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PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIETY NUMBER 4 DECEMBER 1985

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EDITORIAL

IN THIS ISSUE ...

"It is not to judge the focus on the politics of production, but rather to open up the underbelly of industrial experience that the cultural and psychological dimensions of workers' experiences and consciousness need to be studied as well," writes Grahame Hayes in his introduction to *The childhood of industrial experience* by Ari Sitas. With its emphasis on the ideological determinants of "the class of '76", Sitas explores the neglected relationship between childhood and the formation of a working-class consciousness, using oral history material gathered from young workers in the Transvaal metal industry, radicalized by the experiences of 1976.

Next, G. Bruce Irvine's article *Alienation and unemployment - work in progress*, reviews current theories and definitions of alienation, concluding with an analysis of its relationship with unemployment. Discussing the psychological treatment of the effects of unemployment, Irvine cogently quotes Bandura's opinion, stating that "if psychologists are to have a significant impact, they must apply their corrective measures to detrimental societal practices, rather than limit themselves to treating casualties of these practices."

The third article *The 1981 rent boycott in Durban* by David Basckin, systematically reviews the history of the rent boycott that took place in a number of sub-economic housing estates administered by the Durban City Council. Basckin concludes his piece with a discussion of the tactical and community organization errors that were made, and relates this to a community psychology intervention that developed as a direct consequence.

Next, Briefings: and in this section of the journal we begin with *Objective measures of alienation*, by R.D. Bedford and M.J. Cassidy. In the course of a project-evaluation they conducted, the authors develop an operationalized measure of alienation that distances itself from a positivist approach. Instead, the Bedford-Cassidy definition clearly contextualizes itself within capitalist political economy, manifested "within the workplace ... the world in general, the community, the family and the individual."

Debbie Gould's *Gender-based alienation: a feminist/materialist theory of rape* follows. In this analysis, the writer argues that "The act of rape is inherent in social definitions of masculinity and femininity. As such it is an ideological and behavioural consequence of gender-based alienation - men are considered legitimate aggressors and women legitimate victims, and each is structured for the role."

Briefings ends with *The debate on child abuse within South African childrens' homes: the alienation of the childcare workers* by David Basckin. In this short piece, Basckin asserts the nudity of the emperor by unambiguously stating the manifest discontents shared by many childcare workers, concluding with two proposed solutions to the crisis.

Then Reviews, with two books reviewed by Gillian Eagle and Bonginkosi Nzimande.

Finally, readers are asked to note that in future each centre (Durban, Capetown, Johannesburg) will produce one number of the journal each year, with Capetown undertaking the next issue. This - like the variety of typefaces that adorn these pages - is the inevitable consequence of our independence which has meant zero access to the generous funding available to collaborationist journals.

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Introduction to "The childhood of industrial experience"

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The industrial sphere is a domain which is fraught with many politically vexed questions. And in the urgency to understand and resolve the many dimensions of industrial life, the struggles at the point of production achieve prominence with little attention been given to the less immediate determinants of industrial experience. It is not to judge the focus on the politics of production, but rather to open up the underbelly of industrial experience that the cultural and psychological dimensions of workers' experiences and consciousness need to be studied as well.

It is this more complete analysis of industrial experience, both historical and contemporary, which concerns Ari Sitas in his doctoral thesis:"African worker responses on the East Rand to changes in the Metal Industry, 1960-1980s", submitted in 1983 to the University of the Witwatersrand. In general, this thesis is an historical materialist analysis of work and social relations in the metal industry. The method of inquiry into African metalworkers' experience of their work has been to build up an "experiential mosaic" by allowing the workers to speak for themselves in detailed interviews over a long period of association with the author; and by the more formal reliance on the work of oral historians Paul Thompson (1984) and E.P. Thompson (1981). The rigour with which Dr Sitas is able to integrate the "experiential mosaic" of African metalworkers with the sociology and politics of production in the East Rand Metalworks is most impressive and insightful.

The article below, "The childhood of industrial experience", (a modified section of chapter six of Sitas' thesis) is concerned to account for the conflicting and complementary experiences which have contributed to the militancy, alienation, and quiescence of African metalworkers. In this article Sitas traces the effects of Soweto 1976 and the politics of schooling on the socialisation of this generation of metalworkers of the 1980s. The significance of this time (Soweto 1976) is paramount in trying to understand this generation of workers' consciousness, from whatever perspective, sociological and/or psychological.

At the beginning of chapter six entitled: "From slavery to the 'Black Flood': Black workers, mass production and cultural formation in South Africa's metalworks" Dr Sitas gives a history of the "class of '76" parents' generation (especially their fathers), and their political and workplace (metalworks) struggles during the 1960s. It is in the interstices of the productive relations that Sitas seeks the contradictory reality which makes up African metalworkers' industrial experience. In the words of psychology, he gives content and meaning to the social psychology of industrial working class life.

He does this in a way which commits us to some very interesting and important analytic and empirical possibilities in trying to develop an historical materialist analysis of the realm of industrial psychology. Unless scientific practice has become a rubber stamp for ideology, we are forced to rethink and challenge a psychology, and especially an industrial psychology which in South Africa and elsewhere has genuflected towards the paunch of the establishment and reeled away from the underbelly of ordinary people's experience, industrial and other.

The materialist possibilities for a social psychology of industrial experience are elaborated in Sitas' usage of two notions in the analysis of African metalworkers' industrial experience. These two notions are, "moral economy", and "cultural formation", which he gets from the work of E.P. Thompson (1981) and Raymond Williams (1981). In this regard I quote from his thesis,

> "The determination of the manner of expenditure of labour power, forms the sine qua non of a cultural formation in the interstices of the formal organisation of the factory; working class production norms in the East Rand's metal industries, together with the norms of mutuality in the community form what will be called here the moral economy of African metalworkers." (Sitas, 1983, p.297).

The opening up of this domain of industrial experience - the childhood of industrial experience - through the rigour and sensitivity of his study gives hope and encouragement for a social science of work as opposed to the potentially narrow and competing sociologies and psychologies of work. It is as a contribution to the social science of work and working life that Sitas' article, and his doctoral thesis (to be published in 1986 by Ravan Press, Johannesburg) should be of interest to all those concerned to understand the "human face" of working class industrial experience in South Africa today.

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THE CHILDHOOD OF INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCE

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1. The Road to 1976

J.P. Sartre in the early 1960's criticised Marxists for denying 'history' or 'society' any childhood. For them, he asserted in Search for a Method,(1) history started with a worker's sale of labour power to the capitalist. Consequently, working class consciousness only began with the workers's entry into the factory; there, instinctively and spontaneously, the worker rebelled against conditions of employment and exploitation. The worker's response was therefore 'economistic' and flowed out naturally into a sectarian trade union consciousness. Consciousness was never formed prior to or outside relationships of exploitation in the factory. It was in short, the economic base that formed and shaped the superstructural heights of consciousness and ideology.(2)

But what if 'consciousness', 'ideology' and 'cultural formations' are already formed prior to and explode onto, the first sale of labour 'overdetermining'(3) its course? What if, black schoolchildren in South Africa initially sustained one of the most violent urban revolts in recent history, the bloody uprisings of 1976/7 - that in their stride caused a reorganisation of state apparatuses, the collapse of unrepresentative government bodies like the Urban Bantu Councils(4), contributed to the social nervousness and zeal of 'reform' that brought about commissions of inquiry into labour legislation and influx control, and then only then entered wage-employment? Did this imply that the

Metalworks after their long period of consolidation into their 'promised Land' (1969-1977) found themselves sitting on a time-bomb?

To answer this, comparative material held little promise: For instance, P. Willis in his study, learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs[5] dealt with similar problems but from the perspective of English working class youths. The youths, were rebellious and participated in a culture of defiance against the authority of their school and the disciplinary codes that it implied. They distanced themselves radically from the 'ear'oles', the 'conformist'schoolchildren who 'made good' by being studious. For these rebels, 'freedom' was at work, free from school and its regulations, free from child status, with money in their hands and access through money and adulthood to a world they were denied at school. In rebelling against the school system, their cultural formation came to be inspired from the 'streets'. According to Willis in the 'street', they developed their ideology, their unique social being, and self-perception as white, masculine and heavy-work orientated youths. In short, it was this rebellion that nailed them down to heavy manual labour. Willis asserted with remarkable force that,

> ..."there is a moment - and it only needs to be this for the gates to shut on the future - in working class culture when the manual giving of labour power represented both a freedom, election and transcendence and a precise insertion into a system of exploitation and oppression for working people. The former promises the future the latter shows the present. It is this future in the present which hammers freedom to inequality in the reality of contemporary capitalism"...[6]

In South Africa, the 'class of 76' could similarly be summed up by an inversion of Willis' finding: "There was a moment in working class culture when the manual giving of labour power represented a form of slavery, was seen with aversion whilst at the same time a necessary fact of physical subsistence. The

awareness of both created the sense of wrong that defined black working youths' explosive but mercenary attitudes to industrial production"...

Nkadimeng, Eliphas, Sizo, entered the metal factories in the early 1970's, John (Big John Tate' as his friends called him), Mark, Jeremiah and Steven by 1975, Alpheus, Moses Zondie, Elliott and Jonas after 1976. They all came from Daveyton, a township that in comparison to Kwa Thema further east, Tembisa further west, Soweto to the south-east Kagiso to its south, betrayed very little overt militancy during the rebellion. Still, their lives and preconceptions were shattered by the events that polarized South African society in its entirety. Their rebellion was to become two-fold, against on the one hand the 'status quo', on the other against their parents' cultural formations. That they all worked in two of the largest mass producing Metalworks on the East Rand, performing operative labour linked them resolutely to what this thesis is trying to assess vis-a-vis black metalworker responses.

Through the 'extended case study' material gathered it is imperative to assert the following: Prior to 1976, what for the parents became a need to invest in the future, to invest in their children's future and education, became the new melting pot: The school. It was from here that the new generation began its political education to explode into the factories. The rise of Black Consciousness in the late 1960's and early 1970's was a catalyst. The school started responding to the ideology of 'freedom for the black man'. Simultaneously pupils read the future of their lives as wage labourers with disdain. Furthermore, what was different and profoundly so, was the fact that whereas the township reproduced ethnic relations, the availability of a single school in the township brought black scholars together again. Here the children became disgruntled with their parents' hopes of a better future through 'Bantu

Education'; the origins of a resistance culture emerged according to their memory inside the school-gates.(7)

Black Consciousness, with its emphasis on the psychological emancipation and the exorcism of dependency on 'whites', with its slogans 'black man, you are on your own' or 'black man go/go/ man go' and finally its envisaged 'black communalism' a return to the ' egalitarian' institutions of an African past, a return of 'Azania' where 'justice was the law of nature',(8) held very few organisational lessons for the African working class. Through the activities of the South African students' Organisation (SASO) and the Black People's Convention (BPC) though it had significant repercussions in the lives of black students and scholars. Most of its leadership was drawn from such circles and to an equal degree from well-educated professionals. As an ideology of liberation its dissemination to the broad mass of workers even through its trade union wing, the Black & Allied Worker's Union (BAWA) was eclectic and in most cases non-existent.(9) Black Consciousness as a movement failed to respond creatively to the worker struggles of the post 1973 period and its contribution remained on the 'cultural' side of the black community.

It is important to note that, as E.P. Thompson has shown, idealization of the past, and as Barrington Moore Jnr. has argued, 'backward looking' attempts were part of pristine working class consciousness in many historical instances. So much so that appeals to an egalitarian past formed the crucial link to popular mobilisation and appeals towards popular power. The ideologist, the artisans in the case of Thompson were the carriers of such discourses in Britain.

Their impact on working class communities was undoubted.(10)

The point here is that these 'appeals' could take root in the experience of the working class; that they didn't in South Africa indicated the nature and social

milieu of the movement. Black consciousness was not a vast grassroots mobilization for popular power, it was rather an attempt at mobilisation for black mobility and equality. In this sense it remained a workshop of ideas and a pressure group until the Soweto uprising.(11)

There were exceptions though: For instance N. Ndebele wrote in the early 1970's, that,

> "The black middle class, is characterised by a general lack of imagination...The workers (in contradiction) are very active in their urban social setting. They have been shown great initiative and creativity. From them we get the mbaqanga musicians, actors, beauty queens, soccerites, soul musicians, gangsters. The middle class seldom, if ever, take the challenge that the creativity of the workers presents. The middle class never develops on the crude initiative of the workers because it despises the workers' efforts. They forget that the mainsprings of true cultural identity come from below"...(12)

In the early 1970's the 'cultural' give-and-take was divided: On the one hand were the 'workerists' on the other the 'culturalists'. The former, by presenting social analyses of class structures within black society pointed to the importance of the black working class, be they rural or urban worker, as the mainspring of inspiration for a black or a national renaissance; the latter, polemicising against class analyses as a form of imported conceptual packages from the white Motherlands, demonstrated the unity of 'being-black in the world'. Both groupings were concerned with the reconstitution of dignity in and through cultural expression. By the mid 1970's, it is the latter grouping that was dominant.

1975 marked the final year of polarisation and subsequent silence. At the 'Black Renaissance' convention, H. Nxasana and F. Fisher both from the institute

of Industrial Education and related to the budding union movement of the time, presented a class analysis pointing to the distinction between the working class and other classes in black society.(13) But by then, it was a non-debate, as the 'culturalists' appeared to be in control.

But through this process, 'culture' donned its mundane existence in the lives of everyday people, in ghetto-life, and became synonymous with the artistic expression of an oppressed majority. When ghetto life, hostel life and labour reappeared in the writings of the cream of its intellectuals, it entered the stage as the Biblical 'Fall' from a brilliant past, of a stage when people lived in tune with nature, when societies were egalitarian; work and working life were used as a metaphor for a 'black slavery', the result of colonialism, capitalism and white-rule.(14)

It was precisely this metaphor of oppression, the sphere of work, as shall be explored below that prohibited any attempt by the intelligentsia of the black consciousness movement to reach the working class. Yet at the same time Black Consciousness' vibrancy in university and school environments became a catalyst in youth culture. Schoolchildren from working class communities responded to the themes of 'blackness' and 'pride' but redefined them in their own way. Here more comparative work is imperative, for what is outlined below was rooted in the social being of a particular grouping of young people, before a generalisation of this point be finally asserted.

Despite the regional focus, the discussions with these young metal workers brought forward important elements to the comprehension of working class responses on the East Rand. The chapter in its final part, focuses on what dramatically transformed, working class culture, and what at the same time has preserved its central notion of 'slavery'.

Here, as with the migrant metalworkers, the exploration congeals around deep-felt grievances that explain social action out of the respondents' experiential mosaic in the pre-1976 period.

2. The Young Metalworkers' Cultural Formations

The first issue was the political 'overdetermination' in any of their explanations of their conditions of life. Here, contemporary with their times, they experienced through their schooling the impulses of the new search for black identity and self-assertion. For example 'Big John Tate' stressed this unequivocally.

> ..."It is at school and through talk that I realised the white man's robbery. The land, the Land Act and all about black oppression. Black consciousness was educational. More educational than the school" (15)

Mark, who entered factory life early in the 1970's felt the stirrings of a new youth culture without being able for economic reasons to continue participating through going to school.

> ..."Black power was amazing. I wish I could stay at school longer. To be part of it longer. I was just a piccanin when I started working - as a caddy, then in a furniture shop then in (metal)...'Power' said 'look black man you better fight for rights"... (16)

And Moses who joined the labour market for the rebellion added that,

> "The lands of our fathers were robbed. The African was an animal. We are not animals, we were the people of Azania, the rightful owners".. (17)

It is important to note that none of the respondents was a matriculant. Witnessing the rise of dissatisfaction at school was one side of their experience, the other was that none of them could continue with their education. In most of the cases, family pressures for money propelled them towards the labour-market.

There, unlike previous generations, they had in principle better opportunities: The 1971 Administration Act, often referred to above, allowed them more freedom of movement within the East Rand Administration Board's area; yet most importantly all looked at the prospect of 'factory work' with a great degree of aversion.(18) Yet despite desires or intentions, they were trapped: Their inferior education allowed very little space for the climb on any ladder of riches,(19) any mobility, (and this was searched for, became 'horizontal', that is a movement from job to job looking for a better placed job, just 'this much closer to their goals', within the economy's structure.(20) Ironically, if not tragically, the preponderance of metalworks and within these of semi-skilled or operative work was most often their lot.(21) It was this that forged links between the unintended consequences of their desires and the advanced metalworks' sector of the East Rand.

An exception here was 'Big John Tate' who willingly severed his education to enter the labour market.

> "Money was o.k. I didn't have to go to work in 1975. But I had enough of Bantu education - what we call gutter education. I wanted to be my own man. I put an end to my parents hope for education. 'Education will make you into a man'. (22)

Thus a second source of grievance was the constant frustration of intentions, or life-projects, summed up in the grinding reality of the labour

market.

But thirdly, this tragic turn of intergenerational experience made the parents into the living proofs of slavery. Their desire to rebel turned inwardly polarising relations, politicising relationships in the home.(23) Steven captured the conflict most eloquently.

> "Look at your father and mother and you want to hit them. My father is a boy! I am sorry to say that .. He is colonized. He doesn't see it ... I didn't want to work like him. I understand his life ... But whenever I would tell him ... he'd say: 'hey picannin whom are you talking to?' He got very angry"... (24)

Or Jeremiah,

> "Rubbish jobs everywhere ... You say metal wants stable workers ... Nobody asks me what I want. It's only 'they' that want. Metal is also rubbish" ... (25)

And Steven continued,

> ..."father would say 'we need security, we need money ... You bring money but it's never enough. At home they always complain" ... (26)

Nkadimeng Jnr. working from the early 1970's onwards felt particularly frustrated. He by the mid 1970's was looking hard for a 'stable' existence. He was married with a child, but with nowhere to go, because of 'housing shortages'. As he recounted he even considered going to his 'homeland' to chase after a job, but forfeiting his right to the city was a prospect that unnerved him.(27)

According to Nkadimeng, this was compounded further by the parents' inertia:

> "It moved me to tears, sometimes to think that this slave of liquor, this man was not like that before and that when he was like me he was a fighter. He has so many stories to tell. But that's what is left. Stories. Working for the umlungu has killed him." (28)

But even in the families that do not fit into the above, the elders preached caution; their experience reminded them of power, that is, the strength of repression that the white state could muster. The youths in turn, complained that the parents did not 'look Azania in the face'.

> "You don't sit around and drink with the old people and their nonsense. You moved into the streets and because of the tsotsis and gangs you will get into mischief. You become a street child, in and out of fun, in the shebeen and out, into the fight and music..."(29)

> "At home it was horrible. So many people. People everywhere. Four lodgers, my mother, my two little sisters (no father), an older brother who would come over week-ends, but he had his wife's family with him in Tembisa. Everybody on top of each other. And now where do you put your friends?..."(30)

> "... It's this influx control that makes you into a pig sty..."(31)

Overcrowding at home, on the one hand, and frustrations on the labour market on the other, consolidated this generation's sense of alienation from society and furthermore, their particular perception of 'slavery'.

Unlike Black Consciousness though that interpreted work, the factory and existence in the townships as metaphors for black oppression, these youths could not but see these sites as the sources of real oppression. The iron law-like impulses that defined the parameters of their emerging cultural formations were not in the realm of spiritual or psychological solution, rather, they responded

by an unyielding search for new sites of relative freedom.(32)

One of the sites of relative freedom has been the 'street'. Those dark passages that exhume both violence and excitement:

> "The younger ones hate their parents. A lot of them don't drink. But they also don't belong to the mohodisano. They see all this as old. They wander around from home to home, to music to dance to the girls..." (33)

But these young 'impis' of the night, developed the moral codes of gangs without necessarily being 'criminal', as shall be further explored below.

The necessity of working found them all in the East Rand's metal-works despite hopes of aspirations. A quiescent tone despite the degree of protest is evidenced in the statements of the three older workers:

> "Education was not to learn. No future. You could see you were aiming for a shit job somewhere in Benoni. I thought, no, I have to carry on, get as much education as possible. 'Blackboy', I said, 'you improve yourself. Now, here I am". (34)

> "...I have a good job now. It pays well. But I understand what a lot of black people feel. 'Get out of the factories. Get a job in the offices, in the commerce. Study more. Get out of here'. I shall stay. I shall be promoted soon and management talks of training me."(35)

> "...I work for my hire-purchase, that's what my work is all about. You are a dog that they try to make to obey. Do this, do that. The power of the white is that you do it. That's the crucial thing. Your soul says I'm free, I'm powerful; your hands say another story..."(34)

Between the entry of Nkadimeng, Eliphas, Sizo, Mark, Jeremiah, Big John State and Steven on the one hand, and the rest, stood a point of social

eruption, the rebellion of 1976, that shaped both experience and discontent. This shall be left for the following section, after that is, of the discussion concerning the post 1976 period.

Here a certain synthetic conclusion becomes necessary: the 'lean years', beginning approximately in 1969 for both the metalworks (as identified as a period of stagnation and by the migrants as a period of mounting pressure) did not correspond with the subjective chronology of at least the younger urban metalworkers. The latter entering the labour market as from the early 1970s experienced from the beginning a sense of crisis. Of course, objective process and experience could be brought to correspond in the mere fact that the pressures driving these youths out of school and into the labour market are not unrelated. Most likely a broader and not sector specific study would show that this was the case, yet for the analytical terrain involved here, a correlation of a more pertinent nature is implicated.

At the heart of the transformations in the metal industry a contradiction, invisible to the social actors yet visible on the broader spectrum of analysis, was gathering force by the mid-1970s. Its logic can be summed up in this: the modern metalworks were procuring and securing their 'universal', 'collective labour', 'operative labour' despite the workers' reluctance; the new metalworkers' reluctance negated in turn the metalworkers' desire for a stable labour force. The unfolding of this contradiction, was not so much a 'process without subjects' as Althusser asserted (37) rather as shall the next section consolidate, it was a process despite them.

3. 'Soweto' and After, the Consolidation of Young Urban Metalworkers' Cultural Formations.

The contradiction articulated above, was simmering away as the crisis years,

or the 'lean years' were interrupted by the social explosion that started from Soweto to spread throughout South Africa and through a new generation of young metalworkers. Alpheus, Moses, Zondiwe, Elliot and Jonas entered the metal factories after this event. In rounding off the qualitative transformations of their social being it is imperative to outline the further implications of the post-1976 period.

The 1976 and 1977, uprisings, the 'Power Days' were for many of these young men points of no return. On the ashes of the revolt, the die was cast defining their social being for some time to come on three levels: A political, an economic and a cultural level. In the years that followed the revolt and through the resurgence of militancy in the late 1970's this generation was to play a crucial role. This was so despite the low level of political activism on the East Rand.

At the level of community and national politics, new organizations sprang up in the late 1970s: COSAS, organising black schoolchildren, AZASO, for black students and AZAPO for black 'workers' (see below) emerged in the political vacuum of the Rand. AZAPO's formation heralded a stage in popular rhetoric that the black working class was to be the vanguard of Azanian liberation.(38) Its programme marked important continuities and discontinuities with past political activism: On the one hand, it was the continuation of black political resistance in the 1970's led by an increasingly discontented and militant and albeit educated stratum of black South African society. To this effect, it too embraced the central tenets of black consciousness ideology. But it was, on the other hand, the child of a fundamental crisis within the black consciousness movement.

As above-mentioned, black consciousness as a movement lacked any significant black worker support and furthermore, it did not attempt to organise the 'grassroots' in any systematic way,[39] The focus on the black working class materialized after the revolt of 1976, after, that is, this uprising was already in process. After finally, the unleashing of violence by the South African State was turning black townships into battlefields, when the 'stay-away' as a mass action became the tactic of the students' struggle.[40] In this period, black consciousness transformed itself into a quest for black power in the streets. the movement away from psychological and spiritual concerns is more than adequately encapsulated by one of the pamphlets from the 'stay-away':

> "...the students believe that South Africa is what it is, and has been built by the blood, sweat and broken bodies of the oppressed and exploited Black workers. It is a well-known fact that the Blacks carry the economy of this country on their shoulders. All the skyscrapers, super highways etc., are built on our undistributed wages... It is because of these facts that the students realise that in any liberatory struggle, the power for change lies with the workers..."[41]

Increasingly from this time, the black working class became one of the primary foci of appeals and organizational activities for the 'liberation of the black people'. This entry of a class discourse into black consciousness thinking is what defines the discontinuity in the political and ideologial traditions of the 1970s.

It is important to situate this 'discontinuity' in order to understand with more precision the transformation that was necessitated by political events. It was noted above,[42] that work, in the discourse of the black consciousness ideology, was another metaphor for black enslavement and oppression, and that the black enslavement and oppression, and that the black worker in South Africa was the epitomy of colonialism's degradation: a prisoner of the 'fall' from a

mythical great and humane past. It is this metaphoricality that defined the leadership's assessment of economic exploitation. The entry of Marxian notions of classes and class struggle in this perspective has been absorbed by an extension of the metaphor and not by a whole-scale conversion to the scientificity of Marxian analysis.

A.W. Gouldner has noted that within Marxist discourses there exists a 'paleo-symbolic' level where appeals to the 'proletariat' are defined by their 'metaphoricality', relating proletarian appeals with forms of enslavement. This, notes Gouldner, is what makes Marxian discourses particularly attractive to every 'third world' popular movement where the 'proletariat' in any scientific sense is but a small fraction.

> "...It is the metaphor of 'enslavement'... that is the central 'switching house' in which rebellion against any kind of master is sanctioned and which allows Marx's specific theory of revolution against capitalism, by a tacit regression to a deeper metaphor of enslavement, to re-emerge as a generalised theory of revolution..."(43)

It is such a metaphorical reading of a class discourse that allows the 'discontinuity' under discussion to be elicidated. Organizations like AZAPO extended the metaphor of enslavement involved in black consciousness discourses to incorporate class discourse on the grounds of their evocative commonality. This allowed AZAPO leadership from its formation in 1978 to increase its appeals to the black working class in a unique manner. It identified the fundamental contradiction in South Adrica as economic and racism to be seen as an instrument of economic exploitation and oppression. Through this, workers were to be the vanguard of the organization for liberation. Yet simultaneously, all black people were defined in the same breath as workers stretching this definition beyond the limits of Marxist class analysis. All black people were workers

Secondly, relying on mobilising people around issues without organizing them, it left a vast organizational vacuum. As publicists though, ASAPO opened up a new and explosive sphere. The young metalworkers, whose responses make up part of this thesis, acknowledge that the new emphasis on 'black workers as the assegai to freedom',(49) gives them hope to survive this period of 'slavery'.(50) AZAPO is not here, it is somewhere in Soweto. I know it from the 'Sowetan' (newspaper)".(51)

On the economic level, the years 1975-1977 were as far as the interview evidence is concerned gloomy:(52) The migrants' description of this as 'lean years' finds at the level of urban black experience a similar dramatic meaning. The point needs no further elaboration as it was examined in chapter three from the point of view of the Metalworks. Retrenchment of workers was widespread on the East Rand especially in the metal industry. What was particularly marked though was the extent of youth unemployment in the years of crisis. L.J. Loots in his unemployment estimates in the Pretoria region has already stressed the point which was taken up by the South African Institute of Race Relations and the Black Sash in their memorandum on the causes of the 'Soweto riots'.(53) Exact figures are not available but from the experiences articulated here, the problem seems to have been extreme. The reconstruction of it by these youths ran as follows: Firstly, they were affected because there were no new jobs being created so they could not enter the labour market. Secondly, the first people that were retrenched were the young and inexperienced workers of their generation. (54) Both factors exacerbated their feelings of hostility to 'this system of slavery'.

Yet, as was the case with the migrant metalworkers, 'hostility' is neither an unmediated nor a spasmodic response to economic factors. The three years from 1975-1977 according to all concerned became the years that defined their

from 1975-1977 according to all concerned became the years that defined their lives, their life projects, their consciousness and action. They brought forth a subtle transformation in their cultural formations exacerbating on the one hand, their mercenary relationships to wage employment, on the other their need to earn in order to support themselves and their families. A new contradictory set of tensions came into being: a symbiosis of two conflicting yet rational postulates, namely an increasing defiance of slavery coupled with an increasing necessity to 'stabilise' themselves as an industrial workforce. The way youngsters responded to this tension came to define in turn their new cultural formations.

From the interviews at hand, two modes of response seem to crystallise and are held as subjectively meaningful by the young metal-workers. They involved a differentiation, or a separation, between 'smarts' and 'straights'.(55) That is, however much both groupings saw themselves as defined by a similar stand on 'black rights',(56) they differentiated amongst themselves in their everyday lives. Nkadimeng Jnr., Eliphos, Sizo, Mark, Zondiwe, Steven and Elliott are 'straights'; they call the others 'irresponsible hippies', 'tsotsis'; the 'others'; Big John Tate, Alpheus, Moses, Jeremiah and Jonas saw themselves as 'smarts' and see the others as 'cowards', 'unadventurous' and 'conformists'.(57)

In an attempt to define what the division was, the 'smarts' outlined the following facets of their lives: They are self-consciously aggressive about their 'blackness'; they talk back to their supervisors be they black or white.(58) Their escape from control or punishment is to run away to other jobs(59) ("... we don't have to have regular employment", was the commonest response).(60) They are furthermore suspicious of any form of paternalism and they style themselves as 'anti-system'.(61) Another facet of their social being is that they style themselves as modern: They hate 'Bantu radio' and all

that 'shit'; they prefer the 'big black sound': Bob Marley, Bunny Wailer, Peter Tosh, Jimmy Cliff, Stevie Wonder, Disco and Miriam Makheba. They finally see themselves as a mixture between black consciousness and 'tsotsi' in their 'hard fighting spirit'.(62)

The 'straights' are mindful in contradistinction to the 'smarts', of their employment chances. They were particularly clear about the dilemma: On the one hand, the 'system' was unfair yet at the same time on the other, subsistence requirements and the necessity of help to familial stability that their wages ensured.(63) This sense of responsibility made them more cautious in their working environment. In contradistinction again to the 'smarts' they do listen to 'Bantu Radio' and they do like 'mbaqanga' music.(64) They furthermore abhor the violence of the township, the 'tsotsis' and the 'tsotsi style' of the 'smarts'.(65) They also do not approve of the fact the 'smarts' deal with oppression in the factory: "... they don't stand up and fight. They either run away or the foremen chase them away"...(66)

What both groups share though is two-fold: Firstly, they do not seem themselves as metalworkers for the rest of their lives.(67) Secondly, they see 'liberation' coming outside their immediate factory environments. On the latter count they separate attempts to improve wages and working conditions from the politics of power. What the implications of this for trade union organisation are will have to await for the ensuing chapters.

What is pertinent to note here as a conclusion to this discussion is that both groups were part of the 'stabilisation' target the industry is aiming at. From interviews with employers of two of the firms that employ ten of these young workers, what is echoed is a similar predicament as in 1946: managerial observations have not altered fundamentally, however much work relations in the

factories have altered:

a. The need for Control:
"...This new breed of blacks is a difficult problem. They cannot function through the stick, they take only to the carrot... They are very suspicious of any genuine changes"...
"... Productivity needs responsible workers but our society produces people ... black people... who have no interest in the system. We have to develop adequate personnel functions that will control their temperament, without them feeling part of any 'oppression'..."

b. The failure of wage - incentives
"... We tried bonuses and incentive schemes for the last ten years and they do not work. We tried attendance bonuses, and they don't work. These people we are told by our supervisors say that bonuses are a mockery..."

c. Soldiering of Output in Production
"... Japanese workers have a strong work ethic. Ours don't. They want to expend as little energy as they need to get by without straining themselves. They want the minimum effort for the maximum pay..."

d. Unreasonable Politics in Production
"... They get aggressive in the political sense. A lot of complaints are coming from our white staff that especially the younger workers swear at them ... They must realise we are trying to wipe out racism from the factory. It's more than the Government ever did"...

e. Uncontrollable Nature of African workers:
"... Whether they do it on purpose or not their performance is very poor at the best of times. They are not easy to control, the slightest excuse and they disappear, a problem with a machine and they spend the day looking for the maintenance team"...

f. Absenteeism and High Turnover:
"... A lot of them seem to confuse holidays with working time. But for better or worse the turnover of workers is quite high. During the recession the high turnover was

blessing. We didn't have to retrench. Now it's a problem."...

Finally "... The potential is there, what we need is to find the right formula ... the right magic: The onus is on us enlightened employers and we accept this responsibility. On this rests the future of South Africa"...(68)

NOTES

1. See, J.P. Sartre, Search for a Method, New York, 1981, especially the second chapter.

2. Whatever the sophistication that might be introduced or the complexities enumerated (eg. G.A. Cohen's Marx's Theory of History - A Defense Oxford 1978) if determination arises from economic 'base', then 'ideology' is a determined level of a social formation.

3. For the introduction of this Freudian concept into historical materialism see L. Althusser's For Marx London, 1969. For a further discussion of its importance see P. Anderson, Arguments Within English Marxism, London, 1981.

4. See on these bodies, inter alia, John Kane Berman, Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction, Johannesburg 1981; R. Bloch & P. Wilkinson, 'An Overview of State Urban Policy' Africa Perspective, No. 20, 1982.

5. P. Willis, Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs. Hampshire, 1980.

6. ibid. p. 120.

7. From inter alia, Mark, Jeremiah, Steven, Alpheus, John, Moses, Zondiwe, Elliott, & Jonas, Interviews. On 'Bantu Education', see M. Horrell, Bantu Education to 1968, Johannesburg, 1968 & C.B. Collins, 'Black Schooling in South Africa' in Africa Perspective, No. 17, 1980.

8. See, State vs. Saths Cooper & others (Transcript of Court Proceedings) Archives Collection, of SA Institute of Race Relations, (1982), for the core of black consciousness thinking of the time. For a sympathetic overview of the movement see also J. Kane Berman, Soweto, Black Revolt, White Reaction, Johannesburg, 1981.

9. See B. Hirson, Year of Ash, Year of Fire, London, 1980, for a critical assessment of the relationship between black consciousness & the black working class.

10. See E.P. Thompson's The Making of the English Working Class, Harmondsorth, 1970.

11. This criticism is echoed now in Azapo, the currently prominent black consciousness organization in South Africa. For a critical overview, see B. Hirson, Year of Ash, Year of Fire, op. cit. See also, R. Levin, 'Black Education, Class Struggle & the Dynamics of Change in South Africa since 1946; in Africa Perspective, No. 17, 1980.

12. See, SASO (ed.), Towards the Practical Manifestations of Black Consciousness, Johannesburg, 1975.

13. See, T. Thoaklane (ed.), Black Renaissance : Papers from the Black Renaissance Convention, Johannesburg, 1975.

14. Most important here were the works of W.M. Serote, Mafika Pascal Gwala the Medupe Group & Dashiki in the pre-1977 period. For the period after c.f. Ingoapele Modingoane's In Africa my Beginning Johannesburg, 1979, & M. Manaka's Egoli, Johannesburg, 1980. For an analytical overview see the work of K. Sole, in B. Bozzoli (ed.), Labour, Townships & Patterns of Protest, Johannesburg, 1979.

15. John, Interview. (All interviews February/March, 1982).

16. Mark, Interview.

17. Moses, Interview.

18. Mkadimeng, Mark, Elliott, Zondiwe, Interviews, op. cit.

19. Steven, Interview.

20. Inferred from all Interviews, op. cit.

21. ibid. Also, Management Survey conducted for the thesis research.

23. The only exception here was Alpheus, Interview.

24. Steven, Interview, op. cit.

25. Jeremiah, Interview, op. cit.

26. Steven, Interview, op. cit.

27. Nkadiment, Interview, op. cit.

28. ibid.

29. John, Interview, op. cit.

30. Jonas, Interview, op. cit.

31. Elliot, Interview, op. cit.

32. See next chapter for more in-depth discussions.

33. Nkadimeng Jnr. Interview, op. cit.

34. Zondiwe, Interview, op. cit.

35. Nkadimeng Jnr. Interview, op. cit.

36. Jermiah, Interview, Op. cit.

37. See L. Althusser's essays in Self-Criticism. London, 1976.

38. On the formation of Azapo, Azapo & Cozas c.f. S.A. Institute of Race Re-

lations: A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1978-1979, Johannesburg, 1979, p. 33 ff. 1980, p 35 ff.

39. On this non-involvement, c.f. B. Hirson, A Year of fire, A Year of Ash, London, 1979, and J. Kane Berman, Soweto: Black Revolt, White Reaction, Johannesburg, 1978.

40. See ibid

41. Quoted from B. Hirson, idbid, p. 253.

42. See article p.

43. A.W. Gouldner, 'The Metaphoricality of Marxism and the Context-Free Grammar of Socialism' in Theory and Society, vol. 1 no. 4, 1974, p. 402.

44. c.f. SAIRR: Survey of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1981.

45. Azapo: 'Policy Document' (mimeo) p. 8.

46. Trade Unionist, op cit. Interview.

47. From, Nkasimeng Jnr. Interview

48. ibid

49. Moses, Interview.

50. Big John Tate, Interview.

51. Jermiah, Interview.

52. Gleaned from inter alia all interviews.

53. L.V. Loots 'A Profile of Black Unemployment in South Africa - Two Areas Surveys' SALDRU Working Paper, No. 19, Capetown, 1978.

54. Big John Tate, Jeremiah, Sizo, Interviews.

55. Group Discussion.

56. ibid.

57. Group Discussion.

58. Big John Tate, Interview.

59. Group Discussion.

60. From ibid, and Individual Interviews.

61. Big John Tate, in Group Discussion.

62. Group Discussion.

63. Nkadimeng Jr. Interview.

64. Group Discusion.

65. ibid.

66. ibid.

67. From both Group Discussions.

68. From Management Survey, see note 21.

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Alienation and Unemployment - Work in Progress

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1. Introduction

The term alienation has many different meanings based on many different notions of people, society and the relationship between the two. There are however two specific useages which predominate. These are isolated as broad groupings which clearly encompass a wide range of perspectives. The first refers to alienation as a social and economic process and the second as a psychological state.

A.P. Ogurtsov, writing in the Soviet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, (cited in Bottomore, 1983) defines alienation as:

> "the philisophical and sociological category expressing the objective transformation of the activity of man and of its results into an independant force, dominating him and inimical to him, and also the corresponding transformation of man from an active subject to an object of social process." (p. 13)

The tendency of bourgeois sociology to psychologize alienation and by so doing transforming it into a psychological category is perhaps best demonstrated by the work of Seeman (1961) who definies alienation in terms of

five states experienced by the individual. These are powerlessness, meaninglesness, normlessness isolation, and self estrangement. Israel (1971) states that all five categories refer to psychological states, experienced subjectively independant of sociological processes.

A materialist understanding of alienation implies an integration of these broad perspectives, seen as being dialectically related and not as exclusive or opposing. In concrete terms what this involves is a two stage process. Firstly, an analysis of the socioeconomic processes which effect the individuals and their role in society including an analysis of processes which effect the individual relations to work, social relations and relationships established to non human objects. Secondly, an analysis of the psychological consequences of the individual's relations to themselves, persons and objects. In the first instance what is being analysed is the process of estrangement and in the second states of estrangement.

This article then attempts an integration of these two perspectives. A discussion of Marx's theory of alienation provides us with an understanding of both the process of estrangement and in an implicit way the consequences of that estrangement for the individual. This provides the basis for further discussion of the latent functions of alienated labour and the resultant consequences of their loss - states of estrangement experienced by the unemployed. The article

concludes with a brief discussion of the process needed to combat these effects and looks at work in progress in this area.

2. Marx's Theory of Alienation

Marx's analysis of alienation, most clearly outlined in the 1844 Manuscripts, The Grundrisse and The German Ideology contains 3 main aspects :

1) Religious alienation, analysed in connection with an article analysis of Feuerbach's philosophy of religion.
2) Political alienation, a criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of the state.
3) Economic alienation, rooted in the alienation from work.

For the purposes of this discussion economic alienation will be focused on. Religious and Political alienation falls beyond the scope of this article, suffice to say that for Marx the form taken by religious and political alienation is dependant upon existing economic conditions and in particular, the mode of production.

Economic alienation

An understanding of economic alienation rests on an understanding of the role of labour. Marx saw labour as a person's most important activity. In essence it is through work that people create their world and as a consequence create themselves. Central to the role of labour is the concept of objectification. Objectification of people was seen as arriving through the creative activity of people in useing their capacities to transform raw materials into objects which reflect their ability.

When labour is free and not enforced people are able to experience themselves as active subjects. By this what Marx means is that since objects of work represent the nature of the person, the person is able to evaluate themselves through their activity becoming an object for themselves. The activity and the objects which are produced are used as a basis for self evaluation and in turn this evaluation influences the individuals activity. It is then through work that the individual moulds and transforms nature and produces objects for their own need satisfaction.

It is only when work is creative that the process of objectification is acceptable and seen as functional.

Free labour is represented by the active, consciously willing,

self-realizing individual in a social process of production where activity is a goal in itself.

Any other kind of labour is an alienated activity. Labour becomes alienated when production is the acquisition of a nature by the individual within and through a certain social structure. Marx continues in the Grundrisse to stress the necessity of and analyzing the social structure of an existing society, dependant upon the level of development of the means of production and the social relations within which the process of social production occurs.

Later, in Capital Marx shows how economic laws are dependant on certain social conditions and the social structure of the society to which they apply. Thus demonstrating how economic theories are ideologies which are based on existing conditions, but which never question the conditions or discuss the consequences of changed conditions.

Three profound conditions in capitalist society "cause" changes in the work situation and in the individuals social relations. It is these conditions which transform labour into an alienated activity and are :

1) Private property and especially private ownership of the means of production.

2) the process of the division of labour, a consequence of

the development of the productive forces.

3) Subordination of labour to the market laws of capitalist society as a result of human labour being arranged into a commodity on a par with all other commodities.

Alienation is conceived of as a social process occuring under certain conditions. The process of alienation can be divided into two sub processes.

1. Entausserung - exteriorization

In the 1844 manuscript Marx sees exteriorization as constituting the process by which work is external to the worker. By this, Marx means that work is no longer part of the individuals nature and that as a result the individual cannot be fulfilled in work. Marx sees this as resulting in the working having a

> "..... feeling of misery rather than wellbeing...does not develop freely his mental and physcial energies but is physically exhausted and mentally debased. The worker feels himself at home only during his leisure time, whereas at work he feels homeless. His work is not voluntary but imposed, forced labor." 1844 manuscript: (McLellan, 1977, 84)

Exteriorization is experienced by the individual as detachment. Work has ceased to be a goal in itself and has become instrumental.

2. The second process is seen as disposal by the worker of labour power when it is sold as a commodity. The worker is able to confirm himself/herself by subordinating his/her products and activity to the domination of an alien entity, money. Herein lies the basis for the concept of the fetishism of commodities' developed in capital. By fetishism of commodities what Marx refers to is that when money becomes the universal exchange object, it becomes a commodity usually with a value independant of what it represents - a symbol of power.

Alienation, being a social process, created under specific social conditions, affects all. The alienating process is experienced in different ways depending on the class to which the individual belongs.

In summary Marx views the process of alienation as being created by three conditions:

1) the fact that people and their working power is transformed into a commodity

2) division of labour

3) private property.

In the 1844 Manuscripts Marx outlines 3 psychological consequences which arose from the school conditions and the process of alienation. These psychological consequences can

be usefully referred to as states of estrangement.

1) The worker becomes alien to their own activity. Work is no longer the satisfaction of a need but a means to the satisfaction of other needs.

2) The individual becomes estranged from the result of their activity :- the product has power independant of the producer. The consequence of this relationship to the product of the individual leads to the experiences of alienation from the physical world.

3) The worker also becomes alien to the social world within which they live resulting in the loss of their humanity. Estrangement in social relations is then a result of experiencing other humans as subjects of cooperation in relation to other things.

The above discussion follows a similar framework used by Israel (1971) and acknowledgement is made thereof.

2. Work, unemployment and its consequences.

> "The position people hold in society and the jobs they perform play an important role in the conception they learn of themselves. Being a father or mother, daughter or son, manager or worker, engineer or painter carried with it codified forms of behaviour, fixed tasks and a daily, monthly, or annual routine." Stanton (1983 : 1)

Jahoda (1979) in an examination of literature on work in an effort to establish why people work comes to the conclusion that apart from material reward the reason people work and why work is seen as pschologically supportative relates to that which is implicit in work - its latent functions.

The latent functions which are identified are firstly that employment imposes a time structure on the day, secondly provides regularly shared experiences and contacts with people, thirdly that it links people to goals and purposes which transcend their own, fourthly it defines aspects of personal status and identity and finally that employment enforces activity (Jahoda 1979). Research comparing employed and unemployed men shows that while workers experience states of estrangement unemployed workers experience these states of estrangement more acutely. (Irvine 1984).

The acuteness of the experienced estrangement states seems to be directly linked to the loss of the latent functions of work. More specifically the pathological states which are displayed include anxiety, depression, psychosomatic complaints and depersonalization. (O'Brein and Kabanoff, 1979; Hayes and Nutman, 1981,; Irvine, 1984 a and b). In addition psychological deterioration is caused by a reduction in income which results in the restriction of variety in a persons life, a smaller score for decision making, reduction in skill use and development insecurity about the future and increased

psychologically threatening activity, (Warr, 1983).

The above specific symptoms which form the phenomenological picture of the estranged state of the unemployed can be seen as the exaserbation of the the estranged state of the worker contained within the psychological consequences which Marx sees as arising from the social conditions and process of alienation.

The estranged state in which people find themselves caught has repercussions on the social structure of society, as well as on the basic social process of production. According to Marx, the individual's consciousness, their apperception of reality, is influenced by their social position within the structure of society. At the same time it is the individual who creates and changes the basic social process of production and the resulting social structure of society.

This dialectical relationship is explored in The German Ideology leading Marx to reiterate that alienation of man is created by special social conditions. These social conditions, however, are the result of human activity, so people create alienation and by their own activity they can also overcome it. The alienated person is then the product of special conditions and corresponds to peoples nature in a definite historical period. This leads Marx to differentiate between human nature at a given historical period being a consequence of personal, existing social relations and a

persons general human nature as it is changed in the historical process, through always being a consequence of the social relations they have created themselves. In essence then what Marx is talking about is the potential which humankind has on the one hand and the existing human being seen as a consequence of a certain social structure, on the other, (Israel, 1971).

In the same way as there exists a dialectical relationship between man's creation of alienation, and his ability to arrange the processes which lead to alienation so too is there a dialectic relationship between a persons understanding of what is normal and its social construction.

Under capitalism, commodity relationships, the starting point for the theory of reification and the concept of false consciousness lead the estranged state of the worker to be understood as normal and functional. In terms of this what is asserted is that the fact that psychological alienation are not understood as such should be seen as a necessary continuation of the process. Berger & Pullberg (1966) talk of this stage as being one in which the individual is so alienated that their alienation is no longer experienced.

A detailed discussion of the theory of reification and the concept of false consciousness lies beyond the scope of this article. What is important to note is that the

characteristics of alienation outlined by Seeman (1961) while having a negative connotation, are currently viewed as part of the human experience and when present in a person who is "functional" occupationally and socially, is considered normal.

When these conditions are experienced by the unemployed they are of a more extreme nature and likely to be seen as pathological. Research conducted in the motor industry in Port Elizabeth bears this out. The comparison between employed and unemployed motor workers showed that while employed persons experienced anxiety levels considered to be disfunctional, unemployed workers experienced a greater degree of disfunctional anxiety, (Irvine, 1984b).

An analysis of a large amount of the literature on unemployment and its effects yields a few common trends. Firstly, what is clear is that the psychological effects of unemployment are so debilitating to the individual that their potential to be successfully organized is limited. Secondly, that without some degree of psychological intervention, these effects are long lasting and not ameliorated by finding employment. Thirdly, that if the latent functions of work can be restored to the individual in the interaction of the individual with their community and family, the debilitating effects of unemployment can be reduced and, lastly, that until the effects of unemployment are combated the potential for the individual to be involved

in actively particpating in the process of reorganizing society is limited, if not unlikely.

3. A perspective on treating the effects of unemployment.

Bandura (1975) has commented that if psychologists are to have a significant impact, they must apply their corrective measures to detrimental societal practices, rather than limit themselves to treating casualties of these practices. Instead then of offering to act as controlling agents, psychologists would be offering to pass on their knowledge and skills. Instead of being the passive recipients of modified environmental contigencies, clients would become active controllers of their own lives.

It is against this backdrop that treating the unemployed emerges. Any program which aims at reducing the experience of alienation - estranged states - by necessity emerges from a clear understanding of prevailing social and economic relations and is seen as a forerunner of the participation of the unemployed in altering those social and economic relations which generate unemployment. Combating the effects of unemployment is seen as the necessary prerequisite to any further positive development of the individual.

Current work in this area in Durban is dealing with the development of a group program for rehabilitation of the

unemployed person. Participation in a group process is seen as being a viable means of restoring the lost latent functions of work. Participation in the group activity would contribute in the development of structure for regularly shared experiences and contact with others, like the individual to goals which transcend his/her own and aid in the development and definition of personal status and identity leading to the mobilization of collective resources and power for effective actions, however that is defined by the group.

In addition the use of a group process is based on the assumption that major threats such as unemployment can be faced and overcome by the group which bands together to mobilize its resources to withstand a seige or bombardment, utilizing the collective power of the group to change the individual.

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THE 1981 RENT BOYCOTT IN DURBAN

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INTRODUCTION

In 1981 community organizations based in sub-economic housing estates in Durban organized a rent boycott in the face of impending rent increases. On the substantive issue, the rent boycott failed, in that the increases were ultimately implemented. This failure served to heighten the sense of alienation and cynicism felt by some residents. More positively, the rent boycott succeeded in that an increased level of consciousness was achieved and valuable links were forged between the participating communities. The final payoff was the establishment of new community organizations and services (1).

THE HISTORY OF THE RENT BOYCOTT

In 1980, the Durban City Council announced its intention to increase the rentals in the housing estates under its control. The Council felt this was necessary since the rising costs were being subsidized by the City's Rate Fund and would otherwise lead to an increase in rates (2).

A meeting in protest against the increases in Coloured townships was called by the Sydenham Heights Tenants' Association and the Newlands East Residents' Association (NERA). At the meeting Mr Virgile Bonhomme, Natal chairperson of the Labour Party stated that legal action should be taken against the City Council since the increased rentals were needed to offset the losses sustained on redundant land (3). The meeting approved Mr Bonhomme's proposal of a Supreme Court action against the imposition of an average rental increase of 15% (4).

The figure of 15% average rental increase was disputed by Mrs Sybil Hotz, the Deputy Mayor. Depending on whether the housing schemes were classified as economic or sub-economic, the proposed increases were these:

between 3,2% and 15% for Whites;
between 3,8% and 15% for Chatsworth Indian schemes;
between 1,1% and 15% for Phoenix Indian schemes;
between 1,1% and 15% for Newlands East Coloured housing;
between 10,5% and 15% for other Coloured schemes;
and 15% for other Indian schemes (5).

The Council announced that the rent increases were to be applied from 1 February 1981 following a four-month moratorium.

In Phoenix, the Phoenix Working Committee (PWC) held a series of "house, zonal and area cell gatherings" prior to calling a public meeting to discuss action (6). Mr R Chetty, a member of the PWC outlined some of the actions contemplated. "There may be a total boycott of rentals (the residents will not pay their rents at all), there may be a partial boycott (residents will pay how much they want), mass meetings may be staged and administrative work at the rent office in Stonebridge may be disrupted (7)."

A "snap survey (8)" conducted by the Phoenix Rent Action Committee (PRAC) revealed that "seventy percent of Phoenix's 63000 residents (9)" would support a rent boycott as protest against the rent increases. Furthermore, 20% of residents canvassed would consider withholding their rent payments for a specific period while the remaining 10% were undecided, but in the opinion of PRAC official Jack Singh, likely to support "the actions of the majority (10)."

Mr Virgile Bonhomme a committee member of the Durban Housing Action Committee (DHAC) warned the Durban City Council that unless the rent increases were reviewed tenants in Newlands East, Phoenix, Sydenham Heights and Chatsworth would conduct a rent boycott (11). This statement was supported by Mr Jackie Nair of PRAC, who gave 1 March as the deadline (12).

In Phoenix, organizers of PRAC and the PWC collected the rent

slips from 2000 tenants in a door-to-door campaign. There was no compulsion reported Mr Jackie Nair, the chairman of PRAC. "However I would advise them (the tenants) to cooperate with our members when they do come round, as we are working in their interests (13)."

As the rent boycott gathered momentum, Mayor Hotz sternly warned the rent-boycotters that they faced eviction. "She said the City Council, like any other business is obliged to go through certain procedures (14)." Mr Jackie Nair of PRAC responded: "We are not alone. The churches, trade unions and other communities are all watching. Many of them have told us, 'If they touch you, they are touching the entire black community (15).'"

Protest against the rent increases gathered powerful support. At a meeting in Newlands East, Archbishop D.E. Hurley spoke against the rent increases, castigating the "system which oppressed people in this country (16)." Speaking at the same meeting, Mr Virgile Bonhomme rejected accusations of intimidation by his organization of non-participants in the rent boycott. He "called upon the Mayor, Mrs Sybil Hotz to convene a meeting within 14 days to explain the council's policy and listen to the views of the people (17)." Mr Bonhomme urged the 700 people present (18,19) to ignore the "threats of eviction and electricity cuts (20)" made by the City Council. "He went on the say that they (NERA) had

collected hundreds of rent slips already. 'Let me make it quite clear, ladies and gentlemen, the rent slips were not taken away from the residents, the residents came forward and handed them over (21).'"

Meanwhile, surveys conducted by PRAC and the Newlands East Residents' Committee (NERC) revealed that 44,4% of the 7800 residents lived below the Household Subsistence Level. In Newlands East, 47,5% of the 1800 families were in a similar state of economic crisis (22).

These data came from a memorandum from DHAC submitted to the Durban City Council (23). Based on sample sizes of 4,64% (243 cases) for Phoenix and 9,59% (139 cases) for Newlands East, the socio-economic surveys revealed further that in Phoenix over 20% of the heads of households interviewed paid more than 50% of their income in rent. The comparative datum for Newlands East was 16%.

In Phoenix (24), where the mean size of households was 5,47 persons, the budgetary allocations were these:

Food:	40,2%
Clothing:	14,0%
Individual cleansing:	1,2%
Household cleansing:	2,2%
Workers' transport:	10,9%

Water, fuel & light:	8,0%
Rent:	23,5%

Comparative data for Newlands East (25), where the mean household size was 5,41 persons, follow:

Food:	38,5%
Clothing:	10,8%
Individual cleansing:	1,0%
Household cleansing:	2,2%
Workers' transport:	11,7%
Water, fuel & light:	8,0%
Rent:	27,8%

Methodological criticisms and issues regarding definitions were made by the City Treasurer in response to the survey data cited above (26). These comments, plus a detailed analysis of the DHAC - City Treasurer memoranda are to be discussed elsewhere (27).

A DHAC survey conducted in Newlands East revealed that only 10% of those canvassed opposed the rent boycott, while 80% had not paid their rent. Furthermore, no persons interviewed had joined the action because of external pressure. Mr Virgile Bonhomme claimed that "nearly 100000 residents" were participating, and that many more would join if evictions occurred (28).

A united front of 29 sporting, welfare, community and educational organizations was convened to support the rent boycott. These were the South African Council for Sport, Federation Professional League, Natal Council of Sport, Black Sash, Democratic Lawyers' Association, Health Workers' Association, Cato Manor Ratepayers' Association, Southern Durban Rates Action Committee, Chatsworth Housing Action Committee, University of Natal (Durban) SRC, Reservoir Hills Ratepayers' Association, Natal Indian Congress, Stanger Civic Association, University of Durban-Westville SRC, Southern Durban Civic Federation, Durban Child Welfare Society, Asherville Housing Action Committee, Natal Rates Working Committee, Natal Indian Cane Growers' Association, Tongaat Civic Association, La Mercy Ratepayers' Association, Anti-South African Indian Council Committee, Democratic Teachers' Society, Medical School SRC, Natal University Black Students' Society, Merewent Ratepayers' Association and Diakonia.

The meeting decided that rents should be determined by what tenants could afford. In addition, the meeting rejected claims that Newlands East non-participators in the rent boycott had been threatened and intimidated (29). Claims by certain City Councillors that "agitators" were coercing participation in the rent boycott were vigorously rejected by Mr Virgile Bonhomme (30).

With no sign of concession from the City Council, public meetings in the affected townships voted to continue the rent boycott into April. The possible consequences were to have electricity and water supplies cut off (31). A signature-gathering campaign organized by University of Natal (Durban) students and the Black Sash, presented the Mayor Mrs Hotz with a petition from 260 White voters calling for a public meeting to declare the Council's policy for the resolution of the rent crisis (32).

The Working Committee for the Amelioration of Conditions in the City Council's Housing Schemes, chaired by PFP Councillor Margaret Ambler and set up by the Health & Housing Committee proposed that a R1M subsidy be provided for Durban housing. Right-wing Councillors attacked the idea. Councillor Gys Muller said: "It will have the people of Durban up in arms. Rent boycotters should be kicked out (33)." Councillor Muller's comments provoked a vigorous editorial in The Graphic (34), which reviewed the history of "anti-Indian agitiation" by local politicians of the recent past. Arguing that the City Council and the Government were the cause of the housing and rental crisis, the editorial demanded that rentals and mortgage repayments in the boycotting areas be fixed at 12 1/2% of the occupiers' monthly incomes. "The solution is radical but reasonable. The White people of Durban and the Government have caused the problem. They must

pay for it (35)."

At a meeting of the Management Committee of the Durban City Council, figures provided by the City Treasurer's Department showed an increase in rent arrears in the organized townships. However the figure of 80% participation claimed by the rent boycott organizers was disputed. In Phoenix 1862 of the 8441 tenants defaulted on their February rentals; in March, 2294 of the then 8726 tenants did not pay. (The difference in totals was created by new tenants moving in to Phoenix in March.) In Newlands East, 394 of the 1866 tenants defaulted in February and 686 in March. In Sydenham Heights - a Council flat development - 71 out of 360 were in rent arrears for February and 222 in March (36).

Reduced to percentages, the rent boycott participation figures are these:

Newlands East:	February 1981:	21,11%
	March 1981 :	36,76%
Phoenix:	February 1981:	22,06%
	March 1981 :	26,30%
Sydenham Heights:	February 1981:	19,72%
	March 1981 :	61,67%

These data fueled anti-DHAC sentiments amongst certain Councillors, with Management Committee chairperson Councillor Neil McLennan calling the 80% participation claim "utterly ridiculous" and accusing the rent boycott organizers of appearing "to be unaware of what's happening in the areas they claim to represent (37)."

On 11 April 1981, the Council disconnected the electrical supplies of 65 Coloured and Indian tenants. Many of these were participants in the rent boycott. Deputy City Treasurer Wilfred Stone stated that the disconnection was normal practice when arrears had reached a specific level and had nothing to do with the rent boycott. Reaction by the organizers of the rent boycott was to distribute 10000 handbills calling upon the residents of Newlands East and Phoenix to show solidarity with the rent boycott by switching off their lights between 8 and 10 pm (38).

"Candlelight Night" was regarded as a success. All lights were off in Sydenham Heights flat development (where the Mayor Mrs Sybil Hotz was burnt in effigy), all but 8 families in Newlands East were in darkness and about 70% of Phoenix homes took part in the blackout. This was considered to be a refutation of the Council's questioning DHAC's representativeness (39).

After six weeks, the rent boycott began to wane. "Resistence

campaigns" were launched to give new impetus to the faltering boycott. Mr Virgile Bonhomme stated that DHAC had received assurances from 250 people in Newlands East, 100 in Sydenham Heights and "about 400" in Phoenix that they would make themselves liable to eviction by not paying rent for the three months of February, March and April (40).

On 16 April the rent boycott was over. A spokesperson for the Phoenix Rent Action Committee stated that the electricity disconnections had stopped the boycott (41).

DISCUSSION

This analysis of the rent boycott is restricted to a discussion of tactical and community organization errors.

The organizers made four tactical errors. These inhibited either the progress of the action, the development of a democratic community structure or both. The first error was to allow the rent boycott to continue well into injury time. The sense of defeat that followed the slow fizzle as the boycott faded served to reinforce the entrenched sense of powerlessness experienced by many working people within the communities concerned. Furthermore, it is possible that the credibility of the organizers in their roles as community leaders was damaged by this. Those who suffered from electricity discontinuance and eviction might have been

enriched by their martyrdom; however this is a moot point. The tendency to reify matyrdom and suffering serves only to obscure the real effects of struggle. A more useful strategy might have been to limit the boycott to one month. The numbers who chose to engage in the campaign of passive resistance would have been much larger, and thus a greater indication of solidarity and mobilization.

Secondly, obtaining "mandates" from public meetings is a dubious form of democratic practice. On one hand, the numbers present can seldom if ever form a simple majority of the community as a whole. On the other, intentionally or otherwise, the public nature of voting (by show of hands) is inevitably coercive and can never equal the freedom of choice offered by the secret ballot. No doubt a ballot is more demanding of time and effort. However responsible trade unions use the ballot and community organizations can learn from the trade union example. Thus the only claim that can be made of a public meeting is that it reveals trends of thought and opinion within the community as a whole. Mandates come from majorities alone.

Thirdly, DHAC and its spokespersons made claims (such as the 80% participation) that were easy for their opponents to dismiss (36). This is possibly the consequence of conflating majorities at public meetings with the majority of the community or communities concerned.

Finally the tactic of collecting rent slips from tenants was a major error. To unsophisticated persons this could have been seen to be coercive. More damagingly, to hostile elements in the Press and elsewhere, this action provided all the "evidence" they needed of "agitators" and "intimidation".

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1 For example, the *Newlands East Self-Survey of Needs (NESSON)*. Arising directly in the aftermath of the rent boycott of 1981, The NESSON programme had these goals:

Firstly, to obtain empirical data, in terms of the residents' *umwelt*, of the needs and presenting problems of the community.

Secondly, by transferring survey expertise to the people, to provide them with a valuable tool for mobilization and social action.

Thirdly, to provide a fundamental level of community organization by way of the infrastructure of the surveys.

2 *Natal Mercury*, 25 March 1980.

3 *Natal Mercury*, ibid.

4 *Natal Mercury*, 27 March 1980.

5 *Natal Mercury*, 9 April 1980.

6 *Post*, 14 January 1981.

7 *Post*, ibid.

8 *Post*, 18 January 1981.

9 *Post*, ibid.

10 *Post*, ibid.

11 *Daily News*, 9 February 1981.

12 *Natal Mercury*, 17 February 1981.

13 *Post*, 3 March 1981.

14 *Post*, 11 March 1981.

15 *Post*, ibid.

16 *Natal Mercury*, 13 March 1981.

17 *Daily News*, 13 March 1981.

18 *Daily News*, ibid.

19 *Natal Mercury*, ibid.

20 *Post*, 18 March 1981.

21 *Post*, ibid.

22 *Sunday Tribune*, 15 March 1981.

23 12 September 1980.

24 Table 8, Appendix 8, *Appendixes to Addendum submitted by the Durban Housing Action Committee to the Durban City Council*, 29 September 1980.

25 Table 8, Appendix 17, ibid.

26 *Adjustment of rentals in municipal housing projects, Annexure 3: Subsistence level*, City Treasurer's Department, Durban: 2 October 1980.

27 Basckin, David: *Avalanches and Mealie Cobs: Durban City Council and Durban Housing Action Group memoranda on the 1981 Rent Boycott*, in preparation.

28 *Daily News*, 19 March 1981.

29 *Natal Mercury*, 21 March 1981.

30 *Sunday Tribune*, 22 March 1981.

31 *Daily News*, 26 March 1981.

32 *Sunday Tribune*, 29 March 1981.

33 *Natal Mercury*, 28 March 1981.

34 *The Graphic*, 3 April 1981.

35 *The Graphic*, ibid.

36 *Natal Mercury*, 3 April 1981.

37 *Natal Mercury*, ibid.

38 *Natal Mercury*, 10 April 1981.

39 *Sunday Tribune*, 12 April 1981.

40 *Sunday Tribune*, ibid.

41 *Natal Mercury*, 16 April 1981.

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OBJECTIVE MEASURES OF ALIENATION

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A plurality of theoretical conceptions of alienation exists (Durkheim, 1964; Israel, 1971; Marcuse, 1960; Marx, 1981; Ollman, 1971; Sartre, 1973; Seve, 1978.) Empirical investigations of alienation, some of them incorporating objective scales, flourished in the United States in the 1950's and 1960's. (Clark, 1959; Davids, 1955; Dean, 1961; Dean & Reeves, 1962; Erbe, 1964; Hajda, 1961; Middleton, 1963; Neal & Rettig, 1963; Neal & Seeman, 1964; Nettler, 1957; Nettler, 1959; Pearlin, 1962; Rotter, Seeman & Liverant, 1962; Seeman, 1963; Seeman & Evans, 1963; Sommer, 1958.)

These evaluations represented attempts to move away from conceptual theoretical levels to the empirical level. Nevertheless, due to the naivete and restrictions implicit in such undertakings, the full complexity of the epiphenomenon of alienation was never sufficiently investigated. Nettler (1957) devised a 17-point scale based on personal interviews with 'alienated or estranged' Americans. Alienation in this study correlated with creativity, mental disorder and general deviance. The results were confused, the study having dealt with estrangement rather than alienation. In our terms, the phenomenon dealt with was social isolation, this being

restricted to only one of the five indices of alienation as presented below.

Dean (1961) delineated powerlessness, normlessness and social isolation as components of alienation. This was an academic study which failed to operationalize any of the three components of what he terms the concept of alienation. Concentrating on measuring alienation in the micro-scale context of a food cooperative, and dealing with powerlessness as the only index, Clarke (1959) provided an atomistic view of alienation removed from its embeddedness in capitalist political economy.

These early American verisions failed to recognize the complexity of alienation. They were reductionist in their quantification. Operationalization, when attempted, equated components of alienation with the total process. For example, social isolation (Nettler, 1957) and powerlessness (Clarke, 1959) were seen as comprehensively representing alienation. American studies provided a conception of alienation amenable to statistical measurement, rather than one directed at accounting for alienation as it exists in the lives of those who experience it. These measures cannot claim status as objective measures of alienation as it exists within the capitalist mass societies of the twentieth century.

To lend some clarity and provide redirection this definition of alienation is proposed:

* Alienation is fundamentally based within capitalist political economy.
* It is manifest within the workplace, and proceeds to and is expressed in the world in general, the community, the family and the individual.
* Important, though not exclusive indices of this state are: powerlessness, normative inversion, social isolation, meaninglessness and access to information.

In order to develop a measure of alienation for use in Newlands East - for the purpose of evaluating the impact and outcome of the Newlands East Self-Survey of Needs (Basckin, 1983) - the indices of alienation were operationalized as follows.

Powerlessness: individuals in the mass societies of the twentieth century are invevitably involved in public affairs. *Powerlessness* refers the helpless inability ordinary people feel when confronted with changing, influencing or even understanding those events and affairs upon which their lives depend.

Normative inversion: the term "normlessness" has often been considered when dealing with indices of alienation.

(Durkheim, 1964; Dean, 1961; Seeman, 1963). Further American studies based on Durkheim's (1964) notion of the state of *anomie* are once again atomistic in equating such a state with alienation. (Middleton, 1960; Srole, 1956). However, whatever one's norms, every individual does have such things. Thus, a much more useful way of measuring this index is with reference to *normative inversion*. Due to the fragmented and confounded existence imposed by alienation, norms may become inverted so that meaning can be made of the state of confusion characterizing everyday existence. Previously 'unacceptable' standards of behaviour are no longer adequate and 'unacceptable' behavioural standards come into operation as coping mechanisms.

Social isolation: this index refers, in Durkheimian terms, to a sense of estrangement, separation from the group, or isolation from group standards.

Meaninglessness: this refers to the degree of chaos the individual perceives in his/her social world. That is, the partial or complete lack of direction, goal or meaning in general felt by the alienated individual. In its most severe form, this leads to non-ambitious feelings of futility and apathy, reflected in all areas of influence in the individual's life. For example, those unemployed do not have the initiative or energy to seek new forms of employment.

Access to information: This refers to the individual's knowledge relating to his/her life and the society in which he/she lives. Lack of access to information leads to the individual developing a sense of self in which his/her understanding of life and the alternatives ways by which to act are constrained.

In attempting to understand the processes and consequences of alienation apparent in their effects on all spheres of the individual's life, the following areas were investigated: work, religion, family, personal, Newlands East, South Africa and political. The alienating consequences of productive activity point to the workplace as a significant area in which alienation is manifest. The religious and familial institutions refer similarly to a Marxist analysis of alienation. Existential concepts, and Marx's concept of self-alienation are considered in the context of personal alienation. At the wider level of the community - Newlands East - and South Africa, together with associated political processes, alienation is institutionalised. It is possible that separation into areas will result in specifying areas in which alienation is more intensely experienced and which require attention at the base of reality.

Abstracting alienation from the real world, the American researchers cited remained faithful to the conception of alienation as a phenomenon quantifiable within a positivist

framework. The present definition however, takes fuller cognisanse of alienation as it exists within the capitalist political economies, and more specifically within Newlands East, Durban, South Africa. Such objective quantification - in combination with qualitative research - provides for a more integrated and simultaneously reality-based understanding of the processes of alienation in operation.

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GENDER-BASED ALIENATION : A FEMINIST/MATERIALIST THEORY OF RAPE.

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Women are alienated from potency as members of humankind . This is both a subjective and objective phenomenon, an experience of womanhood in patriarchal society. However, I will not outline the concepts of objective and subjective alienation; rather I will attempt to explain the nature of gender-based (or sexual) alienation in such a way as to expound a feminist theory of rape which takes as central the structural nature of social relations.

The act of rape defies 'intrapsychic' explanations of behaviour. It is far more readily explained in terms of a mode of interaction between people operating within socially prescribed sex roles, where each role is accorded differing amounts of physical and structural power. For these reasons, I wish to concentrate my efforts at a definition of alienation in terms of social roles. This incorporates the following notions :

-experienced contradictions between expectations of different roles prescribed for people;

-the limitation of behaviour/thought to spheres within the prescriptions;

-the limitation of roles available to men and women; and

-conflicting values placed on different roles.

Recognising that these roles and their associated values are rooted in the structure of patriarchal society is essential to a feminist understanding of rape and alienation.

Sex 'appropriate' roles are communicated to and assimilated by children during the process of socialisation - a process equipping us for our incorporation into the real world of social relations. These social relations are defined by the structures of capitalist patriarchy and exist as class and sex divisions. Gender is divided into male and female/ masculine and feminine/ powerful and powerless. Human sexual relations (ie. relations between men and women) become distorted and, based on a power differential, exploitative. The nature of these relations allows for the possibility of rape.

An expression of sexual alienation and simultaneously a result of it, rape is defined as the experience of forced sexual contact, whether that force is physical (actual or threatened) or emotional. A more radical analysis, which is outside the scope of this brief, would include structural forces eg. women consenting to non-mutual sex out of a woman's 'obligation' to satisfy men.

Gender relations, and the existence of rape are perpetuated by a pervasive ideology consisting of idea and action. Ideology as idea is expressed in attitudes towards women and rape, in the structuring of family life and in many other spheres. Ideology as action includes the act of rape, or its possibility. The effect of rape on the consciousness of humans is to perpetuate the ideology of male supremacy using 'bully boy' tactics, for example forcing women to acknowledge their own passivity. These tactics

are themselves firmly based in the structure of gender relations.

Although they should be implicit in the body of this brief, I would like to outline the origins of sexual alienation. Essentially, alienation grows out of power relations between people. Sexual alienation is inherent in the polarisation of human subjects into masculine and feminine which is in itself alienating, but also allows for further alienation through differential allocation of power. Alienation of men and women in capitalist patriarchy, begins at the moment of birth with the prescription of gender identity on the basis of genital sex. Structurally, power is then allocated according to one's gender, but simultaneously the development of individual psyches occurs along lines in support of and for the maintainance of gender based relations of power. (This occurs because the ideology of patriarchy operates via and is inherent in, the practices of the various socialising institutions). These relations of power are expressed in rape.

Social definitions of masculine and feminine are in fact descriptions of contrasting forms - strong/weak, dominant/ submissive, aggressive/ passive, sexually assertive/ sexually controllable. Not only do these polarised characteristics give evidence of as well as determine the alienation of each gender, they also illuminate a scenario where each gender is alienated from the "opposite sex". Men and women are socialised into adopting characteristics which are supposedly complementary, but become incompatable with co-operation (being opposite,

differentially valued and associated with differential access to power) and serve to structure a relationship of exploitation.

For the sake of clarity I would like to outline the material (physical and socio-political) conditions which not only determine the occurance of rape but legitimate it as well. I hope to show that rape is simultaneously an indirect consequence, an expression, a direct consequence and a determinant of alienation.

1) "(Women are) powerless by definition and in fact" (Dworkin,1976 ,p43). Female socialisation into the physically weaker gender allows women to be overpowered by the physically stronger male. Men are socialised into developing a physique rendering them capable of subduing a female victim.

2) Male socialisation into the sexually potent gender allows men to rationalise the use of force in order to gain sexual access to a victim who, it is commonly believed, has no sexuality independant of male sexuality.

3) Men are taught to turn their frustration into anger, aggression and direct it outwards. They thus become aggressors. Women are taught to turn frustration inwards and become depressed and weakened, thus entrenching their status as victims.

4) Women's economic dependence on men may create sexual obligations from which men may bargain/coerce for sexual access.

result of the structural definitions of sexuality and the historical conditions within which it is experienced.

Rape is seen as an act of systematic, structural violence against women. It serves a control function in patriarchy while simultaneously reflecting, maintaining and facilitating patriarchy. Rape is "A gross and extreme form of social regulation by which woman is brutally stripped of her humanity" (Metzger, 1976, p405).

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THE DEBATE ON CHILD ABUSE WITHIN SOUTH AFRICAN CHILDRENS' HOMES: THE ALIENATION OF THE CHILDCARE WORKERS

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Delegates at the recent (September 1985) biennial conference of the National Association of Childcare Workers (NACCW) met to discuss "The Dilemma of Risk". Brian Gannon, the Director of NACCW said this:

"The problems are overwhelming. In a period of three years we virtually lose our whole staff. I can't blame them. There is no training infrastructure for child care workers and they come to us full of idealism and a feeling for children. They very soon confront the reality of angry, untrusting kids and the hopelessness of trying to turn a dormitory of 14 children into a home experience ... the profession is totally under-developed in this country - other countries tend to take their youth more seriously - no research is being done (sic) and the State subsidies are inadequate. One of the main resolutions of this conference will be to call on the State for increased equal subsidies for children of all races." (*Daily News*, 21 September 1985.)

From this statement we learn that there are three main reasons for the continued existence of child abuse in South African institutions. The manifest reasons are *Apartheid* and inadequate training. The latent reason (Basckin, 1983) is the attempt to impose a nuclear family structure on an institutional setting which shares nothing with the nuclear family except adults (a few) caring for children (many) in a

building quite unlike an ordinary dwelling.

However there is another reason for the continuing failure of South African Childrens' Homes to maintain their staff. This is salary. Not all the training in the world is going to motivate a new childcare worker to remain in his or her job, with its stresses and low status.

What exactly are these stresses? Clearly, individuals respond differently to their situations, but some of the common experiences of stress amongst childcare workers are these:

1 the contradiction inherent to performing work that is of great importance, yet in the common mind (which includes many Management Committees) "low-grade", "unskilled" and "intellectually undemanding";

2 the pressures of night-duty, or more obviously, working to shifts that do not always conform to a comfortable 8am-4:30pm;

3 the absence of a visible payoff for their work, since positive change may only appear later in a child's life;

4 the unpleasantness of living-in as is the case in some institutions. This prevents a sense of recreation on the

part of the childcare workers concerned and has occasional negative effects on their private and family lives; and

5 the possibility of the childcare worker becoming as institutionalized (eg Goffman, 1976) as the children, with senior staff (social workers, principals, Committee members) consciously or unconsciously exercising punitive and infantilizing control over them.

What then is the answer? Two solutions spring to mind.

Firstly, the myth that childcare is a "profession" must be dispelled. Childcare workers, like social workers, teachers and nurses gratefully accept the designation of "profession" since it does something to soothe their ego's sense of abuse. Somehow the word alone suggests that they loll together in the pantheon with the doctors, lawyers and university professors. A brief comparative analyis of their status, pay and working conditions must surely disabuse them of this comforting illusion.

The fact of the matter is that childcare workers are *workers*. Workers transform the world by their labour. Not only that, but they form active trade unions (not "professional associations") which democratically campaign for their members' working rights.

Secondly, pay. A glance around some of Durban's swishier Childrens' Homes reveal great attention having been paid to the material resources of the institution. Often these have been paid for by public subscription organized by the fund-raising energies of the Management Committee and other well-wishers. It is time for their fund-raising energies to be redirected towards Childcare Worker Salary Funds which will augment the inadequate subsidy from the State. The resulting sense of continuity in the relationships between childcare workers and the children, will modify the current belief that a bad family is better than a good Childrens' Home.

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REVIEW
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'The Voice of Experience' by R.D. Laing[1]

by

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So we move from 'The Politics of Experience" to "The Voice of Experience" and Laing's most recent contribution to the field of "experience, science and psychiatry". Just whose voice Laing is expressing is not always clear; is it the voice of the unborn infant, is it the voice of someone trapped in experiences incomprehensible to the rest of society or is it the voice of Laing himself? In reading the text it seems that Laing's voice is the voice that indeed emerges most strongly.

In "The Voice of Experience" Laing appears to be at his most esoteric in exploring an area seemingly somewhat far removed from his previous focus on the inner and interpersonal experience3 of madness or schizophrenia in particular. The text again attacks the so-called objectivity of scientific methodology particularly in investigating human experience, but then moves into the unexpected domain of embryology, perintal experience and mythology. As Laing's chapter "Embryologems, Psychologems, Mythologems" indicates, the substance of the text is concerned with establishing links between these three areas, links which may serve to elucidate case material, dreams and people's lived experiences and reserve to elucidate case material, dreams and people's lived experiences and

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[1]Harmondsworth : Penguin Books Ltd, 1983.

relationships. However, the balance of the text is devoted to exploring Laing's proposition that pre-and perintal experience has a hitherto unrecognized effect on personal and social development without really elucidating the implications of the relationship for psychiatric practice. One has the sense that Laing has moved away from an intense, felt commitment to making comprehensible the experience of so-called psychotic persons, into something of a "head trip". It is true that this work challenges many of the assumptions of contemporary science, psychology and psychiatry but the implications for practice are lacking or mystified. It seems that Laing has become something of a mystic and in so doing has lost he critical potency of some of his earlier writings.

Laing's recent work is fascinating and certainly innovative. As one reads through the text it seems that some of the slow, dreamlike sometimes tortuous experience of conception, intra-uterine development and birth is mirrored in the development of the text. There are points at which Laing becomes cogent and precise but generally there is a somewhat meandering, unfolding sequence of ideas. As is true of most previous texts Laing leaves the reader to make her own conclusions or connections.

Drawing from the work of anthropologists, scientists, gynaecologists, poets, philosophers, psychiatrists, psychologists, and others, Laing weaves various threads of ideas into a central theme centering around human experience of conception implantation, intrauterine growth, birth and the severance from the placenta.

In conjunction, Laing presents excerpts of case material illustrating hat these supposedly pre-cognitive experiences are expressed symbolically in a number of experiences reported by clients. Ultimately Laing seems to be arguing that much of the basis for our normal schizoid contemporary Western existence stems from our attempts to deal with the impact of conception and birthing experiences. His concluding argument reads:

> "The cut-off is done. You don't know you've done it after you have, since the cut-off entails not seeing yourself make the cut-off."

The steps consists in not knowing one has taken one step into ignorance. The step consists in not knowing one has taken one step into ignorance. The cut-off cannot be seen by the cut-off mind. After this type of cut-off, the person does not know he is cut off. He regards it as an insult, were it not ridiculous, if anyone suggests he is. He may however attach and destroy anyone who is not cut off like him, who remembers having forgotten, or who merely speculates that he night have nor must have. We recognize here the achievement of the usual sort of normal ego boundary." (Laing, 1982, pp 163 and 164).

In his usual paradoxical style Laing offers this final comment on contemporary "adjustment".

The sequence of the "The Voice of Experience" can be seen to parallel he sequence of Laing's writing to some extent. In the initial chapter Laing adopts a phenomenological critique of so-called 'objective' science. Although many readers of this text

will be familiar with some of these arguments against a positivist approach to human experience, Laing phrases much of his argument in new and cogent language.

> "The same scientific look can be applied to anything and everything from stars to atoms, from microbes to human beings. When applied to ourselves it entails more than the elimination of some or all of experience and sense data. While it is operative within itself, it has to cancel the live presense of the other person. To look at the other as an object is not only to change the person to a thing but, by the same token, to cut off, while one is so looking, any personal relation between oneself and the other." (ibid, pp 16 and 17); and,

> "It is something of a paradox that non-objective acts create activity. That the 'objective' world comes into view only when we are objective. Nothing is more subjective than objectivity blind to its subjecticity." (ibid, p 17).

Laing does not stop short at arguing against the supremacy and limitations of an 'objective scientitic' investigation of human experience, but as a precursor to his later propositions goes further to argue that such an approach leaves humanity devoid of many of the magical, metaphysical, emotional and transcedant aspects of life. Jacques Monod believes that the refusal of objective science to pander to man's nostalgia for the days of meaning before it came along accounts for so much of the hostility towards it. This hostility stems, he thinks, from a refusal to accept its 'essential message'. If we accept this message in its full significance,

> "... man must at last walk out of his millenary dream and discover his total solitude, his fundamental isolation." (Monod, 1974, in (Laing, 1982, p 23).

Laing's critique of the objective scientific method is a preface to

the second, more speculative, body of the text, an area which he maintains exists unexplored because of the adherence to positivist methodology.

The third chapter expresses Laing's present view of psychiatry. From Laing's perspective little has changed since his earlier references (1959, 1961, 1964, 1967) criticisms of the psychiatric profession. In Laing's view psychiatry remains dominated by the objective scientific method limiting its conceptualization and intervention to those aspects of experience that are intelligible to this perspective.

> "Biology as such itself is no more than a pretext to objective psychiatry. It presents itself as objective, or is objective only in so far as it is useful to do so or be so, for the unobjective end of controlling undesired experience and conduct. Objective psychiatry is an unobjective attempt to control largely non-objective events by objective means". (Laing, 1982, pp 40 and 41).

Practising psychiatrists continue to operate as if medical descriptions of pathology literal rather than metaphorical approaches to 'abnormal behaviour'.

> "What are all these metaphorical psychiatrists doing literally treating methaphorical diseases?...
> "It is too easy for him or her to be bemused by his own rhetoric, so that he comes to regard his diagnosis as an explanation, rather than a social strategy, or possibly, a speculative hypothesis. When this happens the truth is eclipsed by what is supposed to illuminate it.....
> It is unintelligible, therefore it is uncanny, therefore it is psychotic because it is uncanny because it is psychotic because it is unintelligible." (ibid, p 48).

In this respect Laing is as vociferous as ever in his challenge to practising psychiatry, however this is not the focus of this text. This comment on the psychiatric profession is also a preface to the

focus on perinatal and birth experiences. Adhering to the 'scientific' medical paradigm psychiatry cannot encompass the speculative and metaphysical aspects of human experience that Laing presents, and therefore the possible impact of these early experiences on the development of pathology remains unexplored. The practice of psychiatry does not really come under attach but rather some of its conceptual limitations. In this sense "The Voice of Experience" could be said to fall into Laing's third period of thought (Cf. Heather, 1976) following in the vein of "The Politics of Experience".

The substance of "The Voice of Experience" is an amalgam of different scientific 'facts', anecdotes, poems, philosophical premises and case material which serve to put forward Laing's speculating investigation into pre-cognitive experience. Not only orthodox science and psychiatry come under attach by implication but psychoanalytic dream interpretation is directly questioned by Laing (Cf. 141-146). However it appears that the critiques he levels at the analysts i.e. of forcing material into a preconceived framework. Laing asks the reader to make tangential and sometimes highly subjective connections in order to follow his train of thought. One is left wondering whether one has entirely understood what he is trying to convey or whether Laing's own presentation of the subject is deliberately mystified. This is certainly a journey into inner space rather than a exposure of social or economic forces affecting human experience.
Towards the beginning of the text Laing offers the purpose of the

book as the following:

> "A judge within us may be prepared to listen to the claims on our credulity, both from the testimony of scientific reason and from our unscientific experience, even though each may pay no heed to other. This book is addressed to such a judge in each of us.
> The discord, the collision, is not only between different theoretical abstractions, espoused by different people. The conflict is also within us, especially within scientists, in so far as they are human." (Laing, 1982, p 27).

Such conflicting appraisals certainly surfaced in my reading of the test as is reflected in this review. However, I encourage you to engage your own inner judge.

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REVIEW
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MY LIFE STRUGGLE

by

PETRUS TOM*

A LESSON FOR INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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The appearance of Tom's book has a number of significant implications for social scientific practice in South Africa, which cannot be ignored by serious minded social scientists. Perhaps the two most significant aspects about the book are the following:

1. It challenges the monopoly of writing about black workers by academics and other intellectuals and perhaps, in that way transforms the whole practice of writing into a contested terrain. Tom, himself, sees his book as a direct challenge to this monopoly.

> Intellectuals and academics have, for far too long, been writing about us. But now the time has come for us, the working class, to take a stand and write our own stories about our experiences in life (Preface) (emphasis added);

and emphasizes the point again at the end of the book

> Don't give your struggle to intellectuals, academic and other organisations who do not have workers' interests at heart, who want to further their aims at the expense of the workers. (p.68)

2. It also demystifies the practice of writing in general. Tom's text convincingly demonstrates that writing is not the exclusive domain of a "gifted" and "enlightened" few. Over and above this it shows that feelings, attitudes and experience can be communicated effectively without using any jargon or the mystified technical, supposedly scientific, style of writing.

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* Johannesburg: Ravan Press (in association with the Federation of South African Trade Unions), 1985

However, the aim of this, rather unusual, book review is to draw some implications for that section of the social science community known as industrial psychologists. Within the context of Tom's text, the question that is being posed is: what can industrial psychologists learn from it, particularly in relation to industrial psychological research on black workers. Before drawing implications for industrial psychologists it would perhaps be proper to give an outline of what is in the text. The one fact which cannot be denied about Tom's text is that the majority of workers in South Africa are a product of the social dynamics so brilliantly captured in the book. It is in this way, that Tom reveals the black working class life experiences through his own "life script".

> My grandmother used to brew homemade corn beer (Mqombothi) to make some income to buy tea, sugar and meat. My mother's salary was for rent, mealie meal, and clothing. Sometimes my grandmother would get arrested for brewing beer because it was illegal, and we borrowed money from neighbours and relatives to pay her fine ..... when I was eight years old my brother and I used to draw water from the communal tap for a blacksmith. He gave us 2d for four gallons of water. With this money I could buy some school exercise books (p.2)

> Workers from nearby factory compounds could get arrested for entering Topville (Tom's township) illegally because they had to have special passes to allow them to visit locations. When they came in they had to report to the location superintendent's office to get a stamp. If they ignored this requirement they got arrested. Police raids took place day and night. Sometimes we would wake up and see members of the S.A. Police and Municipal police, black and white, going from house to house searching for beer, passes, taxes, stolen goods, permits, and illegal residents. (p.6)

The text takes us through Tom's childhood experiences and some of the frustrations, insecurity and involuntary sacrifices made by children in African townships, sometimes to provide for the comfort and happiness of children in the wealthier white suburbs.

> After my father's death my mother struglled as a domestic worker ..... earning £2 per month, to give us the best she could ..... I lived with my granny in Top Location because my mother slept at her place of work. (p.1)

From these early childhood experiences Tom reveals how these uncertainities and frustrations continued throughout his life. These frustrations included: leaving school early,

> At school I repeated Stds Two and Three before passing Std Three and leaving school for good (p.4)

and surviving through gang fights and brutal killings and some of the worst kind of violence bred by unemployment, scarce resources and artificially created "ethnic" groups. Survival from township hazards meant the beginning of another struggle: that of looking for a job. After changing a number of jobs as a gardener, working at a café and bakery, he finally got what promised to be a stable job at African Cables. Like many other factory workers, stable employment also carries with it "stable" frustrations and problems, and the beginning of long and sometimes bitter struggles against management and employers.

> I started working at African Cables on 16 December 1956 as a labourer. In 1985 workers complained about the night shift because we were not being paid shift allowance. It was being paid only to white workers .... one Monday evening workers decided that "Tonight we are not going to come back when we go on lunch at midnight .... we want (the general manager) to come and explain to us why he is not giving us a shift allowance when our white colleagues are getting it". (p.14)

Over and above the factory struggles, other broader political struggles are taking place in African residential areas. These struggles are vividly captured by Tom in his eye witness account of the Sharpeville massacre.

> I don't know what caused the police to shoot .....
> .... we heard only one sound ..... People fell on their backs, sides and stomachs. People were lying all over ..... Fortunately for me they could not shoot on the side where I was standing ..... People were running in all directions in the townships. Some couldn't believe that people had been shot, they thought they heard fire crackers. Only when they saw the blood and dead people, did they see that the police meant business. (p.29)

The book further takes us through Tom's experiences with unions in the 1950's particularly the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), and how worker organizations were crushed by the State during that period. He further describes what he learned from SACTU, and how that perhaps helped him to gain a better insight into dealing with problems at work thereby laying a foundation for his participation in union activity when unions re-emerged in the 70's.

It is the last three chapters that I find most interesting and informative, particularly Tom's role in the formation of FOSATU and ultimately working for MAWU as an organizer. These sections show Tom's development and capacity to learn from union experiences and how he did not sway from his commitment to the working class struggle in spite of various setbacks in the fight for union recognition and worker unity.

The last chapter looks at the day (The Third day of September) of the stayaway in the Vaal Triangle and through this Chapter Tom reveals the continuity and striking similarities between the community struggles of the 60's and those of the 80's:

> The police came in their hippos and those big trucks with wire outside, and with their sneeze machine. They dispersed the crowd with rubber bullets and teargas ... we ran away. The children also ran, in different directions .... Everybody was at home. There was nobody who was at work that day, on the third day of September (pp. 63-65)

In concluding the review, I would like to say that, perhaps, Tom could have given us more of the shop-floor experiences and struggles, which I hope subsequent books of this kind will pay more attention to. This would have provided a more thorough appreciation of the 'injury of class' in the capitalist division of labour.

Within the context of Tom's text, four areas have been identified as the most problematic in industrial psychological research on black workers:

(1) work and politics
(2) culture and black workers
(3) need for achievement vs need for affiliation
(4) scientific practice in industrial psychology

WORK AND POLITICS

Despite the pain and agony of going through research studies carried out by mainstream industrial psychology, what also comes out clearly is an unforgivable incompetence of relating work and political experiences of workers. This inability manifests itself in two ways. Firstly, industrial psychologists ignore politics in many of their 'scientific' discourses on workers and concentrate only on productivity, culture, work values, world-view, etc. (1)

Secondly, where industrial psychologists recognize the influence of politics on worker experiences, they treat work and politics as independent spheres, with workers oscillating between the two (2).

Tom's experiences present a completely different picture to the one that has been constructed by mainstream industrial psychology. It comes across very clearly that workers' experiences are an inseparable unity of the work and political environments.

> In 1959 while still at African cables we were arrested at the shops in Peacehaven. We didn't have a canteen at African Cables and at lunchtime we would go to the shop. We were loaded into kwela-kwelas (police vans) and taken to the police station. We had been arrested for loitering. The next day the Company offered to pay our fines of £2 each. But we protested. 'We refuse to pay a fine ..... we don't know what we've done!' ..... Management phoned the station commander. We told them not to deduct the £2 from our wages (p.19).

Many lessons can be learnt by industrial psychologists from these experiences of South African workers. Firstly, how can we ignore such political 'interferences' in workers lives even when at work. Secondly, the very action by management of 'forcing' workers to pay a fine legitimizes the arrest of workers. Let alone the arrogance of wanting to deduct money from workers' pay pockets without their permission. In fact what Tom's book does, and quite successfully too, is to expose the ideological foundations of mainstream industrial psychology.

Ignoring workers' political experiences justifies capital's refusal to take responsibility for the action of a state which primarily acts to protect business interests. It also justifies capital's lack of concern about what happens to workers' lives after work, thereby reducing the costs of reproducing labour. What is also sad about the political explanations of worker behaviour by industrial psychologists is that events have overtaken them such that they should be seriously re-looking at the relevance of their 'scientific'tools. The Lusaka talks (1985) between Gavin Relly (together with other top South African businessmen) and the ANC should be an embarrasment to industrial psychologists who have always claimed to be the advisers of management on human/industrial relations issues. It looks like the Lusaka talks signals the bosses impatience with 'sophisticated' explanations which divert the attention away from the real issues likely to affect business interests in South Africa. While psychologists like Nasser (3) are preoccupying themselves with workers' 'ignorance' of the so-called free-enterprise system, the masters they have faithfully served for so long have realized that the problem is not as simple as all that.

CULTURE AND AFRICAN WORKERS

Tom's book can be regarded as having dealt a severe, if not a death, blow to the cultural imperialism which has bedevilled mainstream industrial psychology for so many years. Africans have been described as victims of an African traditional cultural paradigm which emphasizes group orientation as against the individualism of the West, conformity rather than autonomy; respect for seniority based on age rather than on expertise and knowledge; and belong to extended rather than nuclear families (4)

> ..... 'ubuntu' pervades the African social structure and socialization process and because of its importance as a mechanism of survival for large sections of the Black South African population, it is likely to be needed for some time to come(5).

A close reading of Tom's book does not in anyway suggest primacy of traditional African culture as influencing Tom's life experiences. Instead, it comes out very convincingly that working class life experiences derive primarily from what perhaps can be called the 'culture of resistance'.

> Whites' liquor was strictly illegal for blacks during those years. Home-brewing was a health hazard. People hid beer behind toilets where people urinated because they knew that the police would never think of looking in such a place (p.8)

> In 1960 before that terrible day of 21 March some workers resigned from work because they were preparing for that day .... Everywhere people wore stickers on their jackets saying 'Away with Passes' .... Even people sitting in the shebeens had those stickers. Workers also wore them inside the factory .... On the weekend before the 21, we had parties-stokvels-drinking and having campaign workers there supplying us with those stickers and telling us about a meeting to be held (p.24)

The socialization processes and mechanisms for survival described by Tom are radically different from those presented by Coldwell and Moerdyk. Are factors like 'strategies of dodging the police' 'passes' high unemployment' 'shebeens' and 'matchbox houses' part of the 'ubuntu' and traditional African culture as Coldwell and Moerdyk claim? Or are they part of the cultural environment created by apartheid and capitalism? These are the questions that psychologists like Coldwell and Moerdyk will have to answer if they want us to take them seriously. Why do they ignore all these cultural formations and instead give us their own imaginary, and perhaps ideological, creations of an all-pervasive,unchanging traditional African culture? The message that Tom has for mainstream industrial psychology is clear: All industrial psychologists,

like these two, owe Tom and other workers an explanation of where they got these conceptions from, or even better, an apology! Tom's book also gives us a better insight into the real nature of South Africa's so-called 'western' culture that is daily dangled in front of us as a set of superior or God-sent values.

> Unless Blacks accept Western cultural paradigms more fully, it seems likely that there will remain in them a certain amount of holding back from, lack of involvement in, and general rejection of Western bureacratic organizations (6)

Surely one of the best ways of evaluating or judging whether a culture is superior and civilized or inferior and backward is through an examination of the actions and behaviour of its adherents. Tom's work give us a very clear picture of what this 'western' culture can offer to the majority of the citizens: pass raids, bannings, shootings, unstable employment, forced removals, union bashing, overcrowded trains and buses, etc.

> During the war Sharpeville was built and named after the mayor of Vereeniging .... they started demolishing the houses in Top Location and taking those people to Sharpeville .... It was not a forced removal at first. In Top Location they were jumping from place to place taking only those people who wanted to move. But when they saw that Sharpeville was growing they forced the people to go there. (emphasis added) (p.21)

In his account of the events on that fateful day in 1960, Tom further gives us a taste of what 'western' culture can offer.

> The police came between the two groups. We told them that we didn't want to fight, we only wanted to talk. But the police beat us up, chasing people who ran in all directions, (emphasis added) (p.25)

If this is not the 'western' culture that many industrial psychologists have presented to us as superior, what else could it be then? Why blame workers for rejecting this peculiar type

of 'western' culture found in Africa? Tom's book can therefore be seen as a confirmation of the real aim behind cultural explanations: to divert attention away from the realities of apartheid and exploitation, and also put the blame on workers for problems created by apartheid.

NEED FOR ACHIEVEMENT vs NEED FOR AFFILIATION

Blacks have been described by industrial psychology and other allied disciplines as having a high need for affiliation as opposed to the western culture's need for achievement. It is not very clear though what is meant by these concepts, because they are very vague. However, some of the attempted explanations give the impression that blacks prefer to do things collectively.

> The cultural inheritance of most South African blacks is such that they display affiliation needs rather than achievement needs. They are used to doing things by group consensus, acting slowly and non-individualistically(7)

These observations display a high degree of intellectual naivéte in mainstream industrial psychology. This is a gross failure to, at least, appreciate the fundamental contradition of capitalism: that capitalism creates collectivities at the point of production who later become a threat to its very existence by raising workers' consciousness as a group suffering the same plight. This state of affairs is further aggravated by the oppression of blacks in general. Tom's experiences as a worker show that workers' day-to-day struggles on the shop-floor and in their residential areas have taught them that the prerequisite to challenging the power of capital and the state is collective action and unity.

> It is your duty as a trade union member to organize other workers into trade unions because you alone won't have power to challenge capitalism or exploitation. It is only when we are united that we can achieve our goal (p.68)

If this is the kind of affiliation industrial psychologists are referring to, I am prepared to concede that workers (as constitu-

ting the majority of the black population) have a very high need for affiliation! If this is not what they mean they, once more, owe Tom and other workers a further explanation. But, on the other hand, to state that black workers do not have a high need for achievement is also naive. It is undoubtedly obvious from Tom's experiences that it is through this 'affiliation' that workers want to improve themselves and bring justice, equality and, perhaps, sanity into South African society - which is a display of the highest need for achievement!

Perhaps it would do mainstream industrial psychology a little bit of good if they start 'listening' seriously to the messages in Tom's book, and stop their fruitless exercises of manipulating vague and meaningless concepts like need for affiliation and need for achievement. It is experiences like those described by Tom that, in the first instance, determine worker behaviour and not these concepts. Whether African culture is also traditionally communalistic is an irrelevant question in understanding black workers at this point in time. If this question, on its own, needs answering, it requires a different kind of an analysis, and for that matter an historical analysis.

SCIENTIFIC PRACTICE IN INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY

One simple, but important, way of evaluating the accuracy of scientific research is to test its findings against reality. This review has hopefully, demonstrated that research findings and explanations of black workers by industrial psychologists are poles apart with Tom's experiences. Industrial psychologists, as well as other social scientists, will have to ask themselves why have their findings been so misleading and inaccurate? Of course some social scientists have chosen to ignore the workers voice and went ahead with their studies, even if their results contradict what the workers have said through their representatives (mainly unions) e.g. Schlemmer chose to ignore Fosatu's statement on disinvestment and decided to carry on and publish the results of his supposedly scientific survey.(8) In a way this displays scientific arrogance whereby some social scientists think that surveys can replace the more democratic process of consultation and discussion within worker organizations. In such instances one is tempted to ask the question: whose interests are

these research studies and surveys on black workers serving?

There are two most important messages for scientific practice in industrial psychology which emanate from Tom's book:

First, if industrial psychologists want to carry out truly scientific work about workers, they have to do such studies with the workers and not on them. Otherwise they will continue to produce inaccurate and highly questionable results.

If they don't do this they will have to, either, openly declare on whose behalf are they carrying out such studies on workers or to keep quiet, forever - BATHULE BAZE BAFE. The sooner they do so, the better. Secondly, Tom's work emphasizes, once more, a need for an alternative paradigm in industrial psychology.

In conclusion, Tom's book has certainly redefined the terrain on which black workers will have to be understood, in that any study on workers will have to engage with this book or at least the issues raised in it.

NOTES:

(1) See Coldwell and Moerdyk, 1981; Moerdyk, 1983; and Godsell, 1983.

(2) For detailed arguments on this issue see Nzimande, 1985

(3) Nasser, 1984. In a study of how corporate employees comprehend business and free enterprise, whose findings, he believes, holds the key to achieving higher productivity and stability in South Africa, Nasser makes the following conclusions and proposals 'It would appear that a great deal of ignorance about business and Free Enterprise exists among corporate employees in South Africa. Such ignorance is particularly predominant amongst the less educated, unskilled and semi-skilled workers ..... Companies must, therefore, take stock of this situation and attempt to move towards the creation of greater commitment to, and involvement in, their structures by their non-managerial work-forces ..... a sense of urgency will ensure the type of corporate

climate which makes for high levels of commitment to corporate objectives and will consequently ensure the continued survival and growth of a genuine Free Enterprise Southern Africa'(p.26) (emphasis added)

(4) See Moerdyk, op cit p.7

(5) Coldwell and Moerdyk op cit p.75

(6) ibid

(7) Reese, 1981; and he is also strongly supported by Moerdyk, op cit, on this idea.

(8) University Forum: 'A. Erwin - L. Schlemmer debate on disinvestment' University of Natal, Durban 28 August 1985.

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