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Mopeli, Tawana

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A Workers' Association that Transitioned from a Fighting to an Infighting and Ultimately a Splintering Union: The case of SATAWU

By

Student Name: Tawana Mopeli
Student Number: 1522806

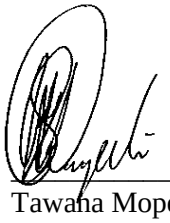
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

March 2020

Supervisor: Professor Devan Pillay

Declaration

I, Tawana Mopeli, student number 1522806, declare that this research entitled "**A Workers' Association that Transitioned from a Fighting to an Infighting and Ultimately a Splintering Union: The case of SATAWU"** is my original effort. With the exception of my supervisor's guidance and suggestions, this report was independently produced. I confirm that it has not been submitted to any other university for a scholarly award. It is submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.



Tawana Mopeli
Signed Date: March 2020

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my late wife ***Lerato Dulcia Mopeli****. Your untimely passing reversed the euphoria of our short-lived marriage with prolonged feelings of agony and grief. "The intensity of losing you [was] like 1000 degrees in the desert with no sight of water or trees." The emotional support from my grandmother, father, mother and sister enabled our daughter and I to adjust to new life conditions. Things are getting better now, however, when given the chance to talk about you I get lost in memories. Though you never lived to witness my work, I know that you and my ancestors- Bakwena ba Mopeli, Bataung ba ha Raphiri and many more- walked me through this academic and spiritual journey. I can't thank you enough for making me gradually realise and accept that every cloud has a silver lining.* ***Bakwena Ba Mokotedi. Pula. Nala. Ha Ene!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!***

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When tragedy struck in 2017, Professor Michelle Williams encouraged me not to drop out of the Global Labour University (GLU) Honours Program. Upon completing the degree, she further persuaded me to enrol for the 2018 Master's intake. Following her advice, I was introduced to diverse lectures, academics and jaw-dropping scholarly works. It was at that stage in development that I met Dr Katherine Joynt. Her remarkable classes on Research Methods in Social Sciences helped me develop a well-crafted research proposal. Professor Devan Pillay subsequently agreed to supervise the research process. His mind-blowing analysis, thought-provoking questions and commitment to the study stimulated me to think out the box, on one hand, but accomplish the objective, on the other. The support of the mentioned individuals will forever be appreciated.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to my grandmother, father, mother and sister for being my pillars of strength when my life took a turn for the worse. They helped me raise my daughter after being declared a widower and single father. The support of my relatives and close family friends such as Masedi Sebetoane, Sello Moteka, Goitsimang Phafuli, Johnson Gamede, Nombukiso (Bukie) Motloung, Tamara Maake, Kgotso Motaung, Sechaba Motaung, and Slindile Mbhele will not go unnoticed. You became a glue that held my sanity together, especially on days life reminded me that my sorrow was a product of my past joy. Your support prevented me from entering a realm of depression, regret and helplessness. You nourished my scarred being with positivity, watered my anger and fears with serenity. In the end, a new man like a phoenix was reborn from ashes, love and hope.

Finally, I extend my gratitude to my colleagues, GLU family and respondents that took part in this study. Your experience, perspectives and recommendations will highly contribute to existing trade union discourse. It will further enhance existing tools of analysis necessary for waging a permanent socio-economic struggle for the emancipation of the downtrodden.

Abstract

This study explores two historical moments that contributed to the internal crisis in SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union). The first moment concerns the merger between the former SATAWU and Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) in May 2000. The outcomes of the amalgamation influenced the formation of two splinter unions which were the Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa (TGWUSA) between 2001 and 2002 and the new South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union (SARHWU) in 2002. Union leaders, members and staff assumed that all internal challenges had subsided after the first wave of crisis. This assumption was negated by events following the 3rd National Congress (NC) in 2011. The second moment has to do with hardened intra and inter-factional struggles which contributed to the formation of three breakaway unions between 2012 and 2015. The splinter unions include the establishment of National Transport Movement (NTM) in 2012, Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union (DETAWU) and the Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa (RETUSA) in 2015. The ruptures had dire ramifications on membership density, financial stability and employee securities. The 2018 SATAWU 4th National Congress report highlighted that approximately 148542 (from 250000 to 101458) members were lost during the latter period of the union's crisis. These turning points reflect that within its stages of development, the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) was unable to manage conflict or collectively adapt to the change process.

The formation of TGWUSA and new SARHWU occurred at a time when African capitalism was expanding in society including the labour movement. The enactment of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy in 1996, created an era of great prosperity and blossoming of an African middle-class through Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), affirmative action, occupation of strategic state positions and growing use of union funds in investment arms for business ventures. The transition to political unionism and adoption of entrepreneurial trade union leadership/managerial styles permitted the labour movement to become a breeding ground for businessmen, union lords and an African middle-class. The newly acquired wealth and prestige were interrupted by the global economic meltdown in 2008/9. General socio-economic shocks and the desire for instant opulence created a race to the top at the same rate as its antithetical relation to the bottom. It was at this stage in development that newly established conditions of the African elite were threatened. Consequently, the ANC-led government and its constellation were subjected to a wave of sequential ruptures. It is from this perspective that the formation of NTM, DETAWU and RETUSA represent a broader crisis in the Tripartite Alliance and South Africa's political economy.

The history of SATAWU's internal crisis illustrates that multiple convergences and divergences led to the splintering of the union. Separate from issues of political ideology, we realise that the fight for resources and upward mobility contributed to the union's negative turning point. The previous administration(s) from 2000 to 2017 relied on kangaroo courts and social distance between union leaders, staff and members to manage factions, avert accountability and to eradicate detractors. The highlighted factors stifled open engagements, minimised direct participation in union activities and outlawed democratic contestations for leadership positions. The factional hegemony was sustained through the phasing out of institutional memory, occupation of strategic union organs, limiting access to information, monopolising communication and eroding workers education for service provider training and development programmes. Intra-factional struggles have proven to reorganise and challenge an existing status quos.

Generally, the distribution of illegitimate power weakens internal democracy and entrenches oligarchic practices. The root cause of oligarchy is the lack of accountability, the need to preserve authority and violation of constituted rules. Motivated by the drive for upward mobility, a culture of monopolisation of resources, means of communication, knowledge and skills was employed to manage and safeguard personal interests within SATAWU. The emergence of oligarchy in SATAWU's formal democratic structure shows that it was a phenomenon caused by the undemocratic actions of a dominant minority. It is only through the proper application of union statutes, direct participatory democracy and worker control that oligarchy can be counteracted. Oligarchy is not inevitable and/or an automatic process but exists as a consequence of skewed/negated democratic processes.

Apart from SATAWU's history of internal crisis, South Africa's trade union landscape is generally in a state of flux. A multiplicity of factors such as the history of in-fighting, global economic instabilities and the inability for capitalism to reform itself played a critical role in dividing and weakening the labour movement. Traditional and independent trade unions have found it to be increasingly difficult to adapt to variations in the capitalist mode of production. The future of work including the direction and character of the labour movement has thus become a muddy terrain. Taken from a positive point of view, these negative conditions open new opportunities for trade union reconstruction, adaptability and modernisation. The work of van der Walt (2014) for example, proposes anarcho and revolutionary syndicalism as an alternative form of workplace organisation. By tracing the genesis and history of internal crisis in line with union purpose, organisation and capacities, adequate change strategies needed for repositioning, reorganising and revitalising trade unions like SATAWU can be formulated and implemented accordingly.

Importantly, this study seeks to answer whether or not a crisis-ridden trade union like SATAWU can be revitalised. In attempting to answer this question, it is important to understand that the starting point for revitalisation demands an open discussion and/or reflection on SATAWU's history of internal crisis. This includes a critical assessment of the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU. Furthermore, exploring the factors and conditions which not only replicated historical problems but created new forms of struggle/challenges. When locating the crisis, both internal and external conditions must be taken into consideration. The differences, commonality of factors, the evolution of historical moments and lessons from the crisis must be drawn before the implementation of remedial prescriptions. The survival of SATAWU will at the end of the day be determined by the union's ability to diagnose, adapt, influence and implement change strategies. Direct participatory democracy is an essential component for achieving problems-solving solutions necessary for realising meaningful change. All other issues will flow from the union's commitment to implement all corrective measures effectively and efficiently.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation	Acronym
ACUSA	Amalgamated Cleaners Union of South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
ANCYL	African National Congress Youth League
AZACTU	Azanian Congress of Trade Unions
BCEA	Basic Conditions of Employment Act
BEE	Black Economic Empowerment
BIH	Bashumi Investment Holdings
BLATU	Black Transnet Allied Trade Union
CCAWUSA	Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
CEC	Central Executive Committee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CTMWA	Cape Town Municipal Workers Association
CUSA	Council of Unions of South Africa
DGS	Deputy General Secretary
DoL	Department of Labour
EUSA	Employees Union of South Africa
FCWU/AFCWU	Food and Canning Workers Union/ African Food and Canning Workers Union
FCWU	Food and Canning Workers Union
FEDUSA	Federation of Unions of South Africa
FINCOM	Financial Committee
FOSATU	Federation of South African Trade Unions
GNU	Government of National Unity
GS	General Secretary
GWU	General Workers Union
IAM	International Association of Mechanics
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IT	Information Technology
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LOBs	Local Office Bearers
LRA	Labour Relations Act
LSSCs	Local Shop-Steward Councils
MDM	Mass Democratic Movement
M&A	Mergers and Acquisitions
NACTU	National Council of Trade Unions
NALEDI	National Labour and Economic Development Institute
NC	National Congress
NDR	National Democratic Revolution
NEC	National Executive Committee
NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NOBC	National Office Bearers Committee
NOBs	National Office Bearers
NPC	National Policy Conference
NSM	National Staff Meeting
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
NUMSA	National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa

PA	Personal Assistant
PC	Provincial Congress
PEC	Provincial Executive Committee
PMI	Post-Merger Integration
POBC	Provincial Office Bearers Committee
POB	Provincial Office Bearer
POPCRU	Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union
PS	Provincial Secretary
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SAA	South African Airways
SAAT	South African Airways Technical
SACCAWU	South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SAFTU	South African Federation of Trade Unions
SALSTAFF	Salaried Staff Association
SARHWU	South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union
SATAWU	South African Transport and Allied Workers Unions
SATS	South African Transport Services
SAWU	South African Workers Union
SEPs	Strategic Equity Partnerships
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SG	Secretary General
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMU	Social Movement Unionism
SOE	State-Owned Enterprise
SSCs	Shop-Stewards Committees
TATU	Transnet Allied Trade Union
TGWU	Transport and General Workers Union
TGWUSA	Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa
TWU	Tata Workers Union
TWU	Technical Workers Union
UAW	United Auto Workers
UDF	United Democratic Front
USA	United States of America
USW	United Steelworkers
UTP/CUSA	Urban Training Project/ Council of Unions of South Africa
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YCLSA	Young Communist League of South Africa

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The formation of independent trade unions in South Africa between the 1970s and late 1980s heightened the collective identity of the structurally subjugated masses which were predominantly blacks in general and Africans in particular. At that interval in time, participatory and representative democracy, shopfloor organisation and worker control were prevalent modes of operation/organising in trade unions affiliated to the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU). Union officials/employees operated within the confines of worker mandates. From the 1980s onwards, trade union membership numbers rapidly grew owing to a series of merger processes. Participatory democracy became structurally impractical thus making way for representative democracy.

The two forms of democracy often complemented each other in practice. Though direct democracy was more feasible at shop-floor level, its ideas were often realised through workers participation in the decision-making of the union. Apart from electing, replacing and removing worker representatives from office, union members influenced the policy direction of the organisation. In principle, representative democracy cannot operate outside the ambit of direct democracy. The formation of COSATU in 1985 inculcated the philosophies of direct and representative democracy. This form of organisation, however, is not synonymous and/or cannot be used to generalise South Africa's labour movement. The reason for this is that COSATU was established by trade unions with contending political, ideological and organisational traditions. Unlike FOSATU, UDF (United Democratic Front) affiliated trade unions, for example, were strongly organised in communities. A majority of these unions were poorly organised at shopfloor level. They often did not subscribe to direct participatory democratic principles like FOSATU. In summary, the existence of COSATU was made possible through prolonged negotiations (from 1981-1985), compromises, cultural diversity and uneven and combined trade union values, political, ideological and organisational traditions.

The constitution of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and its affiliates redirected and/or centralised power in the hands of elected leaders tasked to represent the interests of ordinary members. The combination of organisational governance and representative democracy created some degree of control although rarely extended beyond the workplace (Hirschsohn 2011). The delegation system like a pyramid structure was employed to elect union representatives into various offices of the organisation. The higher the offices/positions of the union (workplace, local, provincial and national structure), the more power wielded by a minority of office bearers. This form of organisation negatively impacted the direct link between the rank and file and elected office bearers of the union (top in particular). On the contrary, the

reorganisation and redirection of power do not necessitate an automatic entrenchment of oligarchy. It is through the distribution of illegitimate power in formal and informal organisations that oligarchy encroaches itself over time.

Separate from the highlighted structural changes, COSATU played a critical role in the liberation of South Africa. The combination of workplace struggles with community organisations, social movements and political parties made it an exemplifier of social movement unionism (SMU). The Tripartite Alliance consisting of the ANC (African National Congress), SACP (South African Communist Party) and COSATU was formed in 1990. It was from this period that South Africa was preparing itself for the 1994 democratic breakthrough. After the euphoria of liberation subsided, the previously oppressed realised that the democratic breakthrough was accompanied by domination of a special type. The newly elected government aligned itself to principles of market regulation thus deepening poverty, unemployment and inequalities.

The implementation of neoliberal economic policies such as GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) in 1996, prioritised economic growth, market liberalisation and private sector investment over the RDP's (Reconstruction and Developmental Programme) human-centred developmental path. This paradigm shift strained the ANC's relations with COSATU and the SACP. Central to the differences was the fact that the RDP had its genesis in the union movement especially NUMSA (National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa). Tensions within the federation reached a qualitative leap in late 2014 resulting in the expulsion of NUMSA and dismissal of the COSATU General Secretary (Zwelinzima Vavi). These manifestations led to the formation of a breakaway trade union federation called SAFTU (South African Federation of Trade Unions) in 2017.

The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) was established in 1998, after a successful merger process between SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union), BLATU (Black Transnet Allied Trade Union) and TATU (Transnet Allied Trade Union). In May 2000, the former SATAWU merged with TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) to form the new SATAWU. The challenges experienced in the latter merger contributed to the formation of two breakaway unions in 2001 and 2002. Interestingly, the breakaways within the new SATAWU emerged from COSATU affiliated unions (SARHWU and TGWU). The union experienced three more splinters after its 3rd National Congress (NC) in 2011. The below table provides the names of the unions, period and reasons for the splinters.

Figure 1: History of SATAWU Splinters

Name of the Splinter Union	Year of the Splinter	Reasons for the Splinter
Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa	Between 2001 and 2002	A group of 10 Gauteng officials initially employed by the former TGWU were uncertain about their future after the merger in 2000. They were equally not happy with the conduct of the SATAWU General Secretary (Randall Howard). The employees revolted against the National Office Bearers (NOBs) resulting in the institution of disciplinary processes. The outcome of the process influenced the formation of the splinter union.
New SARHWU	2002	This splinter union came from a group of former SARHWU members. They accused the security sector and the General Secretary (Randall Howard) for failing to respect decisions of the launching congress. They claimed that the merger in 2000 was negotiated in bad faith resulting in a hostile takeover of the former SATAWU by the former TGWU.
NTM (National Transport Movement)	2012	NTM was formed after the 3rd National Congress in 2011. Factional tensions between the President (Ephraim Mphahlele) and General Secretary (Zenzo Mahlangu) was central to the splinter.
DETAWU (Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union)	2015	DETAWU was formed in 2015 after a group of Mpumalanga and Limpopo leaders broke ranks from the Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya (Deputy General Secretary) faction. They joined forces with leaders from KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) in an attempt to overthrow the General and Deputy General Secretary. Their ultimate defeat influenced the formation of DETAWU.
RETUSA (Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa)	2015	RETUSA was formed in 2015 by a group of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) office bearers, shop-stewards and staff dismissed by the Secretariat (Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya) faction. Differences between the leaders (Mpumalanga and KZN faction) influenced the formation of two separate splinter unions. The unions are DETAWU (formed by Mpumalanga faction led by the former Provincial Secretary Vusi Ntshangase) and RETUSA (formed by the KZN faction and led by the former Provincial Secretary Joseph Dube).

The union's inability to achieve a successful post-merger integration (PMI) strategy after the amalgamation between the former SATAWU and TGWU in May 2000 was the genesis of its problems. Following the merger, two splinter unions emerged as an outcome of internal challenges/tensions. The Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa (TGWUSA) was the first breakaway union formed between 2001 and 2002. This was followed by the formation of the new SARHWU in 2002. The new SATAWU was confronted by a second wave of crisis between 2012 and 2015. The National Transport Movement (NTM) in 2012, the Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union (DETAWU) and the Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa (RETUSA) were respectively established in 2015. The

second wave of the crisis was a consequence of historical conditions and new tensions which manifested before and after the 3rd National Congress held at Sun City in 2011.

Using SATAWU as a case study, this research project investigates the factors that may have contributed to the paralysis of the union after its establishment in May 2000. In better understanding the crisis, the study examines the following aspects: tensions associated with the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU, erosion of worker control and accountability in structures of the union, the correlation between labour aristocracy and oligarchy, contradictions associated with the establishment of union investment companies and the transition to entrepreneurial leadership/managerial styles. It is equally envisaged that this research report will not only contribute to an existing body of literature focusing on trade union fragmentation, revitalisation and modernisation but it will be employed as a policy and educational guide essential for achieving the "back to basics" project.

1.2. Problem Statement

In 2018 SATAWU called its 4th National Congress under abnormal conditions. Firstly, the structural meeting was made possible through an order of the court. Secondly, 83% of its National Office Bearers (NOBs) elected in 2011 were no longer leaders of the union. The leadership turnover resulted from resignations and formation of breakaway unions. Two breakaway unions were established after the merger in 2000. The rest took place after the 3rd National Congress in 2011. Intra and inter-factional struggles were the main cause of the ruptures/splits. Consequently, the union's membership declined from 250000 to101458 (SATAWU 2018).

A clarion call was made at the 4th NC requesting that members decide on whether to reconstruct or further destroy the union.

- "On destruction: continue with the culture of purging, factionalism, suppression of internal democracy, corruption, elitism and championing patronage networks
- On reconstruction: reconstruct and revitalize SATAWU by going back to basics, advancing worker control, re-establish structures of accountability from workplace to national level, advance internal democracy for the strategic realignment of the union, champion workers education for the intensification of class analysis from a socio-economic and political perspective and advance a proletarian struggle in defence of the subjugated majority" (SATAWU 2018:3).

The congress report admitted that after the 3rd National Congress in 2011, the union leaders deflected from the organisation's founding principles, restricted internal democracy and distanced themselves from the rank and file. The new internal culture resulted from the centralisation of decision-making power wielded by a minority of union leaders at provinces and head office level. The minority was motivated by prestige, self-enrichment and upward mobility. The sustainability of the power clique depended on the erosion of internal democracy, suppression of open contestations, and purging, frustrating, expelling and dismissing detractors of the new regime. Structures of accountability were turned into kangaroo courts. The collapse of internal governance led to both mass exodus of members and paralysis of the union (SATAWU 2018).

1.3. Research Question and Objective

In the foreword to *COSATU in Crisis*, Vavi (2015: x) underlined that the federation had shifted from its founding principles of "independence, militancy, worker control and internal democracy." The judicial system became a battlefield for constitutional interpretation, governance and compliance. At an affiliate level, factional battles were accompanied by mass expulsions, allegations of corruption, purging, disbanding of structures and non-compliance with union constitutions. The anti-democratic practices were responsible for the formation of new unions, leadership and staff turnover and mass resignation of members. Parallel to the problem statement and perspective from Vavi (2015), this study aims to answer the following questions:

Main Question:

- *What are the factors that contributed to the establishment of five breakaway unions after the formation of SATAWU in 2000?*

Sub-Questions:

- *Was the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU in 2000 correct in principle but procedurally flawed?*
- *Was the crisis experienced by the 3rd administration after the 2011 National Congress caused by unresolved historical challenges?*
- *Are there any other factors that may have contributed to the splintering of SATAWU post the 2011 Sun City National Congress?*

This research exclusively focuses on the splintering of SATAWU after its inception in 2000. By tracing the union's stages of development, the study aims to find out whether unresolved historical challenges replicated themselves in the 3rd administration in 2011. The merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU is the starting point for locating ideological differences, tensions and factions that shaped the

character of SATAWU. The 1st administration from 2000-2006[1]witnessed the first wave of crisis and 3rd administration the second. By understanding the factors of the first and second wave of crisis, this study aims to shed light on whether the merger was correct in principle but procedurally flawed. Unearthing the cause(s) of crisis will place the union in a better position to revitalise itself by rectifying both historical and current challenges.

1.4. The Rationale for the Study

This study explores two historical moments that contributed to the internal crisis in SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union). The first moment concerns the merger between the former SATAWU and Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) in May 2000. The outcomes of the amalgamation influenced the formation of two splinter unions which were the Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa (TGWUSA) between 2001 and 2002 and the new South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union in 2002. Union leaders, members and staff assumed that all internal challenges had subsided after the first wave of crisis. This assumption was negated by events following the 3rd National Congress (NC) in 2011.

The second moment has to do with hardened intra and inter-factional struggles which contributed to the formation of three breakaway unions between 2012 and 2015. The splinter unions include the establishment of National Transport Movement (NTM) in 2012, Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union (DETAWU) and the Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa (RETUSA) in 2015. The ruptures had dire ramifications on membership density, financial stability and employee securities. The 2018 SATAWU 4th National Congress report highlighted that approximately 148542 (from 250000 to 101458) members were lost during the latter period of the union's crisis. These turning points reflect that within its stages of development, the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) was unable to manage conflict or collectively adapt to the change process.

When examining the labour movement from a bird's eye view, it is discovered that the formation of breakaways generally reproduces historical struggles in the form of trade union rivalry. Continued animosities and intolerance strain centralised or decentralised forms of collective bargaining. Government and employers benefit from the weaknesses of the labour movement. The massacre of 34 mineworkers at

[1] In terms of the SATAWU constitution, the 1st administration occupied office in 2003 to 2006. The office bearers elected at the merger congress in 2000 are not counted as the 1st administration. This anomaly may be caused by the fact that SATAWU including its constitution was officially registered with the Department of Labour (DoL) after its first official congress in 2003. For the purpose of this study, the 1st administration includes the merger and first official congress between 2000-2003 and 2003-2006 respectively.

Marikana in August 2012, is a classic example of a fractured labour movement (van der Walt 2014). When analysing the massacre from a class perspective, we realise that workers indirectly contributed to their fate. The deployed police were mandated to bring law and order, safeguard the employer's private property and economic interests of the state. The striking mineworkers, on the other end, were met by a hail of bullets. Their crime was to wage a class struggle outside prescribed collective bargaining processes. The massacre exposed South Africa's political economy.

South Africa, as a capitalist mode of production depends on an unequal stratification of society, alienation and exploitation of the proletarian class. The police were alienated from their labour at the point of service. Unlike the striking miners, their contractual obligations allowed them to use maximum force. The similarity between the police and striking miners rests with the sale of their labour-power. The general fragmentation of labour demonstrates the sophistication of capitalism. This is achieved from its ability to conceal the embodiment of labour in commodities. The capitalist mode of production produces its own grave-diggers provided that workers are united. In the absence of a united working-class identity, the proletariat unconsciously becomes its own gravedigger.

Bezuidenhout and Tshoaedi's (2017) edited volume on *Labour Beyond COSATU: Mapping the Rupture in South Africa's Labour Landscape* reveals that trade union fragmentation has opened up the labour movement and created new opportunities for class struggle. The character of independent trade unions is not yet clear due to limited research and conditions that triggered their rise.

> "We don't call the book *Labour after COSATU*, since the federation will clearly continue to play a significant role even if it fragments further. We use the world 'beyond' because it signifies that the field is opening up and that references to the South African labour movement and COSATU can no longer be treated as synonyms. In researching the field we realised how little work has been done on other federations and independent trade unions. As the labour landscape changes, so will the field of labour studies. New connections between academics and trade unions will be formed and new traditions will result from this…" (Bezuidenhout and Tshoaedi 2017: xviii).

The scholarly works in both *Labour beyond COSATU and COSATU in Crisis*, reveal major changes in the labour movement. Trade union fragmentation symbolises a broader crisis in the overall structure of the economy. A wide range of literature appreciates trade unions for acting as critical change agents. This perspective omits to examine the impact that variations in economic (commodity production, market competition, banking activities and circulation of money through the sale and purchase of goods) and non-economic (government, legislation, family structure, educational system and religion etc.) institutions have

on the formal structure of a union. Adverse seismic shifts within a union's social structure are detrimental to the collective identity of the working class.

This study intends contributing to an existing body of literature focusing on trade union fragmentation by exploring critical concepts such as worker control, labour aristocracy and trade union oligarchy. A wide range of literature employs similar concepts to explain various turning points in South Africa's labour movement landscape. The seismic shifts in question comprise of the Marikana Massacre, the expulsion of NUMSA from COSATU and the formation of SAFTU etc. This body of literature has barely explored internal factors responsible for jeopardising working class solidarity. This research project is slightly different from other studies focusing on inquiries relating to workers democracy and the rupture of the labour movement (COSATU unions in particular). This study on the contrary critically explores the complexities of trade union mergers, tensions associated with union investment companies, union members' discontentment with their workplace representatives (shop-stewards) and the role played by union employees in weakening workers' solidarity.

1.5. Structure of the Report

This research report is structured into five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction and general background of the research project. It reflects the formation of independent trade unions in the 1970s and 80s. The introduction further outlines the research question, objective and rationale of the study in line with the problem statement. Chapter two explores diverse scholarly work and debates around trade union mergers, modernisation, social movement unionism, labour aristocracy and oligarchy among other concepts. The significance of the literature review is to understand both theories and debates within the field of trade unionism- the transition from participatory democracy to oligarchy in particular. Furthermore, it sets the foundation for questions to pose during the data collection phase. Chapter three outlines the nature of research, methodology, sample size, data collection techniques and method of analysing/interpreting the results in specific categories and themes. Chapter four presents the findings or results from the interviews and documentary analysis. This section is divided into three parts, the first focuses on the merger history and two breakaways that occurred thereafter. The second part deals with the formation of three breakaway unions after the 3rd National Congress in 2011. The third part is an analysis of the research findings in line with the literature review, objectives and rationale of the study. The final chapter provides recommendations stemming from the research findings.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter engages a range of scholarly works as per the question(s), aims and objective of the study. The literature not only acts as a guide but clarifies topics in a related field. For better understanding and/or developing an approach to the study at hand, the literature review grapples with concepts ranging from trade union mergers, worker control, labour aristocracy and oligarchy to name a few. The knowledge gathered is essential for asking relevant questions during the interview stage of the project. Moreover, the findings may either agree or contradict existing literature to contribute to the said field of study.

2.1. Trade Union Mergers and their Inherent Contradictions

The work of Clark and Gray (2000) explores the question of trade union adaptability, evolution and modernisation by concentrating on the merger process. Focusing on workers associations in America, the authors explained that like their business counterparts, trade unions have restructured and regrouped into complex organisations since the 1800s. At least two unions managed to merge every year from 1900 to 1959. The consolidation of resources and elimination of territorial duplications was not foreign in the American labour movement. Business cycles, worsening political climates and the upsurge of multinational corporations were factors that provoked union mergers. Fundamentally, unions merged to mitigate difficulties associated with membership loss and dwarf collective bargaining influence (Clark and Gray 2000).

Mergers do not follow a one size fits all approach based on the complexity and/or impact they have on union structures and functions. Mergers between large and small unions (also known as absorptions) are less complicated. Amalgamations between unions of similar size and comparable power are more complicated and difficult to execute. Near-amalgamations are not a new phenomenon, especially when attempting to combine unions with different cultures and organisational structures. Depending on the form of democratic practices, members have a final say on the outcomes of the merger process (Clark and Gray 2000).

The biggest potential merger in the North American labour movement was announced in 1995. After announcing their intention to merge through a unity statement, quiet negotiations took place between the International Association of Mechanics (IAM), United Auto Workers (UAW) and United Steelworkers (USW). A negotiation committee was formed between all unions. Based on structural similarities, it was resolved that unification discussions had to take place with UAW and USW. This meant that after concluding the first unification process, the IAM will merge with the new union thereof. It was further

agreed that each union's constitutional meetings had powers to ratify and have the final say regarding the negotiated agreement (Clark and Gray 2000).

The three unions had to grapple with administrative issues such as the merging of finances and assets, consolidation of staff, location of headquarter and education centres. If the merger succeeded, it was going to bring considerable financial power. All unions generated money from subscriptions, investments and education facilities. The unions had to decide on how their immovable assets- buildings and education facilities- were going to be geographically spread and whether some would be shut down. Because the merger was going to increase membership to two million, it was suggested that headquarters and office centres remain opened regardless of cost implications. The membership breakdown of the three unions in 1997 is as follows: USW 666,704, IAM 729, 986 and UAW 767, 200 (Clark and Gray 2000).

It was forecasted that the combined staff compliment of the merging unions would be 3000 employees in an event that the amalgamation was successful. The merger process would prompt the unions to reconfigure the organisation, formulate new employment policies, departments, staff assignments and salaries and benefits. The leaders were aware that the merger was going to bring high levels of employee insecurity. Unlike corporations, it was indicated that layoffs as a consequence of the merger were not anticipated. It was anticipated that restructuring employee salaries and benefit plans will not lead to insurmountable challenges. The fundamental challenges and/or issues that were anticipated included agreeing on a union name, the election of the President and location of the headquarters (Clark and Gray 2000).

Though the unions had to agree on various unification issues, there were minor challenges involving their functions and services to members that had to be addressed. Achieving collectiveness was a primary objective that exceeded the costs associated with the merger. It is presupposed that the rise of mega global corporations prompted merger engagements between the unions. If realised, the merger was going to assist with increased bargaining power and leverage at the negotiation table. To realise the merger, it was recommended that the unions firstly resolve structural, political and administrative hurdles. The slow progress thwarted the possibilities of meeting the 2000 or 2002 deadline. Other challenges including the elections process of national leaders- the President in particular- and cultural differences had to be rectified.

On the question of structure, UAW and USW were characterised by a centralised culture as opposed to IAM. Since merging organisations tended to replicate historic union-member relations, it was announced in 1999 that UAW and USW will first merge. This meant that the IAM would remain a separate entity, on one hand, and that full unification would not be achieved, on the other. Clark and Gray (2000) suggested that another possibility was to consider gradually merging the operations of all unions. This would assist in

expanding their cooperative efforts while exploring the possibilities of finding an amicable solution to all identified challenges. In an event that all merger efforts failed, the unions could enter into a formal or informal alliance which will resolve on plans to work together in line with existing relations.

When the article was written by Clark and Gray (2000) it was highlighted that the merger between the three unions was not concluded. The delay resulted from numerous challenges that had to be resolved. Nevertheless, multiple unification opportunities, avenues and options were to be explored by IAM, UAW and USW. Apart from the possibilities to achieve a successful merger, the work of Clark and Gray (2000) reveals that amalgamations are generally not easy, they require compromise, commitment, time and effort before realising their planned objective.

The work of Clark and Gray (2000) reveals the complexities of trade union mergers/amalgamations. A one size fits all approach to mergers should be averted owing to diverse motives and material conditions that influence such processes. The case of IAM, UAW and USW can be used for comparative purposes, however, it cannot be employed to define and/or generalise the South African context of trade union mergers. A discussion on the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) in 1985, is critical for uncovering a section of political, organisational and ideological traditions that shaped South Africa's labour movement landscape. Van Niekerk (1988:158) stated that,

> "The formation of COSATU in November 1985 introduced a new dynamic into political unionism in South Africa. It was founded with a signed-up membership of more than 450000 workers. COSATU drew together the FOSATU [Federation of South Africa Trade Unions] unions; the UDF [United Democratic Front] unions; several large independent unions such as the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers' Union (CCAWUSA); the Cape based unions, the FCWU [Food and Canning Workers Union] and GWU [General Workers Union]; and the increasingly important NUM [National Union of Mineworkers], which broke away from CUSA [Council of Unions of South Africa]".

The 4 years of merger talks between 1981 and 1985 reveals that the formation of COSATU did not follow an easy process. The workers' federation initially had to be launched in October 1985, however, this deadline was not met. Some unions wanted the date of the launching congress to be moved to 1986. The proposed postponement of the launching congress was rejected by a majority of trade unions. The unions, on the contrary, agreed that 1985 was the year of unity. It was further resolved that the last week of November 1985 was appropriate for convening the launching congress (Baskin 1991).

> "The fact that it took so long to unite … can be attributed to differences of opinions and differences in our assessments of many events or developments… differences that can be ironed out through discussions and comradely persuasions.
>
> It was political differences that had stood in the way of workers unity. While the debates were not always very easy, at least it was a start and there were debates. COSATU is alive today because we aired all our suspicions then, it was worth it because most of our suspicions were over nothing" (Baskin 1991: 51).

The newly established trade union federation embodied principles of worker control and worker democracy. For COSATU (2005), trade unionism depended on shopfloor organisation, the building of shop-steward structures, addressing worker issues and improving their working conditions. The combination of participatory and representative democratic principles was critical for realising worker control and managing the affairs of the trade union federation. The unity of workers equally relied on harmonious work relations between COSATU and its affiliates. The establishment of local shop-steward councils, shop-steward locals and mandated workplace representatives/shop-stewards were integral components of working-class unity and democracy.

> "Unionism is a day-to-day activity, and this is particularly true at shop floor level. The result is that thousands of workers have developed the skills of leadership, representation and unionism. This is the basis of democracy in practice" (COSATU 2005: 27).

The diverse political, organisational and ideological traditions affected the working class vision espoused by COSATU. Tensions within the federation were not only historical but shaped by inter and intra trade union distinctions. Firstly, a large number of FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions) unions were effective at shopfloor level (Baskin 1991). Political differences existed between leaders, workers/ordinary members, and full-time union employees. FOSATU leaders were suspicious of and also viewed popular politics as petty-bourgeois. They instead advocated for working-class autonomy. The latter two believed that workers had to engage in township uprisings. Notwithstanding that FOSATU had to form alliances with the UDF (United Democratic Front).

Secondly, independent trade unions such as FCWU/AFCWU (Food and Canning Workers Union/ African Food and Canning Workers Union) and GWU (General Workers Union) were substantially organised at shopfloor level (Baskin 1991). Politically, the unions shared similarities with FOSATU. Unlike FOSATU, they, on the other end, were more open to the question of forming alliances with other organisation. Thirdly, municipal unions associated with CTMWA (Cape Town Municipal Workers Association) were poorly

organised at shopfloor level. This affected their ability to advance militant countervailing actions. Some of these unions sympathised with the UDF while others were rooted in the Unity Movement tradition.

Fourthly, unions such as the NUM (National Union of Mineworkers) originated from UTP/CUSA (Urban Training Project/ Council of Unions of South Africa) tradition (Baskin 1991). The mineworkers union developed strong shaft steward structures. Politically, the union supported both principles of black consciousness and the UDF. Finally, UDF affiliated unions were weakly organised at shopfloor level. The weaknesses were counterbalanced by the union's political linkages with the mass movement. They drew significant working-class sympathy in industries (factories in particular) they organised. Internal differences existed between two UDF factions. The one group was committed to the formation of a new trade union federation. The other group was sceptical about the political, organisational and ideological backgrounds of some unions to be included in the formation of a future trade union federation.

After the launch of COSATU in 1985, its affiliates had to enter into merger processes as per the one union, one industry resolution adopted at the launching congress (Baskin 1991). The launching congress agreed that all industrial unions had to be merged within six months. This resolution instantaneously brought an end to general unions. COSATU realised that its affiliates had to merge to confront powerful corporations embedded in the South African economy. The ambitious six-month timeframe did not live up to expectations. Political and organisational differences resurfaced thus hindering merger talks/processes with various affiliates. The below table provides a summary of popular traditions that shaped the character of COSATU. These competing traditions range from the UDF, centre, independent workers and unallocated block.

Figure 2: Competing Political and Organisational Traditions with COSATU

Name of the Traditions	Description of the Tradition
1. UDF Block	This block had 19 affiliates which were predominantly general unions. Its membership was approximately 106761. This block believed that it reflected the political views of workers and members of other unions. This reasoning can be linked to the political upsurge led by the UDF between the 1970s and 80s. Apart from being politically strong, these unions were generally weak at an industrial level. The UDF block often criticised the centre block of fetishizing over mandates and democracy.
2. Centre Block	This block was also sympathetic to the UDF/ANC outlook. However, the unions located in this grouping were launched with narrow economic trade union perspectives. Even though these unions supported the UDF/ANC outlook, they were uncomfortable with the UDF block. This grouping strongly believed in representative democracy and building grassroots organisations. They accused the UDF block of its

	sloganeering style of politics. Finally, this block represented approximately 168907 members.
3. Independent Workers Block	Like the centre block, this grouping placed significant emphasis on grassroots organisation. Unlike the Centre block, they were often but not always hostile towards the ANC/UDF traditions. They further expressed suspicion of community organisations and nationalist politics. Their political position underpinning supported a working-class alternative at an industrial and community level. Just like the two mentioned blocks, this grouping was not homogenous as it contained individuals that vacillated between the latter. Finally, this block represented 121068 members.
4. The Unallocated Block	This grouping of unions did not properly fit with the previously mentioned blocks. Leaders within this group represented diverse political perspectives ranging from black consciousness, Unity Movement traditions, UDF sympathisers and also apolitical outlooks. Like UDF, Centre and Independent Workers block, some organisations falling in this category were respected for their militant grassroots unionism and others were not organisationally strong.

Summarised from: (Baskin 1991:102-103)

The competing traditions within COSATU reveal that the one union, one industry mandate was not going to be realised in the aforesaid timeframe. Though the UDF and Centre Block voted together on political issues, the two fundamentally differed on the merger process/approach (Baskin 1991). The Centre and Independent Workers Block held the view that mergers had to be determined by majoritarian principles. The UDF Block, on the contrary, opposed this position because a majority of its affiliates were smaller thus feared being politically swamped and swallowed by bigger unions. Similar insecurities were expressed by other smaller unions. A majority of leaders representing all blocks feared losing their positions as a result of unfolding merger talks/processes.

The issue of demarcation also aggravated merger talks since the scope/value chain of some unions overlapped (Baskin 1991). A similar issue included the interpretation of industry. Unions like the TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) for example, rejected the proposal to separate cleaning and security from the transport sector. Finally, the elephant in room involved the determination of paid-up membership. Some unions employed a decentralised collection method. This means that subscriptions were directly collected at local offices. The union dues would then be used to pay staff salaries and overheads of the local. Inadequate financial controls including the determination of paid-up membership prolonged merger talks between parties.

Apart from political and organisational differences, trade unions like TGWU were able to fulfil the one union, one industry within the resolved six-month timeframe (Baskin 1991). This achievement does not necessitate that the merger congress was not met with controversy. Central to the tensions was the definition of industry. Unions like ACUSA (Amalgamated Cleaners Union of South Africa), argued that the cleaning and security had to be separated from the transport sector. ACUSA believed that contract cleaners and the private security industry ran the risk of being neglected in an event that they merged with transport workers. It was further stressed that the interests and problems of the workers in question differed. TGWU rejected the proposal to separate the sectors. The union argued that the lack of financial security would negatively affect the two vulnerable sectors. The debate around the separation of contract cleaning and private security frustrated the merger congress. Firstly, because there were walkouts in protest of the congress. Secondly, some COSATU affiliates claimed that the merger congress did not take place because of unresolved policy questions/issues.

The work of Baskin (1991) and Clark and Gray (2000) clarifies the complexity of amalgamations from a political, organisational structure and ideological tradition point of view. The contradictions in question are shaped by numerous variables ranging from shared assumptions, beliefs and strategic methods that determine the aims, objectives and overall character of trade unions. Trade union mergers have been employed for modernisation, growth and expansionary purposes. The mismanagement of the process has the potential of igniting fears of the unknown, insecurities and hostilities expressed by union members, employees and elected leaders. The emotional attachment associated with the history and pride of merging trade unions must at all material times be taken into consideration. These feelings are most likely to determine the success or failure of merger processes. Mergers can improve trade unions financial stability, strengthen internal knowledge and capacity, enhance worker activism and prevent the demise of smaller and weaker unions.

The formation of COSATU including the merger process entered into by TGWU, General Workers Union (GWU) and ACUSA in 1986, reveals that trade unions in general and the labour movements, in particular, are not homogenous organisations. Merging trade unions are forced to grapple with suitable mechanisms and harmonious approaches necessary for achieving new organisational culture, traditional diversity and systems of internal governance. The work of Baskin (1991) does not explicitly explore the merger between SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) and TGWU. A reason for this is that the merger between the latter unions in forming SATAWU occurred 9 years after *Striking Back: A History of COSATU* was published. Furthermore, contending traditions within the two unions may have delayed the merger process.

Following the formation of SATAWU in May 2000, the union was confronted with tensions between merging parties. Two breakaway unions emerged as a consequence of an internal crisis. The breakaway unions are the Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa (TGWUSA) between 2001 and 2002 and the new SARHWU in 2002. Regarding the work of Baskin (1991), it can be presupposed that the former union belonged and/or had its origins in the Centre Block and latter in the UDF Block. At this stage, it cannot be determined whether contending political, organisational and ideological traditions were responsible for the splintering of the unions. The fight to preserve power through the entrenchment of oligarchic practices is another factor that may have contributed to the splintering of SATAWU. Citing the work of Michels (1911), Bischoff (2015:232) stated that,

> "In his theory of oligarchy, Robert Michels argues that as organisations mature leaders tend to acquire values that come to clash with those of ordinary membership. The leaders of these organisations, including trade unions, become fixated with staying in power. This inevitable trend in organisations, Michels concludes, that is, the rule by an elite is also a strategic necessity for the organisation and that is why he terms it the 'iron law of oligarch'".

Changes in the social composition of COSATU and its affiliates is another factor that may have contributed to the fracturing of SATAWU. According to Bischoff (2015:233), the composition of working-class organisations increasingly represented "lower middle class professionals… permanent and full time workers and has not made inroads into organising casual workers, informal workers and other marginalised workers". The effects of social distance between a trade union's workplace representatives (shop-stewards), elected office bearers (at Local, Provincial and National Level) and ordinary union members may have contributed to the splintering of SATAWU. Bischoff (2015) argued that the social distance witnessed in trade unions was a bottom-up phenomenon. The reason for this is that full-time shop-stewards received numerous privileges linked to changes in their contracts and conditions of employment. The new entitlements range from new occupational grades, salaries and benefits. The question of social distance may have contributed to the following consequences: on one hand, migration of disgruntled members to existing or new rival unions. On the other hand, the formation of rival unions by marginalised/disgruntled union members. Bischoff (2015: 233) supports this statement by stating that,

> "…If only a minority of the labour force is indeed unionised this has provided fertile ground for the emergence of rival unions, sometimes with breakaway groups from a dominant trade union within a sector taking advantage of the gap. Rival unions have emerged, most noticeable in mining…, as well as in manufacturing, healthcare, teaching and transport sectors".

What makes the debate on mergers critical for this study is the fact that it aims to address the genesis of crisis in SATAWU after its formation in May 2000. It has been established that trade unions are not homogenous organisations, as such, their characters are shaped by diverse political, organisational and ideological traditions. Combining these traditions through merger processes might strengthen or negatively affect both organisational stability and working class solidarity. Mergers should also be looked at as a form of trade union modernisation. They can change the political, organisational and ideological character of trade unions.

The following section critically analyses the question of trade union modernisation. The purpose is to understand how variations in socio-economic, political and legislative conditions may force trade unions to review existing and develop new strategies for adaptive reasons. By comprehending the contradictions associated with mergers and other forms of modernisation strategies, this study will be able to unearth how the maturity of SATAWU may have contributed to the entrenchment of oligarchy, labour aristocracy, the rise of entrepreneurial leadership styles and the erosion of worker control. In a nutshell, this study will explore the failure and/or success of SATAWU's modernisation strategies.

2.2. Trade Union Modernisation, their Geometry and South Africa's Four Type Unions

The work of Buhlungu (2003) presents an interesting account on trade union modernisation from a South African standpoint. After political liberation in 1994, unions began to observe the contradictions of democracy and the impact of global change. In 1997, COSATU alluded that since it advocated for the transformation society, government and workplaces, it neglected to talk to its transition. The assessment of full-time employees was a starting point to examine internal trade union change. During the liberation struggle, activist unionists possessed a wide range of organisational skills, nurtured the democratic transition and contributed to building organs of people's power. It was after 1994 that ideas of participatory democracy were discouraged and gradually replaced by principles of minority rule in trade unions (Buhlungu 2003). The transition from the traditions of worker control to new forms organisation is best located in the historical development of COSATU unions. Hyman's (2001) eternal triangle clarified that the material circumstances and ideological traditions of trade unions influenced their interaction with other points primarily society, market and class. This exposes the danger of analysing trade unions from a linear or unvarying perspective.

Buhlungu (2003) notes that organisational modernisation cuts across all trade unions to make them durable and adaptable to change (internal and external). Internally, the stratification of full-time officials/employees widened the gap with ordinary workers from a class perspective. These alterations are symbolic of the emergence of new officials and the disappearance of activist organisers. This coincides with generational change. To comprehend the question of generational change, a distinction between old and new unionists has to be made. The old generation represents a crop of activist organisers that joined unions in the 1970s and 80s. They embodied the philosophies of participatory democracy and notions of worker control. They also conducted and/or facilitated training in all layers of the organisation. Regrettably, only a few activist organisers remained in unions after the democratic breakthrough. Their diminished role as political activists was attributed to broader political and economic changes.

The new unionists entered the environment at a time when principles of the old generation were in decline. It is believed that this resulted from the liberalisation of the political system. Consequently, more people joined unions freely and from 1992, COSATU realised an increase in the employment of full-time officials (Buhlungu 2003). The new trend suggests that political activism was no longer an essential component of trade unionism. Union priorities were on investing in skilled employees that rendered quality service to workers. A significant proportion of new officials disregarded the ideals and organisational culture of the old generation. Supporters of militant unionism also rejected specific aspects of worker control. The below table distinguishes the types of union officials which emerged post-1973.

Figure 3: Ideal Type of Full-Time Union Officials

	Feature	Generation	Gender	Approach to Unionism	Organisational Modernization Project
The Ideological Unionist	Collectivist. Seeks to restore militant tradition and worker control. Wants to achieve socialism	Predominantly old generation officials.	Mainly male	Political. Unions part of class struggle against capitalist class.	Minimalist. Ambivalent. They seek to strengthen worker control. But they also want specialization and some professionalism to achieve efficiency.
The Career Trade Unionist	Wants to make unionism a lifetime career. Focused on becoming expert on specific aspects of union work. Pragmatic.	Old and new generations.	Male and female	Apolitical, economistic and technocratic. Unions to improve wages and conditions, not to destroy but to reform capitalism.	Moderate. Technocratic and bureaucratic. Seek specialization and professionalism. Decisions by experts and top leaders. Unions are not exactly the same as other institutions.

The Entrepreneur	Individualistic and manipulative 'empire builder.' Union is a stepping stone to help mobility up the social scale	Predominantly new generation.	Mainly male	Opportunistic and instrumental. Driven by personal career interests.	Maximalist. They seek to abolish worker control and see unions as business organizations. Create avenues for upward mobility and other entrepreneurial activities such as investment companies.

Reproduced from: (Buhlungu 2003: 23)

Throughout the years, sociological discourse on trade unions concentrated on workers democracy, bureaucracy and oligarchy (Buhlungu 2003). Central to this inquiry was the contestation between ideological and career unionists. As previously highlighted, ideological unionists represented a diminishing layer of activist organisers within the labour movement. They are/were unable to decide on the course of modernisation. Female activism within their ranks was minimal. A majority of male counterparts were at the forefront of debates and public contributions.

Career unionists contradict the ideological form of organisation (Buhlungu 2003). This form of unionism represents technocrats concerned about unions achieving efficiency. They have the potential of either becoming bureaucrats or influence the development of a fully-fledged bureaucracy. Their suggested organisational changes or shifts are most likely to impact on the power relations between officials and members. Unlike ideological unionists, women representation is significant in this category.

A new category of trade unionists appeared after the decasualisation (a process where casual/temporary workforce is replaced for more permanent/stable labour relations) of society, introduction of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies and liberalisation of the South African economy (Buhlungu 2003). A distinct trait of entrepreneurial unionists is that they treat unions as a stepping stone for upward mobility. Principles of collective culture are favoured in the context of obtaining personal gains. Organisational modernisation is supported provided that it weakens participatory democracy and worker control. In realising individual aspirations, power cliques are established between office bearers and shop-stewards. General meetings are replaced for boardroom gatherings with high profile individuals to gain entry, profile or exposure to entrepreneurial avenues.

Buhlungu (2003), argued that the emergence of business unionism and establishment of union investment companies converges with the interest and character of entrepreneurial unionists. The race for upward mobility is central to intra union struggles and/or leadership battles. Without a countervailing struggle by union members, career unionists are likely to benefit from the erosion of worker control. Unlike entrepreneurial unionists, their trade union interests are long term. The union is a stepping stone to improve their intellectual and technical development. With regards to the gender question, like ideological unionists, a minority of women fall under the entrepreneurial category.

Still on the question of trade union modernisation, Hyman (2001) highlighted that the twentieth century was marked by a plurality of trade unions with varied organisational forms and ideological orientations. Numerous definitions were attached to unions which subsequently differentiated their nature, purpose, strategies and tactics. Historically, polarised unions survived under their self-sustaining dynamics which include defined traditions, institutional memories, operations, values and principles. No matter the distinctions, unions share commonalities of interest such as the need to regulate wage labour relations, operate within the market and social framework. They also aspire to change antagonisms by advancing their collective identities and agendas separate from employers. Considering that unions are part of society, their longevity is determined by coexisting with other institutions and constellations that share similar interests.

The labour movement in Europe was influenced by three ideal union types which are business unionism, social integrative unionism and radical opposition unionism. All three unions possessed distinctive identities and orientations. Their evolution in the course of struggle adapted them to new accommodative relations with owners of production. Changes in strategic and tactical approaches in the late 19th century led successful unions to shed their radicalism. The new approach was intended for achieving a union-business consensus that focused on resolving matters of fair wages and working conditions. The deradicalisation of unions sparked arguments over their objective to maintain, improve and defend workers immediate occupational interests. A description of the three union types is important for understanding their character and locating their ideological standpoints.

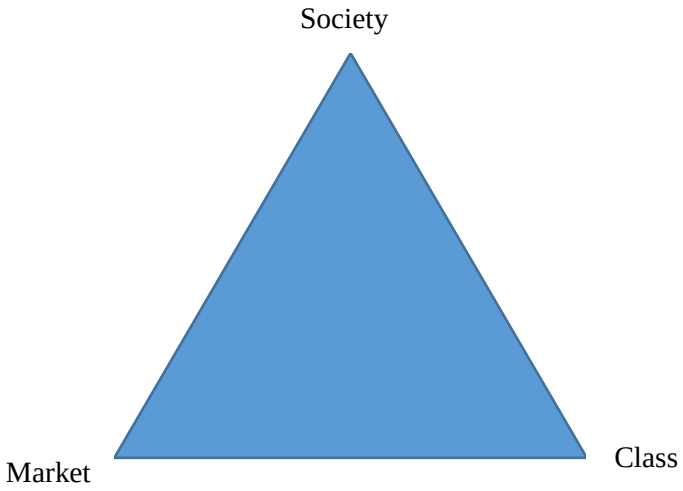
Business unions were devoted to acting as interest organisations with predominant market functions. Their primary focus was collective bargaining and advancing workers occupational interests. To safeguard their identity, socio-political projects and/or entanglements were avoided. Business unions held the view that such engagements were "…obstacles to the maturity of a trade union mentality founded upon workers' need for collective control of employment opportunities…" (Hyman 2001:3).

Social integrative unions were concerned with raising workers social status through social justice. This strand of trade unionism originates from radical-oppositional unionism. The existence of social integrative unions was influenced "…in part as a rival to the first, in part as a mutation from it" (Hyman 2001: 2). It was only towards the end of the nineteenth century that it was articulated as an "…expression of social Catholicism, which counterposed a functionalist and organistic vision of society to the socialist conception of class antagonism" (Hyman 2001:2). This perspective brings to light the ideological tensions between socialist and anti-socialist/Christian unions. Aside from the differences, Hyman (2001) identified an interesting overlap between the two unions. On one hand, social-democratic unions embodied aspects of anti-socialist unions. Anti-socialist unions were, on the other hand, critical of capitalism. Social-democratic and anti-socialist unions shared some similarities which include "…a priority for gradual improvement in social welfare and social cohesion, and hence a self-image as representatives of social interests" (Hyman 2001:2).

Radical-oppositional unions focused on waging a countermovement against the capitalist mode of production. This ideology was championed by various left movements such as "…radical social democracy, syndicalism, communism" (Hyman 2001:2). Regardless of their distinctions, the highlighted movements possessed common elements such as militancy and socio-political mobilisation. Trade unions within this configuration were concerned about advancing workers class interests.

Hyman (2001) designed an eternal triangle to explain the ideological connection each union shared with society, market and class relations. The model illustrates that business union's lean towards the market, social integrative unions towards society and radical- opposition unions towards class relations. Unions most likely prone to instability were according to Hyman (2001), those that paid sole attention to one point of the triangle. To avert unintended consequences, business unions, for example, had to consider broader socio-political conditions in the context of market relations. Social integrative unions had to understand that their members possessed distinct economic interests which may clash with other sections of society. Radical opposition unions had to find a way to adapt within an existing social order. Notwithstanding, the need to represent and deliver immediate gains for their members.

Figure 4: Eternal Triangle-Trade Union Geometry



Source: (Hyman 2001: 4)

The geometry of unions shows that their identities and ideologies are centred within the triangle. Because unions cannot remain static, they tend to vacillate between two of the three ideal types. Hyman (2001:4) explained that,

> "…All three models typically have some purchase; but in most cases, actually existing unions have tended to incline towards an often contradictory admixture of two of the three ideal types. In other words, they have been oriented to one side of the triangle: between class and market; between market and society; between society and class…"

A union's interaction with other points of the triangle reveals their material circumstances and ideological traditions. Their inclination as explained by Hyman (2001) is not stationary therefore, change (external and internal) may influence their reorganisation and possible reorientation. It is rather odd that trade unions tend to neglect building relations with the third dimension of the eternal triangle. Simply put, they ignore integrating and/or forging relations with all three sides of the geometry. Hyman (2001) believes that organisations that possessed an admixture of the three ideal union types had the potential to exert greater influence and leverage.

Pillay (2013) explains that the concept of social movement unions (SMUs) was applied differently by various authors and practitioners since its emergence in the 1980s. The concept was first coined in 1984 and then applied in the South African context in 1988. It was initially crafted to develop an understanding of trade unions when they acted as social movements. This was carried out through converging social movement theory and labour movement theory. Paradoxically, the concept was applied in South Africa by

scholars such as Webster (1994) without particular reference to social movement theory. The aim was to show how the newly emerging unions in South Africa combined workplace struggle with popular struggles, whilst also retaining independent shop-floor democracy.

The interpretive differences attached to the concept reflects the diverse national, socio-economic and political conditions (Pillay 2013). In the United States of America (USA), the concept was applied from a reformist perspective of social justice unionism. In the global south, the concept was linked to the period of political struggle for democracy against authoritarian rule. The latter social movement unions had strong anti-systemic dimensions associated with transformative and revolutionary unionism. The concept of SMU is centred on the role of unions in promoting or supporting democratic action by challenging inequality and injustice, engaging in progressive politics, advancing a struggle to democratise unions and developing egalitarian forms of internal politics.

In deepening the understanding of social movement unions, it is necessary to define social movements without delving into the complexity of new social movement theory (Pillay 2013). Social movements are relatively organised, mass-based collectives that engage in politics outside their institutional framework. They often act as an anti-thesis to existing social norms and values in their quest for social change. Social movements have their advantages and disadvantages. At their best, they practice either participatory or representative forms of democracy depending on their size and reach. At their worst, they can be led by the 'big man' with less, if any, structures of accountability.

When FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions) was formed in 1979, it was cautious about building relations with the ANC (African National Congress) and SACP (South African Communist Party) (Pillay 2013). This attitude was attributed to historical experiences and/or lessons drawn from the SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions). SACTU collapsed in the 1960s as a consequence of repressive measures advanced by the apartheid regime. FOSATU, on the contrary, strongly believed in building strong workplace organisations before entering the political terrain. The SACP viewed this practise with suspicion. It promoted militant community unions in the 1970s and 80s which backed the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983.

FOSATU was criticised for being a workers organisation and deciding not to join the UDF in 1983(Pillay 2013). It was pressured to take part in state politics as the township rebellion spilt over into the workplace. ANC activists within FOSATU played a critical role in mediating between workers politics and populism. They further influenced the formation of COSATU in 1985. After adopting the Freedom Charter in 1987, COSATU was convinced that the combination of populism and workerism was essential for leading a

workers struggle against apartheid. The leading role of COSATU in the late 1980s inspired scholars and activists throughout the world. They viewed its purpose, values, structure and collective action as an ideal SMU model.

Von Holdt (2002) shares a similar view with Pillay (2013) regarding the emergence of SMUs in South Africa including the diverse articulation and application of the concept. According to Von Holdt (2002), the concept of SMUs re-emerged from a series of debates in industrial countries. Labour movements faced numerous challenges that required urgent attention and remedial action. In their attempt to revitalise the labour movement, scholars and trade union activists from the North had an appetite to learn from the innovations and material conditions of the South. They focused on social movement theory as a starting point to develop a conceptual framework for their study. After comparing the experiences in South Africa and Brazil, the concept of SMU was defined as a struggle to raise living standards of the working class as a whole, under conditions of authoritarian industrialisation. Based on diverse national realities, the concept or aspects of SMU may be articulated differently. In South Africa, SMU meant a highly mobilised form of unionism in opposition to authoritarianism and repressive workplaces. Their community and political alliances were essential for advancing internal democratic practices and the broader transformation of societies.

Von Holdt (2002) developed an in-depth ethnographic case study on Highveld Steel to shed light on the nature and characteristics of SMUs from a South African setting. The company possessed a history of militant workplace struggle led by NUMSA (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa) in the 1990s. NUMSA was also known for its strategic innovation and militancy. Over and above NUMSA's crucial role in the struggle, the case study also detailed the nature of internal conflict, contestations over practices, strategies and meaning around black militant trade unions in South Africa. The study further explained how collective identities were forged with urban, rural and national politics against apartheid. These factors were vital for comprehending the internal contestations, strategies and practices of South African SMUs.

The analysis of SMUs places emphasis on building alliances with social movements and community organisations. It regards this relationship as forming external alliances with autonomous movements. Von Holdt (2002) argued that this assumption was weak because the impact of Alliance politics on the movement as a whole was not investigated. Accordingly, the analysis of SMUs in South Africa is weak and should be regarded as incomplete. The overemphasis on exogenous influences overlooks the impact these relations had on internal union practices and collective workplace identities. Since the analysis on SMUs reflects that their distinctiveness lies with community and political alliances, it neglects investigating whether the distinctiveness might also demonstrate workplace practices. To correct the analytical weakness of SMUs,

Von Holdt (2002) proposed that more attention had to be placed on the structural makeup of Highveld Steel under apartheid rule. Firstly, the firm's class antagonisms were explicit in relation to the racially defined occupational structure. This was in accordance with the legislation of that time. The trade union struggle for black workers was twofold as it, on one hand, confronted white power in the workplace and the broader apartheid structure, on the other. In the mid-1980s, the conflict between community activists and the police spilt over into trade unions. On those grounds, members and shop-stewards regarded their union struggle as intrinsically political. The interrelation between the struggle against industrial exploitation and the apartheid regime was central to the collective identity, solidarity and militancy of trade unions (Von Holdt 2002).

Hirschsohn (2011) like Pillay (2013) and Von Holdt (2002) highlights that SMUs embraced participatory democracy, political independence and bottom-up organising which placed the control of the union in the hands of members and representatives. The SMU model rejects a top-down mode of organising-where union leaders and officials exercise control. At a social level, SMUs are not only interconnected to the workplace but form part of a larger social network. Their linkages with political, community organisations and social movements enable them to advance a transformative agenda in line with the interests of workers. These factors are responsible for their distinctive and transformative identity. The concept of union democracy and worker control has to be understood in the context of a distinctive social structure developed in workplaces.

> "The social structure comprises the formal institutional framework, including its constitution, offices, resources and the rules and procedures that govern shop steward elections and roles, as well as a range of informal relationships, practices and meanings around them. The union social structure is influenced by a range of societal and political factors beyond the workplace and governs the distribution of power between members, shop stewards, officials and its various structures, and defines the practices, processes of decision-making, strategies, goals, and organisational culture of the union" (Hirschsohn 2011: 4).

COSATU's organisational model was influenced by labour movement activists of the 1970s. They realised that the failure of South African trade unions in the 1950s resulted from ignoring the rank and file and democratic principles. In rectifying the historical pitfall, lessons and experiences were drawn from British shop-steward movements and participatory ethos of new social movements. By building worker-controlled democratic organisations, unions were able to protect themselves from state repression (Hirschsohn 2011). A bottom-up democratic culture broke away from the traditional representative model. The new form of organisation promoted direct democracy, accountability, and open debate, education and workers

participation in decision-making. The features, practices and values of a democratic organisational culture include:

> "(a) the emphasis of shop floor structures led by shop stewards; (b) the creation of representative decision-making structures with majority worker delegates; (c) mandated decision-making and regular report-backs to members; (d) firm-level bargaining so workers and stewards an control the bargaining agenda and agreements; (e) full-time officials subjected to control by worker-dominated structures; (f) and the involvement of workers in the employment of full-time officials" (Hirschsohn 2011: 6).

The combination of direct participation in local activities and worker control are distinctive features that characterised the organisational model of South African unions. The merger process led to the growth of COSATU unions but made direct participation impractical. Eventually, representative democracy replaced participatory democracy. With time, these changes led to a social distance between workers, shop-stewards, and branch, regional and national leadership. In the 1990s, workers did not have control over policy, the flow of communication in democratic structures was top-down and no longer mandate driven. Worker control alone is not sufficient to hold leaders accountable unless it is supplemented by rank and file participation. Workers involvement and participation ensures that organised labour retains its character and advances its social purpose and in the interest of members (Hirschsohn 2011).

The existence of democratic union structures provides union members with the opportunity to exercise control over elected representatives and indirectly over policy (Hirschsohn 2011). Participation in organisational meetings and union activities enhances the activism and confidence of members in taking part in broader political and community programmes. Participating in debates and discussions at the community, political and trade union level, exposes the rank and file to diverse ideas, shared beliefs, understanding governmental policies and comprehending various socio-economic and political issues. The combination of participation accompanied by responsive shop-steward structures builds loyalty, socialisation and addresses the question of service delivery.

When engaging the question of democracy, it is imperative to draw a line between participatory and representative democratic processes (Hirschsohn 2011). The two forms of democracy, in many cases, complement each other in practice. Direct democracy is feasible at the shopfloor level. Effective representative democracy depends on the accountability and responsiveness of union leaders. To ensure that leaders are responsive, members have to be in a position to oppose their policies and have the power to change and/or recall them. Union democracy is best assessed through the following factors, taking part

in decision-making, ability to influence policy, exercise control over representatives, holding representatives accountable and the responsiveness of union leaders to worker demands. Democracy is critical for enhancing union effectiveness and mobilising workers to support a union's collective bargaining objectives.

With regard to a union's social structure, some scholars according to Hirschsohn (2011) adopted a liberal-democratic approach to democracy. They believed that competing parties and/or factions are necessary for a functioning democracy. Autonomous centres of power create conditions that oppose officials. They promote the existence of an independent base for rank and file activities. Where organisational democracy is not conducive, external factions can provide support to internal democracy. Advocates supporting the concept of liberal democracy believe that factions aligned to worker interests can contribute to the stimulation and maintenance of workers participation. On the contrary, proponents of business unionism argue that the role of a trade union is to advance workers interests, rather than providing the experience for self-governance (Hirschsohn 2011).

Scholars such as Sipahi (2016) propose that to understand the meaning of democratic conduct, one first has to grasp the definition or concept of union democracy. Union democracy is the ability of members to replace leaders by popular vote. The election process has to be free and contested. The theory of polyarchy suggests that the basic principles of democracy include, high level of enfranchisement, one person one vote and contested elections. The lack of leadership turnover or close contestation reflects an undemocratic internal climate. Another group of scholars according to Sipahi (2016) view union democracy as a structural matter that should derive from public democratic models of government. Their theories accommodate notions of a system with checks and balances between functional branches of government. To achieve this, formal measures through laws and statutes are needed. This perspective emphasizes formal structures of an organisation, the powers of top leadership, civil and political rights granted to minorities in union statutes (Sipahi 2016). Modern democratic pluralism theories locate democracy under rank and file participation in decision-making, overall control of union operations, and application of member rights, accountability and transparency of union activities. This approach involves a complex system of practices and values that directly or indirectly affects democratic conduct (Hirschsohn 2011 and Dahl 1956).

Trade union politics are an essential ingredient for confronting class antagonisms within the capitalist mode of production. Globally, unions have achieved substantial gains such as increased membership density, organising the unorganised and negotiating fair wages and decent conditions of employment for ordinary workers. Van der Walt (2014) indicates that beyond these gains, unions have found it increasingly difficult to articulate a vision for social change or develop an alternative to the existing social order. This perspective

not only contradicts the work of Pillay (2013), Von Holdt (2002) and Hirschsohn (2011), it goes on to critique business, political and social movement unionism. Van der Walt (2014:242) maintained that out of the three categories of unionism none "…has proved satisfactory historically-and certainly, none is satisfactory today."

Van der Walt (2014) critiqued economism/business unionism for avoiding broader socio-economic conditions for immediate workplace issues. This form of unionism neglects the fact that the broader social order shapes both wages and conditions of employment. SMUs were criticised for not having a clear change programme beyond demands for democratic reform. Their politics were defined on what they opposed rather than what they proposed. SMUs tended to transform into political unions.

Political unions result from unions forming relations with political parties to capture state power (van der Walt 2014). A relationship of this nature is believed to provide workers access to state power and policymaking. There are three forms of political relations which include social democracy, Marxist-Leninism and nationalism. Social democracy concentrated on forming relations with a mass party to capture the state. Marxist-Leninism aims to realise a revolutionary dictatorship led by a vanguard party. Unions under this setting/arrangement are not at the forefront of the struggle. With nationalism, unions forge relations with a nationalist bloc which aspires to wield the national state as the case with COSATU. The mentioned alliances have the potential to subordinate unions to the ruling party, co-opt them into patronage networks and create internal divisions on competing party interests. Upon winning state control, trade union capacity often suffers as a consequence of appointments/employment of strategic leaders and employees into senior government positions.

According to van der Walt (2014) anarcho and revolutionary syndicalism are an alternative form of workers organisation which can assist in addressing the challenges affecting popular movements. Syndicalism can be understood as,

> "…A tradition that envisages anti-bureaucratic and bottom-up trade unions as key means of educating and mobilising workers, and of championing the economic, social and political struggles of the broad working class, independent of parliamentary politics and party tutelage; and that aims, ultimately, at transforming society through union-led workplace occupations that will institute self-management and participatory economic planning, abolishing markets, hierarchies and states" (van der Walt 2014: 239).

The concept, philosophy and values of syndicalism have been subjected to widespread confusion. In South Africa for example, syndicalism is used to refer to a militant but apolitical form of left economism/business unionism. This reasoning stems from the Marxist-Leninist notion of vanguardism which contends that trade union reformism can only be addressed through party relations. On the contrary, syndicalism according to van der Walt (2014) encompasses a wide range of socio-economic principles which include but not limited to addressing social inequalities, achieving a planned bottom-up participatory economy, removal of hierarchy and elite control of resources.

> "…Syndicalism envisages a militant class-struggle unionism that empowers members while minimising internal hierarchy, and actively opposing domination and oppression by nation, race and sex-within the larger society, but within the union too. Historically, it promoted political education and struggle around larger social and political issues, and forged alliances with a range of other popular movements, including neighbourhood, youth and political groups, while steering sharply clear of alliances with all political parties aiming at state power" (van der Walt 2014:244).

The anti-statism displayed by syndicalist should not be perceived as a disinterest in political issues. Its struggle for wages and political rights is not waged through government or parliament but "…outside and against both, with the trade union, toughened by daily combat and permeated by Socialist spirit and bringing to bear the power of workers at the point of production, the lance head of these and other broader working class battles" (Rocker [1938] 1989: 88-89, 111, cited by van der Walt 2014:245).

The analysis at hand demonstrates that trade unions are fluid organisations with varied types, identities and purposes. The fragmentation of industries and political economy is a major cause of their plurality. As products of industry and anti-thesis to productive antagonisms, the survival of unions depends on their ability to confront and adapt to varied socio-economic changes. In the process of adaptation, unions evolve unevenly depending on the conditions they operate in. The diverse and most often conflicting/contradictory definitions associated with different union types illustrate their fluidity and intersections. These wide-ranging descriptions also explain the periods and socio-economic conditions the cited scholars were writing in. To avert confusion, this study must align itself to a specific set of definitions to fulfil its ultimate objective.

Buhlungu (2003) for example, equated business unionism to entrepreneurial unionism. His description was in direct contradiction to Hyman's (2001) definition of business unionism. Hyman (2001) argued that business unions focused on collective bargaining, advanced workplace struggles and were apolitical. This type of unionism can either be classified as economism or workerism.

Hyman (2001) highlighted that the purpose of radical-opposition unions was to advance a class struggle against the capitalist mode of production. Left movements such as radical social democracy, syndicalism and communism fell under this classification. The unions were not only militant but relied on socio-political mobilisation. Van der Walt (2014) would argue that Hyman's (2001) definition of radical-oppositional unionism was based on the overthrow of capitalism and not forging relations with political parties to capture state power. This perspective connects to van der Walt's (2014) delineation of anarcho and revolutionary syndicalism. Baskin (1995) would dispute this viewpoint by arguing that syndicalists fell under business unionism and not radical-oppositional unionism. For this study, radical-opposition union's best defines the character and purpose of anarcho-syndicalism.

Hyman (2001) expressed that social integrative unions focused on raising workers social status through social justice. The purpose of social integrative unions in this instance can be classified as social movement unions. Citing the work of Pillay (2013:15), Bezuidenhout (2017:220) emphasised that social movement unions were "…by definition progressive, given their orientation towards progressive social change in the interests of the broader working class…" He further divided social movement unions into two sub-types: "social justice unions" and "anti-capitalist" or "anti-systemic" type. Social justice unions can be associated with Hyman's (2001) definition of social integrative unions. Anti-capitalist or anti-systemic unions can be linked to Hyman's (2001) definition of radical opposition unions. These definitions nonetheless, contradict Von Holdt's (2002) description of social movement unions. According to Von Holdt (2002), South Africa's social movement unions were involved in a struggle to overthrow authoritarianism (apartheid) and repressive industrial/workplace relations. To achieve this dual objective, they formed alliances with community, social movements and political organisations.

Flowing from the works of the cited scholars, the below table provides definitions of four popular union types which have shaped South Africa's labour movement. Populism was not included in the list of definitions due to Baskin's (1991) delineation of the concept. The consensus among populists was that the union movement had to actively engage in a wider Congress anti-apartheid struggle. The populists differed on whether they were accountable to their members or the ANC. Populists that opted to uphold their independence will ordinarily fall under the definition of social movement unionism. Likewise, populists that decided to be subordinated to the ANC will fall under political unionism. For this study, populism will be classified as a social movement union with an understanding that they can transition towards political unionism.

Figure 5: South Africa's Four Type Unions and Entrepreneurial Leadership/Managerial Style

Workerism/Economim /Business Unionism	Social Movement Unionism	Political Unionism	Anarcho and Revolutionary Syndicalism	Entrepreneurial Leadership/Managerial Style
This form of trade unionism prioritises collective bargaining, building strong shop-floor activism and advancing workplace struggles. It is also apolitical/distances itself from political alignment (Hyman 2001 and Buhlungu 2005).	SMU's are within a South African context trade unions engaged in a struggle to overthrow authoritarianism and repressive industrial relations. They build relations with community/social movements and political organisations to accomplish this vision. They believe in worker control and advancing participatory shop-floor democratic principles. They run the risk of transitioning towards political unionism once political power is achieved (Von Holdt 2002; Pillay 2013; Bezuidenhout 2017 and van der Walt 2014).	These are trade unions that form alliances with political parties to capture the state. They are often subordinated to a political party. They offer strong support to their political party during elections. After attaining political control, most senior leaders are co-opted into strategic government positions. Senior leaders can also be co-opted into patronage networks with the public and private sector (Van der Walt 2014 and Pillay 2013).	These are militant class-struggle unions with strong shop-floor activism. They are non-hierarchical and advance principles of participatory democracy. Their socio-economic activism is based on building alliances with community, social and political movements. They do not form alliances with political organisations aiming at capturing state power (Van der Walt 2014).	This form of unionism does not believe in worker control. Incumbent leaders treat the union as a business and a ladder for upward mobility. They engage in entrepreneurial activities involving the establishment of investment arms. They prefer being deployed to various boards as directors to build business relations and accumulate wealth. Incumbent leaders depend on forming cliques to protect their business interests. This form of unionism is unstable and declines rapidly once leaders are ousted or move on to other entrepreneurial activities (Buhlungu 2003 and Bezuidenhout 2017)

The previous section analyses both the advantages and complexities of trade union mergers. The complexities provide an idea of possible factors that may have contributed to the waves of splits within the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU). However, the first wave of splits occurred when capitalism in democratic South Africa was expanding in society including the labour movement. The promulgation of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) economic policy in 1996, enabled trade unions like SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) to venture into businesses through the establishment of union investment companies. With links to the ANC-led

government, investment companies exploited Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies. The socio-economic shift at hand suggests that SATAWU may have transitioned from principles of social movement unionism to political unionism. Notwithstanding that a new form of entrepreneurial leadership style may have taken control of the union. This leadership style may have contributed to the rise of a neo-Stalinist oligarchy which may have compromised both workers unity and internal democratic principles.

The following section analyses the impact socio-economic change has on union-party relations after South Africa's democratic breakthrough in 1994. The in-depth analysis sheds light on the factors that may have contributed to the ideological shift in COSATU affiliated unions like SATAWU. Since the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was replaced for GEAR in 1996, the transition to political unionism continued to benefit prominent trade union leaders through their co-option into business and strategic government positions regardless of the economic change. At this stage, it can only be assumed that the move from social to market regulation promoted sections within COSATU and the SACP to join ranks with the pro-Jacob Zuma faction in the ANC. The faction intended to overthrow Thabo Mbeki's administration at the 2007 ANC Polokwane Conference. The victory of Jacob Zuma came with a heavy price for the Alliance in general. In the run-up to the conference, democratic practices in the SACP and COSATU (including its affiliates) were virtually non-existent. Detractors of the Jacob Zuma project were subsequently purged, suspended, expelled and dismissed. The federation was left deeply divided, weakened and fragmented after the conference.

2.3. From Social to Market Regulation and ultimately the Fracture of the Tripartite Alliance

Buhlungu (2005) traces the crisis of union-party relations within a transitional context from social to market regulation. This phenomenon is not unique to any country or society, therefore, the crisis between COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and ANC (African National Congress) must be located in the changing global balance of force. Union-party relations worked during a developmental state period, post-World War Two to mid-1970s. The era of social regulation contradicted the principles of neoliberalism. This society encompassed a strong state presence in the economy, collective decisions-making between government, business and trade unions. The social regulation consensus provided a safety net to the broader working class stratum and improved the effects of capitalist exploitation.

Union-party relation allowed labour to influence policy formulation and implementation (Buhlungu 2005). In instances where labour was marginalised, the developmental state ensured that it catered for the needs of the working class. Relations between trade unions and political parties were instrumental in developing the character of social regulation. In a socially regulated society, objectives such as social justice and liberty

are harnessed. In developed capitalist countries trade unions were influential in the fight for social programmes and social legalisation. Trade union support for political parties often led to the attainment of diverse objectives and victories. Under a market regulation system, these achievements including forged relations are anachronistic.

The mid-1970s saw a shift from social to market regulation which negatively affected and later eroded union-party relations (Buhlungu 2005). The ascendance of neoliberalism weakened the welfare state, its presence in the economy and long term alliances with interest groups. This economic system replaced the philosophy of market regulation for unfettered market capitalism. The new doctrine was championed by ideologues, think tanks and members of the capitalist class. At the level of public and intellectual discourse, this fundamentalist phenomenon manifested itself as market populism. The virtues of the market were asserted without demonstration whilst holding the view that the market was the absolute truth. It was expressed that markets served national interests and benefited all social groups. In this system, political competition was welcomed, however, rejecting any alignment between the state and interest groups. Former liberation movements not only supported market populism but questioned the political legitimacy of its critics. These conditions are at the detriment of union-party alliances.

In new democracies, exclusionary cartels or pacts distribute benefits of political power amongst insiders (Buhlungu 2005). This runs the risk of converting democracy into a private project for corporations and some political leaders. Liberal democracy argues that union-party alliances are undesirable and negate free-market principles. Political parties contesting elections support union-party relations until they assume power. In power, they find it difficult to resist the logic and ideology of neoliberalism. The marginalisation of labour is inevitable but varies in speed. Essentially, union-party alliances hardly survive under a neoliberal and market populism arrangement. Caution must be taken on over generalising the latter argument. In South Africa, union-party alliances between COSATU, ANC and SACP (South African Communist Party) have endured under a neoliberal order. Nonetheless, the ANC's neoliberal policy choice has strained the relations in question.

The history of union-party alliances in South Africa dates to the early twentieth century. Notwithstanding that the formation of the Tripartite Alliance was more recent. In the 1970s, South Africa witnessed the re-emergence of independent trade unions. The movement was divided between two competing ideologies-populism and workerism (Buhlungu 2005). The former preferred participation in politics and the latter advocated for building strong shop-floor activism and political non-alignment. Central to this divide was the debate on whether to participate in politics of the mass democratic movement (MDM).

After the formation of COSATU in 1985, the new federation explored possibilities of forming alliances with organisations aligned to the liberation movement. In 1986, a meeting on issues of common interest was held between ANC and exiled SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions) leaders (Buhlungu 2005). The meeting resolved that COSATU was critical in advancing the interests of workers and the democratic struggle. The federation had to grapple with member concerns and leaders opposed to union-party alliances. On the verge of fragmentation, the 2nd National Congress in 1987 agreed on the integration of shop-floor tradition and commitment to partake in the national struggle under the ANC. The adoption of the Freedom Charter in the same year strengthened the COSATU's credentials in the MDM. Its access to the masses and ability to direct the MDM overshadowed the ANC's armed struggle and UDF's (United Democratic Front) internal campaigns. It was difficult for the ANC to dislodge COSATU because of its membership growth and powerful position in the struggle.

The relationship between COSATU, ANC and SACP was formalised as the Tripartite Alliance in 1990. This was after the unbanning of the latter political parties. This relationship was classified as a natural condition of the revolution (Buhlungu 2005). COSATU believed in the inseparability between the struggle for political and economic liberation. This held view expanded its political unionist hegemony. The inseparable relationship between the ANC and SACP dates back to the early twentieth century. In exile, the leadership roles of the two political parties overlapped. It was accepted that the liberation of South Africa had to be national in character and under the wings of the ANC. Apart from the ANC being regarded as the leader of the Alliance, the political party was unable to consolidate its hegemony. While trying to re-establish itself and prepare for negotiations, it was observed that COSATU's displacement as a leader of the MDM will be gradual. COSATU's displacement occurred in 1994 after the ANC re-negotiated its leadership position in the Alliance. The side-lining of COSATU was not automatic but had to be treated with caution given its strong grassroots influence and fragility of the ANC.

The actual period of COSATU's marginalisation cannot be accurately pinpointed (Buhlungu 2005). Three moments can assist in locating this phenomenon, first, was the agreement that the Alliance had to be led by the ANC. The second was the exclusion of COSATU from the negotiations. Third, was the use of the RDP (Reconstruction Development Programme) to campaign for elections. Lastly, was the victory of the ANC in 1994. After assuming state power, the ANC no longer needed to consult the Alliance on various decisions. The role of Alliance partners had to be redefined under the helm of liberal democracy. This forced trade unions to retreat to traditional practices. The new state of affairs saw COSATU's power and influence gradually slipped away. Independent from these variations, union-party relations yielded policy and legislative victories for the working class such as the adoption of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) of 1995. Tensions became apparent when the ANC-led government shifted to free-market policies in 1996.

The changing balance of force and the reconfiguration of power continued to break down the Alliance (Buhlungu 2005). It is presupposed that a complete break will not happen. However, the reconfiguration of relations allowed the ANC to use its power to bypass Alliance partners when desirable. The leadership of the ANC has dramatically shifted right in its priorities- from radical to neoclassical policies. On the part of ex-union leaders, they have used the ANC as a ladder to gain entry into the business space and upward mobility. Evidence suggests that the democratisation and de-racialisation of South Africa created a breeding ground for the middle-class. Van der Walt (2014), warned that political unions were at risk of being subordinated to the ruling class. Over and above the tensions within the Alliance, some union leaders benefitted from the ANC's neoliberal policy position. Trade unions such as SATAWU became incubators of the middle-class owing to the formation of union investment companies, co-option and deployment of leaders into government positions and strategic boards of directors.

COSATU faces the challenge of diminished influence and respect within the ANC (Buhlungu 2005). Post-democratic union-party relations are centred on campaigning for the ruling party. Keeping COSATU within the Alliance assists in containing the federation. Apart from the challenges with the ANC, leadership drainage affected COSATU and its affiliates in general. The exodus of experienced union leaders and employees has resulted in the loss of institutional memory. Away from the union, some individuals have transformed their outlooks for adaptation purposes. Consequently, ex-union leaders have opted to either cut links or champion anti-union stances in defence of market populism. Only a few help their unions whilst a majority view the new crop of leaders as immature and reckless.

The labour movement has fragmented after 1994. The formation of breakaway unions and retrenchments have affected membership density. Unions have found it difficult to adapt their structures and organisational strategies to conditions produced under a liberal democracy (Buhlungu 2005). The attitudes of union members and leaders have subsequently changed. The former no longer sees the union as an agent of social transformation but join for immediate material benefits. They hardly participate in union activities except for when jobs and bread-and-butter issues are concerned. The latter shop-stewards and union leaders use their positions for upward mobility. The highlighted factors do not suggest the end of trade unions but demonstrate that their form and struggle differ from the past. It cannot be ruled out that their socio-economic and political influence within the Alliance has considerably diminished.

Pillay (2008) reveals that the character profile of COSATU members transformed in the last decade of the democratic dispensation. During the 1980s, the nonskilled and semiskilled were organised but focus later shifted to white-collar workers. Individuals that joined unions after 1991 did not possess a militant background, a socialist ethos and culture of social movement unions. Organising younger workers with

higher educational levels may be responsible for altering the character of independent trade unions formed in the 1970s and 80s. COSATU attempted to organise the unemployed and informal sector workers but efforts did not translate to meaningful action. The reluctance to organise vulnerable workers reflected the character of union leaders and full-time officials. In 2005, COSATU committed to organising semiskilled workers but affiliates did not prioritise the directive. The new generation of workers was interested in short term gains at the expense of a long-term working-class vision (Pillay 2008).

The change in organising priorities had a direct impact on the character of elected representatives and employed officials (Pillay 2008). Entrepreneurial, ideological and career unionists dominated the trade union landscape. Entrepreneurial unionists were interested in using their organisations as ladders for upward mobility. Ideological unionists remained loyal to the 1970s and 80s social movement union principles. Technocratic career unionists prudently vacillated between the two forms of unionists. Acceleration in trade union professionalism was coupled with salary increases and benefits etc. This created both a middle-class and social distance from the rank and file.

Trade union professionalization and leadership distance from worker constituencies replaced worker control with oligarchy. Corporatist arrangements such a NEDLAC (National Economic Development and Labour Council) contributed to the deepening of oligarchic tendencies (corporatism is a form of collective bargaining between interest groups such as labour, business, government and sometimes community and development organisations. Their purpose is to negotiate and reach agreement on the economic and social policy before promulgation at parliament level). Labour unions are perceived to have diverted from their priority to building a counter-hegemonic force against capitalism. This statement is supported by the notion that COSATU had detached itself from workplace and community struggles. On the contrary, proponents of corporatist arrangements reject the view that unions have diverted from their mandate. They argue that the working class have obtained significant achievements from such arrangements. Furthermore, stressing that labours voice in policy determination has played a vital role in regulating market forces. COSATU's counter-argument on oligarchy was that a large number of its members represented the working poor. The diversity of industry differentiated shop-stewards including workers in low wage sectors. Accordingly, not all shop-stewards had an opportunity for upward mobility. If this argument is believed then it will be safe to say that COSATU remained absorbed in the traditions of SMU. Van der Walt (2014) would, on the contrary, argue that COSATU had transitioned to a political union after 1994, resulting to its subordination to the ANC and co-option of its leaders into strategic governmental positions, business and patronage networks.

The 1996 class project also known as GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) (was criticised by COSATU and the SACP for enriching a minority at the expense of the majority. The move from social to market regulation intensified South Africa's deepening social crisis (Pillay 2008). The alliance between COSATU and SACP with former President Jacob Zuma was conceptualised as a counter-hegemonic bloc perceived to pave way for the working class. Indeed, under Jacob Zuma's administration, policy focus was more centred on social redistribution. Interestingly, former President Mbeki's administration had shown signs of a left shift. The victory of Jacob Zuma at the ANC Polokwane Conference in 2007, was glorified by COSATU and SACP as a dramatic move to the left. Some of the praise singers included NUMSA and the former COSATU General Secretary (Zwelinzima Vavi). It was assumed that the coalition with the Zuma pact will prioritise working class issues as opposed to the 1996 class project. Sympathisers located these developments around redistributive politics and departure from neoliberalism. The pessimists argued that the manifestations were based on patronage and tying workers to the ruling class (Pillay 2008).

The SACP and COSATU challenged Mbeki's administration for its inability and/or failure to address the effects of capitalism on the working class. (Pillay 2008). It was argued that the ANC had become bourgeois and this was justified by low voter turnout and support by the poor. This view was supported by social movements sharing similar sentiments. Instead of building strong relations with them, the dominant faction within COSATU and the SACP was not in a position to forge broader working class unity. There was a belief that the ANC had to be returned to its working-class bias as per the 1969 Morogoro Conference outcomes. The collusion between the SACP and COSATU (leaders in particular) had less to do with working-class interests but more with supporting/allying with marginalised business linked to Zuma's side-lined ANC faction. Their strategy intended to hegemonise working-class interests within the ANC and the new government in 2009. Another view suggested that Zuma was indebted to the SACP, COSATU, YCLSA (Young Communist League of South Africa) and ANCYL (African National Congress Youth League).

The plan to oust Mbeki was effected in 2003 after COSATU allowed Zuma to address workers on strategic platforms (Pillay 2008). It was held that a working-class bias could only be realised under a new administration led by Zuma. The argument was solidified by Zuma's articulation of Soviet Marxism which he learned while in exile. These factors were used to profile Zuma as a saviour of the working class in COSATU and SACP structures. In 2005, Jacob Zuma was dismissed as the Deputy President of the country on allegations of corruption. As a countermovement against the Mbeki administration, some COSATU and SACP leaders mobilised rank and file support to defend and rally behind Zuma. Individuals, leaders and social movements that had contrary views or dared to derail the Zuma project were harshly dealt with. The preferred method used to silence various detractors was either through alienation, mass suspension and

dismissals. The Zuma coalition did not embrace principles of participatory democracy and socialist politics which resonated with the 1970s and 1980s. In reality, neo-Stalinist politics swelled the ranks of the left and neglected working-class interests or democracy.

The 2008 Alliance Conference resolved on reconfiguring and reviving moribund structures of the Alliance (Pillay 2008). The aim was to ensure that the Alliance became the political centre and guided policy direction. The SACP and COSATU believed that by capturing the ANC, policy direction will steer towards the left. In 2015, COSATU resolved on the need to grow its membership numbers to 4 million. As a vanguard Party, the role of the SACP was to provide extensive political training to the working class before swelling the ranks of the ANC. To achieve this grand vision, the leaders of both SACP and COSATU had to first populate and/or fill positions within the ANC.

The Zuma administration contradicted the initial left resolutions by reaffirming the ANC's market regulation orthodoxy. Global and domestic market forces proved too powerful for the administration. Rather than transforming the ANC, the market was able to change the men leading the ruling party. The 2008/9 global economic crisis led to calls both within and outside the ANC to postpone its redistributive policy agenda. Apart from its redistributive reaffirmation, the ANC drifted away from COSATU and SACP. It rejected the resolution of the Alliance being the political centre. In strengthening its position as the centre, the ANC took unilateral decisions without consulting its Alliance partners such as the removal of the Eastern and Western Cape premiers (Pillay 2008).

If the idea of the left meant addressing issues of poverty, unemployment and inequalities then the discourse seemed promising. The shift in policy direction, participatory democracy and reversal of Alliance resolutions affirmed that the Zuma administration had steered in a contrary direction. In summary, the worst-case scenario suggests that working-class constituencies were used to promote the interests of a marginalised black business class. The split between the Zuma and Mbeki faction was less ideological but centred on the contestation for national liberation spoils. Accordingly, the overthrow of Mbeki was in reality a change of players in the helm of state resources (Pillay 2008).

Buhlungu (2005) and Pillay (2008) show that the ANC's shift towards a neoliberal economic path negatively affected its relations with the SACP and COSATU. This proves that variations in the structure of the economy have a direct impact on union-party relations. Before locating the tensions within the Tripartite Alliance, it is equally important to explore the concept of neoliberalism to avert loosely using the term. Standing (2011), highlighted that the concept of neoliberalism emerged in the 1970s after a group of economists captured the ears of politicians. They advocated for an economic model founded on economic

growth, market liberalism and market competitiveness. The economists stressed that the market not only had to permeate all aspects of life but to ensure that industries freely invested in economies deemed favourable.

The 1980s saw both developed and developing countries pursue a labour market flexibility agenda. Before achieving this grand vision, trade unions firstly had to be tamed through vilification. State-capital relations were subsequently reinforced to empower capital to freely diversify into countries offering cheap labour.

> "One theme was that countries should increase labour market flexibility, which came to mean an agenda for transferring risk and insecurity onto workers and their families. The result has been the creation of a global 'precariat', consisting of many millions around the world without an anchor of stability…" (Standing 2011: 1).

Labour market flexibility solidified neoliberalism's global footprint and the assault on workers.

> "Flexibility had many dimensions: wage flexibility meant speeding up adjustments to changes in demand, particularly downwards; employment flexibility meant easy and costless ability of firms to change employment levels, particularly downwards, implying a reduction in employment security and protection; job flexibility meant being able to move employees around inside the firm and to change job structures with minimal opposition or costs; skills flexibility meant being able to adjust workers' skills easily" (Standing 2011:6).

Standing's (2011) description of neoliberalism cannot solely be relied on to explain South Africa's transition from social to market regulation. The move from RDP in 1994 to GEAR in 1996, best explains the tensions within the Tripartite Alliance. According to Freund (2013), the ANC's economic policy transformed after the release of former President Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990. The ANC at that interval in time remained committed to the call for nationalisation as articulated in the *Freedom Charter*. This stance was gradually diluted by the business community both domestically and internationally. Before the democratic breakthrough in 1994, former President Nelson Mandela was convinced by powerful economic and political figures to abandon the nationalisation programme for policies that advanced business interests. Nationalisation was later removed from the ANC's agenda in 1992. The party did not completely abandon its radical economic policy direction. In 1993, Mandela and Mbeki reaffirmed the ANC's commitment to radical economic transformation as outlined in the *Ready to Govern* document (Hirsch 2005 and Gumede 2008).

After considering South Africa's reality, the World Bank tolerated the ANC's position on radical reform. It was only in 1997 that the ANC-led government took a small loan from the bank to support the creation of small business. Similarly, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) like the World Bank understood South Africa's structural and institutional problems. Nevertheless, it placed great emphasis on the need to liberate external trade, financial relations and to contract public expenditure. This directive was set in motion in 1993 after the ANC loaned $850 million from the IMF. South Africa was given the loan with an understanding that it will align itself to free-market policies of the IMF. The decision to request the loan was approved by the Transnational Executive Council which was a joint government committee between the ANC and National Party (Freund 2013, Bond 2000 and Padayachee 1997). The "…announcement of the IMF deal in March 1994… added salt to the wounds. It involved commitments to reduce the budget deficit, lower the public sector wage bill and scrap import surcharges. Pressure to impose compliance characterised IMF influence thereafter" (Freund 2013:17).

In the run-up to the 1994 elections, numerous actors both domestically and internationally played a pivotal role in influencing the policy direction of the ANC. Captains of industry agreed to many proposals tabled by the political party such as the adoption of progressive legislation and creating space for black participation in big business. Moreover, the formation of the Economic Transformation Committee in 1992 between the ANC and National Party, ensured that free-trade principles that will later be realised through the establishment of international regulatory organisations like the World Trade Organisation (WTO) were accepted. Internally, the ANC was influenced by political leaders that supported the free-market orthodox.

After winning state power in 1994, the National Party opted to pull out of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 1997. This move did not affect macro-economic decisions historically agreed on. Numerous factors prohibited the ANC from reversing such agreements. Firstly, it understood the repercussions of defying business. Secondly, conservative anti-apartheid economists rejected interventionist policies. Thirdly, the ANC was "…afraid of the potential of massive capital flight, of business investment strikes and white managerial emigration on a scale to undermine the economy, and its leaders wanted to show the world their managerial competencies" (Freund 2013:13). Finally, the ANC believed that its macro-economic policies would attract foreign investment.

The ANC's support for free-market orthodoxy can be connected to the replacement of its 1994 RDP policy for GEAR in 1996. The RDP was a victory for COSATU and the SACP. Though COSATU adopted it in 1993, the ANC later used it to campaign for national elections in 1994. This socio-economic policy was introduced at a crucial time in South Africa's transformation: government and society. It intended to

reconstruct and transform the structure of the economy, on one hand, but to rebuild and stabilise society, on the other.

> "The Reconstruction and Development Programme…is a policy framework for integrated and coherent socio-economic progress. It seeks to mobilise all our people and our country's resources toward the final eradication of the results of apartheid. Its goal is to build a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future and it represents a vision for the fundamental transformation of South Africa by: developing strong and stable democratic institutions; ensuring representivity and participation; ensuring that our country becomes a fully democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society; creating a sustainable and environmentally friendly growth and development path" (Republic of South Africa 1994:7).

The RDP was guided by six basic principles and five key programmes. The basic principles were integrity and sustainability, people-driven, peace and security, nation-building, meeting basic needs and building infrastructure and democratisation. The five key programmes included meeting basic needs, developing human resources, building the economy, democratising the state and society and implementing the RDP (Republic of South Africa 1994). The principles and programmes of the RDP demonstrate that it was a programme aimed at redressing social ills by meeting people's basic needs.

According to the Department of Finance (1996), GEAR was an integrated economic strategy designed to rebuild and restructure the economy as per the goals set in the RDP. Through GEAR the ANC-led government envisaged steering South Africa towards,

> "A competitive fast-growing economy which creates sufficient jobs for all work seekers; a redistribution of income and opportunities in favour of the poor; a society in which sound health, education and other services are available to all; and an environment in which homes are secure and places of work are productive" (Department of Finance 1996:1).

The eloquently crafted vision of GEAR supports the view that the government was determined to fulfil the redistributive objectives of the RDP. This statement is immediately contradicted by the policy's proposal to increase growth from 3 percent to 6 percent through a market-oriented economic path. Transitioning towards a competitive outward-oriented economy demanded that government fulfil the following set of objectives:

> "Accelerated growth of non-gold exports; a brisk expansion in private sector capital formation; an acceleration in public sector investment; an improvement in the employment intensity of

> ‘investment and output growth; and an increase in infrastructural development and service delivery making intensive use of labour based techniques” (Department of Finance 1996:2).

Government’s glorification of the private sector validates the agreements between the ANC, National Party, business and international institutions under the GNU. The RDP was from its very inception a failed project. It instead existed for two reasons: to act as an elections manifesto for the ANC in1994 and to create a point of entry for GEAR. The redirection of economic control and power to business demanded several changes in the public and private sector. The proposed changes include:

> “A competitive platform for a powerful expansion by tradable goods sector; a stable environment for confidence and a profitable surge in private investment; a restructured public sector to increase efficiency of both capital expenditure and service delivery; new sectoral and regional emphases in industrial and infrastructural development; greater labour market flexibility and enhanced human resource development” (Department of Finance 1996: 2).

The GEAR policy relied on economic growth, market liberalisation, privatisation, private sector investment and increased exports to address social ills of poverty, unemployment and inequalities. The support and promulgation of GEAR expose the ANC’s support for neoliberalism and/or a market fundamentalist developmental path. The ANC’s abandonment of a human-centred developmental path proves that it treated the market as an effective mechanism for growth and redistribution. This statement resonates with the work of Friedman (1982) which advocated for the liberation of markets as a precondition for political freedom. The role of the state was to create conditions, preserve and secure individual freedom. However, the concentration of power had the potential to violate both individual and market freedom.

> “…Government is necessary to preserve our freedom, it is an instrument through which we can exercise our freedom; yet by concentrating power in political hands, it is also a threat to freedom. Even though the men who wild this power initially be of good will and even though they be not corrupted by the power they exercise, the power will both attract and form men of a different stamp” (Friedman 1982:2).

The decentralisation of power and limiting government’s scope was a necessary condition for safeguarding the interests of the private sector including its free-market agenda. Even though the proponents of neoliberalism demanded that government delink itself from the market and society, they nevertheless depend on its existence. Similarly, Friedman (1982:2) supports this statement by stating that “…its major function must be to protect our freedom both from the enemies outside our gates and from our fellow-citizens: to preserve law and order, to enforce private contracts, to foster competitive markets.”

The fracture of the Tripartite Alliance was less ideological but resource-driven (Pillay 2008). The Zuma administration reaffirmed the ANC's neoliberal agenda, created enabling conditions for the marginalised black business class and co-opted leaders from COSATU and the SACP into strategic government positions. This suggests that ordinary members were used as a bargaining chip to overthrow one favoured class for another. These actions from the part of COSATU and SACP can be linked to the concept of labour aristocracy. Labour aristocracy means a privileged strata within the working class. This strata depends on class collaboration and subordination of other workers. The existence of labour aristocracy reflects broader socio-economic inequalities within the capitalist mode of production. Referencing the work of Masondo (2012), Bischoff (2015:231) argued that the democratic breakthrough benefited a section of prominent leaders in the labour movement.

> "After the 1994 elections, a significant number of COSATU leadership exited the federation to occupy the top positions in the government, in political parties, in the corporate sector and they also took occupation of junior and managerial positions in workplaces."

Southall and Tangri's (2006:115) analysis on Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) supports the argument that the advent of democracy "…overwhelmingly favoured a tiny 'empowered elite', that a politically motivated programme is encouraging 'crony capitalism', and that, despite such developments, black empowerment has done little…to affect the racialized patterns of ownership and wealth". The establishment of union investment companies such as SARHWU Investment Holding (SIH) may have accelerated the expansion of the black middle-class project within the labour movement. An alignment of this nature provides one of many clues regarding the transition from social movement unionism (SMU) to political unionism and subsequent entrenchment of entrepreneurial and oligarchic leadership styles. It can be presupposed that a politically aligned section of leaders within the SACP, COSATU and its affiliates supported the government's neoliberal policy position for upward mobility purposes.

Citing the work of Masondo (2012) and Buhlungu (2010), Southall (2015: 173) highlighted that, "… the dramatic increase in opportunities for upward mobility now offered by the unions has had a 'generally de-radicalising effect on the unions', while simultaneously enabling employers to co-opt union leaders, weaken labour's organisational strength, and ultimately reinforce capitalist hegemony". The professionalization of trade unionism accompanied by the social distance between elected leaders and members assisted the former to gain access to power, resources and opportunities offered by patronage networks. The shift from social to market regulation, on one hand, and the transition from social movement unionism to political unionism, on the other, lay the foundation for this study to investigate the co-option of SATAWU leaders

by the private sector. This also includes an assessment of the character of factions and competing leadership styles that contributed to the waves of conflict within the union.

The debate at hand demonstrates that the 1994 democratic breakthrough allowed the ANC-led government to be instrumental in creating a privileged strata within the working class. It can be argued that the working class and leaders within the Tripartite Alliance (COSATU and SACP in particular) are not labour aristocrats since they do not own the means of production. The Weberian approach centres labour aristocracy on economic interests of common life chances as opposed to the ownership of means of production. The concept of labour aristocracy is important for this study as it reveals that the working class is not homogenous but divided at an industrial, political and social level. A labour aristocracy does not occur automatically but emerges as an outcome of political, productive and social relations. The next section provides a detailed analysis of labour aristocracy from a South African Marxist and Weberian perspective.

The analysis of labour aristocracy further attempts to answer whether or not the rate of exploitation among African workers was the same during the apartheid era. Even though African workers earned lower than their white counterparts, their wages differed based on industry and occupation. The outcomes of these wages discrepancies may have created a middle-class within the African community. The class distinctions among the working-class might also have frustrated the merger between members of the South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union (SARHWU) and Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) during and after the launch of the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) in May 2000.

By understanding the concept of labour aristocracy, we can explore the possibilities and effects of its cohabitation with oligarchic leadership styles within trade unions (SATAWU in particular). The possibilities of coexistence are from the premise that trade unions have played a crucial role in lifting the social status and maintaining middle-class privileges of incumbent leaders. This material reality has the potential to create illegitimate forms of power which are subsequently met by resistance by the rank and file. With this said, comprehending the relationship between labour aristocracy and trade union oligarchy is necessary for understanding the forms of power, resistance and factors that ultimately led to the splintering of SATAWU.

2.4. Exploring Labour Aristocracy from a South African Marxist and Weberian Context

The work of Celik (2017) explored the concept of labour aristocracy from an early 20th century South African context. The analysis brings forward insights which go beyond traditional conceptual and territorial boundaries. This not only developed an understanding of the South African case but clarified the concept from a reconstructed theoretical perspective. Critical dimensions such as higher wages and authority at work etc. associated with labour aristocracy were likewise considered for the South African case. The question of race was introduced as a new dimension which demonstrated the asymmetrical relationship between class structure and racial stratification. Mainstream approaches to labour to labour aristocracy tended to separate its different dimensions nevertheless, the South African case proved their interconnection.

In a racially segregated system, labour was set according to privileges and benefits of white workers in the following areas, "… higher wages, superior positions and authority at work, high status, culture, education, housing and participation in the political parties and the power block" (Celik 2017: 30). To comprehend the low wages of black workers, a connection had to be drawn with the establishment of compounds in the mining sector and the superior position of white workers regarding the reservation of skilled employment.

The concept of labour aristocracy is one of the oldest Marxist explanations of working-class conservatism and reformism. It refers to an upper favoured stratum of manual workers and also accounts for working-class activity in the Victorian (1837-1901), Edwardian (1901-1910) Britain and the years in the build-up of World War One. Another important aspect of the theory is that it explores the reasons and/or factors that contributed to the unmaking of the British working class. The expression was used to characterise the highly-skilled and strongly unionised stratum of the working class. This stratum was said to be economically, socially and politically aligned to the middle-class of that epoch (Post 2010; Moorhouse 1978 and Waterman 1975).

According to Linder (1985), Ernest Jones (a key figure in the Chartist movement) frequently used the term to refer to skilled artisans that received higher wages and organised under trades as the aristocracy. The unions organising these trades were responsible for weakening both democratic and social movements through the destruction of working class unity. Celik (2017) notes that Lenin developed the concept further and connected it to the notion of imperialism and super-profits. He argued that the profits made the chain of bribes possible. They flowed from the Minister of Labour to labour officials. These developments were followed by a trade union consciousness that was marked by narrow economism and the acceptance of capitalism's basic framework.

Hobsbawm (1968) locates labour aristocracy between 1840 and 1890 Britain. The scholar argued that certain types of workers were in a position to keep or make their labour scarce or valuable. They used this advantage as a bargaining tool but the gains achieved were at the expense of the less favourable workers. The aristocracy of labour was centred on economic privilege and structural subordination of other workers. Apart from their economic privilege or interests, politically they merged and/or vacillated between the higher strata and lower-middle-class. Foster (1974) on the contrary believed that it was authority at work and not higher wages that determined labour aristocracy. Labour aristocracy was created by the bourgeois to contain and control the upsurges of working-class radicalism. This was achieved through the reorganisation of industries whereby a privileged grade within the workforce was created. The development of a new privileged grade of peacemakers and supervisory taskmasters contributed to the creation of labour aristocracy.

Another perspective is that the aristocrats were a socially and politically articulated group distinct from the rest of the working class. They were positioned at the forefront of the labour movement owing to economic and social privileges. The structural conflict of interest between the aristocrats and the rest of the working class illustrated the political conditions of the mid-Victorian era. These conflicts were in part the politics of labour aristocracy (Hinton 1973). Gray (1976) highlighted that the upper strata of the period determined the aspirations of the labour movement. The qualities of the elite were differentiated by their social identity which consisted of distinct factors such as community, patterns of housing, participation in voluntary organisations and domination of institutions etc. The labour aristocracy played a critical role in influencing the modernisation of the Labour Party. The general hegemonic ideology of the Victorian period was fundamental in shaping the reformism and accommodative outlook of the labour aristocrats. The absence of an articulated counter ideology intensified the reformist, moderate and accommodative outlook of the Labour Party.

Celik (2017) postulated that skill was associated with higher wages, social identity, and interaction of the aristocracy with the petty-bourgeois and the lower stratum of the working class. The political outlook of this stratum either neglected or developed at the expense of other workers. Moreover, its weakening effects on the revolutionary progress of the working class are fundamental to the debate. The absence of a framework to analyse socio-economic and political perspectives of the aristocracy limited the general political direction of the working class regardless of division. Social control occupies an important place in the debate even though there is a disagreement on whether labour aristocracy was a bourgeois creation.

The notion of labour aristocracy was advanced in the 1960s and 1970s to analyse the post-colonial African situation. Scholars such as Arrighi (1970) explored and applied the concept to the conditions in Southern Rhodesia. It was discovered that a minority of African workers employed in multi-national corporations were paid decently, engaged in depoliticised unions and their alliance with imperialism distanced them from projects concerning socialist transformation. Importantly, these aristocrats consisted of skilled, semi-skilled manual and clerical workers. The South African case of labour aristocracy was development by exploring the traditional theory and the British case. The exercise aimed to prove that white South African workers lived off the surplus produced by another section of the working class. By adding race to the equation, it was demonstrated that the aristocracy of labour interconnected to the aristocracy of colour (Celik 2017).

The history of mining and/or the discovery of gold in South Africa in 1886- Witwatersrand- provide insight into the dimension of skilled and unskilled labour during the infant stage of the industrial revolution. The inflow of foreign capital and technologies prompted the need for skilled labour in the industry. The skills shortage necessitated that South Africa import white skilled labour which was highly paid as opposed to its African counterpart. After the destruction of the Afrikaner rural settler economy, the Boers were forced to look for unskilled jobs in the urban area which were once preserved for Africans. This process and/or changes in the industrial makeup of the mining sector reinforced segregationist patterns in labour relations. White workers gradually became an aristocracy in relation to skills and wages levels determined by the colour bar (Davies 1973 and Linder 1985). These manifestations prove that white workers indirectly exploited Africans. Their support for the state resulted in improved economic privileges. Class structure and racial stratification were asymmetrically related wherein whites were above Africans in the organisational structure.

Whites reinforced the importance of the colour bar as a criterion to access to rights, power and status. This enabled them to occupy a privileged elitist position as opposed to Africans (Johnstone 2000). At a certain stage in development, English miners employed their skills to bargain therefore, the colour bar was unnecessary. It was only in the 20th century that white workers had nothing to bargain with hence, institutional privileges came to the fore. In 1900, craft unions observed that employers were opting for the cheap labour of non-whites to undermine the wages of skilled artisans. This resulted in a countermovement for survival and existential purposes. Though non-whites began acquiring skills and performed skilled and semi-skilled work, they remained restricted from joining unions (Davies 1973 and Katz 1976).

In 1907, white workers embarked on a strike against the employer for proposing that African and Chinese workers be permitted to carry out skilled work. The strike led to the replacement of immigrant British workers by the Afrikaner. In 1913, 1914 and 1922, a series of strikes were carried out by white workers to preserve their privileges against any attempts of introducing African cheap labour. The 1922 strike was the cornerstone to the making of white aristocracy in South Africa (Webster 2000). Some workers supported the coalition between the Labour Party and the Afrikaner National Party in the 1924 general elections. The victory of the Labour-Nationalist pact secured the monopoly of skilled work for whites. The promulgation of the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924 led to the establishment of a bargaining system that excluded African workers (Webster 2000 and Johnstone 2000).

The political and ideological outlook of South Africa was based on white supremacy, class and race relations. According to Freund (2013), the unity of white workers gradually fragmented after the majority supported the National Party. The support for the National Party and subsequent fracture of white workers started during the general strike in 1913. The tensions further developed until the 1922 strike. Activists such as anarchists, syndicalist and radical groups began to engage and/or advocate for the emergence of a black workers organisation. Unfortunately, their anti-racist ideas failed to gain traction amongst the majority of white union members. The 1922 strike strengthened the argument that white workers were co-opted and non-whites were the most exploited section of the working class (Freund 2013; Kenefick 2010; Van der Walt 1999 and Hyslop 2010).

The question of authority at work or social control was determined by the structure of the mining industry. Skilled and non-skilled white workers earned higher wages and supervised the work of low-paid unskilled non-white workers. The situation created a master-servant relation between races at work and extended to white working-class households. A strict racial hierarchy at both workplace and social level was established. Another element of social control can be traced to the mining compounds. Africans were housed away from their families as opposed to whites (Webster 2000; Wilson 1972; Krikler 2010 and Callinicos 1981).

The control of African labour was central to the construction of the colonial state. It connected to social citizenship and social identity of the labour aristocracy. The social privilege of the labour aristocracy can be linked to patterns of housing, education and high status. The apartheid state and promulgated legislations benefited whites by excluding non-whites from training and registering them as skilled workers (Young 1994 and Katz 1976). The bourgeois was interested in benefiting from the cheap labour of Africans in order to establish an aristocracy essential for controlling upsurges of working-class radicalism (Celik 2017).

Seekings (2009) explained that the Marxist approach to stratification became hegemonic in South Africa in the 1970s. The political economy side focused on the relationship between capital, labour and the consequence this had on policy. South Africa was confronted by a new generation of social historians that examined its making. The humanist and structuralist Marxist strands were divided on issues of methodology and theory but united on Marxist texts, their understanding of class formations and class conflict. South Africa also had a history of non-Marxist scholarship on stratification.

During the late 1940 and 60s, Weberian or quasi-Weberian scholarship predominated the academic space (Seekings 2009). Its studies explored the question of status, distinctions of caste and economic relations entailed in class. The study analysed the middle-class contrary to the Marxist emphasis of the working-class. In the 1970s the Weberian approach came to an end and replaced by the Marxist approach. The factors that may have contributed to this abrupt end include, the study of inequality being integrated to the ideological position of the Communist Party, the rise of independent trade unions and the Weberian approach leaning more towards social democratic or progressive liberal positions. The triumph of Marxism and the marginalisation of non-Marxist approaches impoverished the study of stratification in South Africa.

The Weberian approach to stratification emerged in South Africa after the Second World War. It was set on understanding the concept of class as rooted in economic interests of common life chances. The idea of class and life chances were not only about the procurement of material goods but the achievement of social recognition and internal satisfaction. The ownership of means of production contributed to unequal life chances, further to this, skills and credentials were other factors. Weber divided the propertyless into two classes comprising of the salaried and credentialed middle-class from the working class without credentials. The ownership of property was one of several bases of class distinction. Class itself was one of the several bases for stratification. From this perspective, a class structure comprised of different classes that coexisted alongside the status order and consisted of various status groups. Though class was tied to economic interests, status was centred on prestige and honour, the deference and derogation associated with the two. Diverse lifestyles were associated with different social status. Like class, status was seen as entailing the monopolisation of scarce resources (Seekings 2009 and Gerth and Mills 1948).

According to Gerth and Mills (1948), Weber tended to elide class and status in practice. He recognised that if occupation was a major source of status then there would be a likeliness of the two overlapping. Variations in the economy and technology resulted in a class situation that determined status. Additionally, the style of life for members of a status group was usually conditioned economically. Weber argued that class and status were not the same for example, the owner of means of production possessed economic power but not social honour. Status groups were more likely to serve the basis for political action than

classes. Collective action based on class required class consciousness which was less common than status consciousness. The political division amongst the working class reflected the differences in status rather than economic interests. An extreme case can be defined as caste meaning that the membership of a status group was closed, restricted by decent or other characteristics. Caste divisions were formed on socially constructed ethnic or racial differences.

The American South was structured on a racial caste system because poor whites advanced their social honour through social déculassement of the African-American (Weber 1968). Warner (1936) supports the view that the stratification of the American South was built on a class and caste system. The scholar postulated that the inability to move between castes limited class mobility. The caste system was socially constructed and race was defined by caste. The American South consisted of whites and blacks that comprised of upper, middle and lower classes. The black upper class was objectively in a higher class position than the lower white but constrained by class divide. Under these conditions, castes replaced slavery to maintain the old status order. It regulates the behaviour of groups by differentiating the superior from the inferior (Dollard 1937).

According to Seeking (2009), the work of Kuper (1949) carefully considered the relationship between caste and race in the South African context. The scholar was equally uneasy about using caste to describe the African native given that race was more important than economic class. Black South Africans were forced to sell their labour as they could not own and control the means of production. One's class situation was not as important as their racial position. Race determined life chances for instance, white South African workers benefited from maintaining racial segregation. Black workers were unable to sell their labour where they wanted because of criminal sanctions levelled against them by the apartheid regime. The remuneration of unskilled labour was influenced by standards of race criteria. Opportunities to fill semi-skilled and skilled vacancies were limited by racial factors. Black South Africans constituted the proletarian class. Race was employed to secure and reinforce the non-ownership of property which was a determining factor of their class position (Seekings 2009).

During the 1950s, researchers conducted studies on stratification using the Weberian approach to analyse the emerging African middle-class workforce. The earning of the middle-class was barely sufficient to support a standard of living similar to their white counterparts. Regardless of the wage discrepancies, the African middle-class differentiated itself from the rest of the black working class. It likewise provided ideological leadership to the African population. The American case demonstrated that the combination of upward class mobility and racial segregation led to a class structure within the African population. The class structure was founded on social distinctions and conventional behaviour rather than income.

Accordingly, the African-American middle-class was more worried about the struggle for status (Cobley 1990 and Frazier 1957).

Citing the work of Wilson and Mafeje (1963), Seeking (2009) highlighted that the scholars conducted a study in Langa where it was found that educated black people separated themselves from the rest of the community. They believed to be decent, prided themselves on being respectably dressed and used English in many situations. Those with the highest status leaned towards western culture and sought to emulate the white middle-class. The less educated middle-aged and the elderly were owners of small businesses. The markers of status seemed clear even though the middle-class in Langa were subjected to racial discrimination and segregation. Amidst the class distinctions, they continued to be flattered by the cleavage between colour groups and castes.

Kuper (1965) cited by Seeking (2009) classified the small businessman as bourgeois but not in the Marxist sense for it was well understood that their property rights were weak. It was suggested that the term proletariat was suitable for defining all Africans. He indicated that races did not confront each other as an antagonistic block. The common form of subjection did not stifle class differences in the African community nor did achievements prevent them from drawing distinctions amongst themselves. Prestige resulted from living in the right area, owning a car, clothing and cosmetic appearances, distinctive social activities and the embrace of western civilisation. The life chances of the African bourgeoisie were constrained by racial subjection and subjugation. The combination of prestige and subjugation determined their political character based on opposing apartheid's restrictions on their life chances.

According to Seekings (2009), Kuper's bourgeoisie was centred on salaried professionals or white-collar occupations whose educational credentials determined their privileges. The factors that constrained the African bourgeoisie under apartheid included pass laws, suffering routine police degradation, segregation and discriminatory legislation. These conditions frustrated the African bourgeoisie because their treatment was similar to the common black working class. It was concluded that class was viewed as status rather than wealth or occupational achievement. Status, therefore, meant an amalgam of education, culture and respectability. The differences in status were linked to a lifestyle of conspicuous consumption (Seekings 2009).

Seeking (2009) highlighted that the work of Brandel-Syrier (1971) was based on the study of the social elite in Reeftown. A distinction between social elite and occupational elite was made. It was accounted that they occupied positions at the top of the social pyramid. They claimed a position of social superiority, had distinctive tastes and were contemptuous of African culture by selectively drawing of western norms.

Similarly, Nyquist (1983) analysed the high-status groups more convincingly by allowing an African community to define the upper stratum from their perspective. The upper stratum of the African community was frustrated by apartheid, therefore, status did not signify power or mean economic security. Status under such circumstances meant high ranking in a low-ranked community. This led to the frustrations and alienation of the upper African community when taking into consideration their discrimination and the feeling of superiority over the less educated.

The concept of labour aristocracy maintains that the working class is not homogenous but remains divided at a productive, social and political level. This argument attempts to address a Marxist limitation which overlooks the differentiated forms of exploitation subjected to the working-class. The non-Marxist approach including the study of the middle-class complicates the analysis of stratification. The stratification of South Africa's mining sector during apartheid created a class structure comprising of different classes that co-existed alongside both status order and status groups. Firstly, the organisational hierarchy of the mining sector was divided into skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. This subsequently contributed to the formation of classes within the working-class stratum ranging from upper-class, middle-class and lower-class. According to this arrangement, the social status of the working class was determined by their class position/ranking within the mining sector.

The colour bar created social closure for non-white workers which was a contributing factor to their déculassement. The non-Marxist approach shows that since social closure existed, Africans were also stratified like their white counterparts: upper-class, middle-class and lower-class. Racial segregation ensured that the upward mobility of non-whites was constrained. Regardless of these constraints, the black middle-class was able to differentiate itself from the rest of the African community. Under these conditions, social distinctions were more important than income.

The debate surrounding labour aristocracy and stratification is crucial for this study as it suggests that regardless of having some/no authority at work and being paid lower than white workers, African's were within themselves occupationally and socially divided. This argument critiques the idea that the rise of the African middle-class resulted from South Africa's democratic breakthrough as suggested in the previous section. A correlation between pre and post-1994 labour aristocracy is centred on safeguarding the interests of a privileged strata within the working class.

The preceding perspective opens a question on whether the occupational and social status of the South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union (SARHWU) members (Transnet employees in particular) influenced their resistance to merging with TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) after the

formation of COSATU in 1985. This leads to another interesting inquiry regarding the stratification of shop-stewards (national full-time, divisional full-time and ordinary workplace shop-stewards). Citing the work of Buhlungu (2010), Southall (2015:171) stated that,

> "…The progressive introduction of full-time positions for union office bearers and (some) shop-stewards has been accompanied by a major change in the way in which union leaders project themselves in public and to their own members. Alongside adoption of a more formal dress code, union leaders have increasingly opted for display, involving expensive cars, luxurious offices, the latest cell phones and personal assistants. The subtext is that they wish to be seen as 'important people with elevated social status'".

The stratification of shop-stewards may have contributed to the social distance between ordinary union members and elected office bearers of SATAWU. Furthermore, the status and privileges accompanied by these positions may be another determining factor in the history of tension and/or in-fighting within the union. For this study, the concept of labour aristocracy will be relegated to shop-stewards (national full-time and divisional full-time in particular) and elected worker office bearers. Worker office bearers consist of the following: firstly, at the national level: President, 1st Deputy President, 2nd Deputy President and National Treasurer. Secondly, at the provincial level: Provincial Chairperson, Provincial Deputy Chairperson and Provincial Treasurer. Lastly, at the local level: Local Chairperson, Local Deputy Chairperson, Local Treasurer and Local Secretary.

The reason why the concept of labour aristocracy is relegated to shop-stewards and elected worker office bearers is primarily because the concept of oligarchy is often associated with full-time union officials/employees both at a leadership and non-leadership level. At a leadership level, these elected employees consist of the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary and Provincial Secretary. By separating the two concepts, the study aims to explore the possibilities of cohabitation between labour aristocracy and trade union oligarchy.

The following section explores the concept from a factional and power relation point of view. The case of TATA Workers Union (TWU), shows that oligarchic practices were a consequence of a transition from business unionism to entrepreneurial leadership/managerial styles. The factions did not emerge from political alliances or the caste system in India but shop-floor unionism/activism. Regardless of the nature/form of trade unionism, oligarchy finds expression in formal and informal organisations through the distribution of illegitimate power and influence over time.

2.5. Factionalism and Trade Union Oligarchy

The work of Mamkoottam (1977) highlights that scholars in Indian politics paid considerable attention to factionalism relating to recruitment, organisation and its functioning within the context of politics, cooperatives and factions in villages. Trade unions were also studied in varied aspects however, detailed and careful ethnographical findings on their internal factions were not recorded. In attempting to close the gap, a study on factionalism within the TATA Workers Union (TWU) was conducted. The ethnographic findings not only proved the existence of factionalism but elaborated the impact internal divisions had on members and management.

TWU's social structure was governed by a formal institutional framework- the constitution (Mamkoottam 1977). The constitution separated the functions, structures, powers of ordinary members and elected union representatives. It provided provisions for nominating and voting for preferred candidates into leadership positions. In one congress, out of 214 positions allocated for committee members, only 196 were filled. Eighteen positions remained vacant because of internal factionalist struggles. Corrupt practices and physical violence were reported to be prevalent during union elections. The use of money, physical threats and gangsterism were other methods employed to mobilise support. The constitution provided procedures for filling vacancies but it was not explicit on the rules regulating the method and/or voting process. The process of a secret ballot came into effect whenever contesting candidates disagreed on voting by show of hands. Union members did not prefer voting by show of hands more especially in an environment where elections were backed by threats to one's physical safety.

Ordinary members expressed dissatisfaction towards committee members that occupied the office for over 20 years (Mamkoottam 1977). They called for constitutional amendments to legislate the term of office for elected representatives. It was stressed that long-serving committee members advanced their self-interests through corrupt practices. Accordingly, committee members enjoyed benefits outside normal practices such as securing promotions, receiving quarters for themselves and securing jobs for their relatives. The arrangement between the union and management deprived other employees of securing benefits. Ordinary members accused management of protecting elected representatives since they could only be charged and punished after consultation with the executive committee. Privileges of this nature often led to the abuse of power by flaunting both organisational and union practices. The conditions made it difficult for members to democratically remove elected representatives from office by way of a vote of no confidence. Though the union's constitution provided provisions for removing an elected representative, the executive committee yielded power to accept or reject the motion. In one instance, a committee member was democratically voted out of office yet, the executive committee rejected and reversed the outcome.

The division between the President and General Secretary was a central feature of TWU's internal battles (Mamkoottam 1977). The seeds of internal conflict were sown in 1954 after an outsider was elected to fill the vacancy of a deceased President. Opposition amongst some lower-level committee members was expressed within various layers of the union. The GS was against this decision thus continued to lead the faction opposed to the newly elected President. Tensions deepened within the union after the position of Deputy President was filled by another outsider. In 1964, the opposition between the President and the General Secretary intensified after the President was declared to be extremely ill. An Assistant Secretary supported by the President was nominated to act in his position on an interim basis. The assistant began taking organisational decisions without consulting the General Secretary which created conflict between the two. The General Secretary feared the popularity of the Assistant Secretary and perceived threat to oust him from his position. A vote of no confidence against the Assistant Secretary was brought to the attention of the executive committee. The General Secretary's motion passed with a marginal majority. This simultaneously contributed to severe frictions between the two union factions.

The two factions shared an equal proportion of seats within the executive committee. They operated with the intention of not pulling each other down. At an executive level, the idea of 'live and let live' governed the attitude of leaders (Mamkoottam 1977: 184). The leaders had a wide network of followers and supporters with diverse characteristics and social norms. What makes this interesting is that the political situation in Bihar was centred on caste factions. Paradoxically, the factions in TWU were based on a "social heterogeneity of the social world concerned." This demonstrates that the factions within TWU were less concerned about caste or ideology but more focused on leadership personalities, prestige and upward mobility of elected leaders.

Leach (2005) postulated that in 1911, Robert Michels summarised the conditions within the German Social Democratic Party by indicating that organisation meant oligarchy. He concluded that socialism and democracy were structurally impossible in modern society and oligarchy was inevitable. This account opened scholarly debates which failed in reaching consensus on whether and under what conditions Michels claims were true. The reason for the lack of conceptual clarity can be traced to the scholar's original thesis. The work of Leach (2005) aimed at demonstrating the conceptual inadequacies for determining whether various forms of organisation could be considered oligarchic. A conceptual model was developed to provide a theoretical threshold between the democratic and oligarchic distribution of power. The concept of the iron law can be summarised in three parts: bureaucracy happens, if bureaucracy happens, power rises and if power rises, power corrupts.

For Leach (2005) the components of the iron law can be summarised as follows: **Bureaucracy happens:** this is when organisations- large scale- in modern society employ a rational bureaucratic structure which results from the need to have administrative efficiency. This subsequently leads to the formation of a complex division of labour. **If bureaucracy happens, power rises:** the structural imperatives and assumption of the incompetence of masses lead to the concentration of power in the hands of professional leadership. They confer a monopoly of skills, knowledge and resources. **If power rises, power corrupts:** when power is concentrated, the leaders will work to preserve or concentrate it. This can happen either by going against the position of the masses or employing undemocratic means to stifle internal opposition viewed as a threat to authority.

Most scholars conceptualised oligarchy either from an organisational structure or policy orientation viewpoint. These approaches were inadequate for analysing structures of informal authority in non-bureaucratic organisations. According to Leach (2005), the concept of oligarchy had to be understood as the distribution of illegitimate power entrenched over time. To justify this position, a model is employed to prove that both formal and informal authority has the potential to be oligarchic. Three indicators are used to measure oligarchies which are: lack of leadership turnover, minority control over resources and low participation in organisational governance. A democratic structure is not sufficient for preventing oligarchy but is a necessary component. Democracy means structural mechanisms that place governing authority in the hands of membership, structural protection of the minority and checks on the power of elected representatives.

The difference between the distribution of power in bureaucratic and non-bureaucratic organisations is that it's formally held in the former and informally undertaken in the latter. Furthermore, non-bureaucratic organisations do not formally appoint or elect officials. An adequate oligarchic model is necessary for separating the following dimensions: the type of power a minority has, the amount of power that it must have and the manner that it must be wielded. These factors are important for determining whether or not an organisation is oligarchic. With regards to the first dimension, a distinction must be made between formal and informal power since both have the potential to become oligarchic. A distinction between oligarchic and non-oligarchic use of power has to be made though it is difficult with respect to informal power (Leach 2005). The below table best summaries the concept of oligarchy by analysing the difference between legitimate and illegitimate power within formal and informal organisational settings.

Figure 6: Democracy vs Oligarchy Table

	Formal Power	**Informal Power**
Legitimate	**Authority:** **Exercised by:** officeholders w/delegated decision-making authority **How exercised:** making and enforcing decisions in keeping with formal mandate **Majority goes along:** willingly, because they recognize the authority as legitimate and have consented to its delegation	**Influence:** **Exercised by:** non-office holders empowered by group norms to exert disproportionate influence, but with no delegated decision-making authority **How exercised:** use of logical persuasion and non-material rewards **Majority goes along:** willingly, because they agree (private acceptance/conversion) and/or they want approval or acceptance (social identification)
Illegitimate	**Coercion:** **Exercised by:** improperly-appointed officeholders or non-officeholders who do not have delegated authority to make and enforced decisions **Includes:** use of material sanctions/rewards (money, jobs, physical harm…) without or beyond the scope of formal mandate **Majority goes alon**g: grudgingly, not because they agree or feel authority is legitimate, but simply to win material rewards or avoid material sanctions (public compliance)	**Manipulation:** **Exercised by:** non-officeholders who exert disproportionate influence without having been entrusted with that right by the norm of the group **Includes:** emotional or covert manipulation including agenda setting, withholding information, use of non-material sanctions (ridicule, shaming, guilt) **Majority goes along:** either unknowingly (because they are unaware of deceit) or unwillingly (because they want to avoid non-material sanctions)

Reproduced from: (Leach 2005:323)

Authority vs Influence: the matrix makes a distinction between formal (authority) and informal (influence) power (Leach 2005). Formal power is the ability to make and enforce decisions through the distribution of material rewards and sanctions. Informal power is the ability to affect a person's decisions by changing the assessment of their action environment through nonmaterial rewards or sanctions. Legitimate authority is the enforcement of decisions by an individual formally delegated to. Legitimate influence occurs when an individual is granted informal power to affect decisions. Even though an individual may occupy a higher position within the group, they cannot make or enforce decisions. The similarity between formal and informal power is that it is bestowed on delegated persons by individuals that have deployed them to those positions. The only difference between the two rests with the ability to enforce authority. With formal power, the individual in office may legitimately exercise influence and authority. On the contrary, with informal power, an individual may or may not hold office but importantly, they can influence decisions but cannot make or enforce them.

Legitimacy vs illegitimacy: Legitimate power is centred on authority and legitimate informal power on influence (Leach 2005). The antithesis of the two is illegitimate power which occurs either through coercion or manipulation. In line with the matrix, legitimacy is based on three claims: firstly, it follows from the consent of either the governed (authority) or led (influence). To test legitimacy from a subjective perspective, there must be evidence of resistance to the claim that an individual in authority wields power illegitimately. Secondly, legitimacy is three-fold thus it is necessary to establish the following: (a) who may exercise power; (b) the scope of that power and (c) the means acceptable for use in exercising it. Thirdly, in democratically structured organisations, legitimacy is associated with democracy and undemocratic practices with illegitimacy.

Illegitimacy occurs when formal or informal power is wielded or exercised by an individual without the rights to (Leach 2005). It also arises when a person with legitimate power exceeds the scope of their power or exercises it in a manner not sanctioned by the group. Illegitimate authority occurs when decisions are made or enforced by people without formal power. It also manifests when those without legitimate authority overstep their jurisdiction or use means that are not officially sanctioned to squelch dissent or maintain their positions. Illegitimate influence arises when (a) decisions are disproportionately influenced by people not considered to have that right by the group; (b) when those who have right exceed the scope of their mandate. Authority is illegitimate when it becomes coercive. Influence becomes illegitimate when it becomes manipulative.

A behavioural way of measuring the distribution of formal or informal power is imperative to ascertain its legitimacy and determine whether oligarchy exists or not (Leach 2005). The first face is the straight forward decision-making of power which is categorised as formal power. This form of power may either be legitimate or illegitimate. In line with the definition of formal power, how it is exerted to make and enforce decisions will determine its legitimacy or illegitimacy. The second face of power is non-decision and withholding information from the rank and file. This commonly leads to the elite achieving their desired outcomes. The third face of power focuses on getting others to have the same desires as you want. The purpose of this is to secure compliance by controlling the thoughts and desires of others. The ability to change a person's preferences can be classified as influence and not authoritative or coercive power. However, the means employed to achieve the desired outcome will determine whether or not power was legitimate.

Material vs Nonmaterial Rewards and Sanctions: It has already been noted that formal power employs materials and sanctions to change a person's action environment (Leach 2005). In an informal setting, rewards and sanctions of a nonmaterial nature are used to alter an individual's assessment of their action environment. The legitimacy or illegitimacy of both material and nonmaterial rewards depend on what a group considers acceptable. In collective organisations, nonmaterial rewards that are considered to be appropriate include a form of approval, social affirmation and a sense of belonging. Nonmaterial rewards are also encouraged as a form of community building. The use of nonmaterial sanctions such threat of being rejected, ridiculed and shamed are considered as manipulative and unfair.

Formal and informal forms of power are conceived democratic when the minority exercising authority or influence is within the bounds acceptable to the majority. Oligarchy exists when authority and influence become illegitimate or resisted by the majority.

> "Oligarchy, then, is a concentration of entrenched illegitimate authority and/or influence in the hands of a minority, such *de facto* what that minority wants is generally what comes to pass, even when it goes against the wishes (whether actives or passively expressed) of the majority" (Leach 2005: 329).
>
> "Authority becomes coercive when it becomes illegitimate, i.e., when leaders exceed the scope of delegated authority and/or resort to illegitimate means of exercising formal or informal power (coercion or manipulation) to squelch dissent.
>
> Coercion becomes oligarchic when the illegitimate means of exercising formal power become concentrated in the hands of a minority to the degree that that the minority can regularly achieve it's intended ends against the will of the majority.
>
> Influence becomes manipulative when it becomes illegitimate, i.e., when leaders exceed the scope of informal power implied by group norms. They can do this by usurping deciding- making authority and/or using illegitimate means (coercion and manipulation) to affect decisions.
>
> Manipulation becomes oligarchic when the illegitimate means of exerting informal power becomes concentrated in the hands of a minority to the degree that that minority can regularly achieve its intended ends even though a majority would like to oppose them" (Leach 2005: 329).

In democratic, representative and collective type structures, oligarchy emerges when there is a move from legitimate to the illegitimate exercise of formal or informal power (Leach 2005). It includes the concentration of power in the hands of the minority against the wishes of the majority. Whether resistance

is passive or consciously organised, opposition confirms the existence of oligarchy within an organisation. It demonstrates, on one hand, the non-existence of democratic structures or the presence of oligarchy within a democratic structure, on the other.

Leadership turnover is one of the most common measures of oligarchy but does not necessitate that a minority exercises illegitimate power (Leach 2005). In some instances, it is the majority that decides to retain the same leaders for a long period. This represents legitimate authority and influence. Indeed, finding people in the same leadership positions or influential committees is suspicious of oligarchy. The speciality in functional responsibilities makes their replacement difficult. Conditions of this nature allow incumbent leaders to act in illegitimate ways. An evaluation has to be made on whether illegitimate means are employed to maintain positions of authority or influence.

Minority control over resources involves illegitimate authority over the distribution of rewards and sanctions (Leach 2005). The capacity to wield illegitimate authority occurs when control over organisational resources is concentrated in the hands of a small group. On the contrary, this setting is not sufficient proof of oligarchy. Evidence will have to be gathered to determine whether a minority's control over resources successfully made or led to the enforcement of decisions that the majority opposed.

Low participation levels signal that people feel excluded or alienated from the decision-making process, opinions are not valued and interests are not taken into consideration (Leach 2005). The majority's lack of participation might suggest that the minority calls the shots. This condition is also not a sufficient indicator of oligarchy. The reason for this is that the majority might be confident with the minority's governance so long as they are accountable and do not jeopardise the interests of the majority. In the long run, the abdication of responsibilities leads to a situation where people- the majority- do not feel entitled or qualified to intervene even when they suspect that their interests are threatened. At this point, the minority can push unpopular decisions by making the majority feel guilty for letting leaders do all the work. An evaluation has to be made to determine the legitimacy of exercising authority and influence and whether or not patterns of illegitimate minority control exist.

The discussion at hand demonstrates that trade union oligarchy is not an automatic process. Rather, its entrenchment depends on the gradual erosion of internal democratic practices, defiance of policies and procedures critical for advancing the interests of the organisation. Furthermore, internal systems, financial transparency, means of communication and skills have to be monopolised before incumbent leaders can distribute illegitimate forms of power. The entrenchment of oligarchy is not instant but a process that gradually undermines existing forms of democratic internal governance in democratic organisations.

When assessing the case of TWU, we realise that it disputes the idea that full-time trade employees/officials are the main drivers behind the entrenchment of oligarchic practices within trade unions. This does not intend to dilute and/or dispute the idea that employees play a crucial role in the architecture of trade union oligarchy. Buhlungu (2003) argued that in their mission to achieve organisational effectiveness and efficiency, the organisational changes proposed by career unionists may negatively impact power relations between union officials, shop-stewards, elected worker office bearers and ordinary members. Mamkoottam (1977) on the contrary, argued that elected worker office bearers within TWU were at the centre of entrenching oligarchy in the union. The views of Buhlungu (2003) and Mamkoottam (1977) reveals that the distribution of illegitimate power and influence can be carried out by both trade union officials, shop-stewards and elected worker office bearers.

By treating labour aristocracy and oligarchy as reciprocal power relations, we can better fathom how democratic practices were gradually eroded within SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union). The work of Hirschson (2011) and Sipahi (2016) highlight that organisational growth has the potential of altering existing internal processes. Organisational growth, on one hand, and the implementation of modernisation strategies, on the other, does not mean that the character and overall makeup of a trade union are automatically changed. The process of adaptation, however, can create conditions that allow for the entrenchment of oligarchy and labour aristocracy within a trade union. Buhlungu (2005), Pillay (2008), Hyman (2001) and Van der Walt (2014) demonstrate that the reorganisation of trade unions was influenced by material circumstances ranging variations in political, economic, social, technological and legislative conditions. Van der Walt (2014) further emphasised that social movement unions tended to transition towards political unionism.

With the advent of democracy, politically aligned unions were able to create avenues of upward mobility for some high profile leaders. The rise of trade union elitism demanded a radical shift from ideological to entrepreneurial leadership styles (Buhlungu 2003). The existence and vacillation of career trade unionists between latter styles of governance have the potential to strengthen or erode internal democracy. This study investigates how elitism, cronyism, patronage networks and corruption were institutionalised within SATAWU. It has already been established that labour aristocracy and oligarchy are reciprocal power relations. Resistance, as an antithetical power relation of labour aristocracy and oligarchy, is equally examined. The collision between power and resistance is critical for understanding the forms of countervailing actions over the control of SATAWU operations. Moreover, by exploring the antithetical relations between power and resistance, one can better comprehend the factors that contributed to the fragmentation/splintering of SATAWU between 2001 and 2015. Using the work of Sipahi (2016), Leach (2005) and Mamkoottam (1977), this study explores the following: methods employed by incumbent

leaders in their attempt to monopolise power and preserve their privileges, social distance between shop-stewards and their constituencies and the role of staff in splintering the union.

2.6. Conclusion

The chosen topics in this section of the report are critical for the study at hand. By understanding the geometry of trade unions, we realise that their formation, values and principles are diverse. However, the fundamental similarity is based on defending and advancing the interests of the working class. Trade unions are forced to adapt to external changes either through internal restructuring or mergers. There are varied reasons that influence trade union mergers. Nevertheless, it must be appreciated that adaptation efforts generally have an impact on their social/formal structure. We learn this by comprehending the transition towards different trade union forms, leadership and managerial styles. It can only be assumed that the shifts between ideological, career and entrepreneurial trade leadership styles were for adaptive/modernisation purposes.

The internal shifts triggered by the need to adapt to changing socio-economic conditions have in some instances suppressed participatory democracy for oligarchic forms of control. The South African case illustrates that trade unions pre and post the democratic dispensation have to a certain degree enjoyed political privileges. Some of these privileges include the co-option of some union leaders into business and strategic government positions. The theory of labour aristocracy exposes the contradictions inherent within the working class strata.

The non-Marxist approach, on the other end, reveals that distinctions existed among the African working class during South Africa's colonial era. Working-class elitism is not only shaped but altered by changing political, economic and social conditions. The 2008/9 financial crisis, for example, frustrated the class position of politically connected elites within and without the trade union landscape. Consequently, the ANC and its constellation were subjected by a wave of sequential ruptures. The selected topics illustrate the importance of understanding the character of the union, the nature of its formation, values and stages of development. Acting as a guide, these concepts will assist in crafting interview questions relevant to the overall question at hand. One can only assume that by investigating SATAWU's stages of development, a clearer picture of the factors that influenced the formation of five breakaway unions will be drawn.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Nature of Study: Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a systematic and subjective approach that involves a focus on life experiences. It attempts to uncover how people interpret and makes sense of their actual experiences. It is from this perspective that qualitative research occurs in a natural setting. Strauss and Corbin (1990:17) argue that qualitative research is more concerned about the study of human behaviours and functionalities. This research approach can be employed to investigate "people's lives, stories, behaviours…, organisational functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships."

According to Bryman (2012: 380) "qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. As a research strategy it is broadly inductivist, constructionist, and interpretivist, but qualitative researchers do not always subscribe to all three methods." Qualitative research is, therefore, non-mathematical and data can be collected through observations, interviews, documents, videotapes and books. The work of Yin (2015:9) provides five features essential to qualitative research which are:

> "Studying the meaning of people's lives, in their real world roles; representing the views and perspectives of people; explicitly attending to and accounting for real world contextual conditions; contributing insights for existing or new concepts that may help to explain behaviour and thinking [and] acknowledging the potential relevance of multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone"

In conformity with the research question and objectives, the qualitative approach was chosen for the study at hand. The perspectives, lived experiences and opinions of participants were obtained through a combination of qualitative research interviews. The open-ended questions were supplemented with scholarly insights into the literature review. Opinions from participants either synthesised, contradicted or provided a new perspective to existing concepts. The interconnection of views assisted in better understanding the phenomenon that confronted SATAWU.

3.2. Case Study Research Methodology

Zainal (2007) indicates that case studies allow for the exploration and understanding of a complex situation through a holistic in-depth investigation. Case studies were recognised and applied as a research method on the basis that some researchers became concerned about the limitations of quantitative research methods

in providing in-depth explanations about social and behavioural problems. Through the application of case studies, researchers can understand behavioural conditions from the actor's perspective.

Yin (2009) cited by Exworthy et al (2012:4) indicates that a case study is, "an empirical study that investigates contemporary phenomena within a real life context, when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and which multiple sources of evidence are used." Stufflebeam and Coryn (2014:300) in Yin (1998) highlight that researchers and evaluators should gather one or more of the six sources of evidence which are "documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical effects."

The case study methodology was chosen to study SATAWU's stages of development, sequential ruptures and its turning points. The study pays attention to two historical moments that led to seismic shifts in the social structure of the union: the merger between the former SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) and TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) and aftermath of the 3rd National Congress in 2011. The case of SATAWU is very important because it provides an account and/or explanation of inter and intra factional struggles. This study unlike most scholarly viewpoints examines the factors that negatively negate a trade union's internal stability. The case study methodology was viewed as a critical ingredient necessary for conducting an in-depth analysis of the question at hand.

3.3. Sampling: Non-probability

Sampling is a technique that researchers employ to select a population for data collection. The limited resources and time constraints make it difficult to collect data from an entire population. Data collected from a selected population allows researchers to understand a much larger set of cases. Sampling methods generally differ by virtue of the research topic, question, objectives, methodology and chosen data collection technique (Neuman 2014).

Sampling is also used in qualitative studies however, the methods/strategies differ from quantitative research. Apart from quantitative studies, sampling in qualitative research involves "identifying relevant categories at work in few cases" (Neuman 2014: 247). Qualitative research does not require a huge sample population. Nonprobability sampling often compliments this nature of research. Unlike quantitative sampling, researchers do not have to determine the sample size in advance.

The clarity regarding qualitative sampling allowed the researcher to choose a target population in line with qualitative research principles. In fulfilling the objective of the study, purposive and snowball sampling strategies were chosen. In purposive sampling, the researcher intentionally selects participants for the study. The target population/respondents in most cases share similar characteristics or knowledge about the issues

under investigation (Engel and Schutt 2009). With snowball sampling, the researcher relies on identified members of the population to identify other suitable candidates to partake in the study. This method is "…useful for hard-to reach or hard-to-identify, interconnected populations (at least some members of the population know each other)" (Engel and Schutt 2009:96).

This study initially intended to interview leaders of breakaway unions. The plan later changed to compliment the SATAWU 4th National Congress theme of "reclaim, renew and unite for working class power. Back to basics" (SATAWU 2018:1). The congress theme redirected the researcher to focus on internal factors that contributed to seismic shifts in the social structure of the union. The research project was no longer outward but inward-looking. The variations did not fundamentally alter the research question, aims and objectives. They instead redirected the study to focus on the genesis, development and eventual crisis of the union. The historical process assisted in unearthing a dialectical web of complexities and contradictions in conformity with the research inquiry.

The data for this study was collected from a wide range of individuals with in-depth knowledge about the historical development of the union. Twenty-seven (27) participants were meant to be interviewed however, only twenty 21 availed themselves. The breakdown of the participants as outlined in section 3.4 of the report under in-depth interviews and focus group interviews. All interviewed participants were based in Gauteng. The researcher originally planned to conduct the interviews in two provinces: Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). This decision was influenced by the geographical location where the splinters were formed. The inability to interview participants in KZN did not negatively affect the study. Out of the five splinters, four breakaway unions were established in Gauteng. Accordingly, a substantial amount of data was collected from the selected province.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments: Primary

3.4.1. In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are a data collecting technique used in qualitative research. The purpose of this data collecting technique is to conduct intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents. Furthermore, allowing the researcher to explore perspectives on an idea, programme or situation. In-depth interviews are therefore important for a researcher that wants to obtain detailed information about a person's thoughts, behaviours or to gather information about new issues. The interviews provide a complete and/or detailed picture of what the study aims to find out (Boyce and Neale 2006).

In-depth interviews were chosen as a data collection method for this study. The posed research questions were open-ended. This allowed participants to express their views in relation to the research inquiry. The researcher expected to interview fifteen participants, however, nine availed them for the study. One of the nine participants requested for a tape-recorded not to be used. Moreover, four of the nine participants requested to remain anonymous in the study. The interviews lasted for two to three hours each. The researcher typed the transcripts during the interview session and also relied on the tape recorder in instances where permission was granted. The below table provides a breakdown of the participants in the study.

Figure 7: Breakdown of In-depth Interview Participants

Designation	Male	Female	Total
SATAWU Shop-Stewards	2	0	2
Former SATAWU Leader	1	0	1
Former SATAWU Officials	2	1	3
SATAWU Officials	2	0	2
Labour Researcher	1	0	1
Total	**8**	**1**	**9**

The below table is a breakdown of participants that the researcher was unable to interview. The inability to interview the participants was triggered by diverse factors. Two of the participants worked night shift and weekends at a security company. The proposed times and dates would often clash thus hindering the interview process. Three of the participants agreed to meet the researcher in principle but opted to pull out on the eleventh hour without any reason. It was discovered during the interview process that the individuals were central in the divisions of the union. We may only assume that this was the reason why they opted to withdraw from the study. One SATAWU official/employee was unable to participate in the study due to organisational commitments. However, he assisted in providing the researcher with relevant contacts that participated in the study.

Figure 8: Breakdown of Unavailable Participants

Designation	Male	Female	Total
SATAWU Shop-Stewards	2	0	2
Former SATAWU Leader	2	0	2
Former SATAWU Officials	1	0	1
SATAWU Officials	1	0	1
Total	**6**	**0**	**6**

3.4.2. Focus Group Interviews

The preceding section of the report shows that data was collected through in-depth interviews. The inability to interview a large number of participants prompted the researcher to explore other data collection techniques. Focus group interviews were chosen as a second data collection instrument. Unlike in-depth interviews, focus interviews depend on a small group of individuals with similar characteristics to discuss a particular topic. Dilshad and Latif (2013) indicated that focus group interviews were beneficial to researchers intending to obtain sensitive information from the population, understand participants lived experiences, feelings and thoughts about a specific problem. Ordinarily, focus groups require a minimum of six and maximum of nine participants. Twelve participants took part in the study which was slightly higher than the general rule for conducting focus group interviews. Contrary to in-depth interviews, participants in the study engaged and influenced each other on various topics posed to them.

The focus group was attended by SATAWU shop-stewards from the aviation, rail, security and road passenger sector. The rationale behind this admixture was to avoid sectorial discussions from participants. All interviewees were Gauteng based nevertheless, their sectorial diversity drew a clearer picture of the general character of the province. It was observed that the participants were not well informed about the origins of the union. A majority understood the merger process through the lens of basic shop-steward training provided by the union. The participants made up for this by expressing in-depth knowledge of the union post the 3rd National Congress in 2011. It can only be assumed that the participants joined the union years after the conclusion of the merger in 2000.

All participants allowed the researcher to record the interview. Ten of the twelve respondents requested to remain anonymous. The below table provides the breakdown of participants.

Figure 9: Breakdown of Focus Group Interview Participants

Designation	Male	Female	Total
Aviation Shop-Stewards	3	0	3
Rail Shop-Stewards	2	1	3
Security Shop-Stewards	3	1	4
Road Passenger	0	2	2
Total	**8**	**4**	**12**

3.4.3. Documentary Reviews

The third data collection technique used for the study at hand was documentary analysis. Denzin (1970) cited by Bowen (2009:28) stated that "document analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulation- the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon." Documentary analysis is essential for understanding the history, programmes and organisational operations from their internal setting. A researcher must firstly access documents relevant to the study. The documents are often found in places such as libraries, archives and internal records or reports. Unlike secondary data, documentary reviews are treated as a primary source of data collection more especially when the information is unpublished or accessed for the first time. Merriam (2009) supports this perspective by indicating that documentary reviews were no different from interviews and observations.

> "When someone stands in the library stacks, he is, metaphorically surrounded by voices begging to be heard. Every book, every magazine article, represents at least one person who is equivalent to the anthropologist's informant or the sociologist's interviewee. In those publications, people converse, announce positions, argue with a range of eloquence, and describe events or scenes in ways entirely comparable to what is seen and heard during fieldwork" (Glaser and Straus 1967:163, cited by Merriam 2009: 150).

The below table presented by Creswell (2009) best summarises documentary analysis as a data collection method.

Figure 10: Characteristics of Documentary Analysis

Data Collection Type	Options within Types	Advantages of the Type	Limitations of the Type
Documents	• Public documents, such as minutes of meetings, or newspapers • Private documents such as journals, diaries, or letters	• Enables a researcher to obtain the language and words of participants • Can be accessed at a time convenient to researcher-an unobtrusive source of information • Represents data which are thoughtful in that participants have given attention to compiling them	• Not all people are equally articulate and perceptive • May be protected information unavailable to public or private access • Requires the researcher to search out information in hard-to-find places

		• As written evidence, it saves a researcher time and expense of transcribing	• Requires transcribing or optically scanning for computer entry • Materials may be incomplete • The documents may not be authentic or accurate

Reproduced from: (Creswell 2009: 180)

Documentary analysis was used as a data collection instrument for this study. Data was collected through the review of organisational documents such as the union's constitution, CEC (Central Executive Committee) and National Congress reports. It can be validated that all documents used in this study are authentic since they were accessed from union archives. The data collected was useful in strengthening the results from in-depth and focus group interviews.

3.5. Data Analysis

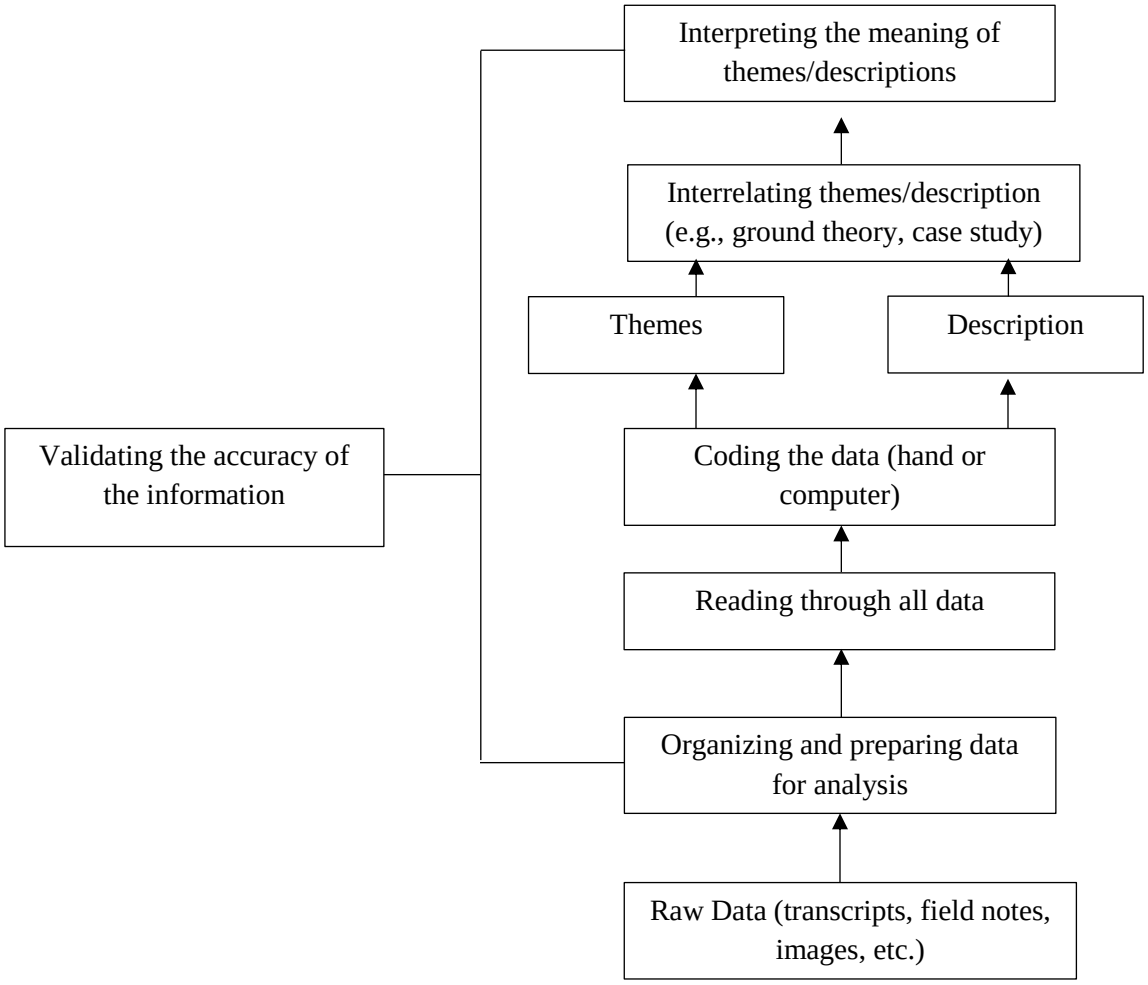
Data analysis is a research process concerned with making sense of the collected data in line with the chosen instruments: interviews and documents etc. This process is ongoing and requires the researcher to continuously reflect on the data collected. Furthermore, running concurrently with the process of data collection. The reason being, while engaged in interviews, the researcher may also reflect or analyse data collected at an earlier stage. Ordinarily, this process involves the collection of data, analysing it for themes and perspectives and reporting on the outcomes. The below explanation best sums up the process of data analysis.

> "… It involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data…, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data" (Creswell 2009: 183).

The different strategic approaches in qualitative research often produce diverse analytic outcomes. Notwithstanding that qualitative researchers often uses a general approach to data analysis. Citing the work of Rossman and Rallis (1998), Creswell (2009:184) advised that "an ideal situation is to blend general steps with the specific research strategy."

The general data analysis process was chosen for the study at hand. It assisted the researcher to arrange and analyse the data collected from in-depth and focus group interviews. The drafting of the report demanded that the researcher organise the data collected. This happened through the transcription of interviews and arranging the information in different parts- in-depth and focus group interviews. The next step involved reading the data to get a general sense of the views shared by participants. Once this was complete, the transcripts were coded thus allowing for the information to be placed under different labels and categories. This process influenced the generation of descriptions and themes to be analysed in the study. The themes were later analysed including how they interconnected with others. Finally, the outcomes of the study presented the researcher an opportunity to interpret the data and supplement with primary and secondary sources of information from reviewed documents. The below diagram provides a general approach to data analysis in qualitative research.

Figure 11: General Qualitative Data Analysis Process



Reproduced from: (Creswell 2009:185)

3.6. Validity and Reliability of Information

Reliability in qualitative research generally talks to an extent that findings can be replicated. To achieve this the following questions have to be addressed: 1. is the data valid? 2. Are the methods reliable? The researcher relied on the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) to increase the trustworthiness of the study. Threats of credibility were decreased by triangulating data. The researcher relied on in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis to validate information gathered in the study. Moreover, interviews were compared to each other to validate the findings. The application of multiple data collection methods assisted in producing more accurate, comprehensive and objective findings (Silverman 2006). The dependability and conformability of the study were increased through the transparent description of steps taken from the start until the end of the project (reporting of findings). The study provides descriptions of how data was collected, how categories and decisions were taken throughout the study. The researcher controlled biasness by comparing data, using literature to search for similar phenomena's and relying on multiple views and constant validation and/or review of data (Strauss and Corbin 1998 and Marshall and Rossman 1989).

3.7. Limitation of the Study

This research project has several limitations that have to be noted. The first limitation involves access to primary and secondary information about unions that founded SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union). The information was either limited or non-existent. Under such conditions, a holistic picture on the mergers cannot be drawn. The study relied on the perspectives of SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) and TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union). Secondly, the researcher was unable to gain access or interview former leaders and staff of BLATU (Black Transnet Allied Trade Union), TATU (Transnet Allied Trade Union) and GWU (General Workers Union). This added to the limitation on the merger history of SATAWU. Thirdly, the study may be viewed as leaning more towards union officials since a substantial number of shop-stewards did not avail themselves for in-depth interviews. This limitation was mitigated through focus group interviews and documentary analysis. Finally, the study may be viewed as lopsided or incomplete because individuals that migrated to breakaway unions were not interviewed.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

This research project explores the factors that led to the formation of five breakaway unions in the course of SATAWU's development. The study primarily focuses on internal conditions responsible for negatively altering the union's social structure. The data in this study was collected through in-depth, focus group and documentary analysis. All participants were selected using two-sample strategies- purposive and the snowball method. Due to limited resources and minor change in the research approach, all interviews were conducted in Gauteng.

All participants were informed about the research project, its aims, objectives and confidentiality assurance. A confidentiality form was read out and signed by participants. The rationale behind the signing of the confidentiality form is to protect the participant, the researcher and the university. With reference to achieving confidentiality, the study does not provide character description or use pseudo names for participants that requested to remain anonymous. The study instead describes the participants using internal classifications such as shop-steward, union official and union leaders etc. The names of all breakaway unions are used in this study since they are public knowledge. This includes the names of specific actors and leaders that served in the structures of the union.

An interview guide was used to collect data for the study at hand. All research findings were kept in a private space at home-pre and post the completion of the study. The researcher guaranteed participants that they will be informed about the completion of the project and a copy of the research report will be provided upon their request. The report will be made available to the public provided and/or in an event that the researcher agrees to have the study published.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter outlines in detail the design and methodologies employed in attempting to answer the research question and fulfil the aims and objectives of the study. It describes the nature of research, methodology, data collection, sampling and data analysis. The chapter also explains how validity and reliability were achieved, the limitations of the study and ethical consideration. The following chapter not only discusses but analyses the data collected through the methodologies explained in this chapter.

Chapter Four: Research Findings and Analysis

4.1. Introduction and Structure of the Report

In 2016, NALEDI (National Labour and Economic Development Institute) conducted a study on trade union fragmentation with a specific focus on South Africa's labour movement. The study acknowledges that challenges of corruption, weakening of worker control, union democracy, workers education and organising etc. constrained the labour movement. It was only after 2012 that trade unions experienced unforgettable seismic shifts varying from the Marikana massacre, internal divisions, breakaways, and the expulsion of NUMSA (National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa) from COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and the formation of SAFTU (South African Federation of Trade Unions). The Department of Labour (DoL) expressed concerns about the increased number of trade union registrations and the negative impact this might have on workers solidarity. NALEDI (2016:7) indicated that,

> "As reports emerged of new splits and breakaways, Department of Labour (DoL) officials and union leaders began to talk about the increased number of unions applying for registration with the registrar and asked if this is dividing workers and impacting on union solidarity. From the side of government, there was a concern as to what does this mean and how will a possible rise in the number of union's impact on shop-floor relations and over labour market stability… The Department reported that there were 190 (and this is a moving target…) registered unions representing 3.5m [million] workers. However, the Department was continuing to receive well over 100 applications for union registrations per annum. As a result, there was a growing perception that the number of unions operating within the labour market was growing."

Parallel to the above highlighted, the report at hand explores the factors that contributed to the formation of five breakaway unions after the formation of SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) in 2000. The report is divided into the following sections: background of the union, merger history, the splintering of SATAWU after the 2011 Sun City Congress and conclusion. The section on the merger history provides an account of the three amalgamations, their challenges and ultimate formation of two splinter unions. The results are aimed at answering whether or not the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) was correct in principle but procedurally flawed. The second section focuses on the splintering of SATAWU after the Sun City Congress in 2011. It intends finding out whether the union's unresolved historical challenges replicated themselves in the 3rd Administration. The significance of this administration like the first is that the union experienced a wave

of breakaways. By comparing the two administrations, we can understand diverse factors-old and new- that contribute to the splintering of the union.

Before proceeding to the next section, it is important to present a breakdown of the role players that contributed to shaping the history, character, identity and culture of SATAWU. The list also includes all participants that granted the researcher permission to reveal their identities. The table below provides the names, surnames and organisational credentials of both role players and research participants in alphabetical order.

Figure 12: Name, Surname and Organisational Credentials of SATAWU Leaders and Officials

Name and Surname	Organisational Credentials
Archie Sibeko also known as Zola Zembe	• Former SARHWU President. • Former SATAWU Honorary President
Bonakele Jonas	• Former SARHWU President
Ephraim Mphahlele	• Former SATAWU President
Ezrom Mabyana	• Former SARHWU National Treasurer • Former SATAWU President
Jackson Simon	• Originates from TGWU • Former SATAWU National Sector Coordinator- Security • He was also Randall Howard's (Former General Secretary) preferred successor
James Phera	• Former SARHWU Deputy President
Jane Barrett	• Former TGWU General Secretary • Former SATAWU Research Coordinator
Johnson Gamede	• Former SARHWU General Secretary • Former SATAWU Deputy General Secretary • Former Head of Collective Bargaining
Joseph Dube	• Originates from SARHWU • Former SATAWU KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Secretary • Founding member of RETUSA (SATAWU breakaway)
Kate Matlou	• Former SATAWU 2nd Deputy President
Lubabalo Tinzi	• Former TGWU Local Organiser • Current SATAWU National Sector Coordinator
Mbhazima Shilowa	• Former TGWU President • Former COSATU Deputy General Secretary • Former COSATU General Secretary
Mojalefa Musi	• Former SARHWU National Sector Coordinator • Former SATAWU Head of Education
Nicholus Maziya	• Originates from TGWU • Former SATAWU Western Cape Provincial Secretary • Former SATAWU Head of Education • Former SATAWU Deputy General Secretary
Randall Howard	• Former TGWU General Secretary • Former SATAWU General Secretary
Robert Mashego	• Originates from SARHWU

	• Former SATAWU 2nd Deputy President • Former SATAWU 1st Deputy President
Sandile Zungu	• Former SARHWU Investment Holding CEO
Tshediso Moshao	• Former SARHWU Deputy General Secretary
Vusi Ntshangase	• Originates from TGWU • Former SATAWU Mpumalanga Provincial Secretary • Founding Member of DETAWU (SATAWU Breakaway)
Zenzo Mahlangu	• Originates from TGWU • Former SATAWU North West Provincial Secretary • Former SATAWU General Secretary • Former Bashumi Investment Holding Director/CEO
Zico Tamela	• Former SARHWU Head of International Relations • Former SATAWU Head of International Relations • Current SATAWU Head of Collective Bargaining
Zwelinzima Vavi	• Former COSATU General Secretary • Current SAFTU General Secretary

4.2. Background of SATAWU

The formation of SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) was influenced by a series of mergers which took place in 1998 and 2000. Mergers are generally not easy, especially when considering the complexities associated with the change process. Changes in the labour movement during the 1980s and subsequent economic restructuring triggered the merger process.

The first SATAWU was formed thirteen years after the launch of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions). In 1998, SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union), BLATU (Black Transnet Allied Trade Union) and TATU (Transnet Allied Trade Union) merged to become the first SATAWU. The Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) did not form part of the initial merger because of disagreements with SARHWU. SARHWU argued that the merger had to be exclusive to transport workers. TGWU on the contrary enjoyed a large following from the security and cleaning sector which it was unwilling to let go of. The sectorial disagreements delayed the merger process. After numerous talks, TGWU agreed to merge in May 2000. The new SATAWU brought together public and private sector transport, cleaning and security workers under one united union (Ruggunan 2001). The below table provides the periodization of the merger process including the reasons and actors involved.

Figure 13: Periodization of the Merger Process

Name (s) of Merging Unions	Year of the Merger	Membership of Each Union	Reason for the Merger
The formation of the first SATAWU was an outcome of a merger between three Transnet unions which are SARHWU, BLATU and TATU	The merger was successfully concluded in 1998	SARHWU: 35 000 BLATU: 6 324 TATU: 1 324	The merger between the three Transnet unions was influenced by economic and industrial restructuring. The unions were forced to pull resources together to adapt to economic conditions and the new Transnet Bargaining Council threshold.
The former SATAWU merged with TGWU to create the new SATAWU	The merger was successfully concluded in 2000	TGWU: 50000	SARHWU and TGWU were affiliates of COSATU. During its launching congress in 1985, the federation resolved on one union one industry. The congress also phased out general unions. The two unions ordinarily had to merge owing to their affiliation with COSATU.

The formation of SATAWU illustrates that mergers are not a new phenomenon in South Africa. The merger process disputes the view that trade unions are homogenous. Multiple organisational forms, values, cultures and role players came together to form new unions. The below table demonstrates the complex political, ideological and organisational values that influenced the formation of SATAWU.

Figure 14: Union-Affiliate Table

Name of Union	Name of Federation
SARHWU *(*South African Railways and Harbours Workers Union)	SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions) in the 1950s but died off in the 1960s. SARHWU later affiliated to the UDF (United Democratic Front) after it was launched in 1983
BLATU (Black Transnet Allied Trade Union)	NACTU (National Council of Trade Unions)
TATU (Transnet Allied Trade Union)	Independent Trade Union
TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union)	FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions)
GWU (General Workers Union)	Independent Trade Union

The negotiated process and sacrifices among parties developed a new organisational culture through an integrated constitution. The constitution is the starting point to understand, preserve and turnaround a trade union. It outlines the vision, mission and objectives of an organisation. The SATAWU constitution which has changed over time (2000, 2003, 2006 and 2011) demonstrates that the union relies on representative democracy, governance and bureaucracy to achieve its goals. The separation of power and union hierarchy explains the chain of command, flow of communication, division of labour and framework of rules. When assessing the vast organised industries, one may assume that SATAWU never ceased to be a general union. Nevertheless, the industries organised by the union differ in the size and nature of work from formal, informal to atypical. The constitution stresses that the union is worker-controlled however, placing and/or centralising decision-making power at the national level. The centralisation of power should be understood from the following: the composition of structures and representative democracy (SATAWU 2011). The below table summarises the constitution of the union by focusing on its organisational layers, separation of power, terms of office, chain of command and organised sectors.

Figure 15: Summary of SATAWU Constitution

	National Structure	**Provincial Structure**	**Local Structure**	**Workplace Structure**
Office Bearers	National Office Bearers (NOBs): • President • First Deputy President • Second Deputy President • National Treasurer • General Secretary (GS) • Deputy General Secretary (DGS)	Provincial Office Bearers (POBs): • Provincial Chairperson • Deputy Provincial Chairperson • Provincial Treasurer • Provincial Secretary	Local Office Bearers (LOBs) • Local Chairperson • Local Deputy Chairperson • Local Treasurer • Local Secretary	Shop-stewards • Chairperson • Deputy Chairperson • Treasurer • Secretary ***Provided that a shop-steward committee exists at the workplace**
Structures that elect office bearers or union leaders	National Congress	Provincial Congress	Local Shop-steward Councils (LSSCs)	General Meeting and Shop-stewards councils (SSCs)
Term of office	5 years	4 years	4 years	4 years
Management of union/highest decision-making structures	• National Congress (NC) • National Policy Conference (NPC) • Central Executive Committee (CEC) • National Office Bearers Committee (NOBC)	• Provincial Congress (PC) • Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) • POBC (Provincial Office Bearers Committee)	• Local Shop-steward Councils (LSSCs) • Local Office Bearers (LOBs)	• General Meeting • Shop-stewards Committees (SSCs)

Chain of Command	"The powers of these structures are defined in this Constitution. Subject to this Constitution, a decision of a higher structure is binding on a lower structure falling under its jurisdiction. A lower structure may not decide anything that conflicts with the policies or decisions of a higher structure" (SATAWU 2011: 19).
Sectors Organised	• "Transport Services: Passenger Transport Services, including by road, rail, air, river and sea. Freight or goods transport and storage, including by road, rail, air, river, sea or pipeline • Maritime Transport: Stevedoring and cargo-handling; shipping; repairs to maritime equipment; clearing and forwarding; seafaring and berthing and ship supplies and chandelling services • Civil Aviation: passenger, cargo and technical services in both domestic and foreign airlines; operations at airports; operations at civil aviation authorities or offices; air traffic navigation services and ground and ramp handling services • Transport Infrastructure: tollgates and road management and operation; car parking; the operation of transport terminals and travel agencies and transport rental services, including motor vehicle rental services • Property Services: contract cleaning, contract security; sports and recreation clubs • General Cleaning Services (other than property services) • Laundry and Dry Cleaning workers • Funeral and Undertaking workers • Temporary employment agencies and independent subcontractors that provide employees to employers operating in any above sectors • General support services incidental to or associated with the above • The union will be open to all workers, including atypical workers, who include but are not limited to casual, part-time, temporary, fixed-term or seasonal workers" (SATAWU 2011:92-93).

Summarised from: (SATAWU 2011)

4.3. Exploring the Three Merger Processes that Contributed to the Rise of SATAWU

In my informal discussions with colleagues, shop-stewards and former leaders, the merger between the former SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) and TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) came out as a recurring theme linked to the union's historical challenges. The merger between the two COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) affiliates in 2000 to form the new SATAWU was deemed a procedurally flawed process. Notwithstanding that, the amalgamation contributed to internal crisis cycles of breakaway unions.

This section of the report investigates the separate formations and ultimate merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU in May 2000. It aims to answer whether the merger was correct in principle but procedurally flawed. A detailed understanding of the process will assist in recovering the unions lost history, explaining its development and locating the crisis within its evolutionary stages.

4.3.1. Formation of the First/Former SATAWU in 1998

Trade union mergers have increased throughout the world. Large and expanding organisations have used this process as a fast and inexpensive strategy to make inroads in new organising territories (Sverke et al 2004). Advocates of mergers claim that members benefit from larger and financially stable unions. Mergers contribute to the employment of skilled staff, attainment of political and bargaining power. Without mergers, smaller unions may cease to exist owing to financial loss and inability to represent members.

Critics of mergers stress that the process leads to a duplication of departments and a bloated bureaucracy (Sverke et al 2004). Mergers can create a new cultural and traditional diversity which may negatively impact member commitment and participation in organisational activities. It is argued that the larger the union the harder it is to mobilise members during strikes or attract them to fill leadership positions. Under these conditions, the trade-off with expanding unions is that they provide financial stability at the expense of member satisfaction and active participation in internal structures.

A merger process takes on different forms due to varied structural makeups of integrating organisations. This makes it difficult to predict the impact that a merger will have on member attitudes and behaviour. The amalgamation of unions similar in size has the potential to affect attitude and behaviour. This is because the establishment of a new union prompts parties to rewrite the constitution, agreed on composition, separation of powers and methods to collect subscriptions. On the contrary, the absorption or affiliation with smaller unions does not lead to a great impact on the structure and governance of larger unions. Under such circumstances, members in larger unions do not need to approve the merger (Sverke et al 2004).

> "Unions in their very nature are formed by multiple strands of leadership, therefore, proving their diversity. This contradicts the idea that people who enter unions come from one ideological polar pole. Unions are not homogeneous even though they subscribe to a particular orientation and tradition. When we talk about merging we must remember that organisations form and evolve in different ways. The merging organisations have to come to terms that some of their unique values and cultures must be shed. It must be appreciated that mergers are not easy" (Interview, Former SATAWU Official, 2019).

The formation of SATAWU is often associated with the merger between SARHWU (South African Railways and Harbours Workers Union) and TGWU in 2000. This perspective is incorrect as it leaves out the initial merger between SARHWU, BLATU (Black Transnet Allied Trade Union) and TATU (Transnet Allied Trade Union) in establishing the first SATAWU in 1998. The confusion may originate from the following factors: firstly, COSATU's resolution of one union one industry, one federation and one country in 1985. Secondly, SARHWU and TGWU being affiliates of COSATU. One of the interviewees agree with

this perspective by indicating that "SARHWU was a founding member of COSATU including TGWU. In terms of the COSATU resolution, ordinarily, the two unions had to merge" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019). The general agreement is that COSATU affiliates in the late 1980s had to merge in line with organisational resolutions. One of the respondents recalled that "the 1997 Congress put in place a line of march regarding the merger process. It was resolved that the CEC [Central Executive Committee] will monitor, evaluate and assist affiliates in seeing through the merger process" (Interview, Mojalefa Musi, 2019).

On the question of SATAWU's formation, Kiloh and Sibeko (2000) indicate that the first merger talks- informal- started with SARHWU and BLATU in Kenya in 1992. It was resolved that the two unions including TATU would work together to improve existing relations. Disappointingly, the discussions failed to accelerate the merger process considering that several historical issues had to be resolved between SARHWU and BLATU. The central problem was BLATU's close relationship with management which resulted in violent clashes between the two unions.

> "The management's tactic of using BLATU members to strike-break against SARHWU had led to violent clashes and deaths on both sides, leaving a legacy of mistrust and hatred which probably held back many BLATU people from coming to SARHWU. Following the strike, management continued to recognise BLATU and to collect subscriptions even though it had been demonstrated that workers wanted to join SARHWU. The 1989/90 strike saw further violence, and management continued to support BLATU up until the signing of the recognition agreement in 1991 and in some regions even later" (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000: 264).

BLATU was aware that its advantage over SARHWU will soon come to an end (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000). It realised this through the constant decline in membership. Even though SARHWU was in a disadvantaged position, the political situation at that time favoured the union because the ANC (African National Congress) was preparing to govern. This meant that with the ANC in power SARHWU would eventually be favoured by government and management.

In its pursuit to gain supremacy in Transnet, SARHWU was compelled to merge with BLATU and TATU regardless of historical and ideological differences. According to Kiloh and Sibeko (2000: 265), the fundamental differences that had to be addressed were "…dues and benefits, organisational structures, location of offices, staffing, assets and liabilities which needed to be brought into line, and the idea needed to be sold to the members, who were reluctant to lose their separate identity…" It was only after the 1994 democratic breakthrough that talks between the unions were officially set in motion. Earnest discussions between SARHWU and BLATU started in March 1996. In August 1996, TATU joined the discussions only

to withdraw from the process. In March 1997, the name SATAWU was adopted. In June 1998, TATU re-joined the merger discussion. A programme of action was adopted by the National Executive Committee (NEC) of the three unions. Its objective was to coordinate parallel operations which will later culminate to the launch of SATAWU at a special congress in December 1998 (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000).

The merger between SARHWU, BLATU and TATU was influenced by multiple factors which are both exogenous and endogenous. External factors such as the political (domestic and international), economic and social crisis in the 1970s and 80s negatively affected the overall operations of Transnet. In 1995, Transnet faced financial instability and the threat of privatisation. Transnet attempted to mitigate the challenges by introducing new measures in the company. Three agreements were reached at the Transnet Bargaining Council which set out a threshold to be recognised as a union, participate in collective bargaining and co-determination forums. The three agreements were "a 15% membership presence in Transnet; representation of 'critical grades' (which implies that unions must also represent skilled and semi-skilled grades throughout all the Transnet divisions); decentralisation of bargaining to cater for the privatisation of some of Transnet's key business divisions like SAA (South African Airways) and Autonet" (Musi, 1998: 14).

The mentioned agreements influenced unions affiliated to FEDUSA (Federation of Unions of South Africa) to undergo the first merger process. In 1998, Salaried Staff Association (SALSTAFF), Employees Union of South Africa (EUSA) and Technical Workers Union (TWU) agreed to merge. The new union had a combined membership of 27000, giving it an added advantage at the bargaining council and improved service to members. The changes accelerated the merger process between SARHWU, BLATU and TATU.

> "The merger between SARHWU, BLATU and TATU was influenced by industrial restructuring within Transnet. The company started to restructure in the late 80s as the economy was going through negative growth. The national debt in South Africa had gone up, jobs were shed and there was deindustrialisation. Some of Transnet's enterprises were no longer viable like before thus forcing the company to unbundle some of its divisions. The apartheid regime was feeling the pinch from sanctions and social unrest. To cut a long story short, the merger was based on the pooling of resources. In maximising the conditions of the economic restructuring, the merger process was the only way to go. The first SATAWU was formed amid an economic crisis" (Interview, Mojalefa Musi, 2019).

The formation of the first SATAWU demonstrates that unions do not merge out of self-selected circumstances but conditions beyond their control- external or internal triggers. Had the economy and apartheid status quo remained unchanged, the probability of merging would be insignificant. Though the merger took place in a democratic era, historical effects of ungovernmentabilty, people's power and economic sanctions spilt over in the new democracy. Sabotaging the economy at that stage in development was essential for collapsing the apartheid regime. Sadly, the new government, industry and relations to production were forced to restructure for adaptability purposes. The merger to form the new SATAWU was, therefore, in harmony with changing socio-economic and industrial conditions.

4.3.2. Formation of the New TGWU in 1986

The merger history of the TGWU reveals that the union initially affiliated to FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions) before the launch of COSATU in 1985. It was after this launch that the union was the first to execute the one union one industry mandate. Six months after the launch of the new federation, TGWU and the General Workers Union (GWU) heeded the one union one industry mandate. Accordingly, the two unions were the first to enter into a merger process.

It was estimated that the merger would increase the membership of the new union to 24000 (twenty-four thousand) of which 22000 (twenty-two thousand) members were in good standing- paid up (Green 1986). The below breakdown provides the sectors and membership of both unions.

Figure 16: TGWU and GWU Membership Breakdown

Name of Union	Organised Sector	Membership Breakdown
TGWU	Municipal Workers	6000
	Cleaning and Security	2000
	Goods and Passenger Transport	6000
GWU	Stevedoring	4000
	Building Supply Industry	4000
	Services and Local Government	1200
	Engineering And Metal Sector	800
Total Membership		24000

Summarised from: (Green 1986)

The above highlight breakdown was subject to variations because the one union one industry mandate phased out general unions. Municipal workers, building supply industry, service and local government and Engineering and Metal sector workers had to be transferred to new unions. The TGWU was aware that its municipal workers' constituency had to be transferred to a new union.

> "Jane Barrett [General Secretary of old TGWU] reports that sector meetings with other COSATU affiliates organising municipal and local government workers have been productive, although co-operation on the ground has been slow. One of the last National Executive Meetings of the old T&G passed a resolution recently expressing the union's commitment to establishing a new national municipal union" (Green 1986: 47).

The cleaning and security sector were to remain in the new TGWU. The reason for this was that they formed part of the services industry which was very competitive, had low wages and vulnerable workers. Before the merger was executed, GWU experienced difficulties and/or expressed concern about the transfer of its building supply members. According to Green (1986:47), a GWU organiser clarified the concern by stating that,

> "…While we are really committed to the policy of one union one industry, we are not going to hand over building and supplies workers to a non-existent union… There is no other union that has substantial numbers of building workers and we are very definite about keeping them in our union until a proper building workers' union gets off the ground".

Over and above the highlighted challenges, the union were excited about organising the transport sector which had a membership of 400000 (four hundred thousand). Out of this membership, 75% of workers were employed by the South African Transport Services (SATS). SATS would later be renamed Transnet. It was forecasted that railway workers will be a new challenge that the union had to grapple with. Another problem that surfaced was that on one hand, the two unions agreed to organise railway workers in the transport union but SATAWU, on the other, argued that they had to belong to a separate union (Green 1986).

The two unions expressed an eagerness to merge after resolving Constitutional issues. Firstly, TGWU's highest decision-making structure was the NEC as opposed to GWU's Annual National Conference (Green 1986). TGWU agreed to incorporate the Annual National Conference clause in the new constitution. GWU accepted that the power of financial control will be moved from branch level to the head office. The establishment of a national executive committee was a new clause that both unions agreed had to be filtered in the constitution. The new union was to have six regions and each would elect four delegates to the NEC. However, six delegates were to be elected to the NEC provided that regions had more than 5000 (five thousand members).

Before the merger, both unions were confident that the process will live up to its expectations. One union organiser confidently indicated that,

> "Neither union will end in a real sense… The new union has T&G's name and our logo. We have also brought almost equal numbers of members to the merger. Quite apart from the new union's strengthened presence in a critical sector of the economy, the merger stands as a landmark on the road to industrial unionism" (Green 1986: 48).

The merger between TGWU and GWU represented an era of modernisation in the labour movement. Furthermore, the one union one industry mandate also suggests that the labour movement was preparing to transition into a new socio-economic dispensation through a democratic government. The merger process was necessary for centralising the management of labour under one banner/federation. Like TATU, BLATU and SARHWU, TGWU and GWU, these unions shared some similarities. Firstly, TGWU and GWU were general unions organising transport and various industries. Secondly, they were reluctant to transfer some of their members to other unions for rational reasons. On the part of TGWU, it did not want to let go of the security and cleaning sector. Additionally, GWU did not want to let go of its building supply members. Finally, their social structures accommodated each other hence, the ability to easily integrate their constitutions but most importantly achieve a successful merger.

4.3.3. Formation of the New SATAWU in 2000

4.3.3.1. Reluctance to Merge-former SATAWU and TGWU

Following the successful amalgamation between SARHWU, BLATU and TATU in 1998, the second merger with TGWU proved to be more difficult than expected. In further expanding on the difficulties of the second merger one of the respondents indicated that "the first merger took place while COSATU affiliates were negotiating which makes this case more interesting" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019). In response to the same question, a SATAWU official highlighted that "when assessing the 1985 COSATU resolution we realise that the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU took over 15 years to conclude" (Interview, Lubabalo Tinzi, 2019). The participants correctly observed the prolonged negotiation process nevertheless, does this justify the difficulties linked to the merger?

In answering this question, Kiloh and Sibeko (2000) presented several factors that influenced the former SATAWU's reluctance to merge with TGWU. Union officials were afraid of losing their positions and constitutes. The rank and file were not in a position to abandon the name and political tradition of the union. They also expressed concerns about losing their identity as a consequence of merging with a non-Transnet union. One of the interviewees confirmed that the former SATAWU did not want to merge with TGWU.

> "…The membership and leaders represented an old generation that was enterprise-centric or Transnet conscious. Transnet was their comfort zone. The company was a mini developmental state which provided a minimum wage, housing subsidy, cross-subsidisation, industry-wide medical aid, bargaining council, collective agreements and shop-steward benefits. The membership did not want to merge out of conservatism. The delay was out of fear of losing their history, provident funds and money in the investment arm" (Interview, Mojalefa Musi, 2019).

Another respondent provided a different perspective regarding the former SATAWU's reluctance to merge with TGWU.

> "TGWU was committed to the call made by the federation for one union, one industry, however, industrial unions argued that general unions had to be phased out. This led to a debate regarding the word 'allied.' The former SATAWU did not want security and cleaning to be incorporated in the new union because they did not represent the transport industry. It was argued that the two sectors were vulnerable, could not stand on their own and were also organised by the former SATAWU at Transnet. It was eventually agreed that security and cleaning will form part of the new SATAWU" (Interview, Jane Barrett, 2019).

The absorption of security and cleaning into the new SATAWU was indeed a thorny issue between parties. One of the interviewees disputed two issues concerning the merger process. Firstly, that the former SATAWU did not want to merge with TGWU. Secondly, security and cleaning were to be permanently incorporated into the new SATAWU.

> "The former SATAWU was not against the merger with TGWU but demanded that the process be exclusive to the transport sector. The reason for this was that the launching COSATU Congress agreed that general unions should cease to exist. A compromise was reached were security and cleaning will be allowed to take part in the merger process but once complete, a new home had to be looked for them. Security had to be transferred to POPCRU [Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union]" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

Kiloh and Sibeko (2000) argued that the former SATAWU (in this instance SARHWU) did not want to merge with TGWU for three critical reasons. Firstly, it feared losing its influence in an event that it merged with TGWU. Secondly, TGWU was perceived to be a sweetheart union while SARHWU, on the other end, was militant. Thirdly, SARHWU accused TGWU of not being socialist enough hence, its ability to source funds from different donors.

The reluctance to merge despite the numerous reasons demonstrates that the process in its very nature has the potential to negatively affect member commitment towards the union (Sverke et al 2004). This occurs when there is a belief or feeling that the history, institutional identity, customs, traditions and values espoused by a union might be dissolved. The fear can be associated with the alteration of the constitution and formulation of new policies. A member's satisfaction is swayed by their evaluation of a union's performance and representation. The day-to-day activities of a union mould member satisfaction. A merger can enhance organisational operations, quality and quantity of service to members. Duplication of departments and employee tasks should be expected after the conclusion of a merger. Understandably, operational effectiveness and efficiency are likely to contract in the short term but with time, redundant structure and positions become phased out.

4.3.3.2. <u>The Pressure to Merge and Allegations of a Planned Takeover of the new SATAWU</u>

A majority of respondents agree that there was pressure from COSATU to merge unions in line with the one union, one industry mandate. One of the participants recalled that "during the time of the mergers a lot of unions were pressured to form new unions to an extent that some felt bullied… Some unions were not ready to merge" (Interview, Jane Barrett, 2019).

A former SATAWU leader confirmed that unions were pressured to merge but accused COSATU of being partial when managing the process.

> "COSATU affiliates were aware that they had to merge. I mean this was a congress resolution that we all had to adhere to. There was serious pressure for SARHWU to merge with the TGWU. At that time SATAWU was not formed. I remember this because Mbhazima Shilowa was still the DGS [Deputy General Secretary] of COSATU. In one COSATU CEC, it was alleged that SARHWU was deliberately delaying the merger with TGWU. Shilowa went as far as threatening us by stating that, 'If SARHWU does not want to merge with TGWU then it had to be expelled from the federation…' Shilowa was a security guard and a former member of TGWU hence the pressure and biasness. All that SARHWU wanted was time. The other unions agreed to this request because they understood that they too will be pressured to merge" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

COSATU (under the leadership of Shilowa) was accused of colluding with security officers to take over the union after the merger in 2000. A majority of respondents raised numerous factors that might have contributed the belief in the possibility of a hostile takeover. It was alleged that after the merger, security officers informed members that they had no alternative home but SATAWU. Secondly, the sector was accused of creating chaos in the union. Thirdly, in congresses, security officers were said to have elected

leaders among themselves. Fourthly, they were accused of withholding information from other sectors creating a communication breakdown. Finally, in provinces, people were fired and replaced by security officers.

The merger history of TGWU validates that it was not willing to let go of the security and cleaning sector. This is rather perplexing because the new TGWU had transferred some of its members to new homes. It is also interesting that COSATU allowed for this to occur. Maybe this is one of the reasons why the federation was blamed for being biased towards the TGWU. The concept of one union one industry supports the argument that the security sector had to be transferred to POPCRU. Likewise, the membership of the cleaning sector had to be transferred to SACCAWU (South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union). If the transfers were impossible then a separate or combined security and cleaning union had to be established. The reason for these approaches is that the sectors represent two separate industries, yet again, share a commonality in terms of vulnerability.

The complexity of a merger process supports the view that amalgamations are generally not easy. A wide range of internal and external factors influence and dictate whether the process will be successful or not. COSATU might have been pressured to see the union's merge before the democratic transition. It is important to note that the new TGWU was formed in a pre-democratic era (1986 to be exact). The establishment of SATAWU (former and new) took place after the collapse of the apartheid regime (1998 and 2000 respectively). The periodization of the mergers reflects a socio-economic transition and subsequent variations in the formal structures of trade unions.

Another factor to take into consideration is the transition from participatory to representative forms of democracy in the 1980s. These relations were again constrained by conditions of a democratic era. The decline of internal democracy, repression of worker control and efforts of demobilisation became conditions that debilitated the militancy of social movement unions. Additionally, new forms of power relations, subjectivity and resistance shaped the landscape of the new South Africa. The mentioned factors cannot be separated from the periodization of merger talks. The pressure and reluctance to merge was influenced by multiple drivers as opposed to the notion of incorporating security and cleaning into the new union.

4.4. Challenges of the Merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU in May 2000

The work of Carr (2015) analysed mergers from a corporate point of view. However, the analysis and/or drivers that influenced mergers are relevant for the study at hand. Carr (2015) emphasised that mergers and acquisitions (M&A) often succeeded in theory but less so in practice. Research shows that M&A's often stand a 50% success rate. The modest success rate is best explained by the following reason,

> "M&A failures are widely typified by shortcomings in planning, differences in management and organizational culture, lack of synergies, poor integration approach, negotiation mistakes and limited knowledge among the senior managers of the M&A tools required to cope with the problems" (Weber et al 2014, cited by Carr 2015: 16).

When entering into a merger process, a synergy between organisations is critical for value creation. Mergers should be undertaken in an event that greater value will be achieved for both organisations. Cooperation and/or synergy between parties must be achieved in the following areas: operations, finances and management (Carr 2015).

4.4.1. Intra-Struggles over Leadership Positions

The first cracks in the merger between the former SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) and TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) were attributed to unresolved intra-factional differences between the two unions.

> "The fundamental problem with the merger in 2000 was that both unions entered into the process with unresolved internal differences. During the merger talks, it was resolved that positions will not only be shared but will not be contested. The old SATAWU focused on worker leader positions and TGWU on Secretariat (General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary and Provincial Secretary) positions. The former SATAWU took the President, National Treasurer and Deputy General Secretary (DGS) positions. TGWU took the General Secretary (GS), First and Second President positions. Problems within the former SATAWU started after the President's position was contested by a candidate nominated to be the National Treasurer. The former National Treasurer had agreed not to stand during the merger congress. However, the contesting candidate won the President's position forcing us to re-nominate our previous National Treasurer. The decision to contest can be liked to issues of tribalism, leadership styles, political and ideological orientation. Be that as it may, this created serious mistrust in the former SATAWU" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

A former TGWU employee remembered the internal challenges in the former SATAWU by stating that,

> "TGWU was aware of the divisions in the former SATAWU but took a stance that they will not get involved. It was unavoidable that workers had to pronounce on their preferred candidates at the end of the day. We were also faced with our challenges, our former Deputy General Secretary wanted to contest the General Secretary position. Through the intervention and guidance of COSATU [Congress

of South African Trade Unions], we managed to defuse tensions and the GS was eventually nominated uncontested at the National Congress" (Interview, Lubabalo Tinzi, 2019).

The work of Kiloh and Sibeko (2000) notes that the difficulties in the new SATAWU were not ideological but centred on vested interests between the two unions. The allocation of positions was not accidental instead reflected where power and resources were centralised in the former unions. Contestation between worker office bearers and officials expose the general organisational, structural, cultural and financial challenges associated with the amalgamation. The two relations demand a critical analysis on the difference between President centric and General Secretary centric trade unions/leadership styles.

4.4.2. Financial Control and Conflict over Investment Arms

In the literature review (section on trade union mergers), Clark and Gray (2000) suggest that in an event that the merger between the International Association of Mechanics (IAM), United Auto Workers (UAW) and United Steelworkers (USW) became realised, the new union would become a financial powerhouse. All three unions generated large amounts of money from subscriptions, investments and education facilities. Accordingly, the merging of finances and assets was a question to be critically engaged and resolved. Respondents in the study agreed that the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU in 2000, did not correctly address the question of assets and finances.

> "After the second merger took place, an immediate challenge that confronted the organisation was control over finances. There were allegations that TGWU wanted to seize financial control of the union. The reason for this was because the former SATAWU was viewed as a cash cow which secured benefits from Transnet. Another hot potato was control of the finance department. The honorary President Comrade ZZ [this is Archie Sibeko also known as Zola Zembe] warned us not to surrender the finance department. The two unions had to merge the finance department to avoid conflict" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

Respondents highlighted that the former SATAWU was financially stable owing to the membership organised at Transnet. The union owned a building in Braamfontein Johannesburg. TGWU was not financially sound hence, its inability to pay staff salaries on certain months. The question of financial control comes out clearer when focusing on the conflict between the National Treasurer and the General Secretary.

> "From a leadership point of view, the former SATAWU treated the National Treasurer as the accounting officer. The National Treasurer had powers to sign cheques as opposed to the General and Deputy General Secretary. On the contrary, these power were allocated to Secretariat (General, Deputy General and Provincial Secretaries) at TGWU. In terms of funding programmes, the

> Secretariat at TGWU would receive money which was something foreign to the former SATAWU. There was a serious conflict between the National Treasurer and the General Secretary on who had power and control over union finances" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

The control of SARHWU Investment Holding was another thorny issue raised by participants. The work of (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000) highlighted that after the 1994 democratic breakthrough, the private sector showed interest to hire black directors, managers, forging strategic alliances with individuals and organisations perceived to be close to the ruling party. SARHWU's (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) initial stance or philosophy was socialist. It envisaged that workers will own the means of production in a new democratic dispensation. This vision was negatively affected by the implementation of GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) in 1996.

> "The National Framework Agreement reached between the government and unions in 1996 recognised a number of restructuring options for parastatals including outright privatisation, out-sourcing of services, granting concessions to the private sector and setting up Strategic Equity Partnerships (SEPs) between government, labour and private business. The union allocation of Transnet shares was to be no more than 9% although more could be bought if they went into a consortium with black businesses" (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000: 259).

At one stage SARHWU directly owned investments in private companies such as "…insurance, scrap metal and advertising businesses." The direct ownership of investment created tension within sections of the union where it was argued that the organisation should distance itself from direct involvement "…in the ownership of capitalist enterprises" (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000: 259). As a response to the concerns raised, the NEC (National Executive Committee) of SARHWU in 1996 resolved on forming a SARHWU Enablement Trust.

> "The company was 70% owned by a special SARHWU Enablement Trust appointed by the membership, which was set up at the same time, the remaining shares being divided between SARHWU Executive Trust, representing the managers of the company (15%), and two private partners (15%). It was set up with four directors and two alternate directors, four of whom were national office holders of SARHWU (Ezrom Mabyana, Treasurer, James Phera, Deputy President, Tshediso Moshao, Deputy General Secretary and Bonakele Jonas, President)" (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000: 259).

The investment company was established to generate profits to be shared among members (Kiloh and Sibeko 2000). It was well received by the union members. They, however, expressed dissatisfaction with the direct involvement of their leaders in the business. Numerous allegations and concerns were raised

about their leaders, such as identifying with the employer, phasing out democracy and accountability, focus on business, investments and boards at the expense of worker issues. Split on the investment arm, some members gradually migrated to other unions. It was in 1998 that the first sign of resistance towards the investment arm was expressed by members.

One of the participants provided a different account on the history of investment wings in South Africa and the subsequent establishment of SARHWU Investment Holding. The following perspective was provided,

> "In the mid-1990s engagements of investment arms came to the fore. Interestingly the SACP [South African Communist Party] pushed hard for their establishment. The Communist Party argued that this was a strategy to have worker control over the means of production. SARHWU was one of the first unions to establish an investment arm. Unions that set up these companies did so unilaterally without any debate in COSATU. Any policy on investment companies in COSATU was like 'a tail wagging the dog because the horse had bolted.' I don't think it's a coincidence that the companies were set up in an environment where internal debates were increasingly becoming absent. This was caused by the centralisation of finances and political control in the hands of national leaders" (Interview, Jane Barrett, 2019).

The formation of investment arms brought serious challenges for the labour movement. The vision of ownership of means of production was negated by individual aspirations. Was prestige the cause of tensions within the new SATAWU? According to the respondents, transparency was a major issue during the merger process. The former SATAWU had declared and audited its investment subsidiaries as requested by TGWU. On the contrary, TGWU claimed that it did not have an investment arm. It was later discovered that it was not forthcoming with the truth. This caused tensions between the unions. TGWU was accused of hiding money, negotiating and entering into a merger in bad faith.

> "TGWU was never transparent with a lot of things including the declaration of the investment company. Initially, Randall [General Secretary of SATAWU. He came from the former TGWU] had a problem with Mabyana [President of SATAWU. He came from SARHWU] for not reporting on activities of the investment arm [SARHWU Investment Holding]. Apart from this, Randall interfered with the running of the investment arm. He was responsible for purging Sandile Zungu who was the CEO [Chief Executive Officer] of SARHWU Investment Holdings. Randall was eventually nominated to serve in the investment arm which ultimately collapsed" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

A former TGWU employee admitted that there was a lack of transparency from the union in terms of disclosing its investment arm. The interviewee stated that "allegations that TGWU did not disclose its investment arm are true. It was still small and not at an advanced stage. The problem we had with the SARHWU investment arm was that it owned shares where we organised and this was a conflict of interest" (Interview, Lubabalo Tinzi, 2019).

Respondents highlighted that after the collapse of SARHWU Investment Holding, an Enablement Trust was established for the sole purpose of making pay-outs to members. Rather than directly paying share beneficiaries, the money was instead channelled to provinces. It was later discovered that the money did not reach the recipients instead was utilised by provincial leaders for personal reasons.

Financial transparency, honesty and accountability are critical factors that have the potential to make or break a merger. The lack of financial transparency validates and/or strengthens allegations that the merger was negotiated in bad faith. The inability to adequately separate powers of elected office bearers and departments proves that the merger failed to agree on administrative and managerial processes. Given this, the union encountered a duplication of powers which became a major source of contestation over the control and distribution of resources.

The presence of former and new SATAWU leaders in SARHWU Investment Holdings created a rift with workers. The tensions were triggered by a conflict of interest, gradual decay in union democracy and a transition towards entrepreneurial trade union leadership/managerial styles. Political interference contributed to the collapse of the investment arm. The rank and file correctly diagnosed and located the crisis to entrepreneurialism. The crisis at that stage in development was in its infant stage, nevertheless, the merger in 2000 exposed and confirmed the concerns of the rank and file.

The formation of investment arms generally enriched union leaders appointed as CEOs, executive managers and board of directors. The prestige acquired from SARHWU Investment Holding delayed the merger process. We learn that after the merger in 2000, the investment arm remained controlled by SARHWU members. The political interference talks to two factors: wind up the investment arm to all members and fight over resources controlled by the business. The crash in the IT (Information Technology) sector/stocks was, on one hand, a good enough excuse to spark a fallout with the CEO and to resolve on the sale of the company, on the other. The reestablishment of a new investment arm was crucial for redirecting political and financial control from worker leaders to union officials.

4.4.3. The Conflict between General, Deputy General Secretary and Staff

A successful post-merger integration (PMI) according to Carr (2015), treats employees as a priority. When two strong organisations merge, a cultural collision has to be expected. Mergers are generally stressful because the process may lead to job losses, restructuring and uncertainty. The demoralisation of staff features a negative bearing on productivity and formed synergies. Both employee and management turnover may be influenced by poor PMI and cultural differences. To avert post-merger failure, the integration of strategies, operational systems, processes and cultures of different firms have to be prioritised. The proper management of cultural difference in a post-merger situation can improve organisational goals, strategic and financial objectives (Carr 2015).

SATAWU faced serious challenges at an administrative level. Differences between the General Secretary (Randall Howard- who came from the former TGWU) and the Deputy General Secretary (Johnson Gamede- who came from the former SATAWU/SARHWU) affected strategic development, creation of a new organisational culture, staff morale and effective running of union operations. Participants indicated that work relations in the General and Deputy General Secretary Office collapsed after Johnson Gamede allowed his PA (Personal Assistant) to work in Randall Howard's office. The respondents further stressed that Johnson's PA clicked with Randall because they were both coloured. Their work relationship went as far as withholding pertinent information from the Deputy General Secretary. Tension in the Secretariat Office escalated after the President (Ezrom Mabyana-came from the former SATAWU) agreed with Johnson Gamede to stop payment of Randall Howard's monthly rentals in line with the relocation policy. The tension had ripple effects and/or negatively affected work relations between former SATAWU and TGWU staff members.

> "Things were so bad that requisitions [requests/request forms] of former SATAWU employees were not approved by Randall. We also observed that Regional Secretaries and former TGWU employees were prioritised in terms of resources. Randall not only employed but placed former TGWU employees in strategic positions. If there were no vacancies, former SATAWU employees were either suspended or dismissed. The only time we received joy was when Randall left the country. That was only when our requisitions will be addressed by Johnson. We were highly discriminated against" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

Some respondents highlighted that the machinery of the union was in the hands of TGWU. The reason for this was that after the merger, it was agreed that salaries, hiring and dismissal of staff members would be suspended. This resolution was not adhered to because former TGWU employees including the General Secretary received salary increases behind closed doors.

One of the participants confirmed that tensions in the Secretariat (General and Deputy General Secretary) Office strained the general administrative/work environment. He disagreed with the fact that salaries were increased behind closed doors and that former SATAWU employees were dismissed to create vacancies for former TGWU employees.

> "After the merger, a National Staff Meeting [NSM] was called where there was a moratorium on the recruitment of new staff. The union indeed recruited new staff members to replace those that were dismissed, resigned and passed away. The meeting further resolved that no employee will be dismissed from the union. Staff members that were dismissed were subjected to fair hearings. Most of them lost their matters at the CCMA [Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration]. In some instances, staff members were suspended for political reasons but brought back after reaching settlements. With regards to salary increases, the former TGWU General Secretary [Randall Howard] and staff received adjustments in line with the new grading system. Employees from the former SATAWU earned far more than us. The adjustment was in line with the concept of equal work for equal pay… It can be confirmed that the tension in the Secretariat Office reached a stage where the Deputy General Secretary [Johnson Gamede] was isolated from internal activities and that requisitions of former SATAWU staff members were not signed by Randall" (Interview, Lubabalo Tinzi, 2019).

SATAWU failed to establish managerial synergy at an administrative level. This strained the efficiency, performance and creation of an employee-friendly environment. The lack of managerial synergy and PMI reproduced internal crisis at the expense of organisational needs. The division exposed a broader bureaucratic weakness. The literature on trade unionism accuses bureaucracy of eroding internal democracy. This perspective omits factors such as cultural diversity, the chain of command and division of labour within trade unions. Buhlungu (2003) eloquently explained that unions after 1992 prioritised efficiency and effectiveness over political ideology. Career unionists were employed to fast track the transition to entrepreneurial trade union and managerial styles. Hyman (2001), on the other end, highlighted that union-business relations existed in conducive environments between parties. The merger between the former SARHWU and TGWU took place at a time of codetermination (cooperation between management and labour unions in decision-making). Be that as it may, the union failed in its transitional efforts, hence, the inability to manage talent and diversity. The nature of division typified oligarchic tendencies in their elementary form.

4.4.4. Splinter of the Former SATAWU and TGWU after the Merger Congress in May 2000

Member's participation in trade union activities is often determined by the nature of organisational democracy (Sverke et al 2004). In most instances, members are discouraged from participating in union activities when incumbent leaders centralise decision-making processes and chances of being contested. A merger might reduce participation levels in an event that operations are optimised by staff. The union might be less dependent on rank and files voluntarism which could affect their opportunities, rewards and participation.

In the previous section, we learnt that operations were not optimised due to internal challenges in the office of the General and Deputy General Secretary. The research findings further indicate that tensions in the office of the President (Ezrom Mabyana) and Secretariat (Randall Howard in particular) discouraged members from participating in trade union activities. This eventually led to the formation of the first breakaway union.

> "The split came from a group of former SARHWU members who felt that the security sector and Randall failed to respect decisions of the launching congress. They argued that the union was run through decisions taken at secret meetings and later rubberstamped at the CEC [Central Executive Committee]. This isolated members and leaders of the former SATAWU from decision-making. Decisions taken at a structural level advanced the interests of the former TGWU. Members were not happy with the direction the union was taking. They alleged that the former SATAWU was swallowed by TGWU. The former TGWU was accused of coming to the merger with no money, resources and furniture. These allegations influenced former SATAWU members to remove the union's furniture from TGWU offices in Kine Centre-Johannesburg. COSATU was called to intervene but workers expressed hostility towards the General Secretary- Zwelinzima Vavi. The federation was accused of supporting and protecting Randall. After removing their furniture, the union opened a case against the workers which it eventually won. The outcome of the case influenced the formation of the new SARHWU. The aggrieved members argued that there were not going to be led by a union official whom they paid a monthly salary" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

The struggle between the President (Ezrom Mabyana) and General Secretary (Randall Howard) replicated itself in regions. The tensions were inflamed by allegations that the former SATAWU was swallowed by TGWU. After the first term in office, it was clear that there was no merger. Both unions started contesting positions from regional to national level. The contestations were based on a winner-takes-all attitude. One

of the participants claimed that Comrade Archie Sibeko who was the former President of SARHWU and an honorary President of SATAWU could have assisted in uniting the organisation during a time of crisis.

> "Comrade ZZ [Zola Zembe] criticised the union for keeping him in the dark. He wanted to be updated about developments taking place in the union. He wanted to assist in remedying the situation. His experience and capacity could have been utilised to bring parties together. He was deliberately marginalised by leaders of the former TGWU" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

Apart from the formation of the new SARHWU in 2002, the former TGWU was faced with its internal challenges which resulted in the formation of a splinter union between 2001 and 2002. The breakaway union was named Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa (TGWUSA). The only difference with this splinter was that staff rather than workers broke ranks from the new SATAWU.

> "The former TGWU had its breakaway called Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa. Divisions within the former TGWU were not coming from workers but officials uncertain about their futures. The tensions were not a national phenomenon but a Gauteng Province matter. The officials were dismissed and a splinter union was formed which did not last long" (Interview, Lubabalo Tinzi, 2019).

Another respondent confirmed that a splinter union was formed from the ranks of TGWU. A concern was raised regarding the favouritism of COSATU towards TGWU. It was alleged that the federation always drew lessons from the former SATAWU's breakaway and not TGWU.

> "Ten Gauteng staff members employed by the former TGWU closed union offices to express their dissatisfaction towards Randall and his security cabal. I was deployed to speak to the workers. It was resolved that a meeting between the NOBs [National Office Bearers] and staff had to be called. Indeed a meeting was held but collapsed. It was resolved that disciplinary processes had to be instituted against the staff members. After dismissing the first staff member, the rest opted to resign thus formed their union called Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa. COSATU never talked about this split instead focussed on the former SATAWU breakaway" (Interview, Johnson Gamede leader, 2019).

When closely analysing the nature of breakaways, a telling story about the character of the two unions can be drawn. The formation of the new SARHWU in 2002 emerged from a conflict between worker leaders and the General Secretary (Randall Howard). On the other end, the formation of TGWUSA emanated from tensions between union employees and the General Secretary. The tensions display the centralisation of

power in both unions. SARHWU centralised power in the office of the President and TGWU in the office of the Secretariat. This exposes two conflicting organisational cultures. It will be premature to reduce the distribution of power to competing union types.

In the same breath, one may argue that SARHWU was a workers/business union as opposed to TGWU. This assumption is too simplistic and potentially misleading as it firstly fails to explain whether the distribution of power in the office of the President was legitimate or not and secondly examine the character of the union within its political, ideological and organisational context. Furthermore, the history of SARHWU and TGWU suggests that the former was a political union and the latter leaned more towards business unionism. Hyman (2001) and Baskin (1991) would argue that the unions shared similar adaptive and response strategies to market, social and political conditions. However, the unions would on the contrary be differentiated by approach and organisation. The following section explores whether the distribution of power in the President or Secretariat office was in accordance with democratic principles.

4.5. General Secretary and President Centric Positions

The preceding section reveals that the formation of two breakaway unions represents a broader power relation between two competing organisational cultures. This opens up a debate on whether the centralisation and distribution of power by the President or General Secretary were in line with democratic principles.

> "There is a wide belief that the General Secretary position was very prominent in unions affiliated to the SACP [South African Communist Party]. On the contrary, most unions affiliated to the Party had prominent worker leader positions. FOSATU [Federation of South African Trade Unions] was not aligned to the SACP but the two organisations shared a similarity in the prominence of the General Secretary position. In the 1970s, a majority of Africans occupied President positions in FOSATU affiliated unions. The two positions [General Secretary and President] reflect the hierarchical relations of society within trade unions. This means that the General Secretaries in FOSATU affiliated unions were by and large white and university produced. The less prominent positions were occupied by African organic intellectuals. On the other side, SARHWU [South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union] was different from TGWU [Transport and General Workers Union] because the President was more prominent than the General Secretary" (Interview, Mojalefa Musi, 2019).

According to the respondents, academics and trade union activists often avoided the racial question regarding the writers of theory and history in South Africa's labour movement. They further claimed that SARHWU was more of a workers/business union as opposed to TGWU. The centralisation of power and administrative control by worker office bearers was the basis for this argument. The participants argued that TGWU's formal structure was ideal and/or preferred by the SACP. In both TGWU and SACP, the General Secretary position was more prominent than the President's position. Accordingly, the structural reconfiguration of the former SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) was achieved after the merger with TGWU in 2000. SATAWU like other COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) unions was eventually under the control of General Secretaries.

One of the respondents downplayed the racial question in trade unions but agreed that the centralisation of power at the head office was a cause of authoritarianism. The analysis slightly differed from other participants because it juxtaposed the character of trade unions in the 70s and 80s to the apartheid regime.

> "During the time of the merger, COSATU advanced a very centrist approach which saw union constitutions and financial control move from workers to the head office. It was in this period that a lot of democracy was lost to power centralised at the head office… The political culture of both apartheid and the liberation movement shared an authoritarian similarity... As unions merged and formed, there was limited space for political contention. There was a need to get unions under the NDR [National Democratic Revolution] project. With timeless attention was spent on sustaining internal debates. The new character of trade unions can be summarised as what the GS says must go" (Interview, Jane Barrett, 2019).

The above views explain that the shift from participatory to representative democracy limited the power of the rank and file. This transition can be linked to two factors: the collapse of political unions like SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions) and the rise of independent trade unions in the 1970s. Pillay (2012) disputes this standpoint by indicating that activists of the 1970s played a crucial role in reshaping South Africa's labour movement. After the 1973 Durban strike, the ANC (African National Congress), SACP and SACTU were forced to contend with a new form of working-class politics. The new strand of activism advanced a participatory democratic vision which "…did not readily subscribe to the vanguards interpretation of Marxism-Leninism promoted by the SACP" (Pillay 2012:7). This explains a power relation and/or contestation between two modes of struggle.

In the literature review, Pillay (2013) highlights that after the township rebellion spilt over into workplaces, FOSATU was eventually forced to take part in state politics. ANC activists in FOSATU played a critical role in managing the differences between workers politics and populism. They further influenced the formation of COSATU in 1985. Within FOSATU, both workers politics and populism intersected. Baskin (1991:5) supports this standpoint by stating that, "…the lines of division, in practice, were far from…neat." He justified this by distinguishing the different branches and perspectives within workers and populist schools of thought.

> "…Workerists divided into a number of camps ranging from those more economistic and syndicalist in outlook to those of a more revolutionary socialist and vanguards orientation. Each union contained within it a wide range of views… Similarly, those labelled populist were united by a belief that the union movement needed to be an actively engaged part of the wider Congress/Charters-inclined anti-apartheid struggle… but they differed on how independent/subordinate this relationship should be and whether they were primarily accountable to their members or to the ANC…" (Baskin 1991:5).

This analysis exposes the danger of attaching labels to unions without critically analysing their formal structure and intersection with other organisational types. The literature review clarified that the different categorisations revealed the time, space and conditions that scholars and labour activists found themselves in. The centralisation or distribution of power by the President or General Secretary cannot be used to define a union's ideological underpinning. The centralisation and distribution of power can be used to explain a union's formal structure, chain of command, division of labour, levels of democratic participation, "principles and practices of worker control" and organisational culture (Baskin 1991:6).

The inability to merge the two formal structures and organisational cultures confirms that the merger was indeed correct in principle but procedurally flawed. The two splinters, internal differences between the General and Deputy General Secretary, worker leaders and staff demonstrates that the former SATAWU and TGWU did not have a clear plan of action before and after the merger process. It is from this point of view that the breakaways were inevitable. The merger was unable to build working-class unity or fulfil COSATU's mandate of one union one industry.

4.6. Splintering of SATAWU after the 3rd National Congress in Sun City 2011

This section of the report explores the factors that led to the union's crisis post the 2011 National Congress in Sun City. The previous section uncovered diverse contradictions that influenced the formation of two breakaway unions. After the first National Congress (NC) in 2003, the union experienced a cooling-off

period for at least eight (8) years. It was presupposed that historical differences were resolved, therefore a new union emerged from the ruins of internal crisis. The lead up to and aftermath of the 3rd NC in 2011 subjected the union to cycles of unimagined crisis stretching from leadership turnover, the formation of three splinter unions, collapse of worker control and managerial systems.

4.6.1. The Run-Up to the Sun City 3rd National Congress in 2011

SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) entered its second wave of crisis after the resignation of the General Secretary (Randall Howard) in 2009. The CEC (Central Executive Committee) as the highest decision-making structure in between the National Congress filled the vacant position. The following cracks emerged before the CEC: lack of succession planning and intra-factional struggles.

> "SATAWU's problems started in 2009 after Randall Howard committed a fatal mistake by stepping down from his position between congresses. This allowed the CEC to decide on his successor. The North West Provincial Secretary [PS] was elected as a General Secretary until the following congress. This election happened without scrutiny. Zenzo Mahlangu did not have a big union profile, his province was small and he had a security background. The CEC parachuted him into the head office. There was no process where Randall mentioned an individual that will one day succeed him at the next National Congress. What happened in SATAWU proved that basic workers education had evaporated for uncritical political education" (Interview, Jane Barrett, 2019).

One respondent disputes the notion that the General Secretary (Randall Howard) resigned from the union without mentioning his preferred successor. It was stressed that a successor was nominated at a secret factional meeting. Randall's wishes were instead disobeyed by his lieutenants after turning their backs against his preferred candidate. The new clique advanced the name of the North West Provincial Secretary (Zenzo Mahlangu) who later assumed the position of General Secretary at the November 2009 Central Executive Committee.

> "Before resigning from the union, Randall convened a secret meeting with his former TGWU [Transport and General Workers Union] clique where his successor was chosen. The nominated person was rejected by a faction within a faction. Zenzo's name was more popular than Jackson Simon [Randall Howard's preferred successor]. Jackson was isolated from the new faction forcing him to join ranks with the former SATAWU grouping. After the National Congress, Zenzo dealt with Jackson" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

Another responded agreed that the departure of Randall Howard reproduced factional contestations and a new wave of crisis within the union.

> "The significance of Sun City was that Randall had resigned to pursue greener pastures in government. With him out of the equation, a gap emerged in his faction. His faction understood what the position entailed in terms of benefits and rewards hence it wanted to safeguard the gravy train. The former SATAWU came across this gap and was determined to contest the position. In a nutshell, old problems resurfaced at the National Congress" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

The 2011 Sun City National Congress demonstrates that SATAWU failed to rise above historical challenges. The union further failed to address its overall character for revitalisation purposes. Similar to the SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) breakaway, we learn that administrative and political decisions were taken at secret meetings. The departure of the General Secretary (Randall Howard) not only exposed but subjected his faction to a range of internal struggles.

4.6.2. 3rd National Congress and the Erosion of Democracy and the Rise of Hardened Factions

Sipahi (2016) identified the general assembly/national congress as the supreme decision-making organ of a union. Furthermore, he underlined that popular sovereignty was a basic and indispensable condition for trade union democracy. Its core function was to elect national leaders, determine union policies, open and close branches, approve budgets and decide on matters concerning the expulsion of members. The frequency of the National Congress was an integral component of democracy, therefore, calling it in short intervals assured adequate decision-making. The work of Slichter (1947) equates democracy to a pluralist political criterion which should ensure that voting is based on fairness and equality, resolution of disputes carried out by independent organs, there should be a separation in policymaking and implementation organs. The union should also ensure that it has open membership, transparency of finances, pension provisions for retired leaders and compulsory retirement ages for succession purpose.

A majority of respondents share the view that the 3rd National Congress/ 2011 Sun City Congress did not live up to its expectations instead plunged the union into crisis. Apart from the election of office bearers, basic democratic principles were not achieved. Respondents labelled the congress a disaster and a waste of money because it failed to deal with policy matters.

> "Sun City was all about hardened factions. There were no discussions and resolutions on the Secretariat report hence the issues were deferred to the National Policy Conference [NPC] which did not sit. The leadership that emerged reflected both the balance of force in the union and its inability to address historical challenges. The instability was not a matter of political will but capacity. The capacity of leaders elected in Sun City reflected disorganisation and chaos" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

One of the participants in the focus group study supports the view that after the 3rd National Congress, contestation for leadership positions became a serious challenge in the union.

> "Contestation for leadership positions has become a problem. The competition has become rotten and no longer democratic. The union is severely affected by the winner takes all attitude" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

In addition to the inquiry of popular sovereignty as a basic principle of democracy, one of the shop-stewards eloquently summed up the conditions in SATAWU by indicating the following,

> "Trade union democracy exists but how it is carried out determines who will benefit from it. South Africa is classified as a democratic country but not all citizens benefit from it. The very politicians have redefined democracy to mean stomach politics. Trade unions and political parties are doing the same thing, they depend on cabals to enrich themselves by killing democratic practices. The union's constitution gives workers full rights to participate in its structures but the problem starts as soon as people want to occupy power outside democratic processes. These individuals will misinterpret the constitution to advance their agendas. This agenda is driven by the politics of money. The buying of delegates makes one question whether democracy exists. Congress delegates often trade mandates from their constituencies for promises, money and benefits. The buying of votes from delegates shows that some leaders have no vision to run the union but are here for personal gain. They will not assist us in growing the union because it is not in their minds" (Interview, SATAWU Rail Shop-Steward, 2019).

The 3rd National Congress in 2011 introduced an interesting dynamic regarding a cross-fertilisation between two competing factions. In the previous section, we learnt that intra-factional struggles influenced Randall Howard's preferred candidate to join forces with the former SATAWU grouping. Interestingly, intra-factional struggles on the position of the President reproduced similar tensions during the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU in 2000. At that stage in development, Ezrom Mabyana (was nominated to be a National Treasurer in the new SATAWU) contested and defeated Bonakele Jonas (was nominated to be the President of the new SATAWU) at the merger congress in May 2000. Both Ezrom Mabyana and Bonakele Jonas came from the former SATAWU. Tables had turned against Ezrom Mabyana at the 3rd National Congress in 2011, after Ephraim Mphahlele, a candidate from the aviation sector, was nominated to contest the President's position. Both Mabyana and Mphahlele came from the former SATAWU/SARHWU faction. The nomination of Mphahlele sparked intra-factional differences within the

grouping. Consequently, Mphahlele joined ranks with the former TGWU faction which emerged victorious at the Sun City National Congress in 2011.

> "What made the National Congress rather interesting was the floor-crossing by both factions. The split in the former SATAWU faction was triggered by a contestation within the Presidency. Mphahlele joined ranks with the former TGWU faction. On the side of the former TGWU, the contesting General Secretary [Jackson Simon] joined ranks with the former SATAWU faction. Mphahlele won the election through the backing of the former TGWU. The newly elected President came from SAA which was under Transnet before it was unbundled. This outcome ended Transnet's control of the President's position" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

The build-up and outcomes of the 3rd National Congress reflect a rupture from the dominance of leaders elected at the first merger congress. The exit of Randall Howard weakened the influence of Ezrom Mabyana in the former SATAWU faction. This development leads to an assumption that the General Secretary and President depended on each other to hold onto power and manage their factions. This scenario is similar to both the case of TWU (TATA Workers Union) and the concept of a liberal-democratic approach as highlighted in the literature review. The cross-fertilisation and later outcomes of the 3rd National Congress demonstrate that the former General Secretary (Randall Howard) and the former President (Ezrom Mabyana) were not in full control of their factions. A contradicting view may argue that the departure of Randall Howard restored a degree of democracy in the union. Another may argue that the former SATAWU unlike TGWU was democratic to a certain degree hence the open contestation for leadership positions.

4.6.3. The aftermath of the 2011 Sun City National Congress and the formation of NTM in 2012

Before exploring the factors that contributed to the formation of NTM (National Transport Movement), DETAWU (Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union) and RETUSA (Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa) post the 3rd National Congress in 2011, one must first understand the nature of factions that contested the space within the union. Respondents highlighted that the factions had nothing to do with performance or ideology instead they were based on gatekeeping and access to resources. The more loyal one was to the ruling faction, the more they progressed within the union. Similarly, detractors were either side-lined, frustrated, purged, suspended or dismissed from the organisation.

> "Zenzo Mahlangu [SATAWU General Secretary elected at Sun City National Congress in 2011] was very powerful. Some say his power came from political connections and access to union finances. Others say that his links to service providers assisted in bankrolling and managing his faction. Nicholus Maziya [Deputy General Secretary] was also powerful but relied more on his

> backing from the Eastern and Western Cape. The tribal card played in his favour. The Secretariat [Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya] faction was instrumental at fighting and destroying any individual or grouping that tried to oppose them. After wiping out their enemies, the faction started fighting within itself. This led to the ultimate collapse of the union" (Interview, SATAWU Official, 2019).

A year after the 2011 Sun City National Congress, the honeymoon between Zenzo Mahlangu and Ephraim Mphahlele [SATAWU President] came to an abrupt end. The conflict ended the new faction established from a cross-fertilisation process.

> "The writing was on the wall regarding the union heading into turmoil after the 2011 National Congress. Historical contradictions deepened and new ones also emerged. Pre-Sun City contradictions were part of the merger which the congress failed to resolve. Historical challenges of the President and General Secretary had once again resurfaced. The slight difference was that Mphahlele did not enjoy support from other National Office Bearers. The new contradictions involved the purging of leaders and staff. These conditions were central to the formation of the National Transport Movement (NTM)" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

Some respondents argued that Mphahlele was purged and coerced to resign from SATAWU after exposing the maladministration, financial mismanagement and corruption within the organisation. Moreover, union members, shop-stewards, office bearers and employees were instructed in February 2013, to march in defence of national leaders (Ezrom Mabyana- former SATAWU President, Robert Mashego- former SATAWU 1st Deputy President and Zenzo Mahlangu- General Secretary) arrested on allegations of corruption. Robert Mashego and Zenzo Mahlangu were later acquitted on charges of corruption. Nevertheless, during this period, internal discussions, debates and decisions not only followed a top-down approach but were imposed on lower structures of the union.

> "The President [Ephraim Mphahlele] was crucified for exposing corruption in the union. The Secretariat [General and Deputy General Secretary] through the assistance of their henchmen coerced Mphahlele to resign from SATAWU. Be that as it may, he was successful in instituting charges of fraud and corruption against union leaders which led to their subsequent arrests" (Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

The fight between the President and some union leaders, was according to other participants, based on access to resources. Accordingly, the defeat of Mphahlele and his Gauteng faction influenced the formation of NTM in 2012.

> "The formation of NTM was based on access to resources and nothing else. The President and General Secretary agreed to narrow their differences before the 2011 Sun City National Congress. After the congress, the leaders did not agree on the question of resources hence their marriage was short-lived. This led to conflict between the two offices and Zenzo emerged victoriously. Mphahlele was a powerful worker leader but his followers were very weak as opposed to the Secretariat [Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya] faction… The very same secret meetings held at hotels were used to deal with him and his Gauteng faction" (Interview, Lubabalo Tinzi, 2019).

Another respondent stated that the conflict between the General Secretary and President had more to do with resources than workers interests. The interviewee criticised the President and other leaders for being authoritarian and having skeletons in their closet.

> "The President claimed to advance the interests of workers but his clique had issues with service providers. The President was also responsible for squashing intellectual criticism. The leaders of splinter unions had elements of authoritarianism, lacked tolerance for critical thinking and had their own skeletons from corruption to unbecoming sexual behaviours" (Interview, Jane Barrett, 2019).

The SATAWU (2012) August Special CEC report provides evidence that the President's faction had intentions to unlawfully access resources from a service provider. The report demonstrates that provincial leaders disregarded the union's constitution by entering into an agreement with a service provider on its behalf. The signed service level agreement (SLA) was not approved by FINCOM (Financial Committee), CEC or NOBC (National Office Bearers Committee). As the highest decision-making structure, the 3rd National Congress in 2011 resolved that service providers were to be engaged through the investment arm or office of the General Secretary. Decisions taken at this level cannot be reversed by lower structures of the union but only a Special National Congress can be called within the five-year term. The provincial leaders contravened the union's constitution and decisions of the 3rd National Congress in 2011.

4.6.4. The Formation of DETAWU and RETUSA in 2015 as a Consequence of Internal Conflict

Summers (2009) indicates that access to information- affairs and finances- freedom to express, communicate, lobby others to support views and the right to a fair hearing were essential ingredients for union democracy. The preceding sections establish that prolonged infighting, purging and mass dismissals triggered the formation of the second and third splinter unions in 2015. The second splinter was an outcome of a rupture within the Secretariat (General Secretary- Zenzo Mahlangu and Deputy General Secretary- Nicholus Maziya) faction. After defeating Mphahlele in 2012 and isolating KwaZulu-Natal province (KZN) after the Sun City/3rd National Congress in 2011, the infighting within the union was no longer outward but

inward driven. A majority of respondents sympathised with the KZN faction for questioning and confronting the dominant faction on issues of corruption and maladministration.

> "The splinter union formed by the KZN faction led by the Provincial Secretary [Joseph Dube] in 2015 was genuine. The Province always raised concerns about the union's finances including monies that were stolen from the SARHWU Enablement Trust. Whenever questions were raised, the Secretariat faction [national and provincial office bearers, shop-stewards and staff members] defended their masters [Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya]. This led to the ultimate dismissal of POBs [Provincial Office Bearers] in 2015. They later formed a new union called RETUSA. The formation of DETAWU [Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union] in the same year was an interesting development. The Provincial Secretary of Mpumalanga [Vusi Ntshangase] was a central figure in the Secretariat [Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya] faction. After Zenzo and Maziya defeated all of their enemies, henchmen like Vusi Ntshangase were viewed as threats thus were later dealt with" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

Another respondent criticised individuals that formed splinter unions except for KZN. It was alleged that the breakaways were based on access to resources and nothing more.

> "The breakaways post-Sun City Congress except for KZN were not ideological but based on the access to resources. The KZN faction led by Joseph Dube [Provincial Secretary] fought and were dealt with for something real. The divisions within the union were based on control over finances. Without money, factions will collapse. People join factions for financial rewards. The funding of factions traps people within the union. Their salaries and lifestyles do not equate to their qualifications and experience. Finding new forms of employment outside the walls of a union is virtually impossible. They instead opt to establish breakaways to carry on where they left off" (Interview, Jane Barrett, 2019).

Another respondent provided a reason why the two factions [Mpumalanga and KZN] were unable to form a united trade union that will advance the interests of workers. Political inexperience was blamed for the leader's inability to address their differences.

> "The formation of DETAWU in 2015 was not as smooth as many had anticipated. It was agreed that the former Mpumalanga Provincial Secretary (Vusi Ntshangase) will lead the process of forming a breakaway. The KZN faction [led by the Provincial Secretary- Joseph Dube] expressed unhappiness regarding his [Vusi Ntshangase] historical skeletons. They [KZN faction] did not mind him [Vusi Ntshangase] leading the process but not the new splinter union. This caused tension

between KZN and Mpumalanga thus destroying the possibilities of forming a united breakaway. Based on the level of tensions, it was predicted that even if they [Mpumalanga and KZN faction] formed a breakaway union, it will not be formidable. It was proposed that the leaders bury the hatchet to focus on a bigger picture. Regrettably, the factions were unable to agree on the sharing of positions. This led to the formation of DETAWU by the Mpumalanga faction and RETUSA [Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa] by the KZN faction. Regardless of their faults, they had the potential to confront the Zenzo and Maziya faction outside the union. All that had to take place was a collaboration between leaders, on one hand, and establish structures of accountability, on the other" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

The formation of the National Transport Movement (NTM) in 2012, the Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union (DETAWU) in 2015 and except for the Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa (RETUSA) in 2015 were based on access to resources. The various cross fertilisations were justifiable from a working-class perspective. This was a genuine step to ending historical conflicts between the former SATAWU and TGWU. The broken relations validate that factions converged to advance the interests of few elites. The elites or entrepreneurs used their influence and support as a bargaining chip to positions of power, resources and prestige. Resource-based factions are not permanent but continuously converge and diverge. Historical differences, intolerance and the need to assume leadership positions collapsed the possibilities of rewriting history and rectifying past merger challenges by forming a united transport, security and cleaning trade union alternative.

4.7. Other Factors that led to the Collapse/Splintering of SATAWU

4.7.1. SATAWU and Private Sector Partnerships

The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) (2011) National Congress Report dedicated a page and a half to the question of service providers. The report admits that organised labour attracted numerous service providers in the medical aid and funeral cover field. Unions were attractive destinations because of their large centralised membership following. Members, staff and leadership were found to manipulate and con service providers for their own personal gain. Service providers were made to pay for presentation slots at structural meetings. The union also blamed them for providing members, staff and leaders with hand-outs. The giveaways were used as a tool to attract business. Individuals that failed to deliver business faced repercussions. In failing to secure business deals, service providers were said to,

"Sponsor some comrades…to remove anybody who is a stumbling block. Some of these service providers sponsor contenders during congress time, to implement regime change. Through their

> power of money, capitalists find ways to divide us as they know that we are hungry. The workers particularly those who are unwise must not allow division sponsored by service providers" (SATAWU 2011:61).

The report proposed that any affairs to do with fundraising, medical aids and funeral covers had to go through the newly established investment wing-Bashumi Investment Holdings (BIH). Likewise, individuals found dealing with service providers without the permission of the General Secretary were to be subjected to disciplinary processes. Nonetheless, an interesting debate regarding service providers came out of the study. Some participants accused service providers of killing the union. Other participants claimed that sluggish economic conditions forced members to join unions for benefits including but not limited to medical aids and funeral covers.

> "Service providers play a role in killing a union. They are the reason why some worker leaders were expelled from the organisation. After signing an agreement for a data monitoring system, the worker leaders were accused and expelled on allegations of corruption. Service providers are corrupt because they assist union leaders to inflate prices. This, in turn, allows them to live and maintain their lavish lifestyles. The private sector is corrupt, manipulative and often uses its financial muscle to influence leadership positions for business purposes. Service providers are the key corruptors of union leaders. They are the reason for the union's state of paralysis. They have no ethics when doing their work" (Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

According to the respondents, taking money directly out of union accounts posed difficulties for incumbent leaders. The use of service providers assisted in channelling funds by overstating invoices. Furthermore, procurement processes enabled leaders to move large sums of money out of the union with a degree of accountability.

Participants in the focus group study support relations between the union and service providers. Their views were not in line with issues of corruption but the financial cushion that their products offer members in financial distress. One of the shop-stewards expressed their support by emphasising that,

> "The union must have benefits such as funeral cover or negotiate with service providers to lower their premiums for members. We are sitting in a tough economic situation and our standard of living is not improving. The situation has forced a lot of workers to look for unions that provide benefits. Things are not like before, we are organising lawyers and economists that can negotiate and represent themselves at hearings. These people do not need the union but seek benefits from it" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Aviation Shop-Steward, 2019).

A shop-steward from the rail sector argued that service providers played an important role in improving workers' standard of living. However, service providers that bankrolled individuals at the expense of members had to be done away with.

> "Times were changing and the union had to adapt to change. The union must consider using a percentage of the money collected from subscriptions for business purposes. Workers want to get something out of the organisation such as funeral cover. It is incorrect that the union only increases membership but not benefits to workers. Workers are sinking in debt therefore, the union must negotiate with service providers to offer workers cheaper benefits" (Interview, SATAWU Rail Shop-Steward, 2019).

The debate on service providers explains a transition from a militant to an entrepreneur-oriented trade union landscape. Respondents that rejected service providers exemplified a section of activists that opposed the entrenchment of trade union entrepreneurialism. The resistance is similar to the discontent that SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) members had for leaders that were directly involved in the affairs of the investment company (SARHWU Investment Holding). The fundamental difference between the detractors and proponents of service providers centres on approach and/or direct union-private sector partnership.

If we annul the direct influence that the private sector has on union affairs, we realise that a majority of respondents endorse the presence and products offered by service providers. The idea of trade union entrepreneurialism is either directly or indirectly accepted by members. Direct in a sense of completely transitioning towards an entrepreneurial trade union leadership/managerial styles. Indirect, by allowing the investment company to conclude agreements with service providers on behalf of the union. Hyman (2001) advised that unions were to form relations with other parts of the eternal triangle, for example, class and market, market and society and society and class. This means that a social movement union can establish an investment company or forge relations with service providers to improve member's social conditions. Structures of accountability, transparency and member participation in decision-making will assist, on one hand, in managing these relations and to avert corruption, on the other.

4.7.2. The Investment Company, Workers' Revolt and Kangaroo Courts

The SATAWU (2011) Congress Report confirms that the 2010 CEC (Central Executive Committee) held at Port Elizabeth resolved on the establishment of a new investment arm. The rationale was that the union had to explore new ways that will assist in financing its operations. Besides, the reliance on and non-increase of subscriptions could no longer sustain the union. It was agreed that Bashumi Investment Holding

(BIH) had to be established to mitigate the challenge at hand. Four National Office Bearers (NOBs) (President-Ezrom Mabyana, 1st Deputy President- Robert Mashego, 2nd Deputy President-Kate Matlou and General Secretary-Zenzo Mahlangu) were nominated to represent the union as trustees in the investment arm. In terms of the BIH organogram, the trust managed the work of Bashumi Investment Holding. Bashumi Investment Holding oversaw the work of various business divisions established to generate money for the union. The divisions included: property, information and technology, projects and financed services.

> "Bashumi Investment Holding came into existence after the sale of SARHWU Investment Holdings. The new investment company was meant to resolve the mistakes of the previous one. The documents were completed and endorsed by the CEC in Port Elizabeth. The documents were completed before the election of Zenzo Mahlangu as the General Secretary in 2011. The investment wing was registered in 2011, in line with the 2010 CEC resolution. Zenzo convinced the CEC about separating the union from the affairs of the investment arm. This contradicted the 2010 CEC and 2011 National Congress resolutions. In our understanding, the NOBs were to serve as trustees. The April 2012 Special CEC, nominated Zenzo as the sole director in the investment arm. Some individuals objected this decision. Provincial leaders opted not to listen because they stood to benefit even though they were not directly involved in the investment arm. It was at this stage that Zenzo was given ultimate political and financial power over the union" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

SATAWU never had a proper investment arm because the General Secretary (Zenzo Mahlangu) was given the power to act like a CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and Director of Bashumi Investment Holding. Respondents claimed that the General Secretary accounted to himself. It was clarified that before the 2011 Sun City/3rd National Congress, the union elected members to serve in the investment company. The decision to make the General Secretary the sole director of the investment arm was unconstitutional. This was made possible by his faction including worker leaders elected to observe the constitution.

After experiencing cracks in the investment arm, ordinary members and shop-stewards revolted against elected office bearers at a provincial and national level. One shop-steward recalled the unbearable conditions workers were subjected to stating that,

> "The Secretariat (Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya) used to boast about the union having money and no one could tell them anything. After defending them for stealing workers money, the Secretariat started buying buildings through the investment arm. We discovered that they had inflated prices. This led us to start asking questions about where the difference was. In some

> General Councils workers were threatened for asking questions about union property and where our money was. We were fighting for transparency and accountability. After the Secretariat was unable to provide answers, progressive comrades mobilised a march against them in March 2015. We were subsequently suspended and expelled from the union. Shop-stewards were suspended by Provincial Secretaries and not structures. This decision was in line with a 2012 CEC resolution to suspend anyone that marched against the union" (Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

Participants in the focus group study confirmed that shop-stewards, staff and office bearers that questioned the leadership were victimised and dismissed from the union.

> "The paralysis of SATAWU was caused at the national level. Workers at shopfloor level were stripped off their power to debate issues affecting the union. When people questioned the leadership, they were either victimised or dismissed. During this period [between 2012 and 2015] the union lost the best officials and worker leaders. The union fought the talent it had in the name of power" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Road Passenger Shop-Steward, 2019).

The General and Deputy General Secretary faction was accused by the respondents for converting structures of accountability such as the CEC into kangaroo courts. The courts were necessary for protecting the faction and disciplining anyone who tried to challenge it. The Secretariat (Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya) faction was blamed for convening secret meetings to plot on getting rid of its detractors. This was the same mode of operation used by the former TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union). Interestingly, a group of rail workers joined the Secretariat faction to acquire financial and shop-steward benefits. A labour researcher eloquently described the behaviour associated with the drive for financial control.

> "The control of resources and accountability is a huge challenge because he who has control of the finances decides what workers money will be used for. Unions are not businesses so transparency, especially on finances, is very important. Nowadays we find that at congresses the financial report is a closed session. I heard about a congress where the financial report had to be given back to leadership after presentations were concluded… What is funny is that the investment arms have failed to consider workers' interests. Most unions argue that investment arms were established for workers to strategically own the means of production. Have the investment wings gone to workers to understand what they want such as buying a mine to avert job losses? Are investment wings creating and sustaining jobs for workers?" (Interview, Labour Researcher, 2019).

The subversion of organisational policies and structural resolutions collapsed internal systems and accelerated the crisis. The SATAWU (2012) April Special CEC report provides proof that internal governance was deliberately collapsed by the dominant faction. The April 2012 Special CEC altered the composition of Bashumi Investment Holding trust. The 2011 National Congress report confirmed the composition of the trust which included three worker leaders (President, 1st Deputy President and 2nd Deputy President) and the General Secretary. The Special CEC reversed this decision by allowing the General Secretary to be the sole director of the investment wing. The report disclosed that the union was in the process of issuing an advert to appoint other board of directors. The directors would then be responsible for appointing trustees. The activities of the investment wing were not to be reported to the union but the new trustees. Similarly, the audit committee and board of directors were to approve or disapprove finances and not the CEC. The decision at hand demonstrates that the investment arm was not accountable to the union. The unconstitutional decision of the Special CEC illustrates that Bashumi Investment Holding was established as a conduit for money laundering.

4.7.3. The Role of Staff in the Splintering of SATAWU

The 2008/9 recession played a huge role in reorganising not only workers relations to production but affected the social structure of trade unions. In attempting to adapt to the changing external environment, unions witnessed an increase in the employment of young workers in the union. A majority of participants in the study highlight that the employment of younger staff members was detrimental to the union. Their appointments, on one hand, occurred amid an internal crisis and influenced by nepotism and factional decisions, on the other.

> "The Secretariat (Zenzo Mahlangu and Nicholus Maziya) had a very strong faction dubbed the 'Vaal detachment.' The name is self-explanatory. It describes a dominant faction coming from the Vaal area. This phrase was adopted into the union after the introduction of interns. It was realised that after the programme ended only people from the Vaal continued to work for the union. Their placements had nothing to do with performance. Zenzo allowed this to take place with no questions asked. The process created the following challenges: increase in salary bill, misplacement of staff and creation of positions outside CEC recommendations. The issue of nepotism is historical, the union placed a lot of unqualified people in strategic positions of power and decision-making" (Interview, SATAWU Official, 2019).

Another participant explained that the appointment of a younger generation assisted in phasing out institutional memory. This occurred through dismissals and the replacement of an older generation.

> "The quality of staff that the union hired after the Sun City Congress was very poor. We had good staff members at some stage but they were dealt with by factions in the union. It was said that the union had to make space for young workers. This led to the gradual removal of the older generation. The union succeeded in increasing the quantity of staff but left a lot to be desired with the quality. People with serious influence were replaced by interns. This killed the union's institutional memory" (Interview, SATAWU Rail Shop-Steward, 2019).

One of the respondents explained that some staff members were active participants in the purging of others. The rationale behind such behaviour was to show loyalty to the Secretariat and assume strategic positions through the replacement of discredited individuals.

> "Staff played a major role in purging others. This was done to show loyalty to the Secretariat and to access resources. The Secretariat replaced me from my position including the board I served in as a non-executive director. It was alleged that I was no longer toeing the line because of the critical questions I raised. I was isolated immediately after being written off from the Secretariats good books. Loyal staff members were mandated to isolate 'sell-outs' which caused significant interpersonal tensions. We all knew that after being isolated, the next stage was a suspension and finally dismissal. Our fears and paranoia were heightened after being informed that our phones were bugged. This empty threat prevented communication between staff, union members and leaders. We were unable to express our thoughts at strategic meetings and social media platforms. People were made to live in fear. This was repression of the highest order in the trade union environment" (Interview, Lubabalo Tinzi, 2019).

Participants in the focus group study agreed that the union was negatively affected after the employment of young staff members. The respondents expressed that the union should explore downsizing staff in place of full-time shop-stewards.

> "We realised that the union was sinking after the employment of interns at the expense of experienced staff. The interns came to the union for money. They did not care about organisational development because their employment was based on nepotism and patronage. The bloated staff complement should be replaced with full-time shop-stewards. Full-times are elected to do union work within the province. The reality of the matter is that organisers are employed to do what full-time shop-stewards are elected for. Rather than using subscriptions to pay salaries, full-time shop-stewards should instead be given allowances to service members. It is also unfair and difficult for LOBs [Local Office Bearers] to service members with their salaries" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Road Passenger Shop-Steward, 2019).

A SATAWU shop-steward confirmed that the union had an employee problem which was an outcome of historical manifestations. The interviewee strongly believed that existing staff had to be developed before considering external recruits. The proper implementation of human resource principles was identified as a weakness that the union had to address for transformational purposes.

> "A lot of staff members are demoralised because their qualifications are not utilised. We need to address the issue of career development. There is a need to skill, empower and unlock the hidden talents of staff. We should not rush into hiring new employees because the current ones already understand the union's internal politics and dynamics. External recruits should be considered when developmental efforts fail to yield positive results. There is a need to follow proper staffing processes. A big union like ours cannot operate without sector and departmental policies. The union needs to hire people with qualifications. Officials are employed to assist with administration, therefore, qualified, knowledgeable and innovative people must be hired into strategic positions" (Interview, SATAWU Rail Shop-Steward, 2019).

Every organisation develops a unique culture that is understood by employees and imparted to new staff members. The culture, characteristics and shared assumptions are developed through a learning process acquired by solving external adaptation and internal integration problems. In an organisation, value creation is fulfilled through the synergy between organisational goals and culture (Carr 2015). The eradication of institutional memory is detrimental to an organisation's objective, values, principles and culture. A balance between an older and younger generation is critical for continuity and succession purposes. The very same balance should apply at a shop-steward and leadership level.

The proper implementation of union policies and procedures are critical for influencing and adapting to change management processes. The identified staffing challenges symbolise a structural and systemic problem. Issues of patronage, purging and nepotism are symptoms of a collapsed internal system and/or governance. The development of policy, standard operating procedures, management of structures, division of labour, union hierarchy and chain of command feature in a trade union's constitution. A trade union's managerial failures may be caused, on one hand, by lack of capacity or a shift from distributing legitimate to illegitimate forms of power and influence, on the other.

4.7.4. The Role of Management in Collapsing SATAWU

Trade unions post the democratic dispensation achieved significant gains for members ranging from legislative amendments, to better conditions of employment and having full-time union representative positions. Employers viewed these gains as a threat and implemented strategies to weaken the power of

labour. The aviation sector SAA in particular is a perfect example to conceptualise the notion of divide and rule. Government's support for public-private partnership created numerous opportunities for business owing to the diverse services they rendered. The procurement of services from the private sector allowed unions like SATAWU to organise SAAs complex value chain ranging from catering services, cleaning and security workers.

> "What we observed in our study in the aviation sector was the alarming level of disunity among workers organised by SATAWU. The division firstly resulted from separate channels of collective bargaining. If one sector were to embark on industrial action, the others will report for duty thus rendering the strike ineffective. Business furthered its assault on labour after the 2008/9 financial meltdown. In its attempt to accumulate profits, radical forms of restructuring took place resulting in huge job losses. Trade unions not only lost membership but influential shop-stewards and significant representation at plant level" (Interview, Labour Researcher, 2019).

Participants in the focus group study confirmed that management played a role in weakening SATAWU at SAA and security sector. Nevertheless, they reiterated that the paralysis of the union was self-inflicted.

> "Management played a role in killing the union, however the biggest form of destruction was internal. When we had majority membership at SAAT [South African Airways Technical] the employer realised that it will be difficult to contain one union. It was decided that no union with absolute power will organise one workplace. Management approached former disgruntled shop-stewards to assist in recruiting for splinter unions. They hit us where it hurt most. If you look at the composition of rival unions, you will realise that former SATAWU leaders were re-elected as shop-stewards" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Aviation Shop-Steward, 2019).

Still, on the same topic, another shop-steward added that,

> "After the security strike in 2006, employers realised that dominant unions were a problem to manage. Management started forming their own workplace unions through the assistance of employees or shop-stewards. These organisations exclude SATAWU breakaways and existing rival unions organising in our scope. The funding of new unions contributed to their mushrooming in one workplace. Employers transferred our members to the new union which sometimes led to the termination of some recognition agreements. Where our recognition agreements were terminated, closed-shop-agreements were signed between the employer and the new trade union. Generally speaking, the union was weakened from its own doing. Members viewed their leaders as dictators which forced them to look for alternative homes.

> Our weaknesses were a bonus for management hence they took advantage of the situation" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

Internal weaknesses of a union naturally make it susceptible to external threats. These threats are treated as opportunities by employers and rivals. The probability of the union being less prone to external threats depends on internal strengths, ability to convert weaknesses into strengths and threats into opportunities. The long and short of this assessment is that a union's failure to influence or adapt to change will expose it to a process of natural selection.

4.8. The Decline of Worker Control in SATAWU

4.8.1. An Internal SATAWU Perspective on Worker Control

The South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) (2018) Congress report dedicated a section to workers participation and control of the union. It critiques workers and shop-stewards for surrendering their power to union officials. The report goes on to clarify that general meetings are critical for addressing workplace issues and championing shop-floor activism. It is at this point that workers political, ideological, organisational consciousness and trade union activism is developed. The General Meeting is empowered to elect shop-stewards, receive union reports, discuss complains and grievances and implement policies, decisions and campaigns of the union. Workplace structures are a primary point for holding shop-steward representatives and union leaders accountable to members.

> "The concept of worker control has always been contested. The basic fundamental principle rests with decision-making and the rest will follow. Members must occupy key decision-making positions and manage the affairs of the union. Workers must be given space to discuss organisational matters among themselves without undue influence by non-workers. Worker control is an important concept that has been practised but recently compromised. The conditions within the union show that worker control was distorted hence it is unpopular at this interval in time. Worker control exists as a concept in the constitution but not in practice" (Interview, Zico Tamela, 2019).

Another interviewee provided a distinction between a worker and an employee of the union. Firstly, the general membership is responsible for the existence and employment of union officials. Secondly, workers elect shop-stewards who above all are members of the union in good standing. Their role is to advance the interests of members, manage and monitor the work of officials.

> "To understand worker control, a distinction must be made between union officials and members. Officials are full-time employees of the union. They are employed to assist workers to execute their

tasks in line with the constitution and structural resolutions. A worker has their own separate employer hence they are organised into the union. They pay subscriptions to service union activities, keep the doors of their organisation open and to employ staff members. Before one can be elected as a shop-steward they must firstly be workers and members of the union in good standing. Members of the union and not officials elect shop-stewards at a General Meeting called at the workplace level. At a local level, shop-stewards and office bearers are in charge of ensuring that worker issues are addressed. They are also responsible for managing and monitoring the work of officials. In an event that an official transgresses, they make recommendations to the POBs [Provincial Office Bearers] and PEC [Provincial Executive Committee] to implement corrective measures" (Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

Participants in the focus group study went further to provide a distinction between workers and employees in leadership positions.

> "Worker leaders are employed by their companies and staff is employed by paid-up union members. The General Secretary is an employee of the union. His/her responsibility is to ensure that administrative decisions of workers are executed with the assistance of staff members. With that said, the General Secretary should not have decision-making power over the affairs of the union. The Secretariat (General and Deputy General Secretary) must work in the office of the President. They must be given job descriptions, have speaking and no voting rights. Why must an official/employee vote on business that concerns workers? The Secretariat must be appointed and not elected into office. Their appointments must be fixed an in line with the term of worker office bearers" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Aviation Shop-Steward, 2019).

There is a general understanding that worker control entails the collective decision-making power of union members. This includes but not limited to voting, mandating, participating in structural activities and monitoring and evaluation of union policies and resolutions etc.

4.8.2. Social Distance between Shop-Stewards and their Constituencies

Worker control in SATAWU was collapsed by union representatives that wanted to assume or retain full-time shop-stewards positions outside constitutional prescriptions. The stratification of shop-stewards could pose a threat to workers unity depending on the benefits attached to the positions. Participants in the focus group interview clarified the following,

> "The issue of occupying strategic positions at the expense of servicing members is affecting the union. This problem starts at the plant level. Members and shop-stewards want to ascend to the

> status of a full-time union representative. This contributed to unhealthy contentions. When a candidate loses the leadership race, they will either talk bad about the union or they will be treated as an enemy of the winning faction" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Rail Shop-Steward, 2019).

Another participant explained that some full-time shop-stewards were also fortunate to be elected as office bearers. The two positions-full-time shop-steward and office bearer- meant dual allowances for them.

> "The issue of allowances has created problems among shop-stewards. When one is elected as a full-time, their conditions of employment and salaries change. It's a bonus for them when they are elected into a national or provincial position. The union will provide them with an allowance. The change in conditions of employment, an increase in salary and allowance changes one's lifestyle. The issue with full-times is that they do not want to execute what they were elected for. Full-time shop-stewards also received paralegal training but they do not represent workers at the CCMA [Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration]. Why did the union waste resources on them?" (Focus Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

In a separate study conducted by one of the participants, similar concerns were raised by an employee of a prominent car distribution company,

> "Before the election of our full-time shop-steward, he used to ride the bus with us, eat with us and listen to our concerns. Ever since his election, he received a car, cell phone and other benefits. He used to eat with us during lunch but now he eats with bosses in the office. We eat pap and he eats a hamburger with the boss. The employer has made it look like full-time shop-stewards are part of management and not worker representatives" (Interview, Labour Researcher, 2019).

Unhealthy contestation and subsequent animosity among workers is experienced by shop-stewards. This means that workers are not so much worried about the benefits associated with shop-steward positions. The discontent with union representatives is caused by the social distance created by their positions. The social distance negatively affects participation in decision-making, access to information and accountability.

4.8.3. The Collapse of Worker Control in SATAWU

In trade union organisations, elected representatives/shop-stewards are the first point of contact and/or communication with members. Shop-stewards are a direct link between ordinary members and the administration. In an event that they act as conveyer belts of the central administration and is unresponsive to member issues at workplace, democracy will then undergo a process of distortion (Sipahi 2016). The

study discovered that though the concept of worker control was well understood, its practicality ceased to exist.

> "During the 1980s and 90s worker control was alive and vibrant. In this era, workers were able to voice their opinions, share ideas and collectively contribute to organisational decisions. Local offices like TGWU retained 70% of income and 30% was given to the head office. With time the control of finances was centralised at the head office reducing both the power and activism of workers at the local level. The centralisation of power at the head office saw power shift from a bottom-up to a top-down approach. This was one of the factors that led to the splintering of trade unions… We hear that the survival of some union leaders depends on cabals and placing 'yes men' in strategic decision-making positions. Individuals that disagree with them are either side-lined or labelled as 'counter-revolutionary'. The space for open debate is closed hence workers feel that they will not attend general meetings, participate in union activities or contest leadership positions. Anyone that contests a leadership position and loses will be dealt with or side-lined from union activities. The magnitude of crisis within the labour movement has negatively impacted the vision of one union, one industry, one country and one federation" (Interview, Labour Researcher, 2019).

One participant explained how worker control died out in the union. Rather than blaming officials, elected worker office bearers were accused of compromising members and weakening worker control.

> "Worker leaders are non-existent and for this reason, the Secretariat [General and Deputy General and Provincial Secretaries] is in charge of running the union. Instead of providing oversight on the affairs of the union, they spend most of their time in board meetings. They find themselves grateful to the Secretariat for putting them in boards forgetting that they are responsible for their existence. Worker leaders are blinded by money. The union has allocated offices for them which they do not utilise but periodically visit. I used the word visit because that is exactly what they do. Worker leaders only come to the office when they have board, sector or COSATU meetings. We know this because they are always posting their lavish lifestyles on social media. The constitution is clear that shop-stewards must represent members at hearings. When did you hear a worker leader doing that?" (Interview, SATAWU Security Shop-Steward, 2019).

The union lost worker control from an illegal structural decision taken in August 2015. One of the participants explained that the decision to grant the Secretariat (General, Deputy General and Provincial Secretaries) power to appoint full-time and national-full time shop-stewards occurred without constitutional amendments.

> "At the August 2015 CEC [Central Executive Committee], shop-stewards, in particular, gave Zenzo Mahlangu, Nicholus Maziya and Provincial Secretaries power to appoint full-time and national full-time shop-stewards. For one to ascend to that position, they had to get the blessings of the Secretariat-Zenzo in particular. The Sun City Congress did not make such a decision or mandate the CEC to amend the constitution. The CEC only had the power to interpret or propose constitutional amendments subject to the approval of either the National Congress or National Policy Conference. Even if these structures made such a decision, the Department of Labour as the final arbiter decides on constitutional amendments. It is for this reason that the decision to appoint full-time and national full-time shop-steward was not only unconstitutional but illegal" (Interview, Johnson Gamede, 2019).

Member's attitude towards a union determines whether it will survive or not. The nature of organisational effectiveness and democratic practices affect rank and file commitment and participation in structural activities. In this instance, commitment is based on their attachment to union goals, values and service.

> "…They [unions] are *of* the members because they are limited to those with a common occupationally or industrially based work interest. They are *by* the members because most of the effort devoted to union goals comes from the membership. And they are *for* members because their primary purpose is to advance the members interests…" (Fiorito et al 1993, cited by Sverke et al 2004: 109).

Trade unions are *of, by* and *for* members. When these basic principles are not achieved, workers end up migrating from one union to the next. Shop-stewards transfer of power to union officials collapsed the culture of open debate, accountability, service and participation of members in decision-making structures. The erosion of democracy is detrimental to the wellbeing of members and the future of a trade union.

4.9. Analysis of Research Findings

4.9.1. Trade Union Fluidity, Modernisation and Mergers

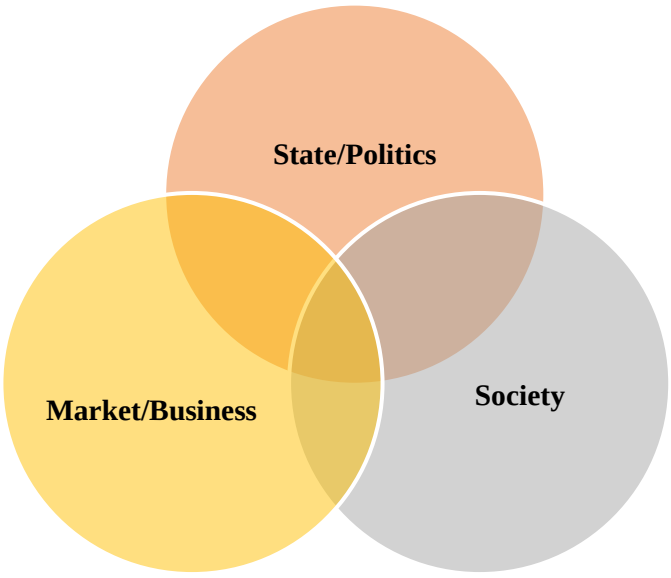
Before the ascendance of social movements in the 1970s and 1980s, earlier forms of alliance between SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions), ANC (African National Congress) and SACP (South African Communist Party) were deeply rooted in the Marxist political tradition (Buhlungu 2005). Because the alliances were formed on a social and political consensus, trade union and political competition were minimal. At that stage in development, SACTU was unable to separate itself from the SACP and ANC. As a political union, its struggle and core mandate were to collapse apartheid rule. The alliance between trade unions and political parties was determined by social democratic and national liberation politics. The situation in South Africa shows that the alliance was an outcome of prolonged colonial rule. National liberation was a goal that had to be realised by the oppressed. The relations between trade unions,

community movements and political parties were necessary for mobilising society behind a shared vision to overthrow apartheid and win state power.

This study establishes that trade union militancy was necessary for confronting apartheid's repressive apparatus and exploitative industrial makeup. The role of social movement unions (SMUs) between the 1970s and 1980s was centred on transforming the South African racial wage structure, inhumane working, living and social conditions subjected to non-white workers. Relations between shop-floor and community organisations were pivotal in shaping the inclusive character of trade unions. The nature of antagonism influenced the posture of class struggle taken by the labour movement. Not only did SMUs combine production politics with community and state power issues, but their internal character also advanced principles of participatory democracy. The formation and growth of COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) made participatory democracy impractical thus was replaced for representative democracy.

Hyman (2001:4) argued that it would be ideal for labour organisations to encompass an admixture of the three ideal union types. This meant that trade unions had to interact between society, class and market. European trade unions, on the contrary, interacted between two union types "…class and market; between market and society; between society and class…" When we replace Hyman's (2001) eternal triangle for the Venn diagram (a drawing that uses circles to illustrate their relationship among and with other groups of things) we realise that the three ideal union types existed in South Africa's SMUs.

Figure 17: South Africa's Ideal Trade Union Type-Social Movement Union



Summarised From: (Edwards 2004:6)

The concept SMUs highlights that the combination of business/workplace, social and political activism was imperative for realising South Africa's democratic transition. Labour activists understood that the liberation struggle and/or countervailing action against apartheid regime had to be carried out through these interactions at a base (workplace, society and party politics) and superstructure (state politics) level. The work of Baskin (1991) and van der Walt (2014) indirectly supports Hyman (2001), by exposing the danger of employing a blanket approach to South Africa's labour movement pre and post 1994. This includes employing concepts such as participatory and representative democracy to generalise and define the character of trade unions. The two forms of democracy were predominant in FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions) and later COSATU.

Baskin (1991) clarified the heterogeneity of the labour movement by demonstrating that merging parties had to grapple with the character of COSATU for four years (1981-1985) before its formation in 1985. The prolonged negotiations symbolise the complexity of trade union modernisation. The contending organisational, political and ideological traditions reveal that principles such as one union one industry, participatory and representative democracy were pure in theory but complex in practice. Unlike COSATU, the formation of SATAWU took 15 years of negotiation before the conclusion of the merger/modernisation process. Though this merger was realised 9 years after *Striking Back: A History of COSATU* was published, the lessons/challenges raised by Baskin (1991) not only replicated but frustrated the amalgamation between the South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union (SARHWU)/former South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) and Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) in May 2000.

This study establishes that the reluctance to merge was firstly caused by fears associated with losing leadership positions, organisational values, principles and identity. Secondly, the debate around incorporating private security and contract cleaning with the transport sector was a bone of contention that repeated itself within TGWU. In 1986, trade unions like ACUSA (Amalgamated Cleaners Union of South Africa) demanded security and cleaning be separated from the transport sector. COSATU, on the contrary, supported TGWU's rejection of this proposal. The former SATAWU supported the position of ACUSA by maintaining that the merger with TGWU had to be exclusive to the transport sector as per the one union one industry resolution. The incorporation of contract cleaning and private security with the transport sector may have been influenced by the following: on one hand, the two sectors were genuinely vulnerable and could not stand on their own. On the other hand, TGWU might have feared being swallowed by the former SATAWU thus depended on the votes from its private security and contract cleaning constituency. Regardless of the decision to integrate the two sectors, Baskin (1991) was correct to highlight that the interpretation of industry was one of many factors that collapsed merger talks.

Thirdly, the determination of paid-up membership contributed to tensions between the former SATAWU and TGWU. The former collected its membership subscriptions through stop-order facilities. This method of collecting union dues assisted with membership verification. The latter union depended on a decentralised collection method. Membership dues were physically collected at a local level. A certain portion of the subscriptions collected would then be distributed/allocated to the head office. The method made it difficult to verify union members in good standing. Further research on centralised and decentralised collection methods must be conducted to determine whether the flow/channel of trade union subscriptions has an impact on worker control, participatory and representative democracy. This study will also enhance existing literature focusing on social distance between union leaders and members, trade union oligarchy, labour aristocracy and centralisation of power at the head office.

Fourthly, organisational, political and ideological traditions between the former SATAWU and TGWU were not far apart. According to Baskin (1991), the former belonged to the UDF (United Democratic Front) Block and the latter to the Centre Block. Though the two unions differed on organising/organisational methods, they at a certain extent, shared similar political views/outlooks. Organisational differences couldn't have been the main reason that contributed to the formation of the Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa (TGWUSA) between 2001 and 2002 and the new SARHWU in 2002.

Finally, the control of union finances was a contentious issue within the new SATAWU after the merger in May 2000. The conflict between the President and General Secretary (which reflected the general character of the union) was more resource-driven as opposed to organisational, political and ideological differences. This statement is justified by the following reasons emanating from the study: The former TGWU was not transparent with its finances especially when it came to disclosing the existence of its union investment company. The former SATAWU had a more financially lucrative union investment company. The subscriptions collected by the former SATAWU were higher, stable and more consistent as opposed to TGWU. In summary, the latter union faced financial difficulties. Lastly, the membership composition of the former SATAWU was more formal/professional as opposed to the vulnerable sectors organised by TGWU. Differences between membership configuration and financial strength created class distinctions within the union. These differences contributed to the conflict over the control and distribution of resources in SATAWU.

This study has demonstrated that the splintering of SATAWU is not unique from the merger crisis that once confronted COSATU affiliates. The ruptures equally affected the one union one industry mandate. The work of Buhlungu (2005) and Pillay (2008) argued that the change in COSATU's character and fracture of union-party relations contributed to the splintering of trade unions affiliated to the federation. The signs

presented themselves before the dawn of democracy. They can be traced to the differences between FOSATU and the SACP; the threat of fragmentation in COSATU in 1986 and the unresolved tensions between COSATU, UDF and community movements in the 1980s. The change in workers, union leaders and employee character after the 1990s signalled new forms of struggle and contestation within the federation, affiliates and Tripartite Alliance.

With the advent of democracy, South Africa has been confronted with new forms of poverty, patronage networks and social struggles. The adoption of market fundamentalist principles by the ANC-led government contributed to the formation of new social movements and struggles in the new dispensation. An interesting twist in events within the Tripartite Alliance showed that union-party relations could be used as a power bloc for factional purposes. Principles of participatory democracy were superseded by the rise of a neo-Stalinist oligarchy. After the Zuma administration secured political power, the radical socialist rhetoric was overshadowed by neoliberal orthodoxy. Pillay (2008) was correct to argue that the differences between the Zuma and Mbeki faction were not ideological but resource-driven.

The restructuring of industry, legislation and relations of production are core drivers that influence trade union mergers for modernisation and adaptive reasons. The 1994 democratic breakthrough, opened accommodative avenues for previously marginalised employees belonging to African trade unions. This study reveals that not all employees/union members enjoy the principles of codetermination (cooperation between management and labour unions in decision-making) to manage union-business relations. The vulnerable industries organised by TGWU continued to depend on trade union militancy as a form of countervailing action against class and industrial antagonism. What makes the South African case even more captivating is that a union-market-class relationship emerged out of democracy. The implementation of GEAR in 1996, liberalisation of markets and introduction of BEE policies altered the hallmark of trade unions. Unions affiliated to COSATU vacillated between union-class alliances and union-market relations. The co-option of leaders and officials into business environments and governmental positions swayed unions to push back from their core founding principles. The character change of full-time union officials justifies the impact political and economic restructuring has on trade unions. The move from ideological to entrepreneurial leadership styles supports the view that the composition of COSATU and its affiliates has become more professional notwithstanding, that minimal effort has been made to organise causal, informal and marginalised workers. Trade union modernisation in this context follows an even and combined developmental path/approach. With this said, we can better appreciate the reasons why the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU in May 2000 was correct in principle but procedurally flawed.

4.9.2. A Marriage of Convenience: Cohabitation between Labour Aristocracy and Oligarchy

The theory of labour aristocracy demonstrates that industrial development and socio-economic change contributed to the distinctions within the working-class stratum. The proponents of labour aristocracy agree that at a certain stage in development, the working class was homogenous but the reconfiguration of industry led to their heterogeneity. Variations of this nature confirm that labour aristocracy emerged from the fluidity of industry. The gradual alteration of industry dislodged the old aristocracy for a new one. Accordingly, industrial change has negative effects on the working class. It subjects the proletariat to numerous vulnerabilities irrespective of their productive, organisational and social status.

In South Africa, labour aristocracy was not only transnational but confirmed Lenin's argument on imperialism. The import of skilled labour permitted British workers to bargain for better conditions of employment as opposed to non-white workers. Accordingly, this new strata of the working class was determined by skill, authority at work, higher wages and race. These conditions created the first labour aristocracy linked to the structural character of the mining sector.

The Weberian/non-Marxist approach locates the class position of labour aristocrats in the economic interests of common life chances. The aristocracy was more worried about protecting their social status, internal satisfaction, authority at work, higher wages, housing patterns, education and participation in politics of upward mobility. Like class, their social status was grounded on the monopolisation of resources-skills in particular. The racial colour bar, skill and credentials contributed to industrial and social inequalities. White workers were directly involved in the exploitation of non-whites. The question to ask is whether the segregated African middle-class worker can be classified as a labour aristocrat?

The African middle-class earned less than the white middle-class. However, their class position and social status made them feel and behave like high ranking individuals in a low ranking community. They created social closure and distance from the rest of the community. They emulated the white middle-class, supported the western culture and showed contempt to African culture. They hated apartheid only because it treated them in the same manner as a low-class common African. Their political struggle centred on the need to be recognised as an upper-class within a low ranked class stratum. Had the black middle-class been treated differently, the possibility of class collaboration and co-option would be inevitable. The reason for this is that even though they were organisationally and socially low ranked, their class position and social status made them behave superior to the lowest-ranked African. It can be assumed that class and racial stratification in South Africa influenced the oppressed to act as sub-oppressors of their own kind/stratum.

When analysing the concept of labour aristocracy from a stratification vantage point, we discover that African aristocrats share similar qualities as their white counterparts. One can argue that Africans are not aristocratic because of their colonial history. It can equally be contended that white workers were not aristocrats due to the non-ownership of means of production. If we annul the colour bar another perspective will suggest that both races were equally exploited. The non-Marxist approach to stratification illustrates the complex arrangement and divisions within the working-class stratum. As such, a general approach to class analysis conceals the question of stratification and labour aristocracy. A non-orthodox approach not only introduces new viewpoints but complicates existing ones. We can now appreciate that labour aristocrats existed among the segregated. The advent of democracy emancipated them from their animal-like conditions in the same proportion as market liberation.

This study establishes that class distinctions existed among trade union members before the advent of democracy in 1994. The reluctance of the former SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) to merge with TGWU (Transport and General Workers Union) exposes the divide between the public and private sector employees and unions. The former SATAWU members enjoyed benefits such as collective bargaining, housing subsidy, industry-wide medical aid and minimum wages. The membership of TGWU, on the other end, did not enjoy such benefits. The security and cleaning sector, for example, was predominantly represented by precarious workers that were low skilled, earned very low wages which were not negotiated for at a bargaining council/forum level. The perks provided to worker office bearers, staff salaries and infrastructure (collection of subscriptions) of the former SATAWU was more advanced than TGWU. In summary, African workers organised by trade unions located in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) like Transnet and other private sector transport companies enjoyed a middle-class status even though their occupational and social conditions were below their white counterparts. A handful of private security officers and contract cleaners were able to enjoy a middle-class status by occupying/swelling full-time union employee positions (SATAWU in particular). This also included the occupation of office bearer (General, Deputy General and Provincial Secretaries) positions allocated and/or eligible to be contested by qualifying union employees. A marriage of convenience between transport workers, private security officers and contract cleaners had to be created for upward mobility purposes. These conditions became evident after the ANC (African National Congress) assumed state power in 1994.

Kiloh and Sibeko (2000) support this argument by demonstrating that labour aristocracy did not collapse in a democratic South Africa. SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union)/former SATAWU was aware that its affiliation to COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions) and the victory of the ANC would improve its conditions as opposed to other unions. The union was expected to benefit at a political and shopfloor level. Politically, union leaders were better placed to ascend to

governmental positions. They were also privileged to gain access to senior political leaders on sectorial matters. The introduction of full-time shop-steward positions was intended to improve workers representation at a shop-floor level. On the contrary, the perks and benefits associated with the positions recreated a favoured strata of workers within the trade union constituency. The social distance intensified class antagonisms between ordinary members and labour representatives. The representatives were accused of advancing interests of the employer at the expense of ordinary union members.

Bischoff (2015:231) affirms Kiloh and Sibeko's (2000) analysis of labour aristocracy by highlighting that the character change of some full-time shop-stewards was at the detriment of servicing ordinary union members at shopfloor level. Democratic South Africa opened new opportunities for upward mobility for the previously marginalised shop-stewards. The full-time shop-steward position created a favoured strata of workers within the trade union landscape.

> "…Shop stewards have taken full advantage of the new opportunities at the workplace. Furthermore, the position of shop steward has become a launching pad to new careers which are well remunerated for some union leaders at shop floor. The result of this has seen a severe struggle on the shop floor for the shop steward position which compromised the organisational strength of some COSATU affiliates. The social mobility of shop stewards are promoted into management…Trade unions have opened up paths to upward social mobility for a minority of workers which were not previously available. In its September Commission Report in 1998, COSATU warned of the impact that the upward mobility of shop stewards would have on its organisational structure, stating that 'there are worrying organisational trends-lack of service, lack of skills, lack of discipline, lack of commitment- that could generate a crisis if not addressed'".

The above quotation argues that the behaviour/character of shop-stewards is not immune from variations in social, economic and industrial relations. It further brings to light that social distance not only starts at the shopfloor level but spills over into other structures of the union. Under these conditions, social distance follows a bottom-up approach. The case of SATAWU supports Bischoff's (2015) argument as it shows that social distance between union leaders and members started at the workplace level. Central to the social distance was the struggle to assume and preserve full-time shop-steward positions. In most cases, the occupation of these strategic positions was at the expense of servicing ordinary union members. The factors that affected service to members include the following: focus on meetings with management, building relations with service providers, prioritising board of director meetings as opposed to shopfloor matters, advancing factional interests rather than attending to workplace issues affecting union members, dereliction of duty and transfer of responsibilities to union employees.

The decision to allow the General, Deputy General and Provincial Secretaries to appoint full-time shop-stewards at the 2015 CEC (Central Executive Committee), proves that the favoured strata of workers in SATAWU deliberately weakened internal democracy through the violation of the union's constitution. Similarly, the 2011 Sun City National Congress (NC) resolved on the structural arrangement of Bashumi Investment Holding (BIH). This decision was later reversed by the April 2012 Special CEC. The nominated worker office bearers (President, 1st Deputy President and 2nd Deputy President) except the General Secretary were removed from this configuration. The General Secretary (Zenzo Mahlangu) subsequently became the sole director of the investment company. Consequently, Bashumi Investment Holding (BIH) became a conduit of money laundering. This statement is backed by the SATAWU (2018) National Congress Report. The report confirmed that the union had instituted a forensic investigation on the misappropriation of union funds between 2012 and 2017.

The preliminary findings of the forensic investigation were presented at the July 2018 CEC (SATAWU 2018). The investigators unearthed the following: firstly, the union could not substantiate its financial transactions because they were not backed by supporting documents. Secondly, governance structures failed to manage due processes, numerous transactions were not correctly authorised, the proper delegation of authority was disregarded, finance policies were flouted and the FINCOM (Financial Committee) failed to play an oversight role as empowered by the constitution. Thirdly, there were no records that showed the union's returns on investment (ROI). Fourthly, the report questioned the legality of SATAWU assets. It was discovered that SATAWU House (the union's head office building) was registered as Bashumi House. The latter and not the former owned the property of the union. Lastly, the preliminary report argued that the General Secretary was not meant to be appointed as the sole director of the investment company. It revealed that the illegal decision of the April 2012 Special CEC led to the General Secretary's centralisation of power in the investment company. This unconstitutional decision allowed the General Secretary to account to himself. Apart from the conflict of interest, the investment company was completely delinked from the union. By making the General Secretary the sole director of Bashumi Investment Holding, the aforementioned CEC, in reality, did not deploy but gave (consciously or unconsciously) him full ownership rights of the union's investment company.

The study at hand proves that structures of accountability were used to centralise, undermine internal democracy and preserve the power of the dominant faction. It further demonstrates that a section of shop-stewards (ordinary, divisional full-time and national full-time) should not be excluded from the architecture that entrenched and institutionalised the distribution of illegitimate power and influence in various structural layers of the union. This perspective slightly differs with Sipahi's (2016) notion that the larger and more bureaucratic a union became, democracy tended to weaken. The rationale was that power would no longer

be centralised at a local but national level. The power shift limited locals from advancing countervailing actions against the central administration. This was caused by its monopoly of power, control over communication, organisational resources and physical distance from members. These factors further hindered members ability to run successful leadership campaigns at national congresses thus adding to the rank and files failure to take control of the organisation. Indeed, the growth of a trade union may alter internal processes, its overall makeup and democratic practices. The transition from participatory to representative democracy does not necessitate an automatic existence of oligarchy. Oligarchy finds its place in instances where worker control and democratic practices are eroded by incumbent leaders.

Because not all trade unions subscribe to principles of participatory and representative democracy, oligarchy may entrench itself in any organisational form (formal or informal). Leach (2005) supports this perspective by arguing that oligarchy may entrench itself in formal or informal organisations. The difference between formal and informal organisations lies in the distribution of formal and informal power. Irrespective of the nature of an organisation, a minority becomes oligarchic by exceeding the bounds of legitimate power. This happens by enforcing decisions or exerting influence without a mandate. An elite leadership secures their positions by enforcing illegitimate forms of power: coercion or manipulation. Through the distributing illegitimate power, a majority runs the risk of being bought off by incumbent leaders. This is achieved by promising material rewards, avoidance of material sanctions, emotional sanctions and withholding information from the majority. The three conditions that may occur when elites become oligarchic are lack of leadership turnover, minority control of resources and low levels of participation in governance. The three indicators suggest that oligarchic control may be present notwithstanding that they are not sufficient proof of its existence.

The case of SATAWU shares common similarities with TWU (TATA Workers Union). The only difference is that the oligarchs in the latter union were worker leaders and not union officials. The analysis on President centric and General Secretary centric trade unions clarifies the question relating to the distribution of power in both offices. By accepting oligarchy as a power relation, we can appreciate that it can be dispersed by union officials, worker leaders and sometimes both. Multiple drivers can transition internal democracy to oligarchic rule. With SATAWU, oligarchy cohabitated with labour aristocracy. The labour aristocrats (ordinary shop-stewards, full-time shop-stewards and elected worker office bearers) depended on the union's influence to secure senior positions, improve their wages and benefits and middle-class social status. Internal factions were critical for creating social closure, preventing contestation and creating lifetime union representative positions. The decision to appoint full-time shop-stewards contrary to union statutes prevented leadership turnover in such positions of authority. Such decisions justify that aristocrats

supported oligarchic practices. In summary, some union shop-stewards and elected worker office bearers) were both aristocratic and oligarchic.

Union officials/employees through the Secretariat (General and Deputy General Secretary) office made oligarchy practical. Their administrative influence helped the dominant faction to centralise resources, communication and political knowledge. Through the services of some career and entrepreneurial unionists, the central administration had an upper hand over lower structures. The distribution of illegitimate rewards and sanctions put both proponents and detractors in their place. Factors such as constitutional manipulation, noncompliance, neglect of policy matters and restriction of open contestations empowered the elite to entrench themselves within the union. A hegemony between some officials and worker leaders had to be established to safeguard minority rule within the union and organised workplaces. TWU on the contrary, depended on the President and General Secretary to manage their factions. Though they were rivals, their permanent agreement was centred on the control of resources and advancing personal interests. Regardless of the form or shape oligarchies take, they depend on the internal unity of a dominant faction.

With TWU, the highest decision-making structure- general assembly- neglected policy issues over contestation for leadership positions. Internal democracy was superseded by corruption, bribes, violence, physical harm and threats during elections. The loopholes in the constitution enabled union leaders to exploit the election processes by subjecting delegates to vote by hand and not by way of secret ballot. Members expressed their dissatisfaction with leaders occupying positions for more than twenty years. Their turnover often resulted from illness or death. In an event that leaders were confronted by ill health or death, union members were excluded from voting for candidates to fill vacant positions. The President, General Secretary or executive committee had the power to appoint candidates into vacant positions. The executive committee undermined union members by reversing their collective decisions. In one scenario, some committee members and the executive were democratically voted out of power through a motion of no confidence but the decisions were rejected and reversed. The ability of leadership to enforce illegitimate decisions, distribute rewards to supporters and sanction detractors demonstrates the extent of oligarchic entrenchment in the union.

The history of SATAWU's internal crisis illustrates that multiple convergences and divergences led to the splintering of the union. Separate from issues of political ideology, we realise that social closure, the fight for resources and upward mobility contributed to the union's negative turning point. The previous administration(s) from 2000 to 2017 relied on kangaroo courts and social distance between union leaders, staff and members to manage factions, avert accountability and to eradicate detractors. These conditions factors stifled open engagements, minimised direct participation in union activities and outlawed

democratic contestations for leadership positions. The factional hegemony was sustained through the phasing out of institutional memory, occupation of strategic union organs, limiting access to information, monopolising communication and eroding workers education for service provider training and development programmes. Intra-factional struggles have proven to reorganise and challenge an existing status quos.

The entrenchment of oligarchic leadership and managerial styles within SATAWU was counterbalanced through resistance. The countervailing action reveals that the union was not under the absolute control of a labour aristocracy and oligarchic leadership. In responding to the resistance, a large number of employees, shop-stewards (including a minority of full-times) and office bearers were dismissed from the union between 2012 and 2015. Consequently, NTM (National Transport Movement) in 2012, DETAWU (Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union) and RETUSA (Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa) in 2015 were respectively established as an outcome of these conditions. In attempting to mitigate the damage caused by the two forms of power relation, the SATAWU (2018) 4th National Congress report argued that the union had to reform by going back to basics to avert collapse. This resolution does not necessitate that undemocratic tendencies were completely and/or automatically dissolved.

Regardless of the 4th National Congress resolution to reform by going back to basics, remnants of the labour aristocracy, oligarchy and entrepreneurialism still linger within SATAWU. Like SACTU (South African Congress of Trade Unions) and COSATU, SATAWU can best be defined as a political union. Van der Walt (2014) was correct to argue that social movement unions had the potential to transition towards political unionism. The adoption of oligarchic entrepreneurial leadership and managerial styles in SATAWU can directly be linked to the patronage networks established by the ANC-led government and/or Tripartite Alliance. In summary political unionism has the potential of converting popular trade unions into breeding grounds for businessmen and African middle-class through political influence and the adoption of entrepreneurialism. The combination of these factors including the union's failure to transition from political unionism to new forms of organisation makes it susceptible to another wave of crisis.

The intra and inter-factional struggles within SATAWU reveals that power and resistance are interconnected relations. Apart from their contestations, both power and resistance have their inherent antithetical relations. Simply put, power dynamics and struggles existed within the former SATAWU and TGWU. The tensions often resulted in a series of cross-fertilisation. Consequently, new factions were created out of existing power struggles. Power is, therefore, not static but a fluid relation that exists everywhere. The thin line between internal democracy and oligarchy is determined by the management of power relations between union members, shop-stewards, elected office bearers and staff.

> "… Power and resistance have been considered as necessarily opposed, a view, however, which is increasingly being abandoned. Because, not only are forms of resistance shaped by existing power relations but resistance also, paradoxically, reinforces and/or creates power relations. Power, then, occasionally, relies on the production of resistance. Power and resistance exist in a mutually constitutive relationship and the two concepts are increasingly being understood as interconnected and entangled" (Lilja and Vinthagen 2014:111).

Generally, the distribution of illegitimate power weakens internal democracy and entrenches oligarchic practices. The root cause of oligarchy is the lack of accountability, the need to preserve authority and violation of constituted rules. Motivated by the drive for upward mobility, a culture of monopolisation of resources, means of communication, knowledge and skills were employed to manage and safeguard personal interests within SATAWU. The entrenchment of oligarchy in SATAWU's formal democratic structure shows that it was a phenomenon caused by undemocratic actions of a dominant minority. It is only through the proper application of union statutes, direct participatory democracy and worker control that oligarchy can be counteracted. Accordingly, oligarchy is not inevitable and/or an automatic process but exists as a consequence of skewed/negated democratic processes.

The study at hand has established that the collapse of internal democratic principles, processes and procedures embraced by SATAWU resulted from the violation of internal governance mechanisms and structures, union statutes, policies and resolutions. Furthermore, the monopoly of information and skills and the scourge of corruption, maladministration and unaccountability are symptoms of a collapsed governance, leadership and management control system. Addressing these ailments demand an honest and thorough diagnosis of current and historical challenges. The lessons and outcomes drawn from the critical analysis will determine the type of prescriptions needed to remedy organisational problems. The success or failure of SATAWU's change process will be determined by the political and leadership will of the elected office bearers in channelling staff, shop-stewards and ordinary members to implement turnaround strategies in line with the union's purpose, organisation and capabilities. The revitalisation of SATAWU requires a combination of factors ranging from the preservation of institutional memory, achieving an admixture of old and new labour activists for succession planning purposes, nurturing talent through cadre development and diversity management and finally, establishing relations with progressive universities, political, civil society and social movements. The following section critically analyses the possibilities of revitalising SATAWU as per the recommendations provided by participants that took part in this study.

5. Chapter Five: Possibilities of Trade Union Renewal/Revitalisation?

The work of Fairbrother (2015) highlights that the concept of union renewal was formulated in the 1970s and 1980s. It focused primarily on promoting member participation, activism and democratisation during a period of economic restructuring and internationalisation. The contemporary analysis turns away from initial notions of renewal by giving attention to factors such as union organisation and capacities. The analytical deflection was a response to perceived threats linked to industrial and political restructuring under a neoliberal arrangement. In the 1980s and 1990s, trade unions were forced to alter their approaches by deviating from servicing to organising members. It was understood that the transformation of unions will be uneven because of their organisational differences and forms. Participants in the study were requested to provide recommendations and/or thoughts on how best the union can renew itself. The recommendations varied from a historical, occupational and a leadership point of view.

5.1.1. Structural and Capacity Development

A union with a history of internal turmoil has to resolve its financial challenges before implementing change strategies. To achieve this, transparency, financial literacy for all staff, shop-stewards and office bearers must be prioritised. All Treasures must be educated on how to read and question financial statements. This will assist in strengthening structures of accountability such as FINCOM (Finance Committee). Office bearers except Treasures should not form part of the FINCOM's composition. An independent chairperson recommended by an external body should be appointed to ensure that members of the FINCOM execute their roles and responsibilities. The FINCOM must be empowered to hold staff and union leaders accountable for financial mismanagement and corruption. Moreover, there is a need to amend policies of the union but most importantly financial and managerial control of the Secretariat (General, Deputy General and Provincial Secretaries).

SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) has to understand its origins and evolution before attempting to revitalise. A diagnosis of the relevance of structures, departments and personnel that shape its internal character or organisational culture must be carried out. All departments must have clear programmes, receive support and resources to do their work. In terms of worker control, the solution depends on discussing, reviving and implementing genuine programmes that spoke to workers. There is a need to revive political education, ideological training and capacity building for staff and members. SATAWU has to create a balance between SETA (Sector Education and Training Authority), CCMA (Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration) and in-house training programmes. A policy outlining training and educational programmes has to be developed and accompanied by a manual, course pack and curriculum.

The revival of SATAWU requires bold leaders that will prioritise workers empowerment. The leaders must endeavour to create synergy between the old and new generation, improve organisational intelligence and create a learning organisation. An independent human resource department must be established to address issues of selection and recruitment, staff motivation and capacity development. The union has to establish working committees empowered to monitor the work of elected office bearers, discipline and temporarily fill vacancies in between the CEC (Central Executive Committee) and PEC (Provincial Executive Committee).

Worker leaders must be given the power to supervise, monitor and evaluate the work of the Secretariat and staff. The Secretariat should report to worker office bearers at all material time. SATAWU must introduce a leadership criterion to be followed before electing office bearers. Workers need to start electing leaders based on quality, not popularity. All leaders have to be given job descriptions. This is necessary for articulating and separating the powers of all elected office bearers. The job descriptions have to be linked to performance contracts which will prevent the union from paying allowances and salaries to individuals that prioritised personal interests.

5.1.2. Organising the Unorganised

There is a need to understand the difference between recruitment and organising the unorganised. Organising involves an entire value chain based on recruiting, inducting and measuring the performance of members brought into the union. When you recruit, you get one member but lose another one at the same time. Organisers do not have the capacity to recruit or organise members hence this function should be redirected to shop-stewards. Recruitment, in general, is not the best strategy especially for a union with a tarnished name. SATAWU should instead focus on retaining, servicing and gaining the confidence of existing members. The union must go back to basics if it is serious about revitalising itself. The first step is to prioritise the general meeting. This structure offers workers a platform to share ideas, resolve issues, and hold shop-stewards accountable. It is impossible to achieve accountability at a provincial and national level when it does not exist at plant/workplace level.

5.1.3. Instituting a Merger Process

The November 2017 CEC resolved that all individuals kicked out of the union had to be brought back. The best way to achieve this is through a merger process. A policy outlining the terms of reference, leadership positions, and power of structures and composition of departments must be developed before merging with breakaway unions. Changing the name and overall makeup of SATAWU will assist in seeing through the revitalisation project.

5.2. Further Research and Conclusion

This study presents evidence that trade unions are complex organisations that not only influence but are compelled to adapt to change. The formation of SATAWU was not out of self-selected circumstances but environmental factors beyond its control. The merger process proves that the labour movement within itself is not united owing to its plurality. Transnet for example, was organised by COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), NACTU (National Council of Trade Unions), FEDUSA (Federation of Unions of South Africa) and independent trade unions. These organisations were established to advance the interests of workers in conformity with their differentiated values, principles, strategies and tactics. Regardless of their diversity, trade unions must accommodate the diverse cultures, identities, ideologies and political perspectives of members. This calls for a study on diversity management within the trade union movement. The study should aim to provide insight into how unions can best manage cultural differences whilst advancing the socio-economic interests of workers.

The formation of five breakaway unions which consist of the Transport and General Workers Union of South Africa (TGWUSA) in 2001, the new SARHWU (South African Railway and Harbour Workers Union) in 2002, NTM (National Transport Movement) in 2012, DETAWU (Democratised Transport Logistics and Allied Workers Union) and RETUSA (Revolutionary Transport Union of South Africa) in 2015, reflects that SATAWU was unable to manage conflict or collectively adapt to the change process. The TGWUSA and SARHWU were established at a time when African capitalism was entrenching itself in society including the labour movement.

The enactment of GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) policy in 1996, created an era of great prosperity and blossoming of an African middle-class through BEE (Black Economic Empowerment), affirmative action, occupation of strategic state positions and experimentation of union investment companies. The transition from social movement unionism (SMU) to political unionism combined with entrepreneurial trade union leadership/managerial styles permitted the labour movement to become a breeding ground for businessmen, union lords and an African middle-class. The newly acquired wealth and prestige were interrupted by the global economic meltdown in 2008/9. General socio-economic shocks and the desire for instant opulence created a race to the top at the same proportion as its antithetical relation to the bottom. It was at this stage in development that general aristocratic conditions established in a democratic era were threatened.

Consequently, the ANC-led (African National Congress) government and its constellation were subjected to a wave of sequential ruptures. The formation of NTM, DETAWU and RETUSA represent a broader crisis in South Africa's political economy. The periodization of crisis, as well as changing internal and external conditions will differ. However, these nuances allow us to better understand the evolution and commonality of factors linked to the internal crisis within SATAWU. By tracing the genesis of internal crisis, a thorough assessment in harmony with the union's purpose, organisation and capacities can be made. The diverse categories, themes and results will provide the basis and/or grounds to review existing and produce new policies, develop new strategies, reconstruct and reorganise the union in accordance with the amended constitution. The survival of the union will be determined by the nature of diagnosis, acceptance and implementation of its prescriptions.

Apart from SATAWU history of internal crisis, South Africa's trade union landscape is in flux owing to a history of in-fighting, global economic instabilities and the inability for capitalism to reform itself. Traditional and independent trade unions are finding it difficult to adapt to variations in the capitalist mode of production. The future of work including the direction and character of the labour movement is a muddy terrain. This opens an opportunity for further research on trade union reconstruction, adaptability and modernisation. Van der Walt (2014) supports this perspective by proposing anarcho and revolutionary syndicalism as an alternative form of workplace organisation. A study on modern and/or alternative forms of trade union organisation has to be conducted. It will be helpful that the research project looks into strategies that unions can employ in tackling varied workplace and social struggles. The study should investigate union relations between community organisations, social movements, political parties and the state.

In the literature review, Buhlungu (2003) explained the idea of trade union modernisation in the context of evolved full-time union officials/employees. Like Buhlungu (2003), Bischoff (2015) conducted a similar study focusing on the evolved character of trade union representatives (full-time shop-stewards in particular). Using the work of Buhlungu (2003) and Bischoff (2015), this study has demonstrated how the two characters cohabitated and/or collaborated in entrenching oligarchic practices through the distribution of illegitimate power and influence for upward mobility purposes and preservation of prestige, social status and power by incumbent leaders. Further research has to be conducted on the character of union members in accordance with organisational change and workplace variations. Variables such as race, gender, education and generational change should be incorporated in the study. This will assist in understanding deeper dynamics and/or conditions that contribute to social distance between union officials, leaders and members. If the variable cannot be incorporated then separate studies should be carried out with an

understanding of uncovering factors responsible for creating social distance within popular trade union movements.

Finally, can a crisis-ridden trade union like SATAWU be revitalised? When analysing the recommendations provided by the research participants in conjunction with the work of Fairbrother (2015), we learn that the process of revitalisation should not be separated from a trade union's purpose, organisation and capacities. Trade union organisation refers to the manner in which they operate and organise. It covers structural, governance and the relations between members, activists and leaders. Union capacities involve an organisation's ability to address and define concerns. Capacities or abilities can be developed, transmitted or learned but are ineffective without resources such as infrastructure, internal (collective identities and practices) and external (embeddedness-within community and political structures) solidarity. Union purpose involves the framing and articulation of organisational aims and values. Organisational values are centred on addressing short-term immediate concerns such as terms and conditions of employment. They can also comprise of long-term goals regarding the improvement of socio-economic and political conditions. Union purpose can be realised either implicitly- policy advocacy- or explicitly- goal settings.

In summary, a trade union like SATAWU can only revitalise by thoroughly diagnosing its crisis from a historical and current material point of view. Within this process, the union must retrieve and aim to preserve its founding principles, values, purpose and traditions. The preamble, aims and objectives outlined in the constitution eloquently describes the character, organisational form, mission and objectives of the union. The prescriptions that will emanate thereof will enable the union to effect the change process in harmony with internal and external socio-economic conditions. All other issues will flow from the union's commitment to implement recommendations and prescriptive strategies.

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet
Researcher: Tawana Mopeli
Sponsoring Institution: University of Witwatersrand Johannesburg

Introduction

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study focusing on the factors that contributed to five sequential ruptures in SATAWU's developmental course. The first two breakaway unions were formed after the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU in 2000. Three additional splinters emerged during the 3rd administration from 2011-2016.

Purpose of Project

The purpose of this research is to find out the factors that led to five sequential ruptures of SATAWU- the two occurred after the merger in 2000 and three post the Sun City Congress in 2011. I am interested in finding out how unresolved tensions may contribute negative effects in a union's social structure. Over and beyond the merger and unresolved tensions, the study intends unearthing various drivers that cause seismic organisational sifts such as bureaucracy, oligarchy, inter and intra leadership conflicts etc. This study intends assisting trade unions to revitalise post a prolonged crisis.

Selection of Participants

The participants were selected based on their rich understanding of SATAWU's history of development and internal character. Participants with knowledge of the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU and the 3rd Administration were selected for the study. All participants were purposefully selected through the execution of snowballing.

Interview Process

Two separate interview processes will be conducted: in-depth and focus group. Interviews are expected to last for an hour or two. During the interview, I will also ask you clarity seeking questions and/or ask you to elaborate further based on your responses. The researcher will use a tape recorder only in an event that participants grant permission-more details are provided in the anonymity and confidentiality section.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

If you agree to take part in this study, your confidentiality will be upheld. This means that your name will not be included in line with your comments. However, I will only use your name if you grant me permission. Your roles and characteristics will not form part of the study. A tape recorder will be used in an event that you grant me permission to. If you do allow me to use a tape recorder, I will transcribe and code the interview but identifying information will not be included. It is important to indicate that your participation is voluntary and at any event, you may stop the interview process.

Researcher:
Tawana Mopeli, Masters GLU Student, Department of Sociology
Contact details: 082 654 3945 and Email: tawanamopeli@yahoo.com
Supervisor:
Name of supervisor: Professor Devan Pillay
Contact details: 011 717 4443 and Email: Devan.Pillay@wits.ac.za

Appendix B: Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

Researcher: Tawana Mopeli

Sponsoring Institution: University of Witwatersrand Johannesburg

I_____ agree to take part in this study and further confirm that I have been briefed about the project, its aims and objectives.

Consent Information	**Yes**	**No**
I have read the participant information sheet		
I had an opportunity to ask the researcher questions and I am satisfied with the content of information		
Interviews will be tape-recorded		
The information provided by the participant may be used by the researcher		
My participation in the study should remain anonymous		
The researcher is able to use quotations from the participant, however, treating my identity anonymous		

Based on the information provided by the researcher I reaffirm my participation in the study.

Participant Name and Surname: _____

Participants Signature: _____

Date: _____

Researchers Name and Surname _____

Researchers Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Interview Guide- In-Depth and Focus Group

The questions formulated for this study allow for open-ended interviews to be conducted. The questions are framed to ensure neutrality and allow open discussions between the interviewer and the participant(s). To achieve reliable responses, a ridged interview structure will not be concentrated on instead, discussions will be based on the topic in question.

Questions for participants with extensive knowledge on SATAWU

1. Please enlighten me about the history of SATAWU and your understanding about the merger process
    a. How did the process unfold?
    b. What were the fundamental differences and/or challenges that were encountered in this process?
    c. Were there any inter and intra factional struggles among the leaders?
    d. Where there any ideological differences between the merging unions?
2. In your view, please explain what may have contributed to the two splinters after the merger?
3. Do you think that the merger between the former SATAWU and TGWU was correct in principle but procedurally flawed?
4. Based on various sources of information, it is not a secret that SATAWU three times after the 3rd NC in 2011. In your view what may have led to such a phenomenon?
    a. Was it the character or style of leadership?
    b. Did staff members have a hand in the crisis?
    c. Was it ideological differences?
    d. Was control over resources the main reason for the three breakaways?
5. In your view do you think worker control still exists and why?
    a. Has the introduction of full-time shop-stewards been beneficial to members?
    b. Do you think that stratification of shop-stewards has the potential of creating a new favoured class among worker representatives?
    c. Have shop-stewards played a role in collapsing workers unity?
6. Looking into where the union comes from, what other factors do you think may have contributed to the formation of the three breakaway unions?
7. What do you recommend for SATAWU to renew and revitalise?

Questions to Professionals

1. What is your experience and/or understanding of internal conflict within the union environment?
2. What do you think led to the weakening of participatory democracy in trade unions?
3. What factors should we look out for to prevent unions from splintering?
4. What is your understanding of worker control and do you think it still exists?
5. Has the stratification of shop-stewards-ordinary to full-time-benefited ordinary members at shop-floor level?
6. What should a union like SATAWU do if it were to consider revitalising itself

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