emanating from or about the enemy will be rejected as inaccurate because it clashes with the hostile evaluating of the opposing party’s nature, objectives and behaviour.

White (1970, pp. 256-264) maintained that bolstering involves seeking out evidence to support a position already adopted in order to justify that position to self and others, and separation or defending an existing negative image of the adversary by failing to give credit for an undeniably good action – attributing the act to others or to force of circumstances. Thus the bad enemy and the good act are kept separate. Mitchell (1989, p. 82) revealed that “[o]ne of the commonest of these simplifying processes helping to achieve cognitive consistency is stereotyping, or simplifying cognitive categories referring to groups of people. Stereotypes normally concern social groups or categories, particularly ethnic groups. However, they can also be held about religious, age, sex, or class groups. Stereotypes may be widely held among members of a given group, as they are based upon the common cognitive process of selecting particular attributes, traits or characteristics apparently shared by another group and (i) expecting all members of that group to exhibit the stereotyped characteristics and (ii) tending to play down the differences between individual members of the stereotyped group.”

According to Mitchell (1989, p. 82) “other slightly less familiar processes which are important aspects of the psychology of conflict include a lessening of participants’ ability to empathise, an increased tendency to universalise one’s own frame of reference, a likelihood of the development of tunnel vision, and an increased probability of perceived polarisation of the environment within which the conflict occurs.”

Mitchell (1989, p. 83) observes that “in one sense the tendency towards tunnel vision is present in all situations of intense crisis, often accompanied by a time-foreshortening factor, when decision makers in parties become concerned solely with the immediate, rather than the long term future, and to see the time available for decisions shrinking rather than expanding.” “Selective inattention,” according to Mitchell (1989) and White (1970), “relates to how different individuals possess a greater or lesser propensity to exclude non-conforming features of their environment or to re-interpret incoming information, so that it is easy to maintain intact their image of the world”.

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Mitchell (1989, p. 76) sets out the basis for the importance of cognitive consistency with the following assertions:

1. Many common psychological processes come into operation in order to reduce psychological stress in individuals and groups faced with a particular range of circumstances.

2. Many factors which result in the activation of such processes (tension, stress, a high degree of uncertainty) are frequently found during conflicts.

3. A conflict is likely to bring such psychological processes and their resultant attitudes into play more frequently and with greater intensity than other situations or forms of interaction.

Mitchell (1989, p. 84) offered an important insight into the construct of the enemy: “If one can unconsciously emphasise the essential ‘alien-ness’ or ‘other-ness’ of members of the other party, then this removes psychological barriers and moral restraints that might otherwise cause stress at the thought of appalling people like us. A tendency develops to use names that call attention to both the opponents’ lack of shared qualities with us, and their basic lack of humanity. One is psychologically justified in killing or injuring fascists, subversives … imperialists.”

6.6 Reflection on the relevance of Mitchell’s research to the question of how hitherto enemies were able to learn from one another

The central thrust of Mitchell’s discussion is therefore that the core learning challenge amongst enemies relates to how they manage and assimilate ambiguity, social fragmentation and complexity. Instead of these stressful social forces being rejected by the contending negotiating leaders, they need to be discretely absorbed and embraced by them, so that they can be jointly managed by them. This means that the negotiation rules of engagement in deeply conflictive situations will ultimately require the most firm collaboration between hitherto enemies if the conflicts are to be dissolved.
According to Mitchell (1989, p. 84), the degree to which stress-reducing processes need to be employed will additionally vary according to:

(i) The degree of psychological flexibility of individuals

(ii) The intensity of the conflict situation (the values of the goals being threatened and the intensity of the threat)

(iii) The conflict behaviour of the adversary

(iv) A variety of social factors, including the positions of individuals within the involved parties (the degree of each person’s exposure to stress) and the efficiency with which the party is structured to cope with its environment and avoid further stress-inducing factors such as information overload and in-fighting.

Three points that are relevant to how learning takes place amongst enemies immediately arise from Mitchell’s observations. Firstly, it would seem that the greater the ‘psychological flexibility’ of the individuals who are party to a conflict, the greater will be their potential to learn from their counterparts. Secondly, the greater the intensity of the perceived or experienced threat to their core values, the greater will be the inclination to distort enemy images, engage in hostile framing, and creating pejorative constructs. A third point arises from the construct of information overload. The ways that the enormous volumes of information associated with a conflict are dealt with are to simplify the information, distort it, or ignore it. The volume of information is often simply too much to manage. It creates a sense of chaos.

Mitchell’s (1989) reflections on stereotyping, self-censorship and illusions of consensus or unanimity are all classic manifestations of group-think (Janis, 1971). The result of group-think is that alternatives are not properly evaluated for their risks and these risks are not properly mitigated. The syndrome of group-think would obviate learning from taking place between hitherto enemies because the objectives and ‘the terms of reference’ for a meaningful interchange would be distorted by the pathological decision-making.
patterns that accompany this syndrome. This process would be accompanied by a poor information search, and there would typically be bias in assessing the information at hand. This leads to failed meetings, escalations of hostility, and a failure to learn and seize valuable opportunities to co-exist. There are times when complexity, ambiguity and chaos are so intense that they are disabling, and create stressful situations that prohibit learning from taking place amongst hitherto enemies. It is true that they can be immobilising, and indeed commonly are immobilising. But there also are times when complexity, ambiguity and chaos, if harnessed creatively, can lead to profound learning taking place.

6.7 Conclusion

The remarkable fact about this research is that the leading negotiation counterparts and hitherto enemies specifically resisted the temptation to frame one another in terms of enemy images and therefore consciously refrained from succumbing to the very powerful inclinations of these rituals of conflict that have been explored in this chapter. It is conceded that there were exceptions among the negotiation counterparts, who did succumb to this temptation. The interesting fact is that those who succumbed were soon marginalised from the entire process. The behaviours that have been investigated converge into what might be termed ‘reality-simplifying conduct’ as anti-learning behaviour.

Chapter 7 explores how the hitherto enemies expanded their behavioural and perceptual horizons by assimilating the situations of complexity, chaos and non-linearity and then adapting these forces of complexity, chaos and non-linearity in a most creative manner.
Chapter 7: Learning in Situations of Complexity, Chaos and Non-Linearity

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will present a set of mental models developed by Gharajedaghi (1999) on assimilating complexity, chaos, and non-linearity into learning. Gharajedaghi (1999) offers a demonstrative schemata and basic framework for understanding how the theme of ‘assimilating’ environmental chaos and complexity created the necessary space that allowed learning amongst hitherto enemies to occur. In the first instance, the South African experience will be briefly contextualised into Gharajedaghi’s (1999) framework of environmental scenarios indicating patterns of social complexity and chaos that have been adapted by the researcher as a heuristic device for understanding how complexity, chaos and non-linearity were assimilated and harnessed to allow for learning to take place between the leadership of the hitherto enemies (Figure 3).

Thereafter secondary research conducted by Ebrahim (1998), Gastrow (1995), Nieburg (1970) and Van Rooyen (1994) will be consulted in order to introduce the reader to an exploration of two remarkable examples of how complexity, chaos and non-linearity were internalised by the business, church, trade union and civic leaders into a positive energy. They chose not to succumb to the temptation of reality simplifying behaviours. The first example of how complexity, chaos and non-linearity were internalised rather than denied is the process that led to the creation of the National Peace Accord. This complex but elegant process was conceived of by Eloff (2004) and led to the containment of the extreme levels of nation-wide and endemic violence. This violence was generalised. The National Peace Accord undoubtedly saved many, many lives. The second example shows the potential for an explosion of counter-revolutionary violence was contained. Here, violence was perpetrated with deadly precision by influential persons who sometimes occupied some of the very highest levels of office in the security forces and wanted to pursue a military junta. A brief sketch is offered of how the counter-revolutionary scenario was negated by the inspiration of Slovo (1993), who created the ‘Sunset Clause’. The ‘Sunset Clause’ alleviated the fears and insecurities of the extreme
right wing, who, if sufficiently alienated and insecure, might have conspired to have launched a counter-revolution.

Thereafter the relevant lived experience of selected respondents will be consulted in this chapter to demonstrate how they internalised complexity rather than succumbed to reality-simplifying conduct, which is so typical of the anti-learning behaviour discussed in Chapter 6. The primary research data will be triangulated with the secondary research in this chapter. Phenomenological reductions will be conducted on the primary research data, as prescribed by the method and methodology of phenomenology. The respondents who were consulted included Eloff (2004), who designed the concept of the National Peace Accord, Hall (2005), Coleman (2004) and Tutu (2005). Van der Merwe (2004) and Meyer (2004) also provided important contextualisation and clarification.

After this triangulation is completed, the researcher discusses the work of Stacey (1996) in order to offer a theoretical presentation of the value of embracing complexity, chaos and non-linearity in dealing with deep-rooted conflicts.

It will be recalled that Chapter 6 was a theoretical reflection and explored the construct of the enemy in terms of ‘construct theory’ (Kelly, 1963), in the first instance. Framing was considered as a second instance (Lewicki, Saunders & Barry, 2006), and ‘conflictive reality-simplifying behaviour’ as a third (Mitchell, 1989). These three theories all considered perceptual behaviour that displayed a disturbing and unempathic propensity towards simplifying perceptions and assessments of the enemy and their reality. It is almost as if understanding the predicament of the other, when one is oneself locked into extreme deep-rooted conflict, is regarded as an act of betrayal. It is very difficult to move beyond the subjective ‘here and now’ of a conflict. This is because one’s focus is so typically ontological and on the present moment. Typical conflictive behaviour therefore includes a tendency to simplify, to be lacking in compassion, to caricature, to act with derision, and present denunciations of the other.

It is ironical that this typically happens in situations where the enemies share so much in their common predicament with each other. They share miserable circumstances,
manifested in insecurity, hate, anger despair and disillusioned hopes. These might be mirror reflections of each other. The enemies often live in almost matching ghettos of psychological and physical insecurity. This chapter will assert that the hitherto enemies in the research sample did not generally succumb to these types of reality-simplifying behaviours. Instead, the leaders in the South African negotiations showed an opposite inclination and seemed to have affirmed the matter of socio-political complexity, chaos and non-linearity as their point of departure.

The respondents consciously and deliberately tried to understand the predicament of the other. The metaphorical images of the transition that were offered by the respondents included: “surfing”, “going before a massive wave”, “running before an enormous avalanche”, “canoeing down never-ending rapids”, “mounting the tiger, and never daring to dismount”. These images are all indicative of an appreciation of the immensity of the challenge that confronted them rather than an indulgence or diminution of it.

7.2 Mental models of ‘the other’: From chaotic complexity to organised simplicity

Gharajedaghi (1999) provides a schema (Figure 3) that is useful in assisting one to gain an understanding of the mental models that informed how the respondents assimilated the matter of complexity, chaos and non-linearity in their interchanges with one another. This schema will be referred to in order to contextualise the matter of how complexity, chaos and non-linearity were embraced rather than denied during the negotiated transition.
7.3 Explanation of Gharajedaghi’s construct

Chapter 6 showed that the mode of thinking that evolves from conflictive scenarios is often mechanistic and attempts to simplify an extremely complex environment. In other words, the starting point for many failed negotiation projects is encapsulated in the left-hand quadrant of Figure 3, point 1 (organised simplicity) and the stereotypical behaviour manifested here is characterised by a search for sets of solutions that are guided by a mental model seeking ‘organised simplicity’. There is nothing wrong with the pursuit of this as a goal. There is much wrong with it, however, if it is pursued as a method. If the goal of organised simplicity is pursued as a negotiation method in a complex conflict there is great danger that thinking will incline towards reality-simplifying behaviours that include the pursuit of cognitive consistency, framing in terms of hostile enemy images, and an extremely hostile and unempathetic view of the predicament of the other.
The simplifying of the reality of 'the other' creates rituals of conflict which would be manifested in the lower left-hand matrix (point 2 in Figure 3) termed 'chaotic simplicity'. Nieburg (1970, p. 83) observed that "acts of violence, even suicide, may be the enactment of a ritual which for a person in an extreme situation appears, inescapable, reasonable, and legitimate. All behaviour is problem-solving in some sense, even though, in terms of value premises of the observer, this is not always obvious. The ritualisation of behaviour must be interpreted as a functional and problem-solving process, however disagreeable or even self-destructive its form."

This ritualistic pattern of conflictive behaviour is encapsulated by the notion of chaotic simplicity. Nieburg (1970, p. 84) referred to this as agonistic behaviour. "Agnostics is a term used by ethologists to denote animal conflict behaviour that is playful, symbolic or ritualistic. The Greek word 'agon' refers to the traditional ceremonial games played by young men and women from which came the Olympic Games. The term itself is interesting. 'Agony' is an 'acted out display' of one in the throes of an 'agon' or symbolic ritual of conflict. 'Antagonistic' refers to real hostility; reduced to its roots, it means pre-ritual conflict."

The scenario of chaotic complexity designated point 3 in Gharajedaghi's (1999) matrix situated in the bottom right quadrant was in fact the mental model of the starting point of the negotiations in South Africa. In the beginning the parties were confronted by an overwhelming and chaotic socio-political context. The general levels of violence were excruciating. There was the ever-present sinister possibility of a violent right-wing counter-revolution.

The step from chaotic complexity (point 3) to organised complexity (situated at point 4 on the top right-hand quadrant of Figure 3) is a vitally important step. The formation of the National Peace Accord and Slovo's offering of the 'Sunset Clause' saw the scenario purposefully being changed from chaotic complexity into organised complexity.

The transition from being situated in scenario of chaotic complexity and moving into a scenario of organised complexity is illustrated by two brilliant achievements, which will
be discussed in this chapter. The first definitive practical example of successfully moving from the quadrant of chaotic complexity (point 3) to organised complexity (point 4) was that the excruciating general levels of violence were brought under control by the creation of the National Peace Accord. This resulted in a change of phase from uncontrolled and generic civil violence to contained violence, which can be designated as a scenario of organised complexity.

The second example of the switch from chaotic complexity to organised complexity was Slovo’s (1993) creation of the ‘Sunset Clause’. At the time of the transition there was the danger of a military-led counter-revolutionary scenario being enacted. The alienation and insecurity of the civil servants was regarded as being the prime source of energy that would lead to a counter-revolution. The ‘Sunset Clause’ led to the creation of the Government of National Unity and included very significant pension payments being made to white civil servants in order to reduce the chances of the counter-revolutionary scenario eventuating. It insisted and gave statutory and practical effect to the imperative for the hitherto enemies to collaborate with one another, whilst leading the country through the forum of the Government of National Unity. Again the situation switched from a scenario of chaotic complexity to one of organised complexity. There was of course the ever-present danger that the negotiation outcome could have stalemated into a scenario of organised complexity.

The final outcome of the negotiations saw a constitution being developed that was generally accepted, and this could be designated as falling under the scenario of organised simplicity. The pursuit of the scenario of organised simplicity is therefore an end-point which is discovered in negotiations.

7.4 **A reflection on the extent of the complexity, chaos and non-linearity of the violence and the design of the National Peace Accord**

Gastrow (1995) provided a synoptic overview of the violence, chaos, complexity and non-linearity of the socio-political environment in South Africa at the time of the
negotiated transition. Gastrow (1995) will be cited extensively in this specific section of the research because he provided a useful contextualisation of the complex violence.

The levels of violence, chaos and complexity were appalling. They had to be understood in order to be wisely addressed by the design of appropriate conflict abating interventions. Gastrow (1995, p. vii) asserted that “the term ‘negotiated solution’ is an apt description of the rapid and tumultuous changes taking place in South Africa since 1990. Revolutions always seem impossible before they happen and inevitable afterward. The same is likely to be true of South Africa’s rapid transition from apartheid to a new democracy, unless we are constantly reminded of recent developments.

Much of what has occurred over the past several years is nothing short of miraculous, and should not be taken for granted. As happens with revolutions, the changes in South Africa were triggered by the vision and determined actions of many individuals as well as national and international developments. There was nothing inevitable about them … One of the products of the political transition in South Africa is the National Peace Accord (NPA) and its structures – something that would have been unimaginable a few years ago. Signed by all the leaders of all major political parties in September 1991, the NPA is an extraordinary and daring experiment in conflict resolution on a national scale. It was aimed at addressing the endemic political violence and rampant political intolerance in the country. It had become essential for political leaders to jointly address these issues, as political violence was increasingly preventing multiparty constitutional negotiations from commencing.

The NPA is in fact without precedent internationally. Special forums have been established elsewhere in the world to settle disputes peacefully, but nowhere has this been done through a countrywide network of peace committees at the local, regional, and national levels, operating with the formal mandates of government and major political parties.”

Gastrow (1995, pp. 10-11) informs his readers that “the inability of the major players to curtail political violence brought home the complexity of its underlying causes. During
the 1970s and 1980s the problem was not as complex, since political violence was usually a logical consequence of political conditions existing at the time. South Africa’s disenfranchised, mainly blacks, were in revolt against the white minority government and its agents. The political transition towards a non-racial democracy, which commenced in earnest with President De Klerk’s 2 February 1990 speech, and the unbanning of organisations, saw a dramatic change in the nature of the violence. No longer were the state and its agents the prime targets.”

Gastrow (1995, pp. 10-11) cites Du Toit (1993, p. 7), who “pointed out that the trends and patterns of conflict that emerged from this transition showed strong paradoxical features: The transition has involved both a significant turn from political violence, as well as a marked escalation in political violence. What occurred during the transition was that, at a formal level, the mainly black-supported liberation movement – the ANC and its allies – turned from the politics of violence to the politics of negotiation. Popular insurrection, armed struggle, and the international sanctions of the 1980s were replaced by an essentially, non-violent attempt to reach a new constitutional order, through the pursuit of a negotiated settlement. At another level, the transition was marked by an increase in what appeared to be endemic political violence in many black townships and some rural areas of Natal. In the mid-1970s, political violence killed an average of 44 persons per month. In the middle and late 1980s the monthly average had risen to 86, and in the 1990s it was more than 250. Most of the deaths in the 1970s and early 1980s were caused by the police, but in the late 1980s and the 1990s a growing proportion resulted from black factional violence. Attempts by South African researchers and commentators to identify the root causes of political violence in townships often resulted in controversy, finger-pointing, apportioning of blame, and inevitable counter-accusations.

Political agendas have often been served by blaming opposing political groups for the violence. The De Klerk regime, its security forces, the communists and insurrectionists within the ANC, the warlords, and hostel dwellers of Inkatha have all been said to be responsible. Unemployment, poverty, and social disruption have been put forward as the major contributing factors to violence. Others have tended to attribute the violence to
rivalries originating from ethnic differences. Generalisations that suggest the violence is the result of two ethnic groups – the Xhosa and the Zulu – fighting for dominance are common. Some took the easy way out, either by blaming all the violence on apartheid or by describing it as simply a ‘black-on-black’ fight between ANC and Inkatha. It has frequently been suggested that the violence is being fuelled by a ‘third force’ sponsored by the state or consists of disaffected right-wing elements with links to the security forces. The many single-cause explanations for the violence have, to say the least, not made it easier to identify solutions. The irony is that many of these reasons contained elements of truth that, if linked with others, provide partial explanations for the causes of political violence. It has been correctly stated, that probably no other, aspect of the South African conflict has elicited more divergent explanations and misinterpretations than the ongoing political violence. A credible comprehensive account of the violence has yet to be produced, despite dozens of articles and books on the topic.

The reality is that from 1990, the year in which the ‘normalisation’ of political activities commenced, until the end of September 1993, a total of 10 495 died as a result of political violence. Until the middle of 1990 the violence was largely confined to the province of Natal. Opinion makers, the media, and the government regarded it as a regional matter that required local solutions.”

Gastrow (1995, p. 12) observed that: “The so-called Natal violence had a distinctly political flavour, as it was shaped by clashes between ANC-supporting youth and Inkatha supporters. In some instances, the roles of the KwaZulu Police and the South African Police were contributing factors. They often displayed a clear bias towards Inkatha, and as a result became an additional source of tension by their presence in conflict situations. The conflict between the warring factors was a struggle for power and control of territory, structures and resources. It was characterised by indiscriminate massacres (incidents in which more than five people were killed), large scale intimidation, and preemptive and retaliatory attacks by armed supporters on each other. Lack of political tolerance marked the conflict. Inkatha has estimated that in Natal alone, fifty so-called no-go areas existed, where ANC supporters had established hegemony and Inkatha
supporters were either driven out or prevented from conducting politics openly. Similar no-go areas controlled by Inkatha existed in many parts, particularly in the self-governing territory of KwaZulu. Mistrust of the security forces and a lack of faith in the legal process contributed to a general breakdown in law and order in violence-ridden areas. Perpetrators were not being apprehended or successfully prosecuted. Lack of trust in the system, as well as widespread intimidation, resulted in witnesses refusing to come forward and testify in court.

Until March 1990 the most common form of conflict in Natal had been small-scale attacks on ANC-supporting townships near Pietermaritzburg in Natal. During these attacks and counter-attacks, about 130 persons were killed in what became known as the Seven Days War. Hundreds were injured, many houses were destroyed, and thousands became refugees. Large-scale violence spread to the Johannesburg area in July 1990 with the first such outbreak between ANC and Inkatha supporters occurring at Sebokeng, a township near Johannesburg, on July 22. Twenty-seven persons died in that encounter. Inkatha was determined to gain a foothold in the Transvaal, while ANC supporters were determined to keep them out.”

Rittel & Webber (1984, pp. 155-169) offered the practical concept of wicked problems, which might assist in understanding and managing the complexity, chaos and non-linearity of socio-political circumstances. Their definition of wicked problems resonated with the types of complexity that the hitherto enemies had to grapple with. Wicked problems in their view have the following characteristics: there is no definite formulation, there are very limited numbers of solutions, the presenting problems are symptomatic of other problems, the choice of explanation determines the nature of the problem resolution, each wicked problem is essentially unique, every attempted solution counts, and these have to often be discovered in situations where there are limited opportunities to learn by trial and error. Wicked problems are usually dissolved by the ongoing work of a group. The solutions always require inventiveness and creativity. There is usually great levels of uncertainty about whether the offered solution is the best solution or even a solution. Wicked problems typically operate according to the no stopping rule. The solutions to
wicked problems are not right or wrong but good or bad. There is often no immediate test of a wicked problem’s solution. It is frequent that the leader has no right to be wrong. Each attempt to create a solution changes the understanding of the problem. Wicked problems usually cannot be solved in a traditional linear fashion, because the problem definition evolves as new possible solutions are considered or implemented. Wicked problems always occur in a social context the wickedness of the problems reflects the diversity amongst the stakeholders in the problem.

It is the social complexity of these problems and not their technical complexity that overwhelms most current problem solving and project management approaches.”

The complex matter of diagnosing and defining the etiology of the violence was a hotly contested political subject in itself. It was very difficult to define. In short, it was a wicked problem. The violence had multiple causes, and changed constantly in its manifestations. Many people died or were injured as a result. It firstly seemed to be localised to KwaZulu-Natal and then spread to the Reef and throughout the country. Many people and parties were involved as perpetrators, victims, and bystanders. These general levels of violence, chaos and complexity created a sense that the country was moving into violent anarchy.

The structure of the National Peace Accord is offered in Figure 2, and demonstrates how it was designed to have a national coverage in order to allow hitherto enemies to co-exist and discover the unique experience of living in peace with one another.
7.5 A reflection on the extent of the complexity, chaos and non-linearity of the counter-revolutionary violence

This section of the research is devoted to a reflection on the possibility of a counter-revolution being enacted, in pursuance of a military junta.

It will be contended that the extreme right wing’s ambitions of igniting a counter-revolution were negated by Slovo designing the ‘Sunset Clause’. Intrinsic to the success of the ‘Sunset Clause’ was Slovo’s personal understanding of complexity, chaos and non-linearity of the environment. Slovo understood the fears, insecurities and interests of the white bureaucrats and employees of the police and military. He was able to enact this sense of fear into a collaborative policy that gave rise to the formation of the Government
of National Unity, where the hitherto enemies assumed co-responsibility for running the country after the first democratic election. He also was responsible for developing a strategy that ensured that the insecure white civil servants would not sabotage the state infrastructure, and secured their collaboration in the new South Africa with the advent of majority rule. Without this collaboration, the new democracy would probably have failed at the starting gate and created the pre-conditions for a violent counter-revolutionary process to be set in motion. There was a strong possibility of right wing counter-revolution being invoked during the course of the national transition. There were many instances of carefully targeted and deadly violence that could have easily subverted the entire democratic transition. This violence was conducted in situations which were complex, chaotic and non-linear. If the possibility of a counter-revolutionary scenario being ignited had been ignored, the democratic transition could, and probably would, have been subverted and stillborn. In this regard there were many testimonies that were presented before the TRC that confirm the brutal extent of this reality.

Ebrahim (1998, p. 154) introspected on the dangers of a counter-revolutionary scenario being invoked by the extreme right wing, which would have given rise to South Africa being led by a military junta. He reflected that, “[i]n another ominous development during this precarious period, General ‘Tienie’ Groenewald, a retired chief director of military intelligence in the SADF, together with several military leaders including General Constand Viljoen, formed the ‘Committee of Generals’, the purpose of which was to support the Afrikaner right-wing demands for self-determination. General Groenewald warned of a right-wing secession backed by an army of 500 000 white national army personnel, and outlined the Committee of Generals as the unity of the fragmented right wing. The objective was to maximise pressure for a volkstaat at the negotiating table and to bolster the strength of COSAG in multi-party negotiations. Support for this committee was manifested in a meeting of 7 000 right-wing farmers in Potchefstroom, where the NP had been routed by the Conservative Party in a recent by-election. Angered at the number of farmers killed in the area recently, the meeting adamantly refused to be governed by the ANC. Even the militant white Mineworkers’ Union gave it its unqualified support.”
Ebrahim (1998, p. 174) mentioned that “the ANC called a meeting of its national executive to discuss the rising tensions. A concerned Nelson Mandela argued that we must treat the threat of civil war seriously”. Van Rooyen (1994, p. 195) classified the extremist right-wing group as “firstly, the brandy and coke set”, which consisted of those who talked about violence but did very little in practice; secondly, the transitional group, which had an agenda, objectives and logistics and formed the backbone of the extreme right – these were overtly tascist...and were characterised by a ‘Holy War’ mentality; thirdly, the ‘counter-revolutionary group’, which was the most dangerous and consisted of a number of highly sophisticated strategists and tacticians, but kept a low profile”.

Joe Slovo was the General Secretary of the South African Communist Party and had been deemed by the National Party in the 1970s and 1980s as public enemy number one. Slovo’s idea of the ‘Sunset Clause’ resulted in order being created out of a potentially chaotic situation. In his discussion about the ‘Sunset Clause’, Slovo (2003) advised that “we should not underestimate the danger of counter-revolution in the period following a major transformation. The extreme right will target sections of the white community, in particular the incumbents (hundreds of thousands) in the civil service, army and police who fear for their jobs and their economic future. Precisely because racism gave them a monopoly of skills and experience, their potential for destroying a newly born democracy is enormous. Hence, in addressing areas of compromise, we should also consider measures that will help preempt the objective of the counter-revolution and reduce its base”.

7.6 Slovo’s design of the ‘Sunset Clause’ and negation of the counter-revolutionary scenario

Slovo’s (1993) inspiration to design the ‘Sunset Clause’ was similar to that displayed by Eloff (2004), who conceptualised the National Peace Accord. Both the National Peace Accord and the ‘Sunset Clause’ were brilliant examples of how the hitherto enemies embraced the complexity, chaos, non-linearity and ambiguity of the socio-political environment and thereby created the preconditions for them to learn from one another. In Gharajedaghi’s (1999) terms set out in Figure 3, this assimilation of complexity by the
leaders allowed them to convert the environmental scenarios from situations of potentially chaotic complexity into organised complexity.

Slovo (1993) anticipated that the extreme right wing would target upon the very real insecurities of white civil servants. He understood that these insecure white civil servants would sense that they would be deemed to be dispensable and feared that they would be fired from their jobs by the incoming regime. He understood, furthermore, that this insecurity was a potential fracture point, which might have caused the entire negotiation process to fail. Slovo (1993) therefore proposed that the underlying forces of this complexity needed to be understood and embraced. In the course of his policy recommendations on this matter to the leadership of the ANC, he advised that “[t]here are, however, certain retreats from previously held positions which would create the possibility of a major positive breakthrough in the negotiation process, without permanently hampering real democratic advance. Let me at once grasp the nettle and specify some areas in which compromises may be considered a part of an acceptable settlement package. A ‘Sunset Clause’ in the new constitution which would provide for compulsory power-sharing for a fixed number of years in the period immediately following the adoption of the constitution. This would be subject to the proportional representation in the executive combined with decision-making procedures that would not paralyse its functioning.”

Slovo’s (1993) terminology of a ‘Sunset Clause’ was cleverly chosen. Its associations are gentle and non-threatening. It captured the inevitability of the cosmos; sunrise, sunset. In this vision it was made explicit that the white leadership would induct the emergent black leadership into office via a process of power sharing. Slovo had the empathy and largess of spirit to acknowledge the importance of his hitherto enemy in building the new South Africa. He understood their insecurities, values and aspirations. He understood their interests. Slovo’s activist wife, Ruth First, was blown up by a bomb placed by members of the South African Defence Force in Maputo, Mozambique in 1982 (Slovo, 1995, p. xi). He did not succumb to a mean-spirited ethic of retribution. Instead he developed the ‘Sunset Clause’ in order to mitigate against the risk of the white right-wing insecurities
spinning out of control into a military imposed counter-revolution. The ‘Sunset Clause’ specified that they would be retained as inter-mediators into the new regime.

Slovo (1993) then advocated that the ANC should subscribe to ‘[a]n approach to the restructuring of the Civil Service (including the SAP and the SADF) which takes into account existing contracts and/or provides retirement compensation. This area too could be the subject of negotiated bilateral commitments, perhaps excluding those categories of unilateral appointments and promotions carried out with an eye to the post-apartheid structure. I am of the view that, subject to a package which would include the ‘bottom lines’ set out above, and subject to proper consultation with our constituency, the compromises here are both permissible, and conducive to a speedier democratic transformation. They are permissible because they will not block the advance to real democracy. They are conducive to a positive breakthrough in the negotiation process because they address, in a principled way, some of the basic and more immediate fears and insecurities of our adversary and its constituency. In particular, the prospect of a period of power-sharing, shared vision of the future regional dispensation, some security for existing incumbents in the civil service, and undertakings which will promote reconciliation, will make it exceedingly difficult for the other side to continue blocking the transformation. As a bonus, these concessions would situate us, indisputably, in the moral high ground and weaken the capacity of extreme hard liners within the regime’s camp to block an early agreement.”

Upon reflection it is clear that Slovo was being pragmatic in his approach. His thesis was that the country would have to pay a considerable financial price for freedom as a type of once-off ‘sunk cost’. It would have to honour its contracts with the civil service, the SAP and the SADF. His viewpoint was that these suggestion were “permissible and conducive” to a speedier democratic transformation of South Africa. Slovo (1993) then defined what he meant by permissible and conducive. He submitted that “[t]hey are permissible because they will not block the advance to real democracy. They are conducive to a positive breakthrough in the negotiation process because they address, in a
principled way, some of the basic and more immediate fears and insecurities of our adversary and its constituency."

As a negotiator, one of his prime concerns was the issue of how to deal with the basic and more immediate fears of the adversary, typified by insecure, white, right-wing bureaucrats. He realised that he needed to understand their interests, and how these interests in turn related to their positional presentation of their case. This meant that he had put himself into the shoes of his enemy and understood where they were coming from. By satisfying and addressing the complex fears and insecurities of the white right-wing bureaucrats he contrived policy guidelines which were of fundamental importance, as they prevented the country from veering off into a counter-revolution. This could have prolonged the conflict and violence for generations to come.

7.7 Self-organisation from chaos: triangulation with the primary data

In this section of the research, the respondents’ lived experiences will be triangulated with the secondary research that has been presented thus far. This primary research will be subjected to phenomenological reductions as stipulated by the method and methodology associated with this philosophy.

The first example of how the hitherto enemies assimilated the complexity, chaos and non-linearity of the environment that was uttered was the example of the design of the ‘Sunset Clause’, that prevented a violent counter-revolution from occurring. The second example of how the hitherto enemies assimilated the complexity, chaos and non-linearity of the environment that will be offered in this section is a consideration of the lived experience of the circumstances under which the National Peace Accord was established.

The reader will deduce by now that all the respondents were remarkably competent in dealing with exceptionally high levels of ambiguity that arose from the complexity of the socio-political environment. All the respondents were able to manage this ambiguity and convert it into creative action and interventions. The respondents also displayed humility, and were grounded in reality. They did not display pretentious ‘airs and graces’. They
were indeed often inclined to be self-critical and self-deprecating. Their language usage was simple and straight-forward, whilst their conceptual dilemmas and moral dilemmas were intricate and profoundly complex.

Primary data arising from the interview with Van der Merwe (2004) will be used to introduce the reader as to the circumstance in which the National Peace Accord was reached. It was conceived at a time when South Africa could easily have spun off into uncontrolled violence. Violent complexity, chaos and non-linearity were the socio-political norm.

There was a massive Zulu impi outside the venue of the Carleton Hotel. Genius was displayed in managing the crowd. Primary data emanating from the interview with Eloff (2004) is presented next. His prelude to his interview was: "Then it was Mamelodi Burning…", which takes one back to the civil rights struggle in the Southern United States of America, with its intended parody of Mississippi Burning.

During the course of the interview, Eloff (2004) introspected on the matter of complexity and the question of how to understand the complex environmental and negotiation scenarios was given particular emphasis. We discover from his response that the negotiation process itself was an elitist process and that in his view it could not have been otherwise. The tone is thus set for a remarkable passage of introspections on how the architects of the national transition managed the complexity of the environment, and how the hitherto enemies learned from one another in establishing the National Peace Accord.

Van der Merwe (2004): The National Peace Convention and the National Peace Accord were negotiated before CODESA got into full momentum. The National Peace Accord was a crucial agreement. This took place over quite a few meetings … The Peace Secretariat was a very important structure. By the time we got to CODESA we were meeting directly with the ANC. The National Peace Accord was one of the main achievements in this entire negotiation process. Without the National Peace Accord we would simply have not got through the CODESA negotiations.
The signing of the National Peace Accord was arranged to take place at the Carlton Hotel, but all the arrangements had been made before the finalisation. This was a very big event. The Zulus wanted to carry arms in public. They insisted on carrying their traditional weapons. It was getting later and later, and we had no National Peace Accord. By 11:00 [the day before] an agreement was reached 'not to carry arms in public'. We came back to report to the government. We all stayed at the Carlton Hotel excepting for some participants who reported to FW with the amendments. Just when we were about to sign the peace accord, Mandela said he was not going to sign it. We went to seek Frank Mdalose of the IFP and we found him at about 21:00. We said to Frank, 'What have you done?' Frank said, 'We will adhere to the accord'. 'But just get Madiba back on line'. We went back to Madiba and he said: 'Of course we will adhere'. Then everybody went to bed. I woke up early the next morning. I looked out of the window and there was this huge Zulu impi in the street. I went to look for Oubaas Frank.

[Oubaas: literally old master, a term of endearment; Madiba: the royal clan name and term of endearment for Mandela; impi: a Zulu military platoon]

Van der Merwe (2004): I said to him, 'How can you keep them from running havoc in the streets?' There were thousands of Zulus supporters there. Frank said to me, 'Don't worry; King Goodwill Zwelithini was there'. They requested the King to walk out onto the balcony and to give a speech. He did this very well.

Phenomenological reduction: This was a very dangerous event. It was charged with potential violence. It was touch and go, whether the National Peace Accord would succeed or not. The communication skills that Frank Mdalose displayed were crucial to the successful outcome of this event. He was able to align the parties. The decision to bring in King Goodwill Zwelithini was wise from a ceremonial point of view. The second respondent that will be cited in this section of the research is Eloff (2004), who was the architect of the National Peace Accord.
Eloff (2004): Why did enemies learn from one another during the national negotiation process? It can only be a complex answer ... Then it was Mamelodi Burning ...

Phenomenological reduction: Eloff has chosen to use parody as a powerful linguistic device to express himself in this sentence. Mamelodi is a black ghetto township outside Pretoria. It was on fire. He has elected to use a parody of the title of the film *Mississippi Burning* to express the crisis. This film was about racism and the civil rights struggle in the South of the United States. He interpreted the struggles as being parallel (Taylor, 1997; Seckings, 2000; Houston, 1999.)

Eloff (2004): There was a new world order. With the falling of the Berlin Wall, the geo-political situation was steering towards a negotiated solution; attitudes against South Africa were hardening; the economy was deteriorating; there was violence.

Phenomenological reduction: Eloff, like most of the other respondents, is citing the syzygy factor of world events as being the major external driving force for change. His assessment of South Africa’s negotiation status at that time was that it was highly precarious and deteriorating. Hardening of attitudes, a rapidly contracting economy, and violence were all signifiers of increasing chaos and complexity, but paradoxically the emerging new world order was steering towards a negotiated solution. The intensification of chaos and disorder led to the creation of a new order.

Toynbee (1985, pp. 3-4), in discussing the forces of history, observed that “[t]he forces in action are not national but proceed from wider causes, which operate upon each of the parts and are not intelligible in their partial operation, unless a comprehensive view is taken of their operation throughout society. Different parts are differently affected by an identical general cause, because they each react, and each contribute, in a different way, to the forces which that same cause sets in motion. A society, we may say, is confronted by a succession of problems which each member has to solve for itself as best it may. The presentation of each problem is a challenge to undergo an ordeal, and through this series of ordeals, the members of the society progressively differentiate themselves from one
another. Throughout, it is impossible to grasp the significance of any particular member’s behaviour under a particular ordeal without taking some account of the similar or dissimilar behaviour of its fellows, and, without viewing the successive ordeals, as a series of events in the life of the whole society.”

Eloff (2004): In hindsight I can say that we had a few years left before there was an implosion. The prolonged struggle would have left a wasteland.

Eloff’s assessment is that South Africa was on the edge of war ... and peace. Stacey (1996) asserted that it is here, on the edge of chaos, that one might discover the greatest propensity for learning to take place.

Eloff (2004): I was head of administration at CODESA. In June of 1992 it seemed to be a failed process.

In contrast to respondents like Barnard (2004), Esterhuyse (2004), Louw (2004), Van Heerden (2003), Maharaj (2004), Meyer (2004) and Ramaphosa (2005), Eloff (2004) joined the negotiation process after much had already been achieved. There had, of course, been many failures but there had also been a series of highly significant successes. These respondents acknowledged that CODESA might fail but never conceded that the negotiated settlement would not occur.

Eloff was correct; the public face of CODESA seemed to be in perpetual crisis. Its underpinnings, however, were quite resilient. This was because of the negotiation counterparts’ development of negotiation channels. The negotiation forum was in a state of continual dynamic tension. Sometimes the parties almost tore themselves and the CODESA structures apart. In retrospect, CODESA had to be a type of sacrificial structure. It was superimposed on a much tougher foundation – the negotiation channels. This tumult within CODESA was useful in the sense that it gave it credibility amongst the public. The CODESA forum probably needed to be perceived as an arena where the alternative constitutional proposals would be conflictively contested. This contestation rightfully took place in the public. The involvement of the public made the urgent
decision making that was required from CODESA extraordinarily complex and difficult. It was not an effective technical constitution making forum. CODESA was a necessary structure that ensured that the various political parties, constituencies and coalitions were afforded credibility by virtue of the contestation that occurred within CODESA. CODESA therefore served an important political purpose in drawing together a highly divided society into a unified national debate about the constitution. The real decisions on the constitution could not be made here. They had to be made in the private bi-lateral channels where it was safe and where the underlying legal technical committees could provide their expert technical input to the process, in a calm and well considered fashion. This means that there are worlds between how the negotiation process was framed and defined by the media, and how they were experienced and lived by the negotiation counterparts. The public face and the private face of these negotiations were kept wide apart.

Eloff (2004): I was brought in from the Consultative Business Movement (CBM) as the head of the CODESA Secretariat. The CBM interacted with the ANC, the government and business and could not agree on who should perform this role, and I was the second choice.

Phenomenological reduction: Eloff does not inflate his role or self-importance. He stated up-front that he was the second choice. He acknowledged that he was accepted by default.

Eloff (2004): CODESA entailed the establishment of an organisation to run the administration, so that the various parties could feel that they were all represented. We had a small office.

Phenomenological reduction: Eloff’s task was the important and practical one of project managing the negotiations via effective deal administration.

Eloff (2004): If there was a breakdown in the negotiation channels, or if we perceived that one might occur, say, between Cyril and Roelf, we would try and
forestall it, prevent it, and solve it. This lasted until mid February 1993, when I was called to Pretoria by Cyril and Roelf.

Phenomenological reduction: Eloff and the CODESA secretariat had an important discretionary role in identifying potential pitfalls to the negotiations and to successful project manage these. It was wise and prudent to include such a role in the negotiations as it created an analytical think-tank dimension to the process.

Eloff (2004): I was involved in the second phase of the multi-party negotiations, as head of the finances and staffing. I offered an organisational management secretariat. I was secretary of the planning committee. In addition, people who did organisational duties and handled financial matters reported to me. That was the overt part …

Phenomenological reduction: The formal structure of the secretariat of CODESA is discussed by Eloff in a neutral and non-descriptive manner. The duties that he mentioned here constituted his formal duties. He also had informal and unspoken duties to perform. There was also a discretionary, subtle, personally judgmental and intuitive aspect that could be regarded as being in the shadow system as designated by Stacey (1996).

Eloff (2004): When Roelf and Cyril intervened, I had to be objective and impartial.

Phenomenological reduction: The secretariat demanded impartiality and objectivity. This was the logos of the role that Eloff was entrusted with.

Eloff (2004): I also had an informal role. I informally monitored the negotiation process and reported to Cyril and Roelf.

Heald: So one of your informal roles was that of negotiation process evaluator?
Eloff (2004): Precisely ... Parties would put things on the agenda. My task was to look at these matters carefully, and to be on the alert for problematic issues ... and whisper that ‘here is a thing that may derail the negotiation, so keep vigilan’t.

Phenomenological reduction: Eloff was contracted to perform certain crucial performance-related tasks, but his informal role is one of negotiation process evaluation, where he could add significant value. It was in his informal role that he evaluated both the content and process elements of the interchange between Roelf and Cyril and offered a discretionary review of how to avoid obstacles and achieve results (Heald & Osler, 1990).

Eloff’s feedback relates to the matter of ‘process’ and the matter of ‘content’. It also shows that the negotiators themselves built in various control functions. In the case of the negotiations between Van der Merwe (2004) and Maharaj (2004), they were backed up by a team of legal experts who would second opinion the negotiation proposals that were interchanged on a continuous basis. They included full-time technical and expert committees that were deployed for the entire process. De Klerk had his own ‘Kitchen Cabinet’ that met for endless hours. The existence of the ‘Kitchen Cabinet’ was raised by Van Heerden (2003), who was a member of it. Esterhuyse (2004) had the Mells House meetings which ‘shadow-danced’ crucial discussions of the future of South Africa. In other words, there was an interesting and spontaneous development of safety nets that acted for the entire negotiation process, and enhanced the possibility for learning amongst hitherto enemies to occur.

Eloff (2004): Cyril and Roelf developed a process alliance to make the negotiations work.

Phenomenological reduction: Eloff’s (2004) contention that “Cyril and Roelf developed a process alliance” was explicitly confirmed by Ramaphosa (2005) and Van der Merwe (2004). It was implicitly confirmed by Esterhuyse (2004) in his discussion and assessment of the value of trust in negotiations. (This matter has been discussed in the reflection about the credos that were established between the negotiation counterparts.)
Eloff (2004): I had to identify many matters that were pertinent to the negotiations.

It is necessary, if not an imperative, to appoint intelligent and discrete people onto the secretariat of a negotiation forum.

Eloff (2004): Some of the parties included the PAC, COSAG, IFP and so forth.

Phenomenological reduction: This is the first time that Eloff mentions the other players, presumably because the ANC and National Party provided sufficient consensus.

Eloff (2004): FW de Klerk’s frame of mind was very important to the success of the negotiation process. He needs to be granted full recognition. He made a difficult break and had the courage to face the criticism of his people. He took very courageous steps.

Phenomenological reduction: Barnard (2004), Crocker (2003), Louw (2004) and Tutu (2004) all referred to President Botha’s state of mind as a major obstruction to a positive negotiation outcome. They all reflected upon how Botha’s personal mental models influenced his decisions and his judgments about the people that he chose to bring close to him. Botha’s state of mind and lack of stability infringed on the possibility of any negotiation success. He had recently suffered a stroke, and he was ousted from power on this basis. Eloff (2004) is contending that De Klerk’s state of mind was courageous, but not reckless. He had an excellent sense of timing. He would self-correct, and when he had placed or deployed someone incorrectly, he would change that deployment, e.g. the switch from Delport to Meyer as chief negotiator. In this regard he displayed emotional intelligence. He also dealt excellently with the public attack and outburst from Mandela at the end of CODESA I.

Eloff (2004): The NGOs’ involvement reached a climax in the peace process, and their hugely important role subsided naturally with the gradation towards democracy.
Phenomenological reduction: The country’s NGOs reached a climax of activism that coincided with the country’s sovereign risk status at the various stages of the negotiation process. Broadly speaking, the higher the risk, and intensity, of violence, and uncertainty, the higher the level of NGO activism. This activism subsided dramatically after the implementation of the New Constitution and when it became evident that a heightened degree of social stability would ensue.

Eloff (2004): Once the peace committees had been put together and they were in place, the politicians and trade unions got ‘fed up’ with these structures on many occasions. They felt that they cramped their style. They started thinking that they could uphold peace in South Africa without the business leaders and the church leaders. The peace committees were pushed into maturity very quickly and there was a danger that they would be pushed too far and destroy the country’s fragile peace ground cover.

Phenomenological reduction: The National Peace Accord was of fundamental importance to the advent of democracy. The politicians could not have coped without it. It contributed to a significant de-escalation in violence. This was because of the disciplined structure and the conduct of the peace monitors. Once the National Peace Accord started achieving positive results, it started being taken for granted by the politicians, and then still later resented by the politicians who started perceiving it as cramping their style. They now fell under the scope of the National Peace Accord.

Eloff (2004): My conclusion is that in really serious political negotiations, like was the case in South Africa, it is a political driven and largely elitist process ... It is not and cannot be a populist process. Hence the actual negotiations took place in smoke-filled rooms. My lesson is that you cannot negotiate a country’s future in the eye of the media. This is because the sensible players, and those with serious contributions to offer, would never be silly enough to subject themselves to that type of scrutiny. The matter was discrete and called for ‘subtlety, discretion and space’.