one with, "[i]ts most dramatic lexical debut [occurring] in 'the third wave' of democratisation, the transition of sundry societies away from communism, military dictatorship, and apartheid during the 1980s and 1990s" (Philpott, 2006, p. 12). In other words, this period of transition, worldwide, is what has catapulted the concept of reconciliation (and the language associated with it) into the political arena, internationally (Torrance, 2006).

Furthermore, the concept of forgiveness, and its political dimensions, has historically been ignored due to the belief held by legal and political philosophers that the moral purpose of the state should be confined to justice, as enveloped in the protection of individual rights, and that the expression of forgiveness is solely a

private, spiritual practice (Amstutz, 2005; 2006). However, according to Daye (2004), this increased interest in studying and defining the concept of forgiveness has also made it clear that philosophers and psychologists are still grappling to reach consensus with regard to a universal definition of this concept. This is mainly due to the fact that different theorists focus on different aspects of forgiveness (Daye, 2004).

2.3.2. The elements of forgiveness and reconciliation – full forgiveness vs. partial forgiveness

Philpott (2006) conceives of forgiveness as the enactment of a decision by the injured party to forego just claims against the offender, which could range from the injured party's right to demand retribution to the injured party's right to express anger at the offender. According to Wolterstorff (2006), the enactment of forgiveness only becomes relevant in the context of someone being treated unjustly and/or unfairly, such as in instances where they have been wronged, where their rights have been violated and/or when they have been deprived of what is rightly due to them. Furthermore, Amstutz (2006) contends that forgiveness is both an interpersonal and interactive process between the injured party and the offender which includes, but is not limited to, the following elements: the offender's acknowledgement of wrongdoing, remorse for such wrongdoing, the injured party's empathy toward the offender as a result of remorse expressed, and the passing up of deserved retribution or punishment.

Amstutz (2006) asserts that when the injured party and the offender are able to engage in these behavioural practices, the moral inequality, which existed between them, is reduced and a level of mutual trust is encouraged. It is evident, then, that the enactment of forgiveness is not self-serving – it is not a process that the injured party engages in simply and solely for selfish reasons. Rather, “[t]he forgiving response is outward-looking and other-directed; it is supposed to make a difference to the wrongdoer as well as to ourselves, and it makes a difference in how we interact with the wrongdoer and with others” (North, 1998, p. 19). Of greater significance, here, however, is the fact that in the midst of the process of forgiveness, the injured party comes to acknowledge that the wrongdoer, by offering an apology and by experiencing remorse, is acting as a human being and as such the injured party readmits the wrongdoer to the realm of moral humanity (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2002). This process entails the ‘humanization of the victim’ and the

'rehumanization of the perpetrator' and is, therefore, beneficial to both the injured party and the wrongdoer (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2002).

Philpott (2006) is of the opinion that though it is possible for forgiveness to be enacted inwardly, in the absence of the injured party's expression thereof to the offender, for this enactment to be considered as an element of reconciliation, it must be (outwardly) expressed to the offender. In this way, then, when the outward expression of forgiveness follows repentance, on the part of the offender, it completes the cycle of restoration that would have initially begun with an apology (Philpott, 2006). According to Govier and Verwoerd (2002), when an apology is accepted, the request for forgiveness is heard and the victim discovers in the apology reason(s) to forgive the wrongdoer and in the process decides to relinquish his/her resentment and anger against the wrongdoer.

In the same vein, Amstutz (2006) contends that as the reconciliatory process is thought to be dependant upon the moral reconstruction of individuals, which is envisioned to incorporate the elements of truth-telling, the acknowledgement of guilt, repentance, empathy, and forgiveness, reconciliation and forgiveness are, therefore, closely linked concepts. That is, forgiveness is often conceived of as a necessary criterion for reconciliation. If this is indeed the case, then the findings of this thesis in this regard, paint a bleak picture as to the process of reconciliation in the South African context. As will be discussed in this study, the informant base is rather resistant to, and critical of, the concept of forgiveness, evident from their comments regarding the work of the TRC.

Amstutz (2006), however, also points out that while reconciliation is depicted as the ultimate goal of forgiveness, partial forgiveness is possible without the re-establishment of relationships being linked to it. Amstutz (2006, p. 154) argues that, "[s]uch forgiveness occurs when offenders' debts are released and victims' anger is healed without necessarily repairing the broken human relationships." Coleman (1998) echoes this view by asserting that the enactment of forgiveness is possible without reconciling, but that the practice of reconciliation is futile without true forgiveness. Amstutz (2005) further contends that whether or not the enactment of forgiveness results in reconciliation is dependent on the degree of mutually supportive actions, as carried out by the injured party and the wrongdoer, which encourage the rebuilding of trust. In the context of South Africa's past, we need to ask ourselves whether constructive nation building is possible without the

restoration of broken (and in some cases non-existent) relationships between the racially diverse sectors of society? That is, can we, as South Africans, envision a future for ourselves, which is devoid of reconciliation?

Wolterstorff (2006) contends that the eradication of one's negative feelings towards the offender is indicative of full forgiveness. However, according to Wolterstorff (2006, p. 101) there are only two conditions under which full forgiveness can take place, "[o]ne is, putting out of mind or forgetting. As long as I harbor the memory of your having wronged me – as long as I have not put it out of mind or forgotten it – I have not fully forgiven you Second, if you repent of what you did to me and I know that you do, that changes things. Full forgiveness without putting out of mind or forgetting what you have done to me seems possible in such a case." In other words, full forgiveness is only possible if the injured party no longer harbours the memory of the wrong done to them or if the offender engages in the sincere practice of repentance.

Amstutz (2006), too, asserts that repentance is capable of facilitating the enactment of forgiveness. However, to be considered authentic and/or sincere, the expression of repentance needs to be accompanied not only by a change in the offender's attitude, but also by the promise that the 'evil' action will not be repeated (Amstutz, 2006). The significance of the expression of repentance, as required for the enactment of forgiveness, is also stated by Daye (2004, p. 15), who asserts that, "... heartfelt repentance on the part of the perpetrator is the most compelling and satisfying reason for a survivor to offer forgiveness." As will be evidenced in this study, there exists a resistance to the concept (and act) of forgiveness within the informant base, as they have not been able to 'put out of mind' the wrong done to them during the Apartheid era due to the fact that they feel that 'White' society has not been repentant, post-Apartheid, for their actions committed during the Apartheid era.

2.3.3. Forgiveness as unauthorised – situations in which forgiveness is not possible

According to North (1998), there may be situations in which forgiveness is not possible, especially situations in which the injured party experiences difficulty in separating the offender from the wrong that he/she has committed. This difficulty seems to be heightened in two broad categories. The first category speaks to crimes of an horrific nature where the wrong committed is of such an extent that it defies

comprehension, for example, the torture and murder of children, genocide and the mass extermination of whole races (North, 1998). The second category speaks to instances in which the offender's personality renders the enactment of forgiveness impossible. Here, North (1998) makes mention of such individuals who consciously and willingly choose to engage in 'evil' acts.

Amstutz (2005) also contends that the enactment of forgiveness is not an unconditional obligation on the part of the injured party. For Amstutz (2005, p. 59), "[f]orgiveness is a qualified moral duty because there may be circumstances – such as when people are responsible for egregious evils or are unwilling to take responsibility for their evil actions or to stop repeating wrongdoing – when moral hatred of others may be appropriate." Perhaps the informant base of this study is correct in withholding forgiveness as for them the actions of the Apartheid regime, and its agents, are too horrific to comprehend. However, again this raises the question as to what space this leaves for reconciliation in South Africa?

2.3.4. Forgiveness as learned behaviour

Enright, Freedman and Rique (1998) suggest that forgiveness is not the automatic, conscious response by many people subsequent to them experiencing any sort of wrongdoing inflicted upon them by another individual. Surprisingly, people respond to acts of wrongdoing with various strategies in an attempt to reverse the injustice suffered and to initiate the healing process, none of which include the enactment and expression of forgiveness (Enright, et al., 1998). According to Enright, et al. (1998, p. 52), then, "... most people need to be taught about forgiveness to begin forgiving,"

This view of forgiveness as a learned behaviour is echoed in the virtue ethics perspective of forgiveness, one of the three major theories of forgiveness, the other two being the classical perspective, which conceives of forgiveness as an interactive process between the injured party and the wrongdoer, and the therapeutic, or unilateral, perspective, which views forgiveness as the liberation of the injured party, via the lifting of emotional burdens such as anger and resentment (Amstutz, 2005). According to Amstutz (2005, p. 54), "... the third theory [the virtue ethics perspective] views forgiveness as a personal virtue or moral craft. According to this perspective, forgiveness is a practice that is learned and cultivated." This points to the (awkward and uncomfortable) reality that forgiveness is not innate, nor is it

automatic, but that it is, in effect, one of many learned behaviours that we as human beings need to acquire and master.

Perhaps this is why the individuals in the informant base of this study are resistant to the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation, they, in all probability have not been taught how to give enactment and/or expression to these concepts. Furthermore, as anti-Apartheid activists, the language of forgiveness and reconciliation was never part of their 'struggle vocabulary' and training, which means that it is only now in the past thirteen years of the 'new' South Africa that they have come to be confronted with these concepts, and the meaning thereof, in terms of the broader South African community. Maybe their familiarisation over time with these concepts, and the practices linked to them, will assist these individuals to see the value of forgiveness and enable them to engage more freely therein.

However, one needs to embrace the view of forgiveness as a learned behaviour with caution as it places the burden of forgiveness and reconciliation solely on the injured party, irrespective of the reparatory actions, or lack thereof, on behalf of the wrongdoer. In other words, one needs to be cautious in arguing that in the South African context, the Black African and 'Coloured' sectors of society have not been able to forgive the 'White' sector because they have not learned how to do so, without acknowledging the fact that perhaps these sectors have not been given any reason to forgive the 'White' community due to a lack of accountability and remorse on their side.

2.3.5. The intricacies of political forgiveness and the implications for reconciliation

The focus here, for the most part, has been on the intricacies of interpersonal forgiveness. However, much of what has been discussed, here, is also applicable to the concept of political forgiveness as it is thought to represent an extension of the process of interpersonal forgiveness (Daye, 2004; Amstutz, 2005; Daye, 2004). According to Amstutz (2005, p. 224), "[political] forgiveness is possible because groups and communities, like individuals, commit moral offenses that result in anger, distrust, and ruptured communal relationships. If collective forgiveness is to occur, legitimate leaders must acknowledge their members' collective offenses, publicly apologize for them, and authenticate remorse through symbolic or tangible reparations. In turn, leaders of victim communities must acknowledge the contrition,

refrain from retaliation, and express empathy and compassion toward former enemies.”

As will be evidenced in this study, the practical outcomes embedded within the concept of political forgiveness have not come to fruition for the informants of this thesis as they are unable to ‘express empathy and compassion’ toward the ‘White’ sector of South African society as they are of the opinion, and rightfully so, that this sector of society has not formally acknowledged their contribution to, and support of, the Apartheid regime, as well as the atrocities committed during this era. Furthermore, no reparations (tangible or symbolic) have been forthcoming from this sector. One then needs to question whether the perception held by these informants bodes well for the possibility of reconciliation in South Africa.

Many therapists believe that forgiveness is essential to free survivors of the control of the past traumatic experiences by reducing the fear, guilt and anxiety associated with it (Allan & Allan, 2000; Enright & Eastin, 1992; Minow, 1998; Staub, 2005). In the South African context, many victims and survivors embraced this idea and engaged in formal and informal ‘forgiveness encounters’ with perpetrators, both within and outside the TRC (Payne, 2004). While religious leaders and therapists asserted that within this context forgiveness was not dependent on, or a consequence of, perpetrators’ remorse, victims and survivors found it difficult to forgive when the identity of the perpetrators were not known to them or when perpetrators offered no apologies, or expressed no remorse, for their acts (Payne, 2004).

The question of the relationship between remorse and forgiveness is an important one and has been briefly outlined in this section, however, it is important to note that this study will focus only on the expression of the experiences of activists in relation to the package of transformation, which includes the notion of forgiveness as a determining factor in influencing the informants’ relative proximity to the current socio-political context.

Theorists have come to distinguish between two levels of reconciliation, namely ‘thin’ and ‘thick’ (Philpott, 2006). According to Crocker (2000) (as cited in Philpott, 2006), ‘non-lethal coexistence’ denotes the thinnest form of reconciliation and can be understood as the establishment of a social context in which the formerly estranged cease to commit acts of political violence against one another. ‘Democratic reciprocity,’ according to Crocker (2000) (as cited in Philpott, 2006),

denotes a thicker version of reconciliation and is thought to be the social context in which former enemies come to conceive of one another as fellow citizens with whom they now envision a future for their country.

It is evident that for countries recuperating from political upheaval, such as South Africa, 'democratic reciprocity' represents the ideal level of reconciliation. However, we need to be realistic as to the attainability of 'thicker' versions of reconciliation and perhaps, to avoid disillusionment and further divisions between already fragile sectors of society, strive instead for 'thinner' versions of reconciliation, which will over time form pit-stops on the road to full and/or complete reconciliation.

Daye (2004, p. 148) similarly points out that some commentators and/or theorists are of the opinion that the processes of forgiveness and reconciliation are too grand and too complex a goal and that, "[i]t is more appropriate, they say [referring to these commentators and/or theorists], for a successor regime or other intervening body to set its sights on peaceful coexistence and the establishment of a liberal democracy in which disagreements are arbitrated through debate or recourse to legitimate adjudicatory institutions." Their argument, here, according to Daye (2004), is borne out of concern for the resentment that might arise when individuals are pushed toward obligatory reconciliation, rendering whatever strides have been made toward democratic stability redundant.

The process of transformation in post-Apartheid South Africa can be seen as providing a complex maize of psychological themes through which the informant base has to navigate its way. Social identity theory, notions of forgiveness, the ability to sustain reconciliation and the reaching out between diverse groups are all permeated in, and around, this maize. Evident, then, is the difficulty expressed by the informant base of this study in defining and redefining their roles, behaviours and relationships. These themes, however complex, provide a genesis for us to unwrap the psychological vulnerabilities that exist within the informant base, and perhaps the broader South African community, and by doing so it refocuses an approach towards future forgiveness and reconciliation beyond the TRC.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Aims and objectives of the thesis

The aim of this study is to analyse the narratives embedded in the experiences of activists of the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), in order to understand their construction of meaning about their circumstances in post-Apartheid South Africa, particularly in relation to the context of reconciliation and transformation.

In essence, these concepts are explored through a psychological lens that attempts to explore the internal, personal ‘characteristics’ of activists in relation to their ability to accept or reject such notions as reconciliation, transformation, and forgiveness. This ‘ability’ becomes the foreground to two distinct psychological dimensions:

- Firstly, the informants’ feelings of belonging. In other words, their ‘binding in’ to a particular cause or ideology; and
- Secondly, their need to reject or ‘distance’ themselves from a particular cause or ideology.

It is in this ‘mining’ of experiences that the study aims to make or ‘produce’ meaning in relation to the informants’ past experiences.

The objectives of the study are, therefore, comprised of:

- A psychological investigation that explores the experiences of activists during the Apartheid era and post-1994 in relation to:
 1. The ‘binding in’ process activists underwent in identifying with or affiliating themselves to a particular political party or ideology;
 2. The ‘distancing’ process activists underwent post-1994 with regard to their current relationships to a particular political party or ideology; and
- How these experiences have shaped their thoughts and feelings with regard to psychological factors such as forgiveness, reconciliation and transformation?

The intention of this study, then, is to understand activists’ construction of meaning about their experiences. Here, the researcher must be cognisant of appropriate and focused methodology in appreciating the process of making and analysing meaning.

This sensitivity is captured, below, through an outline of the research methodology used in undertaking and completing the present study.

3.2. Research design and methodology

This study was conducted, and is firmly situated, within a qualitative paradigm. It is fitting that this study would ground itself within this paradigm as it is essentially a paradigm centred around meaning (Willig, 2001), and this study is essentially about the meaning-making process(es) individuals engage in to frame their lives and/or identities in relation to their experiences in the anti-Apartheid struggle and the circumstances of their lives in post-Apartheid South Africa.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative research requires an intense contact with local actors in the field (e.g. individuals, groups, organisations, or societies), as researchers who subscribe to the qualitative paradigm, strive to acquire a “holistic” overview of the context under study. More importantly, however, is the fact that, “[t]he researcher attempts to capture data on the perceptions of local actors ‘from the inside,’ through a process of deep attentiveness, of empathic understanding (Verstehen), and of suspending or ‘bracketing’ preconceptions about the topic under discussion” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 6). In other words, the qualitative researcher’s interest lies not in establishing cause-effect relationships with regard to the subject under study. What is of critical importance, here, is the quality and ‘feel’ of the subject’s experience (Willig, 2001). It appears, then, that with qualitative research it is not the outcome that is worthy of analysis, but rather it is the process(es) engaged in to reach this specific outcome that should in actual fact become the core around which the analysis is centred.

It is proposed that the qualitative paradigm with its emphasis on local groundedness, holism, and on people’s ‘lived’ experience (Miles & Huberman, 1994) will be best suited to sensitively explore the subjective experience of activists during the Apartheid era and the meaning these experiences have brought to their lives in a post-Apartheid setting in relation to the concepts of reconciliation, forgiveness, and transformation. It is also proposed that the empathic understanding inherent in this paradigm will facilitate the process of disclosure and in so doing, enable the researcher and the participants to engage with one another (on a highly sensitive and personal topic) in a comfortable and relaxed manner.

Therefore, for this thesis, qualitative research is about:

- Interpreting meaning;
- Interpreting and understanding the process in making that meaning; and lastly
- Providing the researcher the space to frame that meaning within a specific paradigm, and in the case of this study, within a psychological one.

This study argues then that, based on a qualitative approach to research, within the realm of psychology, direct and categorical interaction with informants is critical to the process of this framing. Below, the section sets out specific data ‘mining’ methodologies within the context of qualitative research.

3.2.1. Data collection techniques

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, individual qualitative interviews were utilised to collect the relevant data. According to Kvale (1996, p. 124), “[t]he purpose of a qualitative research interview [is to obtain] qualitative descriptions of the life world of the subject with respect to interpretation of their meaning.” Qualitative research interviews are uniquely suited to an exploratory study as such interviews often take the form of a conversation in which knowledge is produced through a dialogue between the researcher and the respective participant (Kvale, 1996).

Smith (1995) contends that semi-structured interviews are especially suited to studies interested in complexity or process or where the topic under study is controversial or personal. According to Willig (2001, p. 22), “[t]he semi-structured interview provides an opportunity for the researcher to hear the participant talk about a particular aspect of their life or experience. The questions asked by the researcher function as triggers that encourage the participant to talk.” This process of ‘triggering’ is critical given the high barrier to entry in accessibility to the sample and, as found in this thesis, the sample’s particular resistance to explore the issues of meaning in relation to transformation, forgiveness, and reconciliation, as well as their own orientation to these factors. This study, given the sensitive nature and particular constraints of the study area, agrees with Smith (1995) that the semi-structured interview provides a catapulting of views by informants, which may have been denied were another approach used.

Semi-structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions were, therefore, utilised in the present study to explore the experiences of the participants. Willig (2001) states that while this style of interviewing is classified as non-directive, it is important to bear in mind that it is in actual fact the researcher's questions that drive or steer the interview.

According to Bernard (1994), individual, face-to-face interviews offer some important (and practical) advantages. Firstly, such interviews can be used with respondents who could not otherwise provide the relevant information. For example, participants who are illiterate, blind, or aged, and as is the case with this study, where participants may be resistant in exploring particular questions and/or completely closed to the idea (Bernard, 1994). Secondly, the researcher can clarify certain aspects of a question if he/she senses that the respondent does not understand a particular question. Additionally, the researcher can also probe for more complete data in instances where the respondent is not answering fully (Bernard, 1994). Again, as is the case with this thesis, this particular research methodology demonstrates very clearly that the researcher could easily enter and exit the set questions for the study, for the purposes of further clarifying particular aspects of the informants' responses. Thirdly, unlike in self-administered questionnaires, in face-to-face interviews the researcher knows who answers the questions (Bernard, 1994). This familiarity, through the establishment of a conducive rapport with the informants of this study, produced a safe environment where the informants could trust the researcher with particularly sensitive information.

The experiences of activists during Apartheid proved traumatic and should not be discounted through the application of what could be perceived as tripe research approaches. Therefore, to conclude, it is the view of this study, that through the experience of conducting interviews with anti-Apartheid activists, semi-structured interviews provided the necessary stage for dialogue between the researcher and the informants in a trusting and safe environment.

Additionally the advantages of semi-structured interviews include the fact that such interviews (due to their interactive nature) facilitate rapport, allow for greater flexibility in coverage and enable novel areas introduced by the respondent to be explored within the interview situation (Smith, 1995). Semi-structured interviews also tend to yield richer data (Smith, 1995).

Unfortunately, individual, face-to-face interviews also have their disadvantages. The following disadvantages have been identified by Bernard (1994): Firstly, such interviews are thought to be intrusive and reactive, and the researcher requires a great amount of skill to conduct the interview in such a manner as to not provide the respondent with subtle cues in regard to certain questions (Bernard, 1994). Secondly, individual, face-to-face interviews are time-consuming and costly. Not only does the duration for such an interview range from anywhere between 1 to 3 hours, but locating suitable respondents in a representative sample is often time-consuming and costly (Bernard, 1994). The present study can attest to this and the challenge in accessing suitable informants is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Despite the disadvantages briefly hinted to above, it is suggested that the advantages inherent in individual, semi-structured interviews by far outweighs the disadvantages, if one is to consider the nature of the interaction it produces between the researcher and the participant, and the quality of the data this technique yields. It is, therefore, proposed that this technique of data collection has enhanced the ability of this thesis to sensitively explore and examine the meaning anti-Apartheid activists attribute to their experiences post-1994.

The interviews varied in duration between 60 minutes and 90 minutes and occurred at locations chosen by the informants themselves. With the permission of the participants all the interviews have been audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. Through informal discussions via the interview process (and subsequently via e-mail), participants agreed to the release of the transcripts, provided that they were able to review said transcripts prior to their inculcation into the research. The researcher provided each of the participants with a copy of their transcript and subsequent approval by these participants has been provided. The resulting texts formed the bases for the analysis, however, the interview process guaranteed the informants with anonymity and as such the informants have not been identified by name in the analysis section.

3.2.2. Construction of interview schedule

In the process of constructing an interview schedule, it is critical that the researcher attempts to construct questions that speak to the area under study. In the case of this study, it meant that the questions constructed had to go to the heart of the meaning of the experiences of activists, so as to uncover the actual research question. Due to

the highly subjective and interpretive nature of the present thesis, it was crucial for the questions to be focused, yet flexible enough to allow the space for a permutation of meanings to be superimposed on them within the interview context itself and, after the fact, during the process of analysis.

The personal (and often controversial) nature of the topic under study, demanded that the questions be constructed and posed in a sensitive manner and that they be framed and influenced by the language and/or dialect of the informant base, who in this case are activists. Phrases thought to be familiar and 'common-place' within the activist community, were, therefore, utilised in the construction of the questions. For example, the localised phrase 'armed struggle' was selected instead of the more universal and/or global phrases of 'army' or 'military.' The activist community has come to develop its own culture of language and as such it was important for the questions to be steeped within this culture so as to facilitate the process of meaning making as well as rapport, within the initial stages of the interview. This point, too, is made by Willig (2001), who argues that it is critical to ensure that the questions which are posed are meaningful not only to the researcher, but to the informants as well.

Based upon the researcher's understanding that the qualitative discourse is inevitably centred on dialogue, the questions constructed are invariably informed by the environmental context in which the researcher is located. In the case of the present study, the researcher's environmental context, though initially thought of as a limitation, proved to be advantageous as the study progressed. This view is echoed by Willig (2001, pp. 23-24) who argues that, "[a] naïve interviewer encourages the interviewee to 'state the obvious' and thus to give voice to otherwise implicit assumptions and expectations." With regard to this thesis, the researcher's age and, therefore, lack of any 'lived' experience of the anti-Apartheid struggle, as well as absence from the geographical location in which the informant base was located at the time, required that the researcher pose direct and unassuming questions. This 'natural' naivety on the part of the researcher, not only subtly 'forced' informants to 'state the obvious,' but had the added advantage of ensuring that the informants felt affirmed and hence powerful with regard to their 'lived' knowledge of the area under study. This affirmation was further consolidated through the application of framed questions that allows for the categorizing of information.

Framing of questions in the context of the proposed study area is particularly useful in that it provides a guide for the systematic extraction of data. Within the context of qualitative research Spradley (1979) (as cited in Willig, 2001) provides for the formulation of research questions within four thematic types, namely:

1. Descriptive questions – prompts for general accounts of informant’s life histories.
2. Structural questions – allows for the categorisation of ‘meaning.’ In other words, how the informant organises meaning for him/herself in relation to the world.
3. Contrast questions – allows the interviewee to construct timelines or time periods (e.g. during Apartheid, being one period, and post-Apartheid, being another). This is useful in understanding how ‘life stories’ and the meaning attributed to them may change over time.
4. Evaluative questions – assess the informant’s feelings about someone or something. For example, “Did you feel afraid during your periods of detention?”

These four question types form the bases for the formulation of questions utilised for the purposes of this study, as illustrated by the table below. The table illustrates how each of the scheduled questions (including examples of the follow-up⁸ questions asked during the interviews) falls squarely under each of the four thematic question types provided by Spradley (1979) (as cited in Willig, 2001).

⁸ Follow-up questions are designated by an asterix (*) in the table

Table 1 Spradley's (1979) Question Types

Descriptive	Structural	Contrast	Evaluative
1) What are your earliest memories of your family life, and in particular of your childhood, in Apartheid South Africa?	2) What particular event happened that heightened your own awareness of your political consciousness?	11) When you look back on your political involvement, what are your thoughts about it now?	5) How did these attitudes influence the way in which you thought about the Apartheid state?
3) Can you tell me how you came to join the political party of your choice?	4) Can you describe to me the attitudes that this political party had towards the Apartheid state?	12) Can you share with me some of your (political) experiences in post-Apartheid South Africa?	7) Was there ever a time at which you felt bad or suffered from a feeling of having done something wrong with regard to your political activities/involvement?
6) Can you share with me some of the experiences you underwent while affiliated to this party?	8) What were some of the thoughts/realities you were confronted with at the time at which the armed struggle was suspended?	13) As an activist, where do you now find yourself in the 'new' South Africa? What role do you play?	9) What impact, if any, did the suspension of the armed struggle and the demise of the Apartheid regime have on your political consciousness/identity?

<p>* Which means did the UDF utilise to overthrow and disorganise the Apartheid system?</p>	<p>*You mentioned that you often helped others survive detention, how did you teach them to survive?</p>	<p>*How are you able to, based on your experiences in Apartheid South Africa, how are you able to bear no grudges and to possess no intention to not support reconciliation and transformation?</p>	<p>10) What are your views on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and its contribution towards transformation?</p>
<p>*You spoke about an education workshop that you attended and the fact that you were groomed, what exactly did this workshop and grooming process entail?</p>	<p>*Where do you think your inherent hatred towards Afrikaner people comes from?</p>		<p>*What impact did the fact that your brother was detained have on your family life?</p>
	<p>*Why do you think you were not prepared for the negotiations that took place between the ANC and the National Party Government?</p>		<p>*My understanding of the struggle, and you are allowed to correct me if I am wrong, is that it was a collective one. So, how do activists now feel about their leaders who are now pursuing individualistic roles?</p>

As illustrated in the above table, the thirteen (13) interview questions span across the four question types developed by Spradley (1979) (as cited in Willig, 2001). In organising the questions in this way, the researcher is able to draw out specific embedded denotations in relation to the responses given by informants. This process aids in constructing themes of analyses. In other words, it provides for the cataloguing of data to simplify and deepen the meaning making process required in qualitative research.

3.2.3. Sampling methods

According to Durrheim (1999, p. 44), “[s]ampling involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours and/or social processes to observe.” With regard to the present thesis, purposive sampling was employed to select informants as they were selected due to their relevant experience in relation to the topic under study. This type of sampling method inevitably results in a homogeneous sample being drawn in as far as informants (due to the selection criteria) share the same experience with regard to a particular condition/experience/event (Willig, 2001), which in the case of this study would be the ‘lived’ experience of being an activist during the anti-Apartheid struggle.

In an attempt to garner access to informants, advertisements⁹ were placed in two local newspapers (The Weekend Argus and The Cape Times). In addition, letters were distributed to political and non-governmental organisations¹⁰, which essentially invited individuals to participate in the study. Unfortunately, these attempts were greeted with non-responsiveness and as such failed to assist the researcher in garnering access to potential informants. Indeed, it appears that gaining access to the activist network appears to be a difficult and daunting task, which even experienced researchers in the field seem to grapple with, as was the case with Foster, et al. (2005) who report that, for the purposes of their study, gaining access to gatekeepers for a face-to-face meeting often took several months.

⁹ The advertisement placed in The Weekend Argus and The Cape Times is attached as Appendix A.

¹⁰ The list of organisations contacted is attached as Appendix B

In light of this challenge, the researcher employed snowball sampling in that access to potential informants was initially gained via the facilitation of entry into a specific network of activists, who, upon meeting with them, referred the researcher to additional and interested informants.

This technique resulted in a sample of seven (7) informants being drawn for the purposes of the present study. An important condition for inclusion in the sample is that informants should have been active within structures of the MDM. The sample is comprised of five (5) males and two (2) females, six of whom have historically been defined as 'Coloured' and one as 'White.' All of these informants stem from the Western Cape region.

A brief description with regard to each of these informants is provided in the table below. The numbers assigned to informants (in the table) will be utilised throughout the analysis for the purpose of clarity.

	GENDER	AGE	RACE	COMMENTS
Informant 1	Male	30+	Coloured	Actively involved in the student struggle and structures associated to it, as well as being recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Currently works within the public sector.
Informant 2	Male	40+	Coloured	Actively involved in the student struggle and structures associated to it. Currently works within the public sector.
Informant 3	Male	40+	Coloured	Actively involved in the student struggle and structures associated to it as well as the union movement. Currently works within the labour sector.
Informant 4	Male	30+	Coloured	Actively involved in the student struggle and structures associated to it, as well as being recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Currently works within the public sector, while pursuing academic ambitions.
Informant 5	Male	30+	Coloured	Actively involved in the student struggle and structures associated to it, as well as being recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Currently works within the private sector while pursuing academic ambitions.
Informant 6	Female	50+	White	Actively involved in the mobilisation of unionised workers, as well as being recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Currently works within the NGO sector.
Informant 7	Female	30+	Coloured	Actively involved in the student struggle and structures associated to it, as well as being recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK). Currently works within the private sector.

While the above sample can be described as one of convenience, it is important to note that sampling within the qualitative paradigm does not presuppose that the views expressed within a specific sample (or grouping of persons) are representative of all individuals located within that specific (activist) community. Qualitative research is, by its very definition, subjective and interpretive and as such the value of the sample drawn for this specific methodological paradigm should not be too heavily vested on quantity (numbers), but rather on quality (meaning). In the case of the present study, the informant base of seven (7) proved more than sufficient, as the quality of meaning produced within each of these interviews was the yardstick against which the sample was measured. Below, the study sets out the specific method of analysis applied to the meaning created, within the interview context, between the researcher and the informant.

3.2.4. Data analysis

A multitude of data analysis techniques are available to the qualitative researcher, ranging from grounded theory to phenomenology to discourse analysis and to conversational analysis, to mention but a few. While these techniques are all well-suited to the nature of qualitative research, this study, with its focus on the meaning-making process(es) activists engage in to frame their lives and/or identities finds particular resonance within the grounded theory method as it functions to facilitate the process of 'discovery,' which is thought to be one of the pillars on which qualitative inquiry rests (Willig, 2001). Grounded theory, as such, became the technique of choice for the present thesis and the analysis processes engaged in are detailed below.

The data was analysed by applying the grounded theory method to it, with a particular interest in identifying themes emerging from the data sets through the researcher's intimate engagement with the data. As briefly touched on above, the aim of this approach is to develop a substantive or grounded theory and as such the researcher avoids allowing existing ideas to dominate the study's design, analysis, and interpretation (Seibold, 2002). Willig (2001), however, is critical of whether this is in actual fact the case in that she argues that all methods of data analysis are

'standpoint-specific' due to the fact that whatever emerges from the data is inevitably guided by the researcher's questions. As such it is critical that the researcher throughout the research process addresses the question of reflexivity. In the case of this thesis, where the (political) material under study is of a highly personal and controversial nature, it was crucial for the researcher to engage in the practice of reflexivity on an ongoing basis so as to reflect on the way in which her own 'lived' experience was shaping and informing the research and its outcomes.

With this warning in mind, a grounded theory is, nevertheless, one that is inductively derived. In other words, one does not begin with a theory and then simply prove or disprove it. Instead, one begins with an area of study and in the process of data collection and analysis what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This relevance established itself through three distinct methodological approaches utilised in this study:

- The first approach required the careful reading of individual transcripts and continuous 'combing' of the transcripts for relevant analytical constructs that were then tracked throughout the collective body of transcripts of all the informants. In other words, these collective frames of analysis, as may be identified in individual transcripts, were compared in relation to frequency and relevance and, ultimately, meaning with regard to the other transcripts.
- The second approach existed in the way that the research assignment set out to construct the research questions. This thesis has already clarified the category of questions as per Spradley's (1979) (as cited in Willig, 2001) question types. Here, the questions, in their semi-structured nature, allowed the researcher to be guided by the input provided by the informants and demonstrated a willingness to be led, on the part of the researcher, to the relevant analytical frames. Lastly, analysis requires comparisons, whether qualitative or quantitative, in this way the questions were critical in ensuring that similar data was 'mined' with slight variations from various informants.

- The third approach is largely based on Willig's (2001) view that qualitative research can never be devoid of preconceived perception. Though this may compromise a pure grounded theory approach, it nevertheless played a vital role in ensuring that the researcher understood broader and fundamental contextual elements in relation to the experiences of activists. What is meant here? Simply, that the researcher was informed, and may have been influenced, by a number of opinions and views on the matter relating to the experiences of activists during and post-Apartheid, both during the design of this research and its final execution.

The identification of analytical constructs emerged here as a direct result of the application of the three approaches cited above, namely an analysis of the text (transcript), interaction with the informants through questions (interviews), and, lastly, the contribution of environmental elements through informal discussions with either supervisors and/or other role players in the design and execution of this study. Due to its inductive nature, it was proposed that the grounded theory method of analysing data would complement the exploratory nature of the present thesis and would assist the researcher in allowing the 'voices' of the informants to come to the fore.

"Analyzing data by the grounded theory method is an intricate process of reducing raw data into concepts that are designated to stand for categories. The categories are then developed and integrated into a theory" (Corbin, 1986, p. 102). The development of categories and their subsequent integration into a theory can only be achieved through a sustained engagement with the transcripts and through a process of interpretation (Smith, 1995). Strauss and Corbin (1990) (as cited in Babbie & Mouton, 2001) identify two main processes to grounded theory analysis, namely coding procedures and adjunctive procedures.

Coding procedures refer to open coding, axial coding and selective coding [not applied here]. Adjunctive procedures refer to memos [applied here, as was discussed above] (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Memo writing allows the researcher to keep a written record of the analytical (and in the case of the present thesis, reflexive) process and to order the results of the

analysis (Corbin, 1986), and as such it is thought to form the intermediate step between coding and the first draft of the completed analysis (Charmaz, 1995, 2000). Concepts and variables that emerged from the data eventually resulted in the themes on which the analysis has been based.

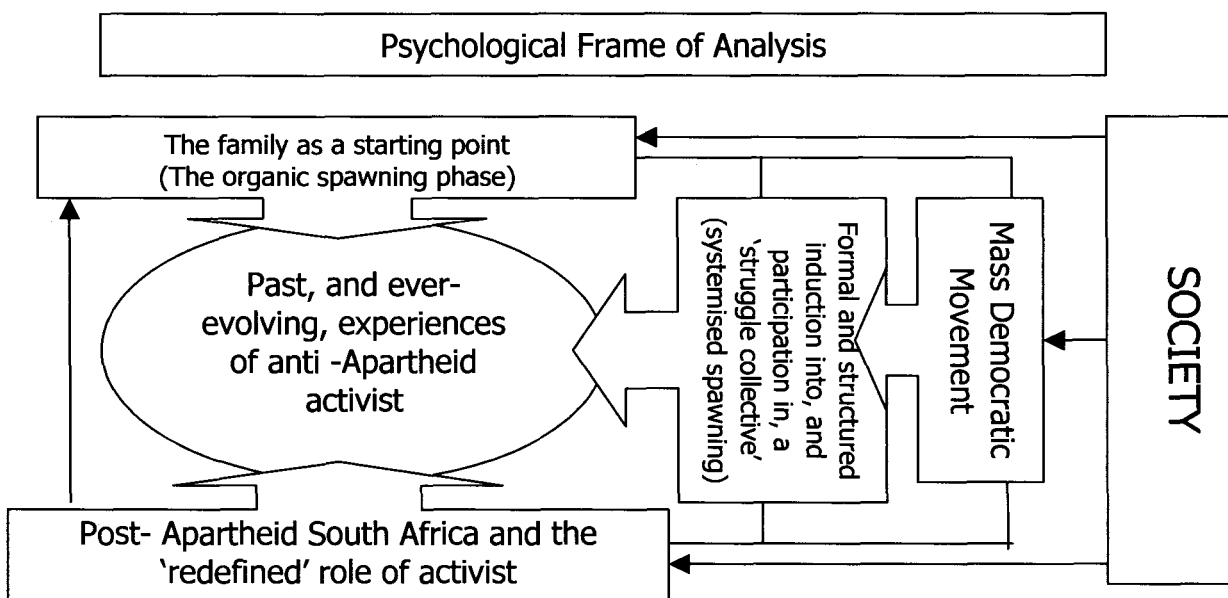
The grounded theory approach has been useful in that it, through a process of careful note keeping, categorisation, and interaction with the texts, uncovered five key analytical constructs as is offered in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 4: FRAME OF ANALYSIS

A psychological focus on the experiences of activists, during and post-Apartheid, uncovers a richly textured reflection on the meaning of their lives as activists through understanding their perception of forgiveness, reconciliation, and transformation. Particularly, and as expressed in the research design, the study further attempts to explore the contextual conditions that existed, or that are currently in play, in understanding the informants' 'psychological' and, at times, political proximity to their known experiences and that of the broader MDM. Careful examination with the informants reveals that the five key analytical constructs provided here, explicitly set out a basis for interpreting the meaning of their experiences as activists. These themes are listed below and discussed in depth throughout the analysis:

- The Family (Chapter 5)
- The Individual (Chapter 6)
- The Collective (Chapter 7)
- The Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) (Chapter 8)
- The Society (Chapter 8)

A conceptual departure in processing the interconnectivity between these analytical constructs is illustrated by the diagram below and provides one with a platform to understand the psychological frame of analysis used throughout this study.



The frame of analysis provides a snapshot of the various 'lived' dimensions of the experiences of activists and finds commonality in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) (as cited in Van Hoorn & LeVeck, 1992) social-ecological model of human development, which highlights the relationship between the individual and his/her social context. This theory posits that the individual is situated at the centre of the ecological environment, which is comprised of a set of nested structures – the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem (Van Hoorn & LeVeck, 1992; Cole & Cole, 2001).

Microsystems include the various settings that individuals occupy on a daily basis, such as one's home, school, or place of work (Van Hoorn & LeVeck, 1992; Cole & Cole, 2001). Mesosystems refer to the interrelationship between two or more microsystems, such as one's home, place of work and social life, in which the individual actively participates (Van Hoorn & LeVeck, 1992; Cole & Cole, 2001). The exosystem, which is the third level, refers to settings and social institutions in which individuals may not directly participate, but that nevertheless have an important impact on their development. Such settings and social institutions can, for example, be comprised of the local industry, the local government, and the mass media (Cole & Cole, 2001; Van Hoorn & LeVeck, 1992). The final level, the macrosystem, is responsible for organizing the preceding levels in terms of the culture's overriding beliefs and ideologies (Cole & Cole, 2001; Van Hoorn & LeVeck, 1992).

It is evident that a causal relationship exists between these systems, which would mean that the occurrence of a particular event at one level has an impact on the other remaining levels, which in turn impacts on the development, and experiences, of the individual. Indeed, this is how this study views the development of activists and it is this multifaceted lens that will be utilised in uncovering the meaning of their experiences, both during Apartheid and post-Apartheid.

As a starting point, and as will be illustrated later, the family as a psychological dimension, and illustrative of a microsystem, according to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) (as cited in Van Hoorn & LeVeck, 1992) social-ecological model of human development, provides the basis for the

formative shaping of the 'make-up' of activists. In this sense it can be argued that the family is an organic representation in instilling in activists an awareness of the societal and political context. Once this organic awareness has been shaped (often ever 'shaping' throughout the life of the activist), the informants become either drawn to, or included in, a more systemised, organised dimension, that of the collective (illustrative of a microsystem) and the MDM (illustrative of an exosystem). This progression from family to the collective is not distinct, but is contrasted in the fact that the informant's role is now as a political activist and not just the son and daughter of so and so.

The third component is embedded in the historical trajectory of South Africa, which is the period after the dismantling of 'formal' Apartheid. This period, as will be discussed later, brought with it a renaissance of political roles and functions, as it required activists to explore deeply personal conflicts within themselves and about their role during the anti-Apartheid struggle. Lastly, but overarchingly paramount to this analysis, is an understanding of the psychological influence of the broader society (illustrative of a macrosystem) as an influencing construct of the self, both during the struggle and hitherto. Here, it will be a failure of this study to exclude the far-reaching impact societal norms and values have had on the past roles of activists and their regenerative roles today.

The researcher chose to undertake this analysis through a structural frame, in other words a peering into the institutions that make up society as contained in the notion of the family, the individual, the collective, the revolutionary movement of the 1970s and 1980s, and the overarching influence of society. These constructs help us in locating meaning, how that meaning is perceived by others and lastly, how those meanings manifest dependent on the particular structure that it is practised in. This frame of analysis provides a relevant psychological platform as it in the first instance sets out to unearth the notion of the family in laying the basis for an individual's propensity to identify with and eventually become involved in a cause or struggle such as the anti-Apartheid struggle in South Africa.

The second structure, the individual, who has a specific relationship with each of the structural themes suggested, is central to this analysis. Here, the individual is the subject of the study, but the study would be incomplete if an exploration is not undertaken in relation to the individual's family, the individual's location within, what informants have termed, the 'collective', participation in the MDM, and lastly, the individual's experience and role within society.

Throughout the researcher's exploration and engagement with the experience of activists, the idea or notion of a 'collective' became a permeating rally point for the experiences of activists. Here, the researcher views the 'collective' as an extended family of the activists and explores the role of the collective in shaping the experiences of the informants and how these experiences have enabled them to become involved in the MDM, the latter being the penultimate analytical construct of the analysis.

This study recognises that a broader movement of ideological and political activity was at play during the Apartheid struggle. Informants often referred to this movement as the MDM and it essentially provided a nationwide, organised base for the outlet of political activism and the struggle against Apartheid. Though this study cannot be conclusive in capturing the extent of the impact of the MDM, it nevertheless used this construct to demonstrate, from a psychological perspective, the experiences of activists beyond the family, beyond the individual and beyond the collective.

A psychological exploration of individuals' experiences will be grossly incomplete without an understanding and appreciation of the meaning that individuals attach to the notion of society. The South African society can be seen as a complex plateau of various races, classes and, within the fight against Apartheid, ideologies. Here the researcher asks the question, "What about South African society has made people undertake life-threatening risk in 'correcting' aspects of that society?" Society, then, becomes the final frontier of exploration in understanding the experiences of activists during Apartheid as well as after its demise.

The five structural themes provided above dance together in a reciprocal symbiosis in comprehending the very real and often distressing experiences of activists. It is important to understand that even though the five themes are explored independently, they are fundamentally chained together and are given mutual meaning through the experiences of the activists. Of particular significance, here, is this study's intention of exploring how these analytical constructs have either catapulted individuals' involvement within the struggle against Apartheid and hitherto how those same analytical constructs have made informants withdraw from active, political involvement. As indicated, we begin this analysis by exploring the role of the family.

FINDINGS

CHAPTER 5: THE OVERARCHING BIND – THE FAMILY AS THE ALPHA

This study views the family as the alpha in the construction of activists as it provided the initial platform for the development of their political consciousness, as will be demonstrated in this chapter.

5.1. Political consciousness within the alpha

When recounting their earliest memories and/or experiences from their childhoods, informants often made mention of the fact that there existed, within their families, a heightened sense of the political context and unrest of the time. Though localised awareness of the manifesting pungency of Apartheid permeated South African society, families of activists, it appears, often possessed and lived an elevated or deeply internalised vigilance of the effects of racial prejudice and segregation. The consciousness exhibited by these families was a consciousness that not only spoke to the practical outcomes of the Apartheid regime, but also to the ideology that drove and informed it. It is likely that this level of consciousness, exhibited at the familial level, stemmed from the informants' 'lived' experience of the indignities of Apartheid, due to the social context in which they were located by virtue of their race and class classifications. This confirms the assertion made, in the theoretical framework, by Miller (1992) that one's instrumental beliefs, that is one's perception that a particular issue has particular outcomes in terms of one's personal or economic well-being, influence how one thinks about (and later reacts to) political issues.

Here, the informants make mention of experiences such as being denied access to certain facilities/services, the forced removals they endured, and the context of poverty in which they were embedded, as described by informant 3:

"I think that when I was a kid we didn't encounter 'White' communities or 'White' lifestyles generally. My earliest recollection of it was when we went on holiday one day. It was somewhere in the rural towns where we

wanted to go buy something at the shop and we had to go around the back. And this is the one memory that stands out in my mind about being directly confronted with Apartheid and being distinguished between.... And I must have been about five or six years old. I remember my parents being really upset and it had quite an impact on the holiday. So, that event stands out for me in a big way in respect of the first time that you're actually discriminated against or feel discriminated against."

Informant 1 recounts his traumatic experience with Apartheid brand racial prejudice when his family was moved to a 'Coloured' township 25 kilometres away from central Cape Town:

"And when we were moved to Mitchell's Plain was a very traumatic experience for me. That was in the late '70s, early '80s, because I had become grown up in Woodstock up until that stage, the only time I ever saw sand was at the beach you know, and when we moved to Mitchell's Plain there was no Town Centre, there was no railway line, most of the areas that's currently there didn't exist, it was just sand dunes after sand dunes, and I remember asking my mother why are we moving to the desert, because I, moving to the desert you know, having a child's understanding of course of what is going on."

Early life experiences of racist practices for the informant base appear to transcend both the urban and rural divide as illustrated in the inputs provided by the above two informants. However, racial discrimination also translated into economic disempowerment and an over dependence on welfare as introduced by informant 2 below:

"We relied for most of my life up to a point where I had to work on my own, on you know social grants really.... So my earlier life in Oudtshoorn was one really of poverty, but not abject poverty in the sense where, I mean there was always bread on the table and so on."

The above three informants (from the same race group) all recount different, but equally disempowering experiences which provided 'early life' exposure to the trauma and vileness of Apartheid. Across the lines, within the 'White' communities, the effects of Apartheid must have been felt differently. One of the informants, by virtue of her being located in the then considered 'appropriate' race and class classifications (read 'White' and of middle-class standing), was exempt from directly encountering the indignities of Apartheid. This informant does, however, make mention of the fact that some of the racial discriminatory practices

instituted at the time, such as the Group Areas Act of 1950¹¹, did have an impact on her due to the relationships she had forged with individuals, across the colour lines, who were indeed the targets of these practices. Informant 6 details the experience below:

"I also lived in Kenilworth on Rosmead Avenue for a large part of my childhood and two roads away were my friends who were forced out of that community because they were coloured and I did ballet with Rose, we took her to ballet every time we went, she hopped a lift with me, and the day that her family actually were packed up to go she came with a brown paper packet with Chinese guavas, we used to climb the tree and eat these guavas, and she came with a packet of Guavas in this brown paper packet and she said, 'I'm saying goodbye', and I never saw her again, so I was affected by Group Areas Act as well, my friends left, and those houses where my friends lived were then, the walls were knocked down, the guava tree was stripped, 'Oh no, there's the tree!' that's gone, those are things that we saw, and sturvy white people moved in, I never made any more friends in that community."

This informant's initial experience of the brutality of the Apartheid regime was via the loss of childhood friendships and as such her political (or rather social consciousness at this stage) consciousness was relegated to the practical outcomes of the Apartheid regime. There does not appear to have been a heightened sense of political consciousness within the realm of her family, though she does recount the fact that her parents were not in support of the government of the day. The informant's father who refused to have the all-important symbol of the government showcased in his home echoes this:

"... I don't actually come from a political home, I don't come from a reactionary home, but politics wasn't the dining room discussion, or the sitting room discussion, it wasn't like you know much spoken about, I don't think they voted at all, they certainly were not patriotic towards the old government and I remember in 1961 when the South African flags were distributed somewhere, we didn't get them at the school, but they were floating around and I picked up a flag, my father got very angry, I didn't understand, he grabbed that flag and he said "I don't want you waving that flag around me!", and I didn't understand what he was talking about, I was only 6 or something, but he had quite knee-jerk response to it."

While this informant's parents never explicitly stated the reasons for their non-support of the Apartheid regime, their tacit critique of it

¹¹ According to Lewis (1987, p. 261), "[the Group Areas Act of 1950] empowered the government to declare residential and business areas for the exclusive use of one or other of the population groups."

expressed via their refusal to showcase symbolic representations of the government in their home, spawned the platform from which the informant was able to transcend the obliviousness, to which the majority of individuals from privileged homes gravitated and took comfort in, and was instead able to confront and entertain questions as to the ideological forces underlying the discriminatory practices of the Apartheid regime. It would later be this informant's capacity to critique the Apartheid regime and its proponents (borne out of her familial environment), as well as her social awareness of the degradation to which individuals were subjected to because of their belonging to specific class and racial groupings (borne out of her pursuing an education in the 'helping professions'), that led to her involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle.

With the exception of the informant discussed above, the majority of the informants made mention of the fact that their political consciousness was, to an extent, overtly groomed within the family and the home. Discussions centring on politics were often the order of the day around the dinner table and informants often knew of, and were in close contact with, family members who were actively involved in the anti-Apartheid struggle and structures of the MDM, as is illustrated by informant 3 below:

"I think they [referring to his parents] were, they were not always politically involved, but they were very political. And there were always political discussions, not in the party political sense, but in the sense of the injustices of the system at the dinner table and things like that and with their friends and other family gatherings also."

This informant brings the notion of the family as a political reference point sharply into focus. Below, informant 4 extends this understanding by illustrating the influencing role of his sibling, an important acknowledgement in understanding the fundamentality of specific family role-players:

"... my brother was, at that stage he was in high school, I think he was in standard 9, and he was involved in Student Organisation called MIPSCO, Mitchell's Plain Student Organisation, they just, it was MIPSAC at that stage, just plain a student action committee before they formed MIPSCO, and he was obviously involved in the SRC, so we always spoke about the UDF at that stage, he went to UDF meetings and he would always talk

about it, what they discussed and what the political situation is in the country.”

It becomes increasingly clear that the family and, more specifically, certain family members played an important role in raising the informant's earlier awareness of the socio-political context. The importance of the family in relation to the development of the political consciousness of activists, too, was echoed in the work of Gelman (1990) and Price (2002) as cited in the theoretical framework, who found that the political consciousness of their respective informant bases was often shaped within their childhood years as a product of political socialization, which had its genesis in the home. Another influencing dimension does emerge, in both the above informant's experience and as introduced below (by informant 2), of the role and impact of the 'school' as a fertile political farm in raising the consciousness of political activists:

“... most of my high school years I became very aware of you know politics on the high school itself but also you know through my brother who was studying at you know varsity here in Cape Town, and he was very active politically. So when he came home holidays and long weekends, he always you know tried his best to involve myself and some of my friends in a political discussion and things ...”

As can be seen by the comment above, the informant exemplifies the view that siblings often played the role of a political incubator in spawning formative social awareness. As argued, the informant's family, his siblings, and connectivity to a tertiary schooling institution were responsible for influencing this spawning. Further, as expanded below, the same informant recounts quite endearingly the role of the extended family and family friends in shaping earlier political awareness.

“From the age of about ten up to when I left you know Oudtshoorn at the age of 17; I worked over weekends for my uncle who was a fruit and vegetable trader. He and a number of traders were, in 1962 and beyond people in Oudtshoorn, coloured people in Oudtshoorn were kicked out of the white area, the so called white area as a result of the Group Areas Act and they were moved to an area called Brixton. And the coloured business class you know of shop owners and retailers at the time were very angry because they lost a lot of their properties and people lost houses and so on. And my uncle was one of those people who were discontented with what happened to them. So my interactions with them also on that you know, on a daily, weekly basis. They also helped to you

know politicise me and in fact my one uncle played quite a major role in my political awareness at the time.... So my uncle and his fellow traders, they were all in one big building in Oudtshoorn. So that was a sort of you know political hot bed everyday where you had teachers and all sorts of people coming there and they were debating the issues of the day and we were just hanging around and I picked up a lot of these things from them."

It is apparent from this discussion, then, that the family, as a structure, indeed informed these informants' initial thinking around the Apartheid regime and the struggle orchestrated against it. The importance of the family in awakening the political consciousness of individuals is also evident in the case of Raymond Suttner (2001, p. 5), an anti-Apartheid activist who had spent copious amounts of time in prison between 1975 and 1988, who states that, "[his] political development can probably be traced back to [his] early life with [his] family." It would also appear, then, that the social environment in which these informants were located, by virtue of them being racially classified as 'Coloured' and economically defined as belonging to the 'working class,' and the political consciousness that sprung from these experiences and which was cemented and encouraged within the family, allowed, by default, the stage to be set for these informants' involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle. Foster, et al. (2005) echo this view in asserting that contextual factors at the time were responsible for the involvement of many youngsters in the struggle.

This, however, does not speak to the question as to why so many individuals from similar backgrounds to that of these informants did not involve themselves in the struggle against Apartheid. A large number of individuals resigned themselves to a life of being treated and regarded as 'second-class citizens' due to (it can be speculated) their fear of reprisal associated with the brutality of the Apartheid state and the level of comfort their designated class classification provided them with. It appears that they were content to live out their days with whatever small mercies the regime was willing to provide them with. What, then, provided the impetus for the informants, discussed in this study, to take up the struggle against Apartheid? It is apparent that these informants, due to their 'lived' experience of the indignities of Apartheid, were willing to take up the fight, despite their fear (or their perceived

politically beneficial position as 'Coloureds') so as to put an end to the indignities and suffering that Black African and 'Coloured' persons faced at the hands of the Apartheid regime. The impact of these 'lived' experiences and the momentum it provided for these individuals involvement in the struggle is clearly illustrated by informant 5 below:

"I didn't want to live under that conditions, I didn't want to live with all of this wrongs being done to me and to my family and to the community that I lived in. I didn't want to be classed man as a second grade or you know not white kind of a citizen of a country, I believed that, and its still my belief, that you know all men are equal, all people are equal so I didn't understand why did they want to now make me feel like I'm some sort of second class citizen or subject. I didn't understand that and I wanted to fight against that."

As cited in the theoretical framework, earlier in this study, these individuals were propelled to take on the fight against Apartheid by virtue of the fact that, at this point, their social identities took precedence over their personal identities and individual survival (Abrams & Hogg, 1990; Reicher, 2004). Furthermore, Braungart and Braungart (1990) point out that members of a specific generation will not necessarily respond to a given political situation in the same manner and may indeed promote different solutions to the societal problems they are confronted with. However, with regard to those individuals who were propelled to take on the fight against Apartheid, their fight would not have been a successful one had they been determined to pursue it as individuals. What these individuals required was an organised structure, which was capable of mobilising the masses and lending credence and credibility to their fight. The MDM, by virtue of its design, provided the platform and/or outlet from which these informants could hurl, and more importantly, live their protest to the Apartheid regime.

Even though, as will be showed later, the MDM through the collective provided a critical and indeed credible platform for political activism, primary support for sustained involvement in the struggle required a trusting and ever resilient family base. As discussed in the following section, this support was subject to ever-increasing limitations and tested to its brinks.

5.2. A resistance to struggle

While the family structure provided the initial platform from which these informants took their political cue, their entry into, and continued involvement in, the anti-Apartheid struggle was often met with a measure of resistance by their families. Informants often made reference to the fact that their parents expressed dissatisfaction with regard to their involvement in the struggle, as is illustrated below by informant 2:

"... when I took that decision [to be an activist], I was still very young. I actually took that decision when I was 19. I was 18 in my first year [at university] and in my second year I was 19, I wanted to skip the country and actually gave you know studying up against the will of my family and I went back to Oudtshoorn and then I went, and I couldn't leave and there was no way and I came back and I continued studying but instead of going to class everyday, I went to organise, not only on campus but at factories and in Elsies River, I was very active in Elsies River although I stayed in the hostel."

As illustrated above, the family played a critical role in the decision-making of activists and as showed below by informant 1, these families provided a limiting dimension as to the involvement of these activists:

"In Standard 7 I met a friend of mine who's living in the U.K right now, he then invited me, he was the chairperson of our Association at the time and he invited me to my first political meeting, it was Mitchell's Plain Action Committee, at the time (indistinct) and from there it was just, I just never, from that first meeting I stayed involved, I never even questioned not going to meetings, there was hard times, families, I had a very religious family and they weren't too happy about this whole story."

As the family provided the initial platform for these informants' involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle, via political consciousness-raising within the home, one would assume that their family would view their involvement in the struggle as a natural progression and as such welcome it. However, this assumption is devoid of the emotional components or bonds inherent within family relationships and discounts the level of fear families must have endured with regard to the involvement of their loved ones in the struggle. Families were well aware of the dangers and risks associated with the involvement in the struggle and as such, while they were supportive of (and often spoke to) a movement critical of the Apartheid regime, they were resistant to

members of their own family being drawn into this movement. This resistance (which can also be thought of as disguised fear) is understandable if one is to consider that a number of the informants were often detained, intermittently, for long periods and often found themselves on the run and away from home during the periods of their release.

Yet, this resistance did not lead these families to abandon their loved ones who were indeed involved in the anti-Apartheid struggle. Rather informants speak with gratitude of the support offered to them and their siblings by their families during their involvement in the struggle, and particularly during tumultuous and often traumatic times. A moment of support experienced by informant 6 is recounted here:

“At certain times there was tremendous support and I, especially when I was detained, I think my mother was absolutely fantastic, ...”

It appears that the support recounted here by this informant was not an isolated case during the anti-Apartheid struggle. While awaiting trial in 1975, Suttner (2001, p. 39) writes in a letter to his mother, “I am strengthened very much by the support of my family.”

Similarly, the resistance exhibited by their families, did not lead these informants to abandon their commitment to the struggle, which provides one with an indication as to their level of commitment to, and belief in, the struggle and what it stood for. This, however, additionally attests to the strength of the political foundation their families laid in the initial stages of their childhood, which culminated in their entry into the anti-Apartheid struggle in their adolescence, via the platform of the MDM.

It is further argued that though this formative entry into the risky political realm of the time was decidedly influenced and facilitated by the awareness of the socio-political context by the informants’ families, there is no doubt that this raised sustained conflict within and among the family and may even have contributed significantly to the erosion of the quality of relationships between the informants and their families. This is further explored below.

5.3. Erosion within the alpha

Due to the resistance expressed by their families with regard to their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle, informants often felt that they were complicit in compromising their familial relationships. While at the time these informants might have regarded it as a necessary compromise borne out of their commitment to the struggle, in retrospect they regret the fact that their involvement impacted negatively on the nature and quality of their familial relationships. Informant 6 expressed her regret in the following manner:

“My mother played a fantastic role when I was detained and many people incredibly they sort of perhaps perceive her as still that same person, but what had happened to her, she was so terrorised by the security policy as a, because this was in ‘84 and ‘85 and ‘86 and ‘87, and ‘88 and ‘89 that she was harassed by the security police she eventually sold her house in Kenilworth, the only house that my parents had actually owned and she went to live in a retirement village at Somerset West thinking that the security at the boom gate and on the premises was going to protect her from the security police, ... this whole issue of family, and the struggle has done good things to it, but it has also harmed that relationship as well, it’s sort of bittersweet story I think.”

This informant explains that familial disassociation was, in effect, at the expense of her involvement in the struggle, and as further argued by informant 7, the impact of familial estrangement continued long after liberation:

“No, I think the one thing that my involvement did do is cause a huge rift with my family, it estranged me from my family, which is something I won’t say that I regret, but it’s something that I do, I think about it often, and I left home when I was about 17 and I’ve never gone back and that has caused a lot of friction in my family ...”

It is important to note, however, that the regret expressed here is not in relation to the informants’ involvement in the struggle, but in relation to the fall out their involvement has had with regard to their familial relationships. In other words, there exists ‘personal’ regret, but not ‘political’ regret. This is quite the opposite of what the researcher initially expected to find, whilst in the process of undertaking this exploration. The initial assumption held by the researcher was that the informants (and especially those whom had been recruited into MK)

would express regret with regard to their military involvement in the struggle. This has not been the case, with the majority of the informants taking great pride in their involvement in the struggle and their contribution towards a democratic society. This sense of pride has also been found amongst other activists (Foster, et al., 2005; Kagee, 2006; Mphahlele, 2002; Patterson, 2005) and in a study, conducted with an informant base of one hundred and forty-eight (148) black South African political activists, Kagee (2006) found that 93.6% felt a sense of pride with regard to their involvement in the struggle. Informant 1 in the present study relates this sense of pride below:

“... I am very proud of the fact that I was involved in the struggle, no matter how short, I'm very proud of my involvement, I'm very proud of the fact that I could be part of a collective that changed our society, you know not the change we necessarily anticipated or wanted, but it has changed you know ...”

The informants' regret, it appears, is not located within the political realm of their activism, but rather in the personal realm. In addition, it appears to be a regret, which never reared its head in the midst of the informants' involvement in the struggle, but only made its appearance subsequent to it, post the negotiated settlement. Perhaps it was functional for these informants not to be plagued by regret whilst the struggle against Apartheid was rife and ongoing as their emotional and psychological energies had to be channelled towards subverting the Apartheid regime and its proponents. It is only now, in hindsight, and in the safe confines of a democratic society, that informants are able to give expression to their regret. While it appears that the expression of this regret might have proven counter-productive to the aims of the liberation struggle, it now appears to prove productive towards the aims of the liberation of the 'self' in that a number of the informants have engaged in a quest for a sense of identity post-1994. This quest for identity is discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this study.

Here, the liberation of the current 'self' of activists is juxtaposed against the disempowering experiences families of activists were subjected to when these same individuals were detained and removed from the family structure. This removal impacted severely on the family's ability to

support itself and brought into question the very bases of family structure and organisation, as illustrated below.

5.4. The alpha change and the change in 'self'

Activists and their families, who had devoted themselves to the struggle for liberation, often had to re-organise their familial structures so as to accommodate the loss of one or more of these family members at a time, due to them being detained, having left the country, or being forced to go into hiding from the Security Forces attached to the Apartheid regime. As discussed above, it was these real and present dangers and risks that led families to be resistant in lending support to the involvement of a family member in the anti-Apartheid struggle. It was due to these contextual factors that familial relationships were often compromised, as contact with one's family was lost for a substantial period of time. Nevertheless, these informants were committed in their involvement to the struggle and their families time and again found themselves having to restructure the family unit so as to better manage familial relationships and resources in the midst of the loss of an individual who often was, and should have been, a resource to the family.

What proved to be an already traumatic period for the family was, in addition, marred with the concern and worry as to how the family would survive in the absence of the informant, in the case of him/her being detained or being in hiding, who frequently happened to be of an economically active age. Informant 4 mentioned the impact that his brother's detention had on their family as a unit:

"... when my brother was in prison, it was like a, not a, ja, it was a sad period in my life because the household was, the structure of your household was disrupted you know."

While the majority of these informants emerge from what are regarded as 'working class' backgrounds, there existed an increased burden on the family at the time at which these informants found themselves drawn into the struggle as this meant that an additional economic avenue was lost to the family under what already constituted dire social and economic conditions. Perhaps it was also in anticipation of this economic or

resource loss and the added suffering and pressure that it would bring to the family, that parents were often resistant to lending their support to their children's involvement in the struggle. Similarly, the 'personal' regret expressed by informants with regard to their involvement having compromised the quality and the nature of their familial relationships, is perhaps regret expressed, too, at the fact that they were not able to assist in the economic sustenance of their families at a period during which it was needed most. Yet, even though it must have been a gruelling process, these families seem to have managed to survive by re-organising their familial structures in whichever manner they saw fit so as to cope economically as well as emotionally.

Fortunately, the 'loss' of a family member to the struggle, via their detention, also had the ability of impacting positively on the lives of those who remained behind and on whom the sole burden fell for the economic sustenance and the emotional stability and cohesiveness of the familial unit. Informant 4, whose mother, subsequent to his brother's detention, took on a more active role in the political realm, describes this 'positive' impact below:

"Oh it [brother's detention] changed it [family life] dramatically because my mother wasn't at that stage, or prior to his detention she wasn't politically, not conscious, I suppose she was conscious but she wasn't active ... So subsequent to that she became involved because she always, she was taken to prison to go visit my brother, I think it was once a month, whereby the, what's this organisation's name, I'll get to their name, because a friend of mine worked there, a friend of ours, Relief, I don't know, something Relief Campaign or whatever, and they used to take the mothers of prisoners to the prison to go visit them or family of prisoners to go visit them. She also always, this guy was like a much matured guy and obviously she met up with families also there you know, and she could see, or she could get some political education from them, and then she became involved and up to the stage that she became more involved than us you know, even post-apartheid she's like still involved in Women's Organisations, Civic Organisations and those kind of things. So it had a positive impact in that sense ja, because my sisters also, two of my sisters became involved and ja, in that sense it had a positive effect."

This resilience to reorganise and perhaps reprioritise the need for the family to continue to exist, and indeed continue to survive, finds itself repeated today, as informants begin to (within the notion of the 'current'

redefined self) place gravitas on the need to build sustained and renewed family bonds as is illuminated in the following section of this study.

5.5. The alpha renaissance

As pointed out, the notion of the family and what it symbolises appears to be of great importance to many of the informants within this study. Not only do they express regret with regard to the quality of their familial relationships being compromised, but it appears as if they are now focussing on the creation, and re-creation, of their own families so as to fill the void of familial interaction that they lost whilst they were involved in the struggle. Some of the informants' thoughts with regard to their own families attest to this, as described by informant 2:

"So I still see myself as you know contributing towards building a new South Africa, but more through my work because unlike the 80's where I was living with my mother, I've got a family to look after and so I am trying to do work where I get paid for what I love doing and to help build the society that we fought for ..."

Apparent from the comment provided by the informant above it becomes clear that the regret experienced by activists with regard to issues affecting their families has become an expression of re-invention and re-configuration of their priority towards the notion of the family within a post-Apartheid South Africa. Informant 6 underlines this point further in providing the following comment:

"So you know one has to, one reconfigures your family and the struggle has done that, you know the ANC was part of my family, I gave my life to a cause which is the ANC under the rubric of the ANC and my role in MK, my role in political underground, its very risky work, extremely risky, and so I think you start redefining, questioning what is family, my father died in '84, the rest are all alive, but they are all very much into their own thing and my family is, I've had to recreate and almost start a new chapter about what family is, and I've started a new generation of [my own] family."

Perhaps this gravitation towards the notion of the family is an attempt at 'normalisation' on behalf of the informants. What else is one meant to do after rising from the ashes of a liberation struggle? Is one not meant to integrate back into 'normal' society? Or perhaps the informants find

safety in the establishment of their own family after having been hauled through the trenches of degradation and suffering that often characterised the fight against Apartheid. Furthermore, these informants could have come to realise the importance of family through the familial support (limited as it may have been) offered to them during their years of struggle in the liberation movement. Anyone would be hard-pressed to argue that this support did not go a long way in assisting these activists to continue their struggle on a daily basis over a protracted number of years.

The attempt on the part of informants to re-invent the notion of the family can also be viewed as an attempt to, in effect, re-invent themselves as part and parcel of their re-integration back into society. In the quest for identity post-1994 (alluded to briefly above, but discussed in greater depth elsewhere in this study), would the construction of a family not be the most rudimentary wheel to re-invent in relation to the self? With a newly constructed family not only comes a sense of belonging and safety, but a sense of purpose and function, too. As is discussed elsewhere in this study, these are elements that many of the informants lacked and were searching for post-1994.

However, one cannot discount the fact that it appears that these informants have come full-circle with regard to their orientation towards family. It seems fitting that they would want to re-prioritise the notion of the family post their involvement in the struggle as it is within their respective families that their political consciousness was initially borne and nursed. Their families laid the foundation for what is considered to probably be the most profound 'lived' experience of their lives and in creating and re-creating their own families they pay homage to the family structure, but more importantly, they pay homage to those members of whom it was, and still is, comprised.

In addition, the construction of their own families allow (and demand of) them to plan for the future - a privilege, which they were denied whilst they were involved in the anti-Apartheid struggle as activists were not allowed to think about tomorrow, when they were not even sure that they would make it through the day. Perhaps the notion of the family is being

re-invented and re-prioritised by these informants out of the hope that they, too, would be able to provide their children with the springboard from which to achieve great things, in the same way in which their own families laid the foundation for their involvement in the establishment of democracy, and that should be reason enough.

In understanding this commitment by informants to ensure the continued existence of the family, it is necessary, as outlined in the frame of analysis, to interrogate more definitively, the role, behaviour, and the experience of the activist as an individual, psychological construct, which is the ensuing exploration of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6: THE 'I' IN ACTIVIST

“The defining characteristic of the ‘new’ activist is his [or her] participation in a student demonstration or group activity that concerns itself with some matter of general political, social, or ethical principle. Characteristically, the activist feels that some injustice has been done, and attempts to ‘take a stand,’ ‘demonstrate,’ or in some fashion express his [or her] convictions” (Keniston, 1968, p. 300).

6.1. Self invention through revolution

A critical and necessary starting point in examining the current role of the informant base is to uncover the historical dimension that infuses their hitherto self, that is the role of being an activist. All informants, with the exception of one, answered in the affirmative when posed the question as to whether they still considered themselves to be activists. However, their definition of what it now means for them to be an activist has been redefined to find synergy within the social and political milieus in which these informants are currently located. Examples of these redefinitions are provided below, starting with informant 2:

“I still see myself as an activist but a different kind of activist, not the activist of the ‘80s where I organised marches and boycotts and demonstrations. I see myself more as an activist for the democratic government and whether I am working fulltime for the government or outside of the government, I see myself as an activist of democracy and reconstruction and development and as I said subsequently to my leaving Oudtshoorn, I was always involved up to now in what I regarded as development work.”

The comment above launches the historical roles of activists into the future and places no discerning boundary between the new state and its historical position as the MDM. As illustrated below, this new state has become the status quo, and for informant 5, providing the comment below, his role as an activist is to continue to challenge this status quo:

“I am an activist yes, I think my interests first and foremost is to equip myself, to empower myself to a level where academically I would be able to challenge the status quo, I believe that this is a new role for me, and it’s an important role to play within the global context of things.”

The capacitating of the self continues to remain a key characteristic in ensuring the ongoing role of the activist and as provided for by informant 6, activism is decisively and proudly linked and rooted in the notion of the 'struggle':

"Well I am [an activist] ... I find myself in a very small nucleus, but in a very big family with survivors of the country, with actually a lot of clout, if you come to realise it, there's only one survivor community in this country and it's Khulumani¹² and I am very proud of my association with them and I'm very much embedded or rooted in their struggle."

This embedding of roles and continued contribution to the current socio-economic milieu, invokes a sense of pride within the informant base and as is further implied by informant 7 below, it (current roles) underlines the objectives and ethos of the liberation movement:

"And I mean, I still consider myself today as a revolutionary, whatever I do, as a business owner, you know, I understand that I have a role to play in the transformation of this country. I understand that I'm not here to uplift myself, that I'm here to be part of the mainstream economy to create jobs, to absorb the unemployed, to build other businesses, you know, that are Black."

Following from these extracts, then, to label these individuals as 'former activists' would be a misnomer. These informants still construct aspects of the self (and their identity) around their core existence as activists and they clearly demonstrate that activism can be practised in many differing ways, but that fundamentally it has as its core the best interests of humanity at heart. Flacks (2004) (as cited in Egan & Waffer, 2006, p. 59) would refer to these informants as 'ideologically committed activists' as, "...[they] frequently have taken leadership in single-issue causes and campaigns while, at least initially, seeing those causes as mere steps towards more ultimate ends, rather than ends in themselves."

This finding, yet again, proved another one of the researcher's initial assumptions to be erroneous as informants, instead of finding aspects of their roles as activists to be redundant within the 'new' South Africa,

¹² Survivors and families of victims of the political conflict of South Africa's Apartheid past formed the Khulumani Support Group in 1995. The support group was established by victims, in response to the pending TRC, who felt that the TRC should be used as a platform from which to speak out about the past so as to ensure that such violations never occur again.

opted to redefine these roles instead of relegating them to the minefields of redundancy. This process might have been automatically engaged in by these informants as a mechanism by which to preserve core features of their identity within the changing context of the 'new' South Africa and to ensure continuity of the self in making the ideological (and very realistic) leap between the South Africa under colonial and oppressive rule and that of the 'new' and democratic South Africa.

In addition, this redefinition in all probability attests to the strength and durability of these informants' identification ('binding in') to the goals and ambitions of the MDM. It would appear, then, that these individuals aspire to the same overarching goals and ambitions that the MDM inspired in them, but that they adapt these to suite and fit particular avenues when and as required. The danger, however, exists that there might in fact be an over-reliance on the activist identity on the part of individuals and that this could deter them from cultivating other interests and avenues through which to shape and construct their identities. This 'presumed' rigidity in the construction (or rather lack thereof) of their identities could lead to individuals remaining 'stuck' in the past without them realising that is indeed the case. None of the informants in this study have expressed this sort of rigidity with regard to their identities. Instead they have all been able to redefine and realign their activist identity so as to suite their current social and political milieu.

The one informant (informant 1), who consciously chose to not define himself as an activist with regard to his current context, based this on the fact that he associates and equates activism with (political) activity and action:

"As I said I'm not doing anything at the moment, and to be an activist you must be active."

This informant further attempted to clarify his position by offering an explanation as to the differences, which exist between 'activists' and 'politicians':

"You see there's differences between activists and politicians. Do you know that there's a difference? Activists you had a purpose, you had a

goal, you had ideals, you had beliefs, you weren't sitting around and writing policy for the government you know, you were writing plans of action, you were working going door to door, you know as the word implies it was activity, you know you were an activist, you took up issues, and politicians are a whole different breed of animal."

In addition, this informant makes the argument that one can only be an activist within a movement, not within a political party and as the ANC, in his opinion, no longer constitutes a movement, but a party, his role as an activist has been rendered redundant. If one is to assume the redefined definitions of an activist that the other informants have utilised and superimpose them onto the current experiences of this informant, then by those definitions this informant would be regarded as an activist. However, the possibility exists that this informant has chosen to 'deny' the continuity of his identity as an activist due to his unhappiness with the manner in which the negotiated settlement has panned out. The impact of the negotiated settlement on activists is discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this study.

A more immediate consideration, however, is that the negotiated settlement had as its outcome, a transformed political landscape and, therefore, must have presented informants with a new terrain of struggle, as introduced below.

6.2. Shifting sands of struggle

Intricately linked to the redefinition of the activist identity, discussed above, is the notion amongst informants that *aluta continua*¹³, but in that of a transformed and ever-changing terrain. It appears that many of these informants have sought humanitarian causes to associate themselves with in an attempt to revive and give continuing credibility to the goals and ambitions of the MDM, which were after all the improvement of the quality of life for persons of all colours and creeds. Nassi (1981, p. 759) in a study of former Berkeley free speech movement activists, 15 years after their arrests, found that, "[i]ndeed, professional commitments that allow creative expression and human service may now serve as an outlet

¹³ Portuguese phrase that when directly translated into English translates into 'the struggle continues.' This phrase has come to be widely associated with the anti-Apartheid movement.

for [these individuals'] social convictions [following the decline in their level of political activism].”

All of the informants, with the exception of one, are no longer politically active in the traditional sense of the word, as practised in the 1970s and 1980s. It appears that, post-1994, these informants have chosen other avenues in which to find expression and fulfilment, avenues that they were unable to explore at the time of their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle. These avenues have taken various forms such as the pursuance of an academic or tertiary education, the pursuance of a formalised career, and the establishment and nurturance of a family, as discussed in the previous section.

Even though these informants made mention of the fact that they currently consider themselves to be activists, bearing in mind that the meaning and purpose attached to this role has been redefined, they have actively and consciously chosen to distance themselves from traditional MDM structures, such as the ANC branch structures. This ‘distancing’ is borne, in most instances, out of their unhappiness with the manner in which the negotiated settlement has panned out in relation to their expected outcomes of the struggle, whatever those expectations may have been. Sentiments of the informants’ unhappiness in relation to the negotiated settlement and its outcomes are provided below, as detailed first by informant 4:

“... I think, I feel we were sold out you know at the negotiation table, not me myself, I'm talking about the people who are suffering at the hand of poverty today still and ja, there hasn't been a lot of changes, that I can say with safety honestly, there hasn't been, especially within the economic situation in our country, people are still suffering you know, it's only the top political people who has been empowered economically now and that was not the principals and policies of socialism that was preached during the Apartheid years by the ANC.”

The view of being ‘sold-out’ was permeating across many of the interviews. Informants felt a sense of betrayal and must have been catapulted into a milieu of ambiguity and purposelessness. Informant 1 goes as far as saying that his role was to overthrow the Apartheid state and to ensure a ‘total turnaround’ of the society. As expressed below, the

informant implies that the objectives of their roles as revolutionaries (and the aims of the revolution itself) were in effect not reached:

“For me there was no revolution because a revolution is a total turnaround, there was no total turnaround in our society and not to get too leftist or anything, but if you don't control the means of production you don't control the society, because you are not able to implement all your policies and stuff because you don't have the financial economic backing to do that. So ja, it will take much longer, than if there had been an overthrow of the State, there wasn't an overthrow of the State, there was a negotiated settlement, there's a big difference.”

These expressions clearly illustrate that these informants' decision, to 'distance' themselves from traditional MDM structures, has been a decisive and definitive one. It is a decision they have taken, it appears, due to the fact that they conceive of the negotiated settlement as a flaw in the liberation movement's political strategy and, more importantly, as a devaluation of their contribution to the struggle. This decision of 'distancing' may also be due to their personal dissatisfaction, which is possibly the result of their perceived location within the lower ranks of the MDM, as they were not drawn in to participate in the central structures of the current government, or the actual process of negotiations.

It appears that this sense of being slighted stems from the fact that many of the informants indicated that individuals, unknown or unfamiliar to them, took up the leadership positions in the negotiation process and subsequently within the current government structures.

It appears, then, that some of these informants are of the opinion that the negotiated settlement was a betrayal of their contribution to the anti-Apartheid struggle as in its aftermath they were not given the acknowledgement or treatment they believed was due to individuals who had sacrificed so much for the freedom of their own country. This lack of acknowledgment and the impact thereof is described as follows by informant 6:

“... they [the ANC] showed no interest in assisting us to, in supporting us in any way, nobody has ever, the ANC ever, in any of the public statements said, any of my testimony to the TRC, and anything I've done, nobody that I regard in the ANC has said thank you for what you've done

*and we're behind you, nobody, It's just f*ing silent, so I feel I'm on my own."*

In other words, "I've given so much, but gotten so little" permeated aspects of their everyday existence post-1994. This perhaps points to the fundamental flaw within human existence, which is essentially the self-serving interest inherent in each and every individual.

Alternatively, these informants' propensity towards 'distancing' themselves from the traditional MDM structures may be an automatic, and therefore natural, progression in relation to the fluidity of their identities. The negotiated settlement signalled the end of the anti-Apartheid struggle, which essentially meant that activists and/or cadres were required to now assume alternate roles within the 'new' South Africa. Would it then not be natural for these informants to withdraw from structures, which no longer required their skills and/or services, and gravitate towards other avenues or structures where they are better able to utilise their skill sets within the current South African context? This understanding, as to the natural progression towards different avenues through which to give expression to one's identity, is demonstrated by informant 2 below:

"... I think when the negotiations really got under way and the ANC was unbanned, two things I think happened. One was that there became less and less a need in South Africa for that kind of resistance, I mean the resistance you know shifted away from the you know streets at the time against Apartheid to the meeting rooms around the new constitution and the new society etc. etc. So the emphasis was more on developing the new systems of government and policy and put in place, things around service delivery etc. etc. And I became involved in that you know, in various jobs that I've had. But the other thing also that happened was that I think when I came to Cape Town I became more focussed on my career and family."

Based on the comment provided above, should one not instead have been alarmed if these informants, despite them living in a democratic society, continued to conduct themselves as they did whilst they were involved in the struggle? Rather, these informants' actions, in relation to them 'distancing' themselves from these structures, illustrates their capacity for taking on different roles where and when their social contexts require

of them to do so, and this after all should signal how psychologically well adjusted these informants are capable of being.

However, despite ongoing critique and emphatic distancing of, and from, the current state it is somewhat ironic that informants display ongoing support of the government. Here, as set out below, it is necessary to explore why this support is evident and lastly, how this support is shaping the redefined roles of activists.

6.3. The irony of commitment

While the researcher initially thought, at the start of this exploration that the informants interviewed would not be critical of the current government and its policies, a number of the informants indeed expressed critical opinion in relation to the current government. These criticisms, of course, centre on different aspects of governance and range from the government's economic policies of choice to the nature of the current government structure as separate from the people it serves, to mention but a few. Presented below are some of the informants' critical expressions as to the government of the day, starting with informant 3:

"We got people to stand behind us in the fight against Apartheid under the banner of the ANC. The values that we stood for was the values of the Freedom Charter. We took that further in 1994 when we drafted an election platform that was called the Reconstruction and Development Programme. So, these are the promises we made the people. Yet, when we came to power these were not the promises that we realised."

This informant clearly articulates the essence and the rooted values within the MDM at the time. The struggle philosophies, as embedded in documents such as the Freedom Charter, were of critical significance in binding the movement together and in binding informants into the movement. However, the informant expresses concern that the actual objectives of the struggle were not delivered after liberation, and as further articulated by informant 5 below, he simply argues that a change in policy, post –Apartheid, is 'wrong':

"I think it's [referring to his 'distancing' from the ANC] really a process that starts before 1993, but for me personally I saw the emergence of the

ANC as a political party and I saw people coming into the ANC, claiming leadership positions and really influencing the policy of the organisation, that were not there prior to 1990. And I saw that their policies were wrong, that their policies were geared towards building a political party that was separate from the people, it's not how I was taught you see."

It is worth noting that the notion 'separate from the people' may render activists as 'separate from the state' as they have in effect become the people. This view underlines the assumption that these informants' critique of the government is by default. This default position is due to them having distanced themselves from traditional MDM structures and their dissatisfaction in relation to the negotiated settlement (as discussed in the previous section). Their critique could, alternatively, just be an extension of their inherent activist or revolutionary identity. In essence, then, it appears that the role of an activist or revolutionary extends far beyond the end of the revolution, or the outcome thereof, beyond liberation.

The ANC, as arguably the most significant stakeholder within the MDM, became the new government and as such it would seem fitting that the activist aspect of these informants' identities would be critical of that political metamorphosis. As society finds itself in a flux of constant and ongoing conflict and due to the fact that activists appear to possess personality types which are prone to confronting conflict on a continual basis, there exists the notion that a revolution is by its very definition permanent and that the role of an activist is infinite.

Though these informants' are critical of the current government, they continue to exhibit loyalty towards the ANC as a political party, as illustrated in the comment below by informant 4:

"But I'm not a blinkered person to say I'm going to support the ANC without any question you know and I still will never vote for any other party besides the ANC, there's no question about that, but it doesn't mean that I mustn't question, I mustn't criticise you know."

Informant 1 goes on to say that:

“The ANC today is a political party. Yes, they have the best policies and principles and ideals of any other political party in the country and therefore I still will vote for them you know, ...”

Both these informants, using differing narratives in a cautionary tone, set out clearly their continued support for the current government under the ANC. It is this ability to mediate between the tensional dynamic of support and non-support of the current government that envelopes the actual ‘distancing’ and subsequent role re-definition that is occurring amongst activists. Herein lies the discourse of role conflict that so often permeates the text in discussions with activists about their roles historically and today. This tension seems to provide a sobering hope in setting out the roles of activists today, as informant 3 articulates:

“I’m still a committed member of the ANC and so I have hopes that we can change it [referring to certain elements of the current style of governance and current policies] from the inside.”

This ‘hope’ to ‘change it’ may be expressed as loyalty to their commitment to the movement, of which the ANC was, popularly, regarded as the major proponent. Following from this, then, it would just be ‘natural’ that they would feel an affinity and loyalty towards this party as many of the ideals, which the MDM held dear, might be emulated within the ANC-led government. One then needs to question whether this is a ‘true’ loyalty borne out of these informants’ genuine and sincere belief in the party’s current functioning, role and purpose, or whether this loyalty can be defined as ‘residual’ in that it is a loyalty borne out of the need to be loyal to the party due to its past contribution to the MDM. Alternatively, this loyalty expressed by informants could also be due to the ‘culture of discipline’ which was present within the MDM and held in high esteem amongst activists. This ‘culture’ of discipline’ ensured that activists preserve and adhere to the rank and file of the movement, and perhaps in the case of these informants, this ‘culture’ continues to do so.

Notwithstanding this culture of discipline embedded through their involvement in the struggle, it would be expected (an assumption held by this researcher before undertaking the study) that there exists a relationship between the end road of the struggle, formally marked by the

negotiated settlement, and the identity and role of activists post-Apartheid, as introduced below.

6.4. Lifting the iron curtain on identity

Some of the informants, who were involved in MK and structures of the armed struggle, made mention of the fact that they were thrown into a state of confusion during, and subsequent to, the suspension of the armed struggle and the disarmament of MK, brought about by the negotiated settlement. Informants' own mention of this role confusion is demonstrated below by informant 1:

"The whole negotiated settlement had a very negative impact, I think I would say the years between '93, '96, '98, I think myself personally, it left me very depressed, very disillusioned. It left me purposeless because you know as a teenager I was not planning my personal future, you know, I wasn't planning to go to University, I wasn't planning to have a career in this and that and the other like normal teenagers should be, I wasn't playing sport, no soccer or athletics or anything like that. My total existence was centred around political activity. Now all of a sudden that changed ... What is it I was going to do now, and that was very unclear to me and also I mean as I said our slogans were freedom or death and then we negotiated the settlement, it was kind of an anti-climax ..."

The 'freedom or death' orientation to the struggle was, as described by the above informant, a very real notion that was internalised by activists. This internalisation cultivated somewhat of a tunnel vision in that it presented activists with limited options as far as the struggle was concerned, that of freedom or that of death. This vision, as informant 5 below further clarifies, never said anything about the revolutionary vision being based on dialogue and further argues that he was never prepared for negotiations:

"I would say what happened on the 1st of, I think it was the 1st, at the opening of Parliament in 1990, when de Klerk announced that the ANC was unbanned, I think that can also be a defining moment for me because I remember being completely confused about my existence and about what I was doing at the time, and what was going to happen ... there was a mixed sort of reaction from the crowd, on the one hand there was joviality and people were celebrating, because it was a victory, and it was a victory for the liberation movements. But on the other hand there was also a group of people, including myself, that couldn't partake in that sort of jovialness, that didn't understand, I would assume, make that assumption, because I didn't understand, and I think the basis of being

not understanding was I didn't know what was going to happen next, I didn't prepare sort of myself psychologically for any sort of negotiation that was going to take place between the ANC and the National Party Government. I wasn't prepared for that."

It is critical to reflect carefully on the comments provided here. It is clear that the struggle was lived as a central part of the informant's everyday life. It is then expected, as this informant further articulates, that a deep sense of loss or pointlessness would in effect become an everyday occurrence:

"I think the conditions that prevailed after 1993, after the unbanning, the disbanding of MK, and the process leading up to the elections of 1994 I didn't feel a home for myself any more, I was a lost character."

It appears that the disarmament of MK impacted so severely on the political identity of these activists, because for them it was the central axis around which their identity as activists rotated. For years, their political education and military training geared them towards the preparation of a militant overthrow of the Apartheid regime. For years, their 'lived experience was that of being trained in the assembly and disarmament of weapons, military tactics and strategy, and the execution of military operations. It is just natural that one would feel a sense of loss of self and/or one's identity if those core elements and activities, which construct one's sense of identity, were lost to one almost with immediate effect. Indeed, Price (2002, p. 204) in her study on elderly activists, too, found that the liberation of South Africa, "... was represented as a significant 'turning inwards' in that the capitulation of the apartheid government meant a fundamental change in their identities as political activists and exiles."

Holter (2005) attributes this sense of meaninglessness experienced by these informants to their 'damaged reflective self-function.' According to Holter (2005, p. 530), "[t]he development of the reflective self-function, which enables the individual to plan his own behaviour and actions and thus implies a vision of the future, promotes the ability to differentiate between interior and exterior reality and forms the basis for interpersonal communication." When this reflective self-function is impaired and/or damaged via a traumatic experience, individuals often seem to suffer from

a sense of meaninglessness and are confronted by, what Holter (2005) terms, 'a shadowed future.'

One cannot discount the emotional and psychological turmoil these activists must have been thrown into with regard to the suspension of the armed struggle – one moment they were taking up arms in preparation for war and the next they were unexpectedly instructed to lay down their weapons for the purposes of the negotiated settlement. The 'unexpectedness' attached to this whole process is best described by Terreblanche (2002, pp. 85-86) who states that, "[t]he unbanning of the liberation organisations and the beginning of negotiations in 1990 created an unforeseen problem for the South African left: it had prepared itself for a revolutionary take-over of both the state and the economy, and was therefore unprepared for an evolutionary reform process."

This 'discontinuity' of the 'self' (precipitated by the unbanning of the liberation organisations and the disarmament of MK) is perhaps another reason as to why some of these informants expressed dissatisfaction with the negotiated settlement and the outcomes thereof, as was discussed in the previous section. After all, how can one be appreciative and supportive of an event that signalled a major loss to one's sense of self and which inevitably led one to question one's role and purpose within a so-called 'new' South Africa?

It appears that this sense of loss of 'self' was a permeating feature of these informants' identities for a number of years subsequent to the disarmament process. A sense of 'non-belonging' and that of being a 'lost character'¹⁴ are some of the experiences which attest to this loss of 'self.' It is this process of loss that spurred these individuals on to embark on the often painful process of self-reflection, of which the end goal was the re-creation and clarification of their role and purpose within a restructured South Africa, which inevitably required in them the restructuring of their own sense of self. Yet, this would be the most natural process for these individuals to embark on, as the quest for a sense of meaning and purpose as to one's role within society appears to

¹⁴ Taken from one of the informants' transcripts who described himself as such subsequent to the suspension of the armed struggle

be central to the survival of human beings. One can appreciate, then, that this quest for a sense of meaning and purpose would be more pronounced for activists, whom in most cases, devoted large quantities of their youth and adult lives towards the cause of the clarification of meaning and roles of all human beings through the overthrowing of the Apartheid state.

Though this role ambiguity existed amongst informants, there also existed a sense of relief once the armed struggle had been suspended and the Apartheid regime was disbanded, as illustrated by informant 6:

“That's a difficult question, what impact did the demise, well it was our victory, absolutely it was our victory, I mean we had contributed to this, it was our victory, it was what we had fought for and we were combat tired, we were exhausted actually. Its not easy living in the underground, its not easy living being your own jailer, not seeing the light of day for years and years. I don't think anybody has any idea what underground life is like, if you stick to the rules which we had to.”

This sense of relief appears to be borne out of the fact that the suspension of the armed struggle allowed individuals to gravitate back towards their familial bases and towards a sense of ‘normalcy’ that was lost to them on the battlefield, a ‘normalcy’ that has found expression in the re-creation and re-prioritisation of these informants’ own families, as discussed in a previous section of this study. Alternatively, this same sense of ‘normalcy’ may have presented a danger in that informants may not have had the coping skills to exist within this normal societal context. In other words, their gravitation towards ‘normalcy’ may have proven a challenge for these activists as they, themselves, may not necessarily have had the coping skills to exist within that society to which they are so attracted.

In developing these coping mechanisms, this researcher found that informants are aggressively in search of new roles and new identities, even if these roles are a renaissance of their historical, political characterisation, as introduced below.

6.5. The revolution of the ‘self’

The suspension of the armed struggle and disarmament of MK were not the only events which gave rise to the quest for identity, which was

prevalent within activists post-1994, though these events might have been the precursor to it. As discussed above, and in the first section of this study (which deals with the family), informants sought differing manners in, and avenues through, which to bring meaning and purpose to their sense of 'self' and in turn to fill the perceived void which was lost due to their exit from the struggle via the negotiated settlement.

The informants, within this study, appear to have chosen various identity dimensions in locating and re-defining their sense of 'self.' Five dimensions have made their appearance within the analysis process and these are discussed below, in no particular order. These dimensions should in no way, however, be viewed as exclusive and separate from one another as individuals' experiences can cut across all these dimensions at any one given time, nor are these dimensions conclusive as other identity dimensions may emerge as the informants progress through life.

The first dimension, which of the informants have chosen, is that of a reflective nature in which they look back on their struggle days in an attempt to re-create the identity milieu in which they existed within the anti-Apartheid struggle via their continued romance with the notion of the collective, post-1994. In other words, the identity, which they assume is a reflective one and the danger, here, is that, they continue to re-invent their role, purpose, and meaning through an emphasis on the past. This perhaps points to the fact that, for these individuals, there has been no clear break with their past and that the only manner in which they are able to guarantee a sense of continuity with regard to their identity is via their continued existence in, and affinity to, the past. This is demonstrated by informant 5, below, who expresses his wish to be catapulted back into the days of the struggle:

"I wish I can still be in that era man, I wish I can be put back in time in the late '80s or early '90s ..."

In this sense the 'reflective self' desires to return to the struggle days so as to give sustained meaning to its historical role. Incidentally, the above informant stated earlier that he lost his sense of character for a period after liberation in 1994. This 'loss' may be significant in understanding

why this informant wants to 'be put back' so as to find or locate what he now experiences as a 'loss of character'. This reflective dimension may erode the capacity to look forward in finding a new role, the second dimension introduced here.

The second, and more popular, dimension chosen by informants appears to be that of the assumption of new roles via a process of re-defining their traditional activist roles and inevitably their understanding of what the cause would entail, and be comprised of, in the 'new' South Africa, as was illustrated earlier on in the study in relation to the re-definition of their activist identities. Here the cause, which was understood as being embedded within the goals and ambitions of the MDM structures, and now emulated within the ANC-led government, is central to these informants redefinition endeavour as it is this cause, which led them to feel an affinity towards the MDM and led to their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle. Today, these informants have taken up positions in government (to pursue the ideals of democracy, transformation and development), within the labour movement (to pursue the ideals of economic reconciliation), and within the private sector (to pursue the ideals of the development of Black business and commerce).

The third, but less popular, dimension, which informants have chosen, is that of their continuing existence as active participants in the provision of platforms from which to spawn new debates around the current government's policies and manner and style of governance. It appears, then, that these individuals have taken the conscious decision to continue to fight the struggle, and that it is only the government at which their fight is targeted that has changed. This dimension has found expression in informant 6's involvement in the Khulumani Support Group and she expresses her commitment to this support group as follows:

"So that's my site of struggle, has been the '90s and still in this century, this decade, and this one, I don't think will end, I don't think, you know, I've never really been a great hopper from one to thing to the next, I've really stuck things out, so that's what makes a difference and it makes a difference in terms of the constituency I work with."

The concept of ideological or cause ‘hopping,’ as articulated by the above informant, is not a feature of this role dimension, though others may easily disagree. Instead, and given the contextual continuity that exists between the ‘struggle days’ and the current democracy, the expression of this role consolidates the view of a continuation of these informants’ current roles as life long activists. Perhaps in extending this role dimension, a fourth character emerges, that of the life long student as introduced below.

The fourth dimension is that of the search for self-knowledge and the ambitions held by these individuals for the aspiration of the self, which has found expression in their quest for academic qualifications. As discussed in the previous section, this is perhaps an attempt, on their part, to integrate back into the ‘normalcy’ of society and the daily functioning attached to it. Informant 4’s description, as to his quest for education and the contribution he will be able to make towards society as a result of it, is presented below:

“... so when I went to university I realised that I have a much bigger role to play or a greater role to play if I educate myself you know because by educating myself I become an example to the community where I come from, because where I come from it’s gangsterism, that’s the order of the day, people do drugs you know, it’s basically a poverty stricken community but it’s a ghetto basically where I come from, so by doing that I can inspire people, I can also use my education to educate others, you understand, and ja, and inspire people.”

The fifth dimension, perhaps the most feasible one, is that in which the informants’ quest for identity permeates all of the afore-mentioned dimensions. This means that informants have utilised, and may at various times through their quest continue to utilise, a number of these routes to find self-expression and meaning within the ‘new’ South Africa.

The five role dimensions provided a genesis in understanding the informants’ relative proximity to the current socio-political state. However, it is this researcher’s view that these role dimensions begin to provide a platform for explaining the informants’ views on issues relating to forgiveness, reconciliation, and transformation, as introduced below.

6.6. Admitting guilt without fault

The establishment of the TRC was one of the outcomes of the negotiated settlement and as informants expressed dissatisfaction with the settlement and the outcomes thereof, it would just be natural that they would express similar discontent with the TRC and the results thereof. This was indeed the case, with the majority of informants expressing their dissatisfaction with the TRC, as illustrated by the following comments made by informant 4:

"I think it [TRC] is, personally I think it's a farce, its really, you see life or things cannot be turned around by just, okay, you can heal by talking about things but its never going to change the past, what happened you know, and I understand that we are a forgiving nation, South Africans but for myself I just don't think that it made any significant change ..."

This informant expresses quite unambiguously his feelings with regard to the TRC in characterising the process as a sham. The categorical characterisation of the 'truth telling' process imputes a sense of anger among informants and is further expanded on by informant 1:

"I don't know what the purpose was of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I know what (indistinct) said the purpose is, personally I don't think they achieved their goal, because a lot of what came out of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission just left people with a total sense of disgust, with no sense of anything that justice has been done and a lot of people still don't know where their loved ones are, and ultimately the main thing was to know, you know at the end of this process my son disappeared in 1976, last seen here, what happened to him, there are still, those questions were not answered you know."

The informant above brings into question the outcomes and processes used in actualising the TRC. Here, the informant raises concern as to the integrity of the stories that emerged and as further argued by informant 7, who essentially implies that the process was a comic story:

"I think it was a joke first of all. In fact I was called, I was questioned as part of the then Ashley Kriel group in the Western Cape and it was verified, I mean the questions, the one good thing that it did for me was that it verified all my questions. You know you walk around with suspicions for years. And you say, "Was this person actually an informer?" And you just have to know and I think that's the only good thing it did for me, it managed to answer some of my questions. But I think all it really did was it opened up wounds and it never healed those

wounds and I think a lot of people are still walking around today with deep wounds that haven't been healed. So, I think the TRC was a waste of money and I think it didn't achieve, it didn't do what it was supposed to do, and it didn't achieve its aim. I think it was a complete waste of money and time. ... It's opened up wounds and it's actually created more questions and more confusion than before and it hasn't achieved anything, you know."

These informants' dissatisfaction with, and criticism of, the TRC may be an automatic reaction due to the fact that they would be inclined to reject any process which sprung from the negotiated settlement as a result of their discontent with the settlement process and the subsequent impact it had on their political identity and sense of self, as was discussed in the previous section. Their rejection of the TRC may also be borne out of the fact that their dissatisfaction with the settlement did not allow them to recognise the TRC as a formal structure within the 'new' South Africa and this is perhaps why many of these informants chose not to appear before the Commission. It may be that these informants' rejection of the TRC is a 'distancing' tactic employed by them and is yet another avenue through which their dissatisfaction with the negotiated settlement and their critique of the current government of the day is expressed.

One needs to question whether these informants would have been less critical of the TRC if they had indeed appeared before the Commission and had a more intimate understanding of the procedures and processes followed. Similarly, one needs to question whether these informants involvement in the TRC, and by default, then, their acknowledgment of the negotiated settlement as the most appropriate means through which to return power to the people, would have led them to be less critical of the current government. Furthermore, one needs to question whether these informants' involvement in the TRC would not have provided them with a better understanding of the negotiated settlement and its importance in the reconstruction of a democratic society and as such would have assisted in the clarification of the role ambiguity many of them battled with post-1994.

As expressed earlier, under the quest for identity discussion, where the researcher delineated a specific set of role dimensions, it can be argued that continued criticism of the current government, including the

outcomes of the TRC, will always permeate activists' identities today. Here, the role dimension of a 'life long activist,' as illustrated earlier, is relevant in understanding why informants may continue to criticise government.

Though a number of the informants expressed a clear commitment to the ideals of reconciliation and forgiveness, a few of the informants indicated that there exists within them a resistance towards reconciliation and forgiveness. Informant 4 voices this resistance below:

"I don't believe in reconciliation personally, I still, I don't know if it's, you can take it as I say it, I still when I was at Stellenbosch I still had hatred for white people you know, hatred, maybe a bit of jealousy because it's, when I was there it's a rich institution, people who go there are only the rich, the unique, they have cars, they have money, they have food every day to eat you know and hence they do well at school, they have their books."

This informant provides a fresher understanding as to why reconciliation and forgiveness have become such increasingly difficult processes to undertake. Here, the informant speaks about the current 'lived experience' of people who benefited under Apartheid in relation to his own role dimension today. In other words, it appears that external environmental factors such as the relative ease of comfort with which 'White' people are still able to exist stands as a manifesting testament to the notion of continued resistance and, therefore, a deterrent to forgiveness. Informant 5, below, provides further clarity as to why forgiveness and reconciliation cannot be achieved:

"But what I can say is that I didn't want to be part of any TRC, I didn't feel that I had any to report to them as investigators or whoever, or that I would be interested in their version of what was going to happen, this reconciliation thing you know. I remember myself holding an opinion that it's important to forgive, as a Christian person you are taught you need to forgive your enemies, but I also remember that you must only forgive, you can only forgive people once they've declared that this is what they've done and I didn't think that that happened man, I didn't think that the Apartheid government declared what they did you know, or whoever else you know declared what they did against people, individual people, against, communities."

From the above illustrations, it is clear that informants are critical of the concepts of reconciliation and forgiveness. One then needs to question

whether these individuals would have been more open and welcoming of reconciliation and forgiveness had they appeared before the TRC and been more familiar with its workings. In other words, did one's involvement in the TRC automatically render one more accepting of reconciliation and forgiveness and if this is indeed the case, one then additionally needs to question what about the TRC process enabled this propensity to emerge.

However, a particularly political, contextual case where one of the informants (informant 6) did in fact appear before the TRC provides for an alternative view offered by this study. Here, the informant claims that she has made full disclosure as per the requirements of the TRC, but continues to be exceptionally resistant to the notion of forgiveness. In this case, the informant feels aggrieved at the input made by the state on her and their participation in sabotage and counter-sabotage activities relating to the anti-Apartheid struggle. This case offers an experience where, after the passing of a number of years, Adriaan Vlok (former Minister of Law and Order under the Nationalist Party government) washed the feet of the current presidential advisor, Reverend Frank Chikane, in a symbolic gesture of an expression of forgiveness. The informant views this 'washing of feet' as particularly insulting and is not prepared to enter into symbolic acts of forgiveness. She maintains the view that full disclosure on the part of the Apartheid state, with regard to atrocities committed by them, must and continue to be a non-negotiable act that would facilitate true forgiveness and reconciliation. This view is cemented by Hamber and Wilson (2002) who similarly echo the importance of reparations (symbolic and/or practical) being offered in conjunction with the truth of what has transpired. This informant's concerns are articulated in-depth below:

"Well I think my previous statement about foot washing of Adriaan Vlok, or Adriaan Vlok and his gesture of foot washing, actually doesn't wash down with me, it's I mean it makes you think what an incredible gesture, this out and out racist getting on his hands and knees and washing the black feet of people that he hated and thought he was superior to, not so long ago. It makes you think, it's a humbling gesture, I acknowledge that, but it also, there's another thing that sickens me about it, because out of the ripple that it creates and immediately the spotlight was on me again, what do I think, and its not about what I think, I have to think about what its in the nation's best interest, its not about what I think, don't come and ask me, you should say what do I think, I'm in a unique

position to analyse this and to have a statement that speaks not only about my own personal process but the nation's process. And all I can say is you've 100 000 people's feet to wash still, and don't come to me, I don't want my feet washed, I'm not religious, I don't want you touching my feet. Not that I would want anyone really touching my feet, especially not him. That's my position and in terms of forgiveness, I think forgiveness comes with full disclosure and I haven't had that. So when that happens maybe I will be in position to start saying, okay, I don't think forgiveness is really a necessary ingredient in the reconciliation, I don't think its dishonourable, but I don't feel I should be forced into it, I don't feel I should be pressurised into feeling forgiving if I don't feel that, and I don't think the nation should."

While these informants' rejection of the TRC springs from their dissatisfaction with the negotiated settlement and the outcomes thereof, additional reasons for their rejection of the TRC may be found in the structure and organisation of the TRC itself. The fact that the TRC chose to define acts of the anti-Apartheid struggle as 'gross human rights violations' may have sat uncomfortably for activists who felt that their actions in the struggle were necessary ones and ones in which they take great pride, as it was these acts that led to the defeat of the Apartheid regime. Foster, et al. (2005, p. 293) in a study exploring the narratives of anti-Apartheid activists found that, "[a] number of these narratives challenge the notion that they could be regarded as 'perpetrators', arguing that they should not be in the same category as those who committed violence on behalf of the apartheid state."

Similarly, Letlapa Mphahlele (2002, p. 205), former APLA commander and now president of the PAC, states of the TRC that, "[i]t didn't differentiate between the violence of a colonised people, committed in self-defence, and that of the coloniser. You cannot equate a disease with its cure, poison with its antidote." It is obvious, then, that individuals would not want to associate themselves with, or contribute to, a structure, which labelled their contributions in the struggle as grotesque and inhumane.

In addition to this, informant 6 made mention of the fact that her involvement in MK and the armed struggle is now viewed as a blight on her political identity and history and that it is no longer popular (or politically correct) to admit that one was once associated with these structures:

"I think its unfortunate that there's a blemish on our history when it comes to the armed struggle, but this is not something, you know you were a hero one day and a villain the next, overnight, not a villain, but a perpetrator, through the process you were regarded as something different, it had a different lens on your work and your commitment, and the nation hasn't quite snapped out of that, partly because there hasn't been full disclosure from the ANC side as well, and I wish the ANC would have seized the opportunity to say this is what happened, this is what we did, but the burden is on operatives and that's a very hard one to live with."

While this informant explicitly articulated the fact that her involvement in MK is now regarded with disdain, other informants by virtue of their resistance to explore their involvement in MK and the armed struggle in greater depth in the interview process, implicitly signalled their realisation that within the current political context there appears to be a sense of shame and scandal attached to the actions of cadres who were active in the armed struggle. It appears that it is now no longer popular to entertain conversations about the armed struggle and one's involvement in it. Perhaps this stems from the fact that within the TRC policy the actions of activists or cadres were conceived of as equivalent to those of the proponents of the Apartheid regime. Given this context, one can then understand why these informants would not be supportive of the TRC as a formal structure.

An alternative explanation, however, also exists as to why activists or cadres are resistant to entertain conversations with regard to their involvement in the armed struggle. Cadres were trained to be secretive in the manner in which they conducted the armed struggle and as such their resistance to engaging with the researcher on their experiences within MK may just be an automatic extension of their training resonating within their current context.

Informants also expressed their dissatisfaction with regard to the level of disclosure that permeated the TRC hearings. They were of the opinion that proponents of the Apartheid regime, who had put in applications for amnesty, were often selective in the amount of information they brought forward to the public and that much of what occurred under this regime was never revealed, and was left untold. Expressions as to the informants' dissatisfaction are presented below, as articulated first by informant 2:

"... there are still many unanswered questions and events and there are still many people out there who haven't really come forth with what they have done ... But I recognised it [TRC] as an important process but it had also a lot of defects. As I said you know many things did not come out but if it wasn't for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, then I think we would not have heard a lot of those things."

The existence of the 'untold' stories and details are indeed a permeating factor in fostering the resistance by informants to forgive and to reconcile. Here, the above informant expresses the view that in addition to the truth being somewhat partial, and in some cases absent, many agents of the Apartheid government were also absent from the process. It appears then that this absence of truth impacted on the final 'product' of the TRC - that of fostering reconciliation and forgiveness, as expressed by informant 1 below:

"I don't know what was achieved [by the TRC] because so many questions were not answered, were left unanswered, so many things were eventually not even included in the [final] report ..."

In essence, it would appear that the informants feel a sense of dissatisfaction with the process of 'truth telling' and as summarised by informant 5, below, some people who did go to the TRC were also not satisfied:

"... I just felt that people weren't up front in coming to the TRC and saying this is what they've done. There were a lot of people that didn't come and there were also I think a lot of people that went, that didn't get the satisfaction out of the forgiveness and healing thing that was supposed to happen there."

Perhaps these informants may have been more supportive of the TRC if it had succeeded in gathering a more complete picture or story as to the nature of events that unfolded during the anti-Apartheid struggle. The question, however, remains as to whether the TRC or any other structure and/or process would have been able to accomplish this given the context of political compromise in which the TRC was mandated to function.

Similarly, the informants also made mention of their unhappiness as to how the TRC negotiated and managed the reparations, which were due to

victims of the Apartheid regime. These informants' discontent is expressed below, as described by informant 4:

"The reparation that will pay R30 000 it's like really, it's virtually nothing to what people endured for months and sometimes years of imprisonment and embarrassment by the police you know, ..."

Informant 6, below, who, too, holds the view that the concept of 'justice' has been lost in the process, further expands on this point:

"A symbolic half-hearted attempt [referring to the TRC] and I think the real burden has been carried by survivors and to that end I will continue with the struggle to secure more complete reparations and compensation for survivors, because I think they have brought us to where we are now, and they continue to carry the burden of our transformation, and I think it's very unfair, it's not just at all, there's no justice in that."

Again, the argument can be made that the TRC would have been able to garner more public support had it better managed the reparations process, which was central to activists and their families who had sacrificed so much for the sake of the struggle. In reflecting on the input of activists, it becomes apparent that their experiences remain invalidated as far as they are concerned. Kagee (2006, p. 20), too, found that, "[activists] indicated concerns that the present South African government appeared to have forgotten them and that they have received no material benefits in return for their activism against apartheid."

This 'devaluing', it appears, contributed significantly to these informants' resistance to participate fully in the transformation process and, more specifically, in the process of reconciliation. Allan and Allan (2000) are of the opinion that the mismanagement of the reparations process hampered rather than promoted the healing of survivors. This is echoed by Daye (2004, p. 118) who states that, "[t]he fact that perpetrators have received their good [in the form of amnesty] but victims have not is simply unjust. It has extended the injustice of the original violations." It is, then, expected that activists would feel somewhat slighted and removed from the reconciliatory process, as hitherto they have not received 'symbolic reparation' for themselves and their families in the form of credential acknowledgement and/or material reward. Further the argument can be made that activists would distance

themselves now, more so than ever before, from the process of transformation and reconciliation because their experiences appear to have been made redundant by the TRC. Similarly, as alluded to earlier, the role ambiguity experienced by activists may have found definite clarity at both a personal level, and at an 'activist level,' if such acknowledgements were indeed made either by the TRC or the current state.

According to Alex Boraine, deputy chairperson of the TRC, the TRC cannot be blamed for the manner in which the reparations process has been managed. Blame, he argues, should be laid squarely at the feet of the current government, "All I can argue is that we handed in our recommendations regarding reparation a very long time ago, and the government had made no attempt to implement any of these, except for the urgent interim relief¹⁵, which took a long time to happen. The government owes an answer, not merely to the Commission, but to those victims who came to tell their stories and hoped that there would be some practical response other than the words of compassion which were expressed in the public hearings" (Boraine, 2000, p. 336). To add insult to injury, the South African government in January 2000 stated that it was only able to offer token compensation of R2000 to Apartheid-era victims instead of the individual financial grant (estimated to be between R17 029 and R23 023) payable annually to victims over a six-year period, as recommended in the final report of the TRC in 1998 (Wilson, 2001).

From the informants' statements provided above, it appears that the government's response to the matter of reparations is long overdue and that the danger exists that when that response makes its appearance, in whichever form, it will not be able to dissipate the feelings of devaluation, betrayal and anger with which these informants and many survivors are riddled. This betrayal and anger may be embodied in the initial, and subsequent, trauma experienced by activists during their involvement and post-Apartheid, which is the following exploration of this chapter.

¹⁵ According to Boraine (2000, p. 336-337), "[u]rgent interim reparation [can be defined as] assistance for people in urgent need, to provide them with access to appropriate services and facilities."

6.7. Forgetting the bad dream

Though many of these informants have been detained and tortured, as part of their activism against the Apartheid regime, they appear to have been able to develop coping mechanisms to better manage their trauma, and the perceived impact of it. Informant 2, for example, provides an explicit and detailed account of how he was able to survive the several detentions he encountered during the struggle. For him, the key survival strategy was to keep his mind occupied so as to overcome the 'mental torture' him and his comrades were subjected to. The strategy this informant applied is outlined below:

"With detention your biggest enemy apart from physical torture, is your mind and as long as you can occupy your mind all the time, then you can withstand detention or solitary confinement for long periods of time especially if you are being held on your own without you know contact with other people, without visits, without, the only people that you see are your interrogators ... so what we did was that we had also sorts of workshops that we have organised with people in the Southern Cape in all the towns with activists to prepare people "You will get detained at some point or the other, this is how you deal with it." ... So it was mostly around, I mean you can't do anything about physical torture but you can do things around mental torture and for instance one of the things that we did, you know taught people, that I practiced and that I conveyed to other people and you know helped them to understand and to learn was to organise your day even if you are held alone in a cell without any contacts, to organise your day into various parts and programmes and activities as if you are outside you know. The main thing is not to focus on your release but to A) accept immediately the moment you are there that this is your home now, you are not going to come out of here, you are here for ever, although you know that at some point you will be released and to make sure that you structure your day in various activities from the time that you wake up in the morning to the time that you go to bed you know ... You have the time where you go to movies in your mind. You have the time when you do sport, you have the time when you, you know socialise, you have the time when you play chess, you have the time when you do all sorts of things, but it is you alone and your mind and you have the time where you sing and you have a time where you do a whole range of things and you have a time where you rest ... And you kind of you know try to live an ordered organised life because the moment you are disorganised and disordered, then your mind start to just wonder where it wants to. It inevitably goes to 'I want to go out, I feel trapped in here' etc. etc. And then once that happens, you start to panic and you start to give in to all sorts of things and you can go crazy there and it becomes unbearable, you start to cry, you want to be outside and so on and so on. So it is how you focus your mind to think about certain things only and so."

Joseph Faniso Mati, an activist who was detained on Robben Island, also describes the 'mental occupation' and physical organisation required to survive detention, similar to that described by the informant above. Mati (2000, p. 27) says of this experience, "As I said, if you were not constructively busy in prison, it was very dangerous, because you could become mentally deranged So in order to stay sane and to avoid worrying about your loved ones, you had to get busy in studies, in discussions, in sport, in reading – later on even playing games like scrabble and chess." The acceptance of one's conditions in prison, which this informant, too, makes mention of, appears to have been a common coping mechanism for activists during periods of detention as Suttner (2001, p. 101) too, writes that, "[f]or your own psychological survival here [in prison], you adapt to the pace and expectations of prison life. That way, all goes well – until some changes leaves you 'dumbfounded.'"

When posed the question as to what impact the trauma of detention had on him, informant 2 answered emphatically that it increased his level of commitment to the struggle and that this indeed has been an enduring trait of his character post-1994. Of his comrades were not able to withstand the impact of detention and withdrew their participation in the struggle with immediate effect subsequent to their release, which beckons the question as to what factors (both psychological and contextual) enabled this informant, and many others, to continue their involvement in the struggle despite the fact that they were detained several times throughout their involvement. For this informant it is perhaps his 'lived' experience of the indignities of Apartheid (having to rely on social grants) and his 'lived' experience of activism within his family, via the activism of his brothers, which enabled, and propelled, his continuation in the struggle, despite the hardships he endured during his periods of detention.

An alternative view is offered by Suttner (2001) who argues that during his periods of detention, unlike many of his fellow comrades, he was able to preserve his level of commitment to the struggle, due to the fact that he had internalised the ideas and theories of the MDM.

Informant 6 makes mention of the fact that subsequent to the suspension of the armed struggle she sought psychological support and counselling

for a number of years, though it is apparent from the interview that she holds the view that this process was not as effective as she had hoped:

"I went to therapy eventually, and I was extremely angry, I was counselled by [name of therapist withheld] who saw me for a year and then I went to the Trauma Centre for nearly two years, I saw [name of therapist withheld], who was a psychoanalyst, one of a few in this country, he is not here anymore. And I think that, I don't know if entirely, I didn't entirely break through, or my family entirely was ready but it did help, and instead now I work with a support group that is in the process of much more greater community healing and so that's what I can give back, because I've had that opportunity, from the advantage position in psychology, how the psyche copes under extreme stress and it is extreme stress."

While this informant is of the opinion that one-on-one counselling was not as effective as she had initially hoped, it is evident from the statement above that she has found (and continues to find) greater psychological support and healing in the community support group of which she is part. Perhaps she is able to find greater support within this environment due to the fact that she is able to identify with the experiences and emotions of fellow survivors of the Apartheid state. One cannot discount the impact this 'collective consciousnesses' must have in the way of sharing their institutionalised experiences of pain and suffering inflicted on them by the Apartheid regime. Additionally, this group continues to assert their survivor status by continuing the struggle for equitable reparations for survivors of the Apartheid regime and its atrocities.

Similarly, informant 1 also entered into counselling post-1994 due to the fact that he experienced difficulty in managing his anger and the expression thereof. This informant's experience of his anger is expressed below:

"I had a serious problem with my temper and anger and violence, because I mean look my whole youth was around violence you know. I was part of a military organisation, so violence was a big part of my existence, you know we were fighting, it's a violent act, with words, with actions, physically, we were being beaten and beating up you know, there's two sides to everything. We'd been attacked and we were attacking as well, it wasn't all in defence, don't let anybody ever tell you that, you know. So those things is things, so I had a big problem with my violent reaction to situations, because it becomes sort a defence mechanism almost and its

something I'm glad to say I left behind a couple of years ago, something I had to learn to deal with and specifically with that I actually went to see someone for a long time, just to deal with that specific characteristic you know."

This informant is of the opinion that this 'residual' anger is borne out of the social environment in which he was located during the anti-Apartheid struggle and the military training he received via his involvement in MK. It appears that these violent playing fields, marred by social upheaval and restlessness, inculcated in this informant the tendency to give volatile expression to his anger. While this behaviour might have been condoned and perhaps even encouraged in the context of the anti-Apartheid struggle, within the context of a 'new' South Africa, which was set on transformation and reconciliation, this sort of behaviour was frowned upon. It may be this environment, in addition to the informant's realisation that this behaviour was no longer adaptive in this context and to his personal interaction with others, which led him to seek psychological support.

While the aim of this study was not to explore trauma in its depth and breadth, from the cursory discussions had with informants and from the extracts provided above, it appears that the informants have been able to manage the trauma of being involved in the struggle fairly well. While a number of them have not found it necessary to seek psychological support, there are those who have sought this nature of support post-1994. What emerges from this data, however, is the fact that one is not able to delineate a generic set of coping mechanisms for activists involved in the struggle. Instead, what has happened is that these informants have personalised their coping mechanisms to suite their current needs and context.

This personalisation of coping mechanisms again illustrates the manifesting resilience activists had to develop in sustaining their participation in an extremely hostile, and potentially life threatening, political context. It is this researcher's contention, then, that even though a generic set of coping mechanisms cannot specifically be drawn, it still remains overarching that the role of the family (as was presented here) and the role of the collective introduced below, in particular, ensured that

informants were able to overcome torturous hardships. Nor can we discount, as introduced in this study, the constructive effects the impact of role dimension selection has had on the capacity of these activists to cope. Here, the application of particular role dimension types in effect became the saving grace of many activists post liberation.

Whether these role dimensions were selected during or post-Apartheid, it is nevertheless critical to view the perception of the 'self' within a broader context of a collective, as so frequently argued by the informants in this study. Here, Suttner (2001, p. 145) illuminates the importance of the collective in coping with particularly traumatic conditions in stating that, "As I sit here [in prison], I am at once an individual but also part of a wider whole. The consciousness of that connection gives me strength and makes it difficult for me to indulge feelings of self-pity. I have to keep my feelings under control or experience them as not being solely an individual problem." As cited in the theoretical framework, this attests to the fact that one's involvement in the struggle automatically invoked the saliency of one's social identity, which led one's self-concept to become synonymous with that of the group's (Abrams & Hogg, 1990), in this case that of the liberation movement's, as is illustrated by informants in this study and by Suttner (2001) in his comment above. This discussion on the collective is further explored under the next chapter of this study.

CHAPTER 7: AN ENSEMBLE OF COMMITMENT

7.1. Systems of the cause

The importance attached to the notion of the 'collective' is evident from the informants' denial of the singular identity or the concept of the 'I' from their discussions of their experiences. This emphasis on the collective¹⁶, and similarly on the concept of 'we/us,' may have led to the role ambiguity many of these informants experienced post-1994, as the negotiated settlement and the demise of the Apartheid regime caused them to become dislodged from their collective groupings. A strong sense of the collective was also present in the anti-Apartheid activists studied by Foster, et al. (2005).

This emphasis on the collective may have sprung from the fact that individual proponents of the movement came to the realisation that their attempts to change the state of affairs within the Apartheid regime would only be effective if their individualised efforts were collated within that of a group or a collective. In other words, the notion of a collective bestowed their efforts with a sense of credibility and, in addition, it provided activists with a base from which to operate. This credibility, which the collective afforded these individuals' efforts with, is best described by Baumeister (1997, p. 190) who asserts that, "[o]ne reason for the importance of groups in idealistic evil¹⁷ is the power of the group to support its high, broad ideals. Abstract conceptions of how things ought to be gain social reality from the mere fact of being shared by a group. Without the group context, they are merely the whims of individuals, and as such they do not justify the use of violent means." Within this context, then, it not only becomes acceptable to harm or injure others, it becomes one's duty to do so, as one is motivated by the

¹⁶ Here, it must be pointed out that even though none of the informants explicitly used the term 'collective' it is abundantly evident from the transcripts where the informants often refer to 'we/us,' which then places an emphasis on the notion of a group or a collective rather than on the 'self' or the 'I.'

¹⁷ According to Baumeister (1997), idealistic evil occurs when idealism and moral virtue are utilised to support, and even condone, the committing of violent deeds. While I do not support the usage of the terms 'evil' and 'perpetrator' due to the fact that I am of the opinion that it devalues and taints these informants' contribution to the liberation of South Africa, I have found Baumeister's (1997) explanation as to the importance of the group/collective fitting in explicating and understanding these informants' gravitation towards group activity.

belief that one's actions contribute to making the world a better place (Baumeister, 1997).

With regard to anti-Apartheid activists, the ideals held by their political parties, and the MDM at large, provided them with a cause to fight for (i.e. the liberation of South Africa and its people) and, in the process of realizing that cause, inflicting harm on the enemy (the Apartheid regime and those affiliated to it) became a legitimised 'duty.'

From the above discussion, it is clear that the collective provided activists the space in which to access a group of individuals with whom they could share their 'lived' experiences of the brutality of the Apartheid regime and with whom they could, in turn, find common ground in striving towards the ambitions and/or goals of the movement. Perhaps this reliance on the collective, and the realisation of these informants that they were indeed part of a larger group, offered them the safety and support they sought in taking on the Apartheid regime.

It is worthwhile to note at this stage, considering the earlier discussion on the notion of the family, that the collective provided an extension to the embedded value that is found within the structure of the family. Notably, informants often referred to one another as 'my brother or sister,' and more commonly, as 'comrade.' As with the family, the collective provided a close, caring and nurturing relationship between individuals. The intensity of these relationships, and the quality inherent in them, ensured that the members of the collective protected each other at particularly vulnerable moments within the struggle.

It appears from this discussion that the manner in which the collective emulated the family structure was perhaps by design for the purposes of the motives of the struggle, yet one cannot escape the fact that it appears that activists were almost 'naturally' drawn to the idea of a 'collective' or to that of belonging to a group. Baumeister (1997, p. 192) sheds some light on this by stating that, "[s]ome theorists have argued that the tendency to form small groups is the most important adaptation in human evolution, ranking even above intelligence, and so natural selection has shaped human nature to need to belong to groups."

The collective was a necessary vehicle of the struggle in that, by its very structure, the collective is comprised of leaders and followers. In other words, within the collective there are individuals who are assigned the task of giving orders and others who are assigned the task of following those orders. This very structure alludes to the fact that within the collective there existed an organised and systematised approach to the anti-Apartheid struggle and this is evident from the manner in which the informants analytically articulated themselves in the interview process. Below, informant 2 summarises the critical characteristics of the collective:

“In Oudtshoorn I was involved, not only in Oudtshoorn but in the whole of the Southern Cape, when I went to Oudtshoorn initially, myself and a few of my peers at the time, Oudtshoorn and the Southern Cape was very dead you know politically and we basically organised and mobilised the people in each of those towns, George, Mossel Bay, Knysna, Plettenberg Bay, Beaufort West, all over the Southern Cape and the Klein Karoo areas. And as result of my consistent involvement and activity and leadership that I gave and the things that I went through in terms of detentions etc. etc, I became a leader in that sense being in the forefront of things, with other people obviously.”

The consistent reference to ‘other people’ or ‘my peers’ underlines the notion that the political challenges of the day required a collectively driven approach with specific systems and cultural elements. According to Cohen (1969) (as cited in Ross, 2000), groups often utilise ‘cultural organisations’ to address political problems, which, when addressed appropriately, enhances the groups’ solidarity, as well as its level of mobilisation. It is my contention that these cultural elements provide a value base to the collective, but more importantly, provides manner, form and function to undertake the work of the collective, as is captured in the table below.

	Political Problems addressed by Cultural Organization (as identified by Cohen, 1969)(as cited in Ross, 2000, pp. 41 – 42)	Cultural Characteristics of the Struggle Collective
1.	<p>“Such organizations help define a group’s <i>distinctiveness</i>, meaning its membership and sphere of operation within the context of the contemporaneous political setting, through myths of origin and claims to superiority; descent and endogamy; moral exclusiveness; endo-culture; spatial proximity; and homogenization.”</p>	<p>The collective, within the MDM, was typified by intellectual debate, liberal discussions on democracy, a commitment to the advancement of members in relation to political capacities, which was considered to be a necessary distinction of the collective. Even though it invited as many people as possible into the struggle, it was nevertheless heterogeneous, dependent upon regional political dynamics and the localised type of leadership. For example, collectives within the Western Cape were largely led by ‘Coloured’ leaders and, therefore, took on a particular shape and culture, whereas the struggle collective in KwaZulu-Natal required the often impossible mediation between Xhosa and Zulu speaking comrades. As with church groups, who have their particular way of doing things, which distinguishes them from groups who, for argument’s sake, attend a rock concert so, too, do struggle collectives stand out by virtue of the particularly unique characteristics fostered by members as a necessity of the struggle and the continuation of the revolution.</p>
2.	<p>“Cultural organizations meet the political needs of groups for intense internal <i>communications</i> among their constituent parts.”</p>	<p>Another distinction of organisational life is of course the way that members within the group communicate with each other. It is no underestimation that the struggle collective developed, by way of steep political consciousness, a sophisticated ability to communicate internally. The development of a particular language characterised by ‘ideological speak’ and particular words and phrases such as ‘comrade,’ ‘chief’ and ‘particularly’ or ‘categorically’ and so forth, have in a way become consummate with activist language. A second consideration for internal communication is in the way that the struggle collective produced its text. Here, an understanding of the collective’s affinity with theories such as Marxism, socialism and liberalism often manifested in</p>

		<p>the way that members of the collective wrote positional papers on various aspects of South African life. It appears that this trend has followed through into the post-Apartheid era with significant emphasis being placed on position papers within the current ruling party informing the political, social and economic direction of the country.</p>
3.	<p>“Cultural organizations offer mechanisms for <i>decision-making</i> involving some formulation of general problems confronting the group and taking decisions about them.”</p>	<p>Inherent in organisational life is the ability to make decisions on a number of levels, both about the role of the organisation as well as its function and purpose, which extends to everyday organisational operations such as meeting dates and times. In this way the struggle collective was no different than any other organisation, albeit more secretive. Here, the collective depended on a system of decision-making based largely on a tiered structure as far as organisational systems are concerned, where senior activists often led and executed the required decision-making. A key distinction must be pointed out though, which underscores the fact that the campaign to eradicate Apartheid was a national programme as much as it was a local one. This means that the collective, in effect, executed decisions taken far higher up within the organisation, often from places such as Lusaka and London where the ANC was based since its banning in 1961. An additional distinction that characterises the struggle collective is the notion of ideologically informed decision-making. Here, struggle leadership needed to contend not only with the modalities of everyday revolution such as which municipal building will be targeted next for bombing, but needed to at the same time eek out an ideological vision of a future South Africa. In other words, the practicalities of the revolution provided a basis for decision-making while still having to contend with shaping and deciding on how a new South Africa will look or be. Here, ideological considerations such as systems of economy, systems of politics, and systems of socialisation needed to be considered so to pre-empt a</p>

		post-revolution society.
4.	“They provide <i>authority</i> for implementing decisions and for speaking where appropriate, on behalf of the group.”	The notion of authority within the broader scope of the revolution was contentious and ambiguous. At the one level, there existed a moral authority in the fight against Apartheid, which provided a unifying dimension to all organisations under the MDM. At another level, however, the notion of authority became ‘messy’ as competing ideological perspectives, multiple centres of power, racial diversity, and equally important, the notion of gender, played itself out in impacting on how authority was executed within the struggle. This said, authority within the revolution had a clear distinct line based on hierarchical structures and authority was often given (or taken) by those who were in exile, banned or in prison. It is not uncommon to believe that the struggle was directed from Lusaka, London and Robben Island, a sort of external authority, which was readily accepted by comrades on the ground. The system of authority was based on experience, competence and seniority. In other words, activists who were in the struggle for longer, were in prison more than once, or who were banned a number of times would often be seen to have a supra-authority as it was believed that they had more experience and/or suffered more.
5.	“Cultural organizations can provide a political <i>ideology</i> often rooted in the language of kinship and ritual which gives legitimacy to power and converts it into authority.”	Within the ambit of the struggle, the collective can be seen as a cultural organisation. It is here that ideological debate was rife and was often adopted and where specific organisational how-to’s, in other words ‘the way we do things around here’ (organisational culture), were developed. It is this mixture of ideology and organisational, cultural practice that spawned a sense of ritual and connectivity between members. This connectivity and ritual provided a legitimate base with regard to the notion of power and how this power was assigned and under whose authority this power was expressed. The informant base utilised in this study often referred to the notion of a mandate and that

		<p>they are unable or unwilling to do anything contrary to the organisational mandate and that even today the mandate requires reconciliation, but against their will they are clearly towing the line. Here, one cannot underscore the importance of organisational culture and its effects and influence on its members as clearly demonstrated by the informant base of this study.</p>
6.	<p>“Finally, cultural organizations meet the need for <i>discipline, through ceremonials and rituals which connect the ideology to current problems of the community.</i>”</p>	<p>Organisational discipline is perhaps one of the most fundamental organisational cultural components, in that it (the collective) required its members to strictly adhere to the organisation’s modus operandi. Very often, struggle collectives provided a protective barrier to more militaristic structures, such as localised MK cells. This barrier existed in the organisational discipline that was held amongst activists for the purposes of advancing a military offensive against the Apartheid state. The necessary secrecy required for the manifestation of military operations was characterised by unspoken rituals and rules, where very often members of a collective did not specifically know that their co-comrades or fellow activists were operative in military cells. However, it was not just the military programme that required discipline, the work of the collective, and indeed of any organisation within the struggle, required activists to be extremely conscious of their behaviour in meetings and in public, about the way they managed their time so as to ensure that meetings started and ended on time, and lastly with regard to the organisation of logistically intense events such as mass rallies and marches. This level of organisation required advanced discipline and an understanding that organisational rituals, rules, and habits were there to ensure the smooth running of the revolution.</p>

The cultural characteristics provided above ensured that the collective and its participants were able to operate quite effectively given the day-to-day demands of 'struggle' activity. Another manner in which the collective drove the struggle was through the establishment of an informal 'learning institution' geared towards preparing activists for their role in the struggle. Here, the collective arranged for the continuing political education and training of activists so as to ensure that they had an understanding of, and appreciation for, the dynamics and workings of the struggle, and that they were updated as to the current political context and strides made by the movement on a regular basis.

Foster, et al. (2005, p. 300) also make mention of the political training afforded activists, especially those recruited into youth and/or student organisations. These authors assert that, "[t]hey [youth organisations] taught appropriate political understandings and created their own form of sub-culture with disciplinary measures shaped by the common identity of the 'comrades.'" As was cited in the theoretical framework, Bundy (1989), too, made reference to 'alternative education' and 'awareness programmes,' which became the norm within 'Black' communities, particularly during the 1985 schools boycott. Provided below, is informant 4's description as to what transpired at workshops of this nature:

"... we had group sessions where we break into group, we would have plenary sessions and then after that we would break into groups, in the plenary sessions you would be told about ANC policies, the Freedom Charter, the structure, the hierarchy or the, not the hierarchy but the links between organisations, what the NECC is involved in, National Education Crises Committee, what the UDF stands for you know and how organisations are connected to the UDF and via the UDF to the ANC. We would learn about the history of the ANC, the leadership of the ANC, those kinds of things and then from there, from the plenary session you would go into small groups and have discussions then. From these discussions you have to report back and then there will be questions on how we understand, what the role of the ANC is in transforming South Africa into a democratic South Africa for example, and then you as a group you have to discuss those type of things and report back you know, to the plenary and from this workshop everything would go to the mother organisation, we would report back to the mother organisation, which is the UDF, we were affiliated to the UDF and the UDF would have meetings, I think once or twice monthly and then we would report back as to what we have done for the past three months or two weeks, what has happened in schools, those kind of things. And just those type of

organisational skills, communication skills, people skills you would like be groomed for, but not as I say not officially as we are being groomed you know."

Sustained collective and individual capacity building was critical in ensuring a continued and relentless struggle against Apartheid. Informant 2 also supports this view by pointing out that education and training within the group ensured the ongoing security of the group:

"... so what we did was that we had also sorts of workshops that we have organised with people in the Southern Cape in all the towns with activists to prepare people, "You will get detained at some point or the other, this is how you deal with it." And we had organisations from Cape Town and from Johannesburg and so on who were involved in running workshops of that nature."

The political education provided to activists, via their initiation into a collective, often extended far beyond the aims of merely wanting to educate activists on the political context of the day and the struggle associated to it. In effect, the political education afforded these activists was often part and parcel of the grooming of, what activists referred to as, a second tier leadership within the collective. This was done so as to ensure that in the event that activists, who were central to the collective, were detained, that there would emerge activists who would be willing and ready to assume these positions with immediate effect to ensure the continuing contribution of that specific collective to the movement. Below, informant 4 recounts his experience of being groomed for this purpose:

"My brother was detained in '87 ja, in September, no in June '87 ja ... So I had to take leadership there at that stage and I became part of the Executive of MIPSCO, I was the media person of MIPSCO, but it was really well thought out because since my brother was detained the guys decided that they needed a second layer of leadership you know, they needed to groom people, and Errol, this one guy who was like the media person before I became the media person and I had to, and then he left school so when you leave school you can't be part of what's going on because you're not a student and I became the media person, he trained me how to do silk-screening, how to do posters, we used to go to CAP, I don't know if you know CAP, Community Arts Project, we went there and we would go for a day, you don't go to school, and you print pamphlets and print banners and t-shirts."

It is apparent from the role ambiguity experienced by informants, subsequent to the negotiated settlement and the disintegration of the collective (as discussed in the previous section), that activists attached a high degree of sentimentality and meaning to their belonging to a collective or a group. The notion of the collective, which appears to have been part and parcel of the culture of the revolution, appears to be in the process of eroding away post-1994 within the 'new' South Africa. Unlike in the anti-Apartheid struggle where the collective took precedence over the wants and needs of the individuals who comprised it, there appears now within the current South African context to be an emphasis on the attainment of wealth and self-enrichment by the current leadership. Informants have expressed their dissatisfaction with this as follows, as expressed by informant 3:

"When you were an activist in the '80s and '90s, you were there because you believed in the plight of the people and the cause that you were struggling for. But people were also servant-leaders; it was to serve the people, to serve the ambitions of the people, the belief of society. Today many people aspire to leadership positions, not driven by those values, but driven by the fact that with leadership positions there is a lot of material advancement and wealth and so that becomes the key driver and that becomes sometimes what brings people together- their common desire to enrich each, themselves and so the peoples' interest, those who they must serve becomes secondary to serving themselves and then becoming self-serving and so their whole system of their whole engagement is designed to improve their personal circumstances ."

Informant 1 expands on the issue of this pervading leadership character by implying that the activists who have become politicians are too concerned with the 'self'. Here similarity, as per the role dimensions discussed earlier, can be drawn between today's politicians and activists, as activists themselves, too, are more internally focused:

"You know for me politicians are too concerned with weighing the pros and cons of situations, to effectively do their jobs, you know, how will this, and too much, I'm not saying all of them but too much of them is centred around their own personal interests and not the interests of a broader cause or a broader purpose, it's more centred around their personal promotions, their personal career or as we say the ANC was attacked with careerists and opportunists in the '94 onwards ..."

It may be, then, that these informants' critique of the current government and their dissatisfaction with the outcomes of the negotiated settlement

are more of a critique as to the breakdown of the collective, and the devaluation of this structure's contribution to the movement, via the emphasis on the individual as may be exhibited by the top leadership structures within the current government. The impact that the breakdown of this collective has had on these informants' sense of identity cannot, however, be discounted, as was demonstrated in the previous section of this study. In as much as the collective ensured a cementing of the identity of activists, it is argued that it also contributed significantly to the informants' 'binding in' to the objectives underlining the MDM, as introduced below.

7.2. Cementing commitment

As discussed in the above section, the eradication of Apartheid would have proven an impossible feat if there existed not a group of people who opposed this regime in an organised manner. Not only did the notion of the collective, and one's sense of belonging to a group, legitimise one's efforts and lend credence to the anti-Apartheid struggle, but the very grouping of individuals within the collective instilled in many activists the sense of a 'political home' in that one found oneself within a group of other activists who shared one's thinking around the current political context and one's drive to transform it. More importantly, the context of the collective was adaptive in that it renewed and reinforced activists' commitment to the movement via dialogue and debate with, and encouragement and support from, other activists within one's collective grouping.

It appears, then, that the notion of the collective, far from being just a method of struggle, came to be thought of as an ideological component to, and of, the struggle as it played a crucial role in the construction and grooming of activists and in providing the impetus for these activists to propel the struggle forward. In this manner, then, the collective ensured that the social identities of activists always took precedence over their personal identities and their individual survival. In other words, as cited in the theoretical framework, it ensured that their self-concepts became synonymous with that of the group's (Abrams & Hogg, 1990).

While the political consciousness, which sprung from these informants' 'lived' experiences of Apartheid and which was cemented and encouraged within their respective families, by default set the stage for their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle, the collective, in the manner in which it was structured and operated, afforded these informants a credible platform from which to practically exercise this consciousness. In other words, the collective, by its very design, form and function, inadvertently entrenched and strengthened these informants' commitment ('binding in') to the ideals and ambitions embedded within the anti-Apartheid struggle. This is demonstrated below by informant 1's description of his commitment to the movement:

"... my whole life was dedicated to the struggle, my actions, my movements, where I went, what I did, how I did it, was dedicated solely to the struggle and to the movement, specifically to the movement. There was nothing they could ask me that I would say no, and there was nothing I wouldn't do at that stage."

In addition, the culture of the collective, which instilled in these informants the commitment to fight the Apartheid regime and the structures affiliated to it, has perhaps contributed to these informants' resistance to support the current government as well as its agenda of reconciliation and transformation. During the anti-Apartheid struggle, the collective preached the fighting of the enemy and spent years on instilling political tactic and strategy within its members, the process and aims of reconciliation never formed part of its agenda, as was expressed by informant 5:

"... I think I was just staunch in understanding about negotiating, about negotiation and reconciliation. It wasn't something that I understood or in my political education that I was taught about you know."

Would it, then, not be natural for these informants, whose identity came to be tied up with that of the collective, to express a natural tendency toward continuing the struggle within their current contexts, as this is all they were taught to do and as their survival was dependent on their ability to fight? One then needs to ask what this would, then, mean for reconciliation. Just as it appears natural for these informants to continue the struggle, it appears natural that they would express a resistance

towards reconciliation and a difficulty in engaging with the practicalities of the concept. After all, how does one reconcile if one does not know how to and if one was taught not to?

In these questions, the study argues that informants had the need to sustain the idea of the collective post-Apartheid so to construct new identities and roles, as clarified below.

7.3. A faultless collective romance

As discussed in the previous section, many of the informants appeared to have undergone an experience of role ambiguity post-1994, subsequent to the negotiated settlement. The main reason offered as to why this may have been the case was largely tied to these informants involvement in structures of the armed struggle and the sense of their loss of self subsequent to their roles being made redundant with the disarmament of MK. Yet, an additional reason may exist as to why informants found themselves in this state post-1994.

The negotiated settlement inadvertently led to the dismantling of many of the 'informal' structures that were crucial to the progression of the anti-Apartheid struggle, as these structures were no longer required due to the struggle having come to an end with the defeat of the Apartheid regime. The collective, too, fell victim to this redundancy post-1994 and with its breakdown many activists were dislodged from their 'political home' and from the individuals they had come to regard as members of their own families. This dislodgement from their collective groupings, which appears to have been the base through which their political consciousness was sharpened and exercised, could additionally have been responsible for the role ambiguity many of these informants' experienced post-1994. Informant 5 vividly describes how this dislodging process affected both the embedded unity of the collective and the eventual impact on the individual and the community as a whole:

"... the unity that I'm speaking of is not just for me as an individual, it's not just about a group of people being together, it's also about that group of people having a common understanding of what they want, their ideals and aspirations are common you know, it's not just about the community

coming together on Sunday in the church, but the community in the church having the same aspirations, the same values, that was lost, it was gone. So the situation it changed man, after 1993 for me, as an individual, the situation changed."

In an attempt to protect themselves from this dislodgement, would it not just be natural for these informants to reminisce about the collective and even go so far as to attempt to re-create the notion of the collective in their current contexts? It is likely that this process of reminiscing has found practical expression in the re-creation of these informants' collective groupings by them gathering together with known individuals from their struggle days in what can be defined as 'splinter groups.' This re-creation of the past, within a now 'causeless' collective, requires of these informants, then, to re-create a cause so as to ensure that this 'new' collective is as similar in structure and form to the collective from which they have been dislodged, as articulated by informant 5 below:

"And hence I wouldn't be able to form part of any sort of structure where there's no common identity, where people don't necessarily understand things the way I understand it. Because that is where I come from, I do still have a lot of relationships with individual people where that commonality is there, but we exist outside of an organisation."

What appears to have happened is that for these informants the cause has shifted from critiquing and actively opposing the Apartheid regime, as was the case in their days of the struggle, to now critiquing the current regime and structures affiliated to it, such as the TRC. This, again, alludes to the fact that the notion of a 'permanent revolution' is indeed a reality for many of these informants, which is perhaps another factor, which has led them to 'distance' themselves from the current ANC-led government. One can, after all, not be supportive of a regime, which has now become the central cause of one's reinvented collective. Below, informant 1 emphasises this point quite succinctly:

"For me I don't see it, as an activist I think my job so to speak would be to become the conscience of the political party, but not from within the party, reminding them from outside the party, but as a member, that things still need to be done."

Whether on the political periphery or from a 'safe' socialised distance, the re-creation of the collective has come to be an adaptive mechanism

for these informants so as to lessen the trauma that their loss of 'self' would invoke. The danger exists that these informants, in their continued insistence on re-creating their past, may not have made the psychological and emotional leap from the past to the present. As discussed earlier, this perhaps points to the fact that for these informants the only manner in which they are able to guarantee a sense of continuity with regard to their identity is via their continued existence in, and affinity to, the past. While this appears to be an adaptive mechanism for now, it is sure to have a shelf life and once this mechanism has expired, these informants may again be hurled into the realm of role ambiguity, which, it appears, they have attempted so ardently to avoid post-1994.

Critical to the existence of the collective and the continued redefinition of the roles of activists, it is important to explore the influencing nature and culture of the MDM, within which political ideology was shaped and given credence, as explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8: THE MASS DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDM) AND SOCIETY – THE SUPRA-ALPHA AND THE OMEGA

The following chapter simultaneously addresses two key interlocking, yet distinct, constructs in understanding the broader sociological and ideological dimensions of the experiences of activists during, and post, the Apartheid era. The first component deals with the overarching, and ever permeating, role of the MDM as a broad ‘church’ of anti-Apartheid organisations. The latter component (that of society) speaks to the macrosystem dimensions prevalent as an influencing discourse of both the organisations and the individuals involved in the anti-Apartheid struggle.

8.1. One message, one nation, one struggle

It is evident that a broader movement of ideological and political activity was at play during the Apartheid struggle. This activity was encapsulated in the MDM, which essentially provided individuals with an organised, nationwide base for the outlet of political activism and the struggle against Apartheid. The MDM was by definition a social movement, though one of mass proportions. Touraine (1997) (as cited in Egan & Wafer, 2006, p. 51), “... defines a social movement as ‘the organized collective behaviour of a class actor [the disenfranchised sector of South African society] struggling against his class adversary [the Apartheid regime and affiliated structures] for the social control of historicity in a concrete community.’”

The political consciousness of these informants, which was borne in their respective families, was entrenched and ultimately found expression in, their collective groupings, which then, in turn, found resonance in, and was influenced by, the political ideology embedded within the MDM. From this, then, it is clear that the political ideology of the MDM permeated and filtered through the family, the individual, and the collective, as separate, yet, intertwined entities. It seems that the MDM’s main purpose was to cement the political ideology, driving the struggle, within the family, the individual, and the collective. This provided activists with a sense of political and ideological safety and protection in that they were aware of the fact that their ideology was not an ideology adhered to singularly by them, but that it was an ideology

adhered to by a mass of other activists and individuals, like themselves, across the country. Here, informant 2 exhaustively amplifies the fortifying effects of a democratic hegemony embedded in a unifying ideological discourse across a broad front of anti-Apartheid structures:

“You know the civic level, civic organisations were formed almost in each and every community, youth organisations, women’s organisations, students’ organisations, labour unions and so on were formed. But they all, although there was a link between them and they worked together, they didn’t work together in a kind of an open way, they had joined campaigns and joint struggles that they were fighting but more at a kind of almost underground level. It was all obviously coordinated but there was no public coordinated united voice for all those organisations. So the UDF was also an attempt at a public level to bring together what was referred to at the time as the Mass Democratic Movement, which was a collection basically of all these various loose organisations around South Africa.”

The launch of the UDF provided a sustained, manifesting impetus for anti-Apartheid campaigns throughout the 1980s, and the funnelling of localised struggles, under the banner of the MDM, ensured that differing ideological perspectives and group-specific interests were channelled as a singular reply of protest against the Apartheid state, as further articulated by informant 1:

“The whole purpose of the UDF was to create an above board front, remember the UDF wasn’t an organisation, it was a front, it was the United Democratic Front, it was a front of organisations and I think the purpose of designing the UDF like that was so that you could have many affiliates of all sectors, schools, youth movements, church, religious, soccer clubs, I think there was even the Gay and Lesbian Movement that also belonged, I think the purpose of creating a front was so that it will give it a broad base of organisations. There was no criteria, you know it wasn’t just the students, it wasn’t just COSATU¹⁸, it wasn’t just the workers, it wasn’t just the civic associations, but now there was an umbrella body that encompassed all these various organisations with one aim, and that was to overthrow the State at the time, that was the aim of the UDF.”

This sense of safety and that of belonging to a larger group, which these individuals were afforded by the MDM, cannot be discounted as it in effect came to represent some sort of ‘political home’ for them. Within the MDM, activists were able to give expression to their victim status, while simultaneously opposing the regime, which had inflicted this status upon them. It is also within the MDM that these individuals’ understanding of the cause became crystallised and through which they came to appreciate the manner in which the struggle was orchestrated and in which it would be carried out. In

¹⁸ Congress of South African Trade Unions

essence, then, the MDM provided a deepening of activists' ideological strength in that it created a continuity of ideological values across the family, the individual, the collective, and as will be discussed later, the society.

As an ideological structure, the MDM also ensured for the grooming of national leaders in that it elevated individuals with whom activists could identify and to whom they could aspire. This, in effect, led to the 'political branding' of leaders within the movement, such as Reverend Frank Chikane and Reverend Allan Boesak, which, in turn, led activists to replicate the values of leadership exhibited by these leaders within their own respective collective groupings. This process, and the importance thereof, is described by informant 3 as follows:

"But the things that kept you going or helped you to overcome those fears [referring to the confrontational and often violent nature of boycotts/demonstrations/riots] was the fact that there were so many other leaders at the time who was giving so much more to contribute towards liberating the land. And so in that sense, that was a huge magnet drawing people to the values of the organisation and those values were encapsulated by the leaders, the leaders really lived those values."

In this way, then, the MDM inadvertently demanded of activists the same political will and belief that its leaders exhibited so as to ensure that these values would be instilled within the collective groupings of these individuals and in this manner filter through to the masses of society. This mass filtration, and replication, of the MDM's political values and will is what made this structure a force to be reckoned with during the anti-Apartheid struggle.

The MDM can be conceived of as an ideological structure in that it brought together organisations aligned to various and differing ideologies, such as trade unions, the UDF and certain churches (Terreblanche, 2002). Yet, instead of these differing ideologies detracting the MDM from its cause, the MDM was able to transcend these ideological differences in finding common ground and unity in its overall goal – the eradication of Apartheid. For activists, within the MDM, the distinctions evident between them was secondary to their commitment to the cause, and it is this transcendence of difference, which, during the anti-Apartheid struggle, came to be inculcated in activists that today still proves to be part of their psychological make-up.

It was very often these distinctions that drove the process of meaning making for activists in understanding their own roles within the broader playing field of the MDM and, more specifically, within the context of the collective. Here, activists set out to debate, explore, and internalise differences so as to crystallise for them the nuances embedded within the unity of the MDM. This is particularly important today as activists seek to find a redefined role for themselves distinct from the past, immersed in the present, and fully cognisant of a transforming South Africa.

The MDM, with its emphasis on formal education and aspiration to education of a higher quality for all, instilled in activists the sense of the importance of learning and especially that of life-long learning. Informant 2 expresses this zest for education in the following manner:

“They [fulltime activists/revolutionaries] may or may not be paid by the struggle, but their main job is to organise people and you know as far as educating themselves is concerned, they educate themselves about politics, you know everything is about politics. You know whatever you read or learn about economics or sociology or history or anything, it is to sharpen your understanding and to become a better and better and better activist.”

This drive towards the education of the self perhaps also stems from the numerous political education workshops activists attended as part of their initiation into the collective and subsequent to it. As discussed elsewhere in this study, a number of informants have decided to seek formal education post-1994 and their involvement in the struggle. In addition, of these informants’ ability to redefine their activist role within the ‘new’ South Africa and their integration into both the private and public sector, pays homage to the principles of life-long learning, which were instilled in them via their involvement in the MDM.

In addition to its ideological advocacy, the MDM provided a national revolutionary conveyer belt in systematically dismantling Apartheid, as discussed below.

8.2. Parenting the collective

The MDM was, in essence, an intricate network of organisations geared towards opposing the Apartheid regime. Essentially, this highly complex, organised, and intelligent network was tasked with the aim of collating the various respective collective groupings into one movement via a system that ensured effective communication and decisive messaging so as to enable and ensure the effective mobilisation of the masses. This would have proved a remarkable feat for the MDM as this mobilisation and organisation had to happen under the shroud of secrecy and amidst the opposing and brutal gaze of the Apartheid regime and its proponents. This intricate complexity of networks between the various organisations aligned to the MDM also found replication at the individual level between comrades and within their respective collective groupings in that they were able to, at a micro level, mobilise and organise individuals within, and between, collective groupings.

This level of organisation, which came to be a defining feature of the MDM, must have sharpened the organisational skills and capacities of activists, which is evident from the manner in which they conduct themselves today as highly skilled individuals occupying instrumental positions across both the public and private sector. It appears that their involvement in the MDM has endowed activists with various skills and competencies, which have rendered them highly sought after within the employment market.

The MDM's influence on the collective cannot be underscored considering its ability in creating popular impetus through protest and other means for its cause. Here, the MDM must be seen as a construct of society at the time in which these collectives and individuals found themselves. This study, as introduced below, goes on to argue that the relationship between the MDM and society is important so as to fully understand the mechanics of the roles and identities of activists and the nature and culture of struggle collectives. Furthermore, this study, in the section below interrogates the question as to what about South African society has made people undertake life-threatening risk in 'correcting' aspects of that society?

8.3. Divided we stand

The South African society, under Apartheid, was one that was racially segregated and one that vehemently opposed the integration of individuals across the colour lines. This opposition was demonstrated and enacted in the countless number of legislative policies, which were introduced by the Apartheid regime at its rise to power in 1948. Two of these policies, which proved fundamental to the Apartheid regime's strategy of 'divide and rule,' were entrenched in the Population Registration Act¹⁹ of 1950 and the Group Areas Act of 1950 (Lewis, 1987). It was this system of racial segregation, introduced and cemented by the Apartheid regime, which came to be the site of struggle for the liberation movements. A struggle, which many activists would in all probability not have ascribed to if they had not been subjected to the 'lived' experiences of these legislative policies and the brutality of the Apartheid regime.

This has, indeed, been the case for informants of this study who make mention of experiences such as being denied access to certain facilities/services, the forced removals they endured, and the context of poverty in which they were embedded. One cannot discount the impact these experiences must have had on these informants and less so the impetus these experiences provided for their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle. As discussed earlier in this study, many individuals, stemming from similar backgrounds to these informants, consciously decided to distance themselves from the anti-Apartheid struggle, despite similar 'lived' experiences they endured at the hands of the Apartheid regime.

The argument could then be made that the informants of this study valued their self-worth and humanity, and that of others, to such an extent that they were prepared to lay their lives on the line in order to reclaim and affirm their rightful place or standing within society. One cannot doubt that these values of equality were instilled in these informants, firstly, within their familial structures, and then, secondly via their involvement in the MDM, but that it

¹⁹ According to Lewis (1987, p. 261), the Population Registration Act of 1950, "...arbitrarily divided all South Africans into population 'groups', defined by race or, in the case of Coloureds, by appearance or general acceptance as well as by descent. Race reclassifications from one population 'group' to another required a laborious and not infrequently humiliating series of appeals to and appearances before race reclassification boards."

was, ultimately, the 'victimised' state of South African society that cemented within them the cause and the values of equality attached to it.

Though the blatant hurt of these 'lived' experiences is evident from discussions with informants, and more significantly so in their decision to take on the Apartheid regime by virtue of their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle, one cannot be oblivious of the fact that the brutality of the Apartheid regime was not exercised equally amongst different racial groupings. It is a known fact that Black African society bore the brunt of the Apartheid regime's brutality and indignity (Gibson, 2004; Lewis, 1987; Terreblanche, 2002). This perhaps provides another reason as to why many individuals, who were classified as 'Coloured', chose not to involve themselves in the struggle against the Apartheid regime. They, after all, were able to navigate their way around the legislative policies and, in some instances; they were even able to draw benefit from a number of these policies.

In a survey of South African opinions conducted in 2000 and 2001, Gibson (2004) found evidence to, "... suggest that Colored people were especially disengaged from the struggle over apartheid. Being neither fully oppressed nor fully free, Colored people occupied an ambivalent position under the apartheid system." This ambivalent position occupied by 'Coloured' people under the Apartheid regime is further articulated by Charles Albertyn, one of the regional bishops on whom Archbishop Tutu often relied for advice.

Of this ambivalent position, Albertyn (as cited in Allen, 2006, p. 337) says, "You will never understand how difficult it is to describe [to an outsider]. On the one hand politically we're black and oppressed... But socially and biologically and culturally, whites are our brothers and sisters There's a very strong bond between us ... [We] were rebuffed on both sides. The whites were clear that [we] were not whites and the Africans make it quite clear that [we] are not black Africans." This ambivalence must have been worsened by the fact that 'Coloured' people were able to benefit somewhat under the legislative policies introduced by the Apartheid regime. It was unfortunate for the struggle, and no doubt fortunate for the Apartheid regime, that many potential 'Coloured' activists fell victim to the carrot and stick approach so eloquently mastered by the Apartheid regime.

Based on this understanding of the way in which racial groups were set up so as to suite the intentions of the Apartheid regime, it is reasonable to expect that, within the 'new' South Africa, the implementation of legislative policies geared towards the advancement of those who were worse off in the 'old' regime, would be the central focus of the current government. It is apparent that Black African society comprised those who were worse off during the Apartheid regime and as such it would just be expected, and rightfully so, that the current government would focus much of their legislative and fiscal energies on the advancement of this sector of society so as to place them at an equal playing field with the remaining sectors of South African society.

Given this socio-political understanding of the current context, there exists, however, among many of the informants within this study, the perception that within the 'new' South Africa, the 'quality of life' has only been improved for a few, which is perhaps an additional reason as to why many of these informants have decided to consciously 'distance' themselves from the current government and the political party aligned to it. Here, informant 1 expresses this contention somewhat derisively:

"You know we are getting some people are becoming very, very rich in this new society of ours, this open society, and others are dying in poverty, and that is not an exaggeration."

Yet, one must also acknowledge the contribution that these informants made to the struggle and that there perhaps existed within them the expectation that their contribution would be acknowledged within the 'new' South Africa via the similar improvement in 'quality of life' that their fellow Black African comrades have received, and continue to receive. Terreblanche (2002, p. 27) points out that these unfulfilled expectations should be addressed in a cautionary, yet urgent, manner as, "[i]t should be remembered that the transition to democracy unleashed pent-up expectations of a restoration of social justice and a dramatic improvement in the living conditions of blacks. The fact that these expectations have not been realised may well lead to growing frustration and even to destructive rage, with the potential of undermining the social stability on which the newly attained democratic system depends."

While Terreblanche (2002) utilises the term 'blacks' to denote 'non-White' South Africans, the perception held amongst the informant base utilised for the purposes of this study, is that the 'quality of life' has only been improved for the Black African sector of society, with limited improvement evident within the 'Coloured' sector. Similarly, Adam and Moodley (1993, p. 218) contend that, "[d]emocracy without material gain would surely delegitimize a liberation movement that not only fought for symbolic equality but also raised expectations for greater wealth and material equality."

It appears that the informants of this study have come to associate their level of material gain or level of improvement in their 'quality of life' (post-1994) with the esteem in which their contribution towards the struggle is held by the current government. In other words, as their 'quality of life' has not improved as much as that of their fellow Black African comrades, their contribution to, and involvement in, the struggle must be viewed as less valuable and less significant than that of their fellow comrades. This, then, leads one to question what this 'perception,' held by many of these informants, means for the state of relationships between the Black African and 'Coloured' sectors of society and, indeed, for the social stability of the nation?

Additionally, these informants' dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs may be due to the fact that the 'White' sector of society continues the existence of their decadent lifestyles, similar to that which they led under the Apartheid regime. To these informants, it may appear that the 'White' sector of society enjoys the same luxuries and benefits under the current government as it did under the Apartheid regime. The following comments best sum up this 'perception' as illustrated by informant 7 below:

"Though I think the negotiated settlement certainly was the way to go, I think that we've given too much though for too little. I don't think White people show any remorse, I don't think they've taken any responsibility, and it shows in their attitude towards transformation in this country if you look at how little they give back ..."

This 'perception' exists, too, amongst the academic community and, according to Daye (2004, p. 59), "[m]any observers, myself included, feel frustration that whites are not more aware of the gift [referring to their citizenship being fully acknowledged in the 'new' South Africa] they have received or of their

responsibility to atone. It is disconcerting that more whites are not willing to acknowledge their support for the apartheid regime.”

Though the material conditions of ‘White’ South Africa continue to be a central benchmark in measuring the liberation of the poor, as articulated above, informant 3 throws the net wider and begins to look at the emerging Black African elite in determining the continued existence of poverty:

“We had a political CODESA²⁰, where we dealt with the distribution of political power from white people to the entire society, but we now need to also define an economic CODESA. The way that economic redistribution or democratisation is happening is to a Black elite, through Black Economic Empowerment clauses. So, that is why I would say that there is in many respects an interest deal done that’s just unfolding in front of our eyes now and that disregards poor black communities or working class families. And the irony of it is that those people are the main constituency of the ANC and so if the ANC is looking after anybody’s interest, they should be looking after the interest of poor black communities, but policies have been more favourable to wealthier, white communities.”

This then begs the question as to what this perception may mean for the process of reconciliation between the ‘White,’ ‘Coloured,’ and Black African sectors of South African society. Informant 3 provides insight into this question by offering the following comment:

“All that’s happened is that Black people have opened their hands and their hearts and forgiven everybody for the atrocities that have happened to them. But they now have to live with the legacy of Apartheid, and the communities who oppressed them have given very little in return. You know, they got forgiveness, they never went to jail, they weren’t prosecuted for a lot of the stuff that they did, it was particularly horrendous. It was amazing that people, the Black people could even forgive them and the reconciliation programme that we’re on is going to be undone if we don’t do something about economic reconciliation. Because you can’t build a sense of community if people are still divided and become more and more divided every day. Because what do you ultimately want to do? You want to build communities and nations that identify with each other and that’s committed to each other. The political reconciliation was meant to be the first steps to doing that and it’s gone somewhere to doing that, but that good work’s been undone because the economic reconciliation is not following it up and not undoing the legacy of Apartheid.”

The above comment clearly points to the fact that for reconciliation between the Black African, ‘Coloured’, and ‘White’ sectors of South African society to occur, an equal political and economic playing field has to exist between these

²⁰ Convention for a Democratic Society

sectors to not only foster a sense of identification and community amongst them, but to foster a sense of equality amongst them, which appears to be one of the conditions (at least for the informants of this study) on which reconciliation is dependent. This point is further illustrated by Terreblanche (2002, p. 45), who contends that, "... , it will not be possible to create a non-racial [and reconciliatory] South Africa as long as the vast wealth gap between black and white remains intact, and as long as the government fails to alleviate poverty and rectify skewed economic structures."

It is the current state of poverty and degradation that informants are extremely worried about and on which they base their argument that they need to continue the struggle so as to ensure that liberation benefits all, as is introduced in the ensuing section.

8.4. United we aim to stand

Though there existed amongst informants the 'perception' that the 'quality of life' has only been improved for a few within the 'new' South Africa, all of them clearly stated their commitment towards the 'improvement' of South African society. Examples of this commitment are provided below, as described by informant 2:

"... my main objective is to really contribute towards a society where more and more jobs will be created, a society where poverty will be reduced more and more, a society where people will have the freedom in a very real way that are in the Constitution and in the Bill of Rights."

Informant 5 augments this view below:

"I understand where we are as South Africans within our own development, political and socio-economically, I understand where we are, and I think that we need to move beyond a level where we are, we need to take people out of poverty, and give people dignity, and I believe that I've got a role to play in that process, and hence I will focus all my activities, whatever I've got left in me, whatever energy and life I've got left in me I will channel towards that, because it is an ideal that I aspired to as early as 1988 and it must be the same ideal, you can't start something and leave it, you must continue."

It is clear that their commitment towards the improvement of South African society stems out of their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle, and it appears that many of the same values and beliefs that spurred them on to join

the struggle have found resonance in their current commitment, in that they continue to strive for a better life for all.

While the 'perception,' as to the improvement of 'quality of life' for a select few, clearly finds expression in many of these informants' critique of, and 'distancing' from, the current ANC-led government and structures associated to it, they explicitly state their continued support of the ANC come election time. It may be that they continue to vote for the ANC, despite their critique of this party, based on their historical romance with the party due to the monumental role it played in the anti-Apartheid struggle.

Additionally, their continued support of the ANC, in the form of their vote, may be due to the obliged loyalty they feel they must exhibit towards this political party due to their involvement in the anti-Apartheid struggle. After all, one can just imagine the shame and guilt these informants may experience if they have to turn their backs (or in this case their votes) on a political party that is conceived of by many as the stalwart of the liberation movement – a movement to which these informants actively subscribed.

Of course, an alternative explanation as to why these informants continue to vote for the ANC can also be found in the argument that suggests that, at this stage, there exists for them no viable alternate political party. The assumption that follows from this line of argument is then that given the existence of a viable alternate political party, many of these informants may rather cast their vote in favour of this party than of the ANC. It appears, then, that the existence of a viable alternate political party is all that is required for these informants to 'distance' themselves from the ANC. One has to bear in mind, of course, that the concept of 'viable' will mean different things to different people and as such this 'distancing' would not be as straightforward and clear-cut as this study may imply and describe it to be. Perhaps the 'viability' of this alternate party would be based on the level of 'improvement' it is able to offer these informants in terms of their 'quality of life,' as well as the level of political acknowledgement and recognition it will be able to offer to activists. These appear to be the components that are missing from the ANC-led government, as well as from the ANC as a political party, according to many of these informants. These are perhaps the components that the ANC needs to address if they wish to continue securing the vote of these informants.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

9.1. Summary of findings

As stated in the methodological framework chapter of this thesis, the objectives of the study were comprised of:

- A psychological investigation that explores the experiences of activists during the Apartheid era and post-1994 in relation to:
 1. The ‘binding in’ process activists underwent in identifying with or affiliating themselves to a particular political party or ideology;
 2. The ‘distancing’ process activists underwent post-1994 with regard to their current relationships to a particular political party or ideology; and
- How these experiences have shaped their thoughts and feelings with regard to psychological factors such as forgiveness, reconciliation and transformation?

In so doing, the study undertook to understand the life experiences of activists during Apartheid and the eventual manifestation of their experiences today, post-Apartheid. In exploring the experiences of activists the study found five specific analytical constructs in relation to their experiences vis-à-vis the inherent role of the family as a formative influencing dimension on their character, the role of the collective as a justifiable space for the expression of their roles as activists, and the Diaspora of activism as a telling point in understanding the intricacies of this particular persona. Here, the study further examined the above factors in relation to broader, sociological dimensions such as the omniscient influence of the MDM and, finally, the contextual factors embedded in more societal considerations.

Given these analytical constructs, the study employed empirical platforms to make meaning of the lived experiences of activists within these various dimensions. Here, the theory of social identity provided a formidable anchor in understanding the analytical constructs offered in this study, particularly in relation to the role of the individual. Further empirical podiums such as the discourse of forgiveness and reconciliation proved invaluable in uncovering

current contentions within the broader debate of transformation within South Africa. This debate takes on a particular flavour as the study examines a third empirical frame, that of the Diaspora of activism. Here, the study showed that critical debate and vigorous analysis of societal problems are the order of the day in exploring notions of forgiveness and reconciliation or propensities towards political dispensations.

In isolating and interpreting the many varied conclusions and tying these with empirical theoretical perspectives it is critical, at this concluding juncture, to also inculcate some of the researcher's earlier assumptions. These perspectives lend insight into both the manner in which the data was interpreted and how other eminent scholars conclusively shaped it through established and authoritatively documented perspectives.

Prior to undertaking the research and exploring these objectives, the researcher had a number of assumptions with regard to the experiences of activists in relation to the above-stated objectives. The researcher initially assumed that a large number of the informants would have 'distanced' themselves from the political party/organisation to which they were affiliated during the struggle due to them having felt "sold out" as a result of the negotiated settlement. The assumption was also held that these informants' identification or 'binding in' to the ideals and ambitions of the struggle would be by default due to the socio-political context in which they found themselves by virtue of their race and class classifications. Furthermore, the researcher assumed that the informants would express a sense of pride with regard to their involvement in the struggle, but that informants who had been active in MK and the armed struggle would express a sense of regret with regard to their involvement in various operations.

In addition, the assumption was also held that aspects of these informants' roles as activists would be rendered redundant within the 'new' South Africa and that this redundancy would impact negatively on their sense of identity, but that they would, nevertheless, be relatively "happy" with the way in which the 'new' South Africa had transformed itself. Finally, the researcher initially assumed that the informants would have been accepting and supportive of the TRC process and its outcomes and that by default, then, there would exist within these informants the propensity for forgiveness.

These assumptions proved useful in that they assisted the researcher in formulating a frame of analysis in which to interrogate the data 'mined' throughout the research process. Therefore, the researcher sets out the following summarised points as the most strikingly salient features in concluding this study.

The factors that contributed most significantly to the '**binding in**' process activists underwent in identifying with the cause of the struggle include the **family** in that this structure played a significant role in shaping the political consciousness of these informants. This finding resonates with the work of a number of theorists (see Gelman, 1990; Keniston, 1968; Price, 2002) who have found that, to some degree, political socialisation has its genesis in the home, and specifically within the family. The shaping of this consciousness was, however, linked to, and not in isolation of, the 'lived' experience of these informants (i.e. the meagre socio-political context of the time).

The **collective**, as a structure, also contributed to the 'binding in' process in that it provided the impetus to ensure continued commitment to the cause via the protection, safety, legitimacy and political schooling it offered activists. Furthermore, however, there existed, amongst activists, the 'functional' need to build and strengthen the collective, which further contributed to, and ensured, the strength and solidification of this 'binding in' process. This 'functional' need is best described by Baumeister (1997) in relation to human evolution and the process of natural selection, which is thought to have rendered within human beings the innate need to belong to groups.

The 'legitimate' existence activists and the collective enjoyed, under the national agenda of the **MDM**, whose overarching aim was the eradication of Apartheid, was also found to quite significantly have contributed to the 'binding in' process, as did the 'suffering' of **society** in that it provided activists with an additional, and equally important, reason for their involvement in the struggle. Here, the central tenet of social identity theory has been supported in that the informant base, via their activism, attempted to effect change within the social structure so as to acquire a positive social identity for themselves and their respective communities. Additionally, given the sense of deprivation experienced by Black African and 'Coloured' individuals in South Africa between the periods of 1985 and 1987 (as found by Appelgryn, 1991), it

was inevitable that the 'suffering' of society would drive many of these individuals into social action geared at restructuring the social status hierarchy.

Within the informant base a distinct '**distancing**' from their traditional 'role' as "hardcore" traditional activists is evident. In summary, the factors that contributed most significantly in their '**distancing**' from current socio-political activity include their dissatisfaction with the process and outcomes of the **negotiated settlement**, which is entrenched by a deep sense of **betrayal** felt amongst activists with regard to their contribution to the struggle.

A **disappointing sentiment** expressed amongst activists as far as the '**truths**' at the TRC hearings are concerned in addition to the **equating of activists' roles** and experiences with that of the **agents of the Apartheid state** has also contributed significantly to the fact that activists have chosen to 'step back' from political activity. Finally, the perception amongst activists that **democracy has brought benefits** only for a "**select**" few has also driven them to 'distance' themselves from all things political.

Other significant findings within this study include the fact that contrary to fictional perception, activists continue to define themselves as such, but within a new terrain of struggle and within a **redefined definition of activism**. Linked to this finding is the discovery that within this 're-invention' of their roles in post-Apartheid South Africa, the notion of a '**re-invented**' family is paramount for the activist. This finding lends support to Flacks' (1990) understanding of political behaviour, which is framed by Erikson's life-cycle theory of psychosocial development, and who purports that the adult stage renders the activist identity problematic as the demands of 'normal' adulthood take precedence at this stage of the individual's life-cycle.

In addition, and of importance to the identity of these informants, immediately after 1994, activists found themselves in a state of **role and identity flux**, which had a number of outcomes. Firstly, a large part of the activist core found themselves **without a role to play** in the shaping of the national negotiations that were then unfolding. They, in effect, became part of the ordinary person on the street. Secondly, as soldiers they found themselves without a commander, in effect, rendering their role, which they were trained and prepared for hopelessly **redundant**. Thirdly, the informants found themselves in a **state of ambiguity**,

which in effect has contributed significantly to their current dislocated position from the outcomes of the negotiated settlement, which is the hitherto state.

It is the researcher's view that these aforementioned findings (regarding the role and identity flux in which activists found themselves post-1994), including the prejudicial process of the TRC and the limitations placed on 'truth' within this process, contributed to a **wave of indignity** felt by activists, which has resulted in a significant **resistance to the notion of reconciliation and forgiveness**.

In conclusion, then, this study has illustrated, often with illuminating sadness, but never without the voices of courage of the informant base, that the transition from Apartheid to liberation has, and continues to be, a difficult process. Here, an understanding of the expressively overwhelming nature of political transition must be viewed in the psychological context of the lives of the individuals affected by this transition.

Enigmatically, the truth of their 'lived' experiences as activists continues to prevail as this study was unable to fully explore (in greater depth) the impact Apartheid, and consequent liberation, has had on their existence. Notwithstanding, the obvious limitations associated with psychological meaning making in a qualitative research frame (that the researcher may be incorrect in her assertions and views), it is important to clarify a number of distinct findings:

- 1) The full truth, or its reported invisibility within the transition, it appears, remains a fundamental hindrance in advancing a commitment to forgiveness. This sentiment is consistent with the work of theorists such as Amstutz (2006) who contend that the element of truth-telling is an essential component to the reconciliatory process.
- 2) The process of forgiveness was compromised by internal debates in the liberation movement as to the 'extent of reconciliation' needed to propel South Africans into constructive dialogue and sustained transformation. These debates have also been had amongst theorists and have led to a distinction being drawn between 'thin' and 'thick' versions of reconciliation (Philpott, 2006). While 'thicker' versions of reconciliation represent the ideal, the findings of this study (in relation to forgiveness

and reconciliation) act as cautionary reminders that perhaps for the conceivable near future 'thinner' versions of reconciliation should be our focus as they are more attainable in the current context.

- 3) These debates provided, and continue to provide, contesting and often uncompromising views by agents of the anti-Apartheid movement, including the informant base, and in so doing began to deconstruct the culture of the collective, leaving behind activists who now felt alone and without a base; and lastly
- 4) This 'aloneness' impacted on individual activists in varying ways, often manifesting in anger, betrayal and confusion.

The sum total of this study's conclusion significantly demonstrates the relevance of prevailing scholastic thinking on the notion of political activism, its manifesting proximity to political discourse and its inevitable and often justified return to 'normal' life through the redesign of traditional activist roles. The South African activist experience is particularly unique as its current embryonic existence in the new South Africa continues to be shaped by the unhealed scars of formalised racial prejudice taking place against an intensified global perspective of human rights cultures. Here, the theories drawn from both local and international scholars show how the South African activist experience can, to some extent, be understood given prevailing pedagogy and how localised perspectives on the notion of political discourses such as reconciliation and forgiveness remain somewhat of a mystery.

In conclusion, then, though the impact of the struggle on the lives of the informants was ruthlessly compromising at a very personal level, their ongoing commitment to make a change in the new South Africa continues unabated as they journey (sometimes alone, sometimes often in a group) along the road of freedom and democracy.

9.2. Limitations to the study

In the process of undertaking and finalising this study, the researcher was made aware of a number of limitations evident in this study and the research process. These limitations include, but are not limited to, the fact that access to informants proved exceptionally difficult and stalled the research process intermittently at various periods throughout its two-year cycle. After fruitless

attempts to garner access to informants via advertisements placed in local newspapers and letters sent to political and non-governmental organisations, the researcher employed snowball sampling in that access to informants was gained via the facilitation of entry into a specific network of activists.

Due to snowball sampling being employed as a method to gain access to informants, the informant base utilised for the purposes of this study speaks mostly to the experiences of 'Coloured' activists stemming from the Cape Flats area and such many of these findings do not speak to the experiences of Black African activists nor can they be generalised to 'White' activists, due to the fact that only one 'White' informant was present in this informant base. In addition, the informant base utilised here were all members of the UDF and as such were ANC-aligned. These findings do, therefore, not speak to the experiences of activists aligned to other political parties, such as the PAC, and as such cannot be generalised to them.

Furthermore, at times throughout the research process, the researcher's lack of any 'lived' experience of the anti-Apartheid struggle made it difficult for her to interrogate the highly subjective and personal narratives of these informants without a sense of voyeurism looming over her. The fact that this research was grounded in a qualitative paradigm at times also led to a sense of uneasiness within the researcher as with qualitative research one can never be absolutely sure of what one is going to find and if the questions posed to informants are going to generate data fitting to one's objectives. Fortunately, in the case of this study, the questions posed to the informants generated the required data, as was illustrated in the analysis section.

9.3. Further opportunities

Given the sentiments expressed by the informant base, it is essential that we acknowledge that we must go beyond a once-off intervention of healing as was provided within the frame of the TRC. What is required here is a formal and perhaps government endorsed programme that is aimed specifically at the integration of various racial groups and 'a without prejudice' process of truth-telling at both a group and an individual (one-on-one) level.

Intricately linked to this, would be the establishment of a national programme geared towards the offering of sustained psychological support to activists so as to assist them with the debriefing process of their historical trauma linked to their experiences of activism. This programme should perhaps be extended so as to offer psychological support to the families of these activists as well as to perpetrators on the side of the then Apartheid state. In other words, what is required, but which is perhaps fiscally infeasible, is a collective, national effort of psychological support to all South Africans.

Furthermore, annual assisted or mediated sessions of dialogue between activists, within their historical collectives, and extended dialogue sessions between victims and perpetrators, regardless of the side of the fence on which they were on, should also be engaged in so as to facilitate the healing process. This healing process can be aided via the introduction of a national programme within the education realm that explores the meaning of the liberation movement in post-Apartheid South Africa. This can be done through anecdotal story telling of activists' experiences at schools, which may contribute to their healing process. At a more formal level, a review of current pedagogy, in relation to the subject fields of history and social sciences, is required so as to provide youth with a richer understanding of their history and the onus this places on them to contribute towards the transformation of South African society.

As expressed by the informant base, the notion of reparations should be reassessed to include not only material benefit, but psychological and emotional benefit too. Here, what is required is for us to explore the notion of reparations in a psychological realm in seeing the unfettered offering of truth, and the acceptance thereof, as reparations within itself. For this process to materialise, a paradigm shift on our part as to the notion of reparations and what this should or should not entail would be required, which would at the end of the day enable us to be more creative in the manner in which we undertake reparations. Though symbols, such as the recently constructed Freedom Park in Kliptown, go a long way in attempting to acknowledge individual activists at a national level, it must be noted that politics and the liberation movement itself was very much comprised of localised experiences. The acknowledgement of activists' experiences, therefore, needs to be localised at the level of the collective and at the level of the specific communities in which these activists practiced their

activism. Additionally, while current government policy is progressive in the manner in which it sets out to empower and emancipate previously disadvantaged individuals, an intensified programme of advantage is required targeted, specifically, at Apartheid activists so as to funnel their experiences in the advancement of transformation. Finally, within the role metamorphosis that activists are experiencing, as outlined in this study, what is required is the provision of an enabling environment for them in which to journey through these various identity dimensions so that they, too, may eventually become comfortable with role interchanging at various stages in their lives.

For those of us who find ourselves within the corridors of academia, it is imperative that we have a sincere appreciation, and not a clinical appreciation, for people's experiences and as such we must strive to treat these experiences kindly and with great sensitivity. Furthermore, as academics we must continue to write about, and explore, the experiences of activists because too little has been written and said about these experiences and the trauma that these activists have experienced, and continue to experience. It is important that we acknowledge the consciousness with which these individuals have (voluntarily) subjected themselves to trauma and/or victimisation as illustrated by Zubeida Jaffer (2003, p. 133), an anti-Apartheid activist, who said of her periods in detention, "I had consciously decided to commit myself to a cause that I knew was dangerous. I accepted the consequences." It is important, then, that the counselling approaches utilised to facilitate the healing of activists must be cognisant of these specific and unique circumstances.

Ultimately, then, given the importance of transformation, it is critical that academics define for themselves a role that does not merely produce knowledge, but that extends to the application of this knowledge to advance transformation. In other words, they need to become academic activists as opposed to laboratory ones.

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APPENDIX A: ADVERTISEMENT

Advertisement as carried in the Weekend Argus 1st - 2nd of July 2006 and the Cape Times dated the 3rd of July 2006

Personal	
a	invitation to
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and-	focusing on the
way	experience of
y my	"Comrades
nie	Cadres" during
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nee	focus group in their in-
elle	volvement in the Mass
and	Democratic Movement
	(MDM) and the armed
	struggle, in particular.
	For further informa-
	tion contact Brigitte
	Swarts on 425 838314
	before 7 July 2006

APPENDIX B: LIST OF ORGANISATIONS

Organisations contacted in an effort to gain access to participants:

1. The ANC Youth League (Johannesburg and Cape Town branches)
2. The Amy Biehl Foundation Trust
3. The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR)
4. The Robben Island Museum
5. The Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture in South Africa
6. The Early Learning Resource Unit (ELRU)
7. The South African Non-governmental Organisation Coalition (SANGOCO)
8. The Development Action Group (DAG)
9. The Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO)

APPENDIX C: LETTER TO ORGANISATIONS

17 July 2006

For Attention: The Director/Chairperson/President

Re: Participation in Master's Research Thesis

Dear Sir/Madam

I am currently a registered student at the University of Cape Town pursuing a Master's degree in Psychological Research. The submission of a thesis is part of the requirements for the completion of the degree programme. My thesis focuses on the experiences of activists pre- and post-1994 and what factors in specifically have shaped their political identity and/or consciousness at various intervals during South Africa's political history. In particular, my thesis aims to view these individuals' experiences through a psychological lens with a take on transformation and reconciliation.

I am hoping to conduct interviews and/or a focus group with activists who have been involved in the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), and in particular in the armed struggle, during the Apartheid period of 1976 – 1991. If you yourself fit this criterion, or know of any individuals who do, I would very much like to invite you and/or them to participate in this study. The proposed interview schedule is attached.

My contact details are as follows:

Tel: 021 – 425 8383/4 (office hours only)

Cell: 073 8767 110

E-mail: brigitte@socialprocess.co.za

I would appreciate it if you could respond before the 15th of August 2006.

Your participation would be highly appreciated and any information provided would be treated with discretion and as highly confidential. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Yours sincerely,

Brigitte Swarts