

The Politics of Workers Control in South Africa's Platinum Mines

Do workers' committees in the platinum mining industry represent a practice of renewing worker control?



Name: Nyonde Ntswana

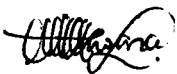
Supervisor: Dr Vishwas Satgar

A dissertation submitted to Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand.
Johannesburg. South Africa. In partial fulfilment of a MA Degree in Development Studies

Johannesburg, 2014

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand for the partial fulfilment of the Master of Arts Degree in Development Studies. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or to any other university.



Nyonde Ntswana

ACRONYMS and ABBREVIATIONS

AMCU	Association of Mining and Construction Union
AMPLATS	Anglo American Platinum Limited
ANC	African National Congress
CCMA	Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Union
FOSATU	Federation of South African Trade Unions
IMPLATS	Impala Platinum Limited
MCI	Marikana Commission of Inquiry
MIC	Mineworkers Investment Company
NUM	National Union of Mine Workers
NUMSA	National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa
PTV	Pipe, Transport and Ventilation
RDO	Rock Drill Operator
SACP	South African Communist Party
SALB	South African Labour Bulletin
SAPS	South African Police Service
SARHWU	South African Railways and Harbour Workers' Union
SWOP	Society Work and Development Institute
TU	Trade Unions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

1. Chapter 1- Literature review and theory

1.1 Theories

1.1.1 Worker Control

1.1.2 Trade union politics

1.2 Literature Review

2. Chapter 2

Methodology

3. Chapter 3

South African Platinum Mining Industry in Perspective

4. Chapter 4

Marikana and the 2012 strike wave

5. Chapter 5- Organised labour on the Platinum mines

5.1 Evolution of workers committees

5.2 Underlying causes for evolution of workers committees

5.3 Status-From the 2012 strike wave to 2014

6. Chapter 6

Conclusion

7. Bibliography

List of photographs

Photo 1	Thesis Cover photo of mine workers at a rally in Rustenburg
Photo 2	Khuseleka Shaft 1
Photo 3	Women Mine Workers lead protest march against retrenchments
Photo 4	AMCU members carrying a makeshift coffin at a rally symbolizing the death of NUM
Photo 5	Amplats Workers marching to a rally in Rustenburg to protest retrenchments

List of Figures and Illustrations

Figure 1	Marikana/Lonmin stories newspaper source
Figure 2	Major players in the platinum Industry
Figure 3	Lonmin and Amplats total workforce and contract share

The 16th of August 2012, has inscribed a never to be forgotten 'moment' in the history of post-apartheid South Africa when the South African Police Service (SAPS) opened fire on striking Lonmin (Plc) mine workers, killing 34 and injuring 78 in Marikana, North West Province. The workers were part of an unprecedented strike wave on the platinum belt, which had begun at Impala Platinum Holdings (Implats) at the beginning of 2012, spread to Lonmin that August and to Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) in September. At the heart of the strikes was the demand for a 'living wage' - a clarion call that would be taken up by workers at other platinum mines, the gold, coal, transport and agriculture sectors and for a short while left the country in political and economic turmoil. This platinum belt strike wave was not led by the unions but by workers themselves. Workers emphatically refused to be represented by their unions and opted to form alternative structures of representation called the independent workers committees.

This thesis examines these structures and the deadly contestation over representation that developed. It analyses the driving forces behind these committees, why they were formed, how they were formed and how they managed to self-organise, mobilise the mine workers, and engage directly in negotiations with management. This thesis argues, that a close examination of the workers committees is seminal to understanding the current nature of the South African working class and whether it is reasserting democratic control over trade union organisation, and whether the workers' committees represent a challenge to the corporatist arrangements that have underpinned the post-apartheid 'social contract' between labour and capital mediated through the state, since 1994.

INTRODUCTION

On 16th August 2012, South Africa witnessed the bloodiest massacre of workers by state security forces since the end of apartheid in 1994. The world watched in horror on live television as the South African Police Service (SAPS) opened fire on striking Lonmin (Plc) mine workers killing 34 and injuring 78 in Marikana, an area close to Rustenburg, North West Province.

The workers were part of an unprecedented strike wave on the platinum belt, which had begun at Impala Platinum Holdings (Implats) at the beginning of 2012 and spread to Lonmin – South Africa's third largest platinum producer – that August. At the heart of the action was the demand for a 'living wage' of R12, 500 - a clarion call that would be taken up by workers at other platinum mines and in the gold and coal sectors, and which would continue to spread until the end of October, when workers at Anglo American Platinum (Amplats – the largest platinum producer) would return to work. The Lonmin strike had already been characterised by extreme violence with 10 people - including two police officers, two security guards, two union officials and four mine workers - killed in the week that preceded what has since become known as the 'Marikana Massacre'.¹

In the weeks following the fateful day of 16 August, media commentators and pundits jostled to explain the police killings and to apportion blame. Political influence from outside the ruling party, union rivalry mainly between the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) and newcomer the Association of Mining and Construction Union (AMCU), economic hardship and even Muti (African medicine) were cited as forces behind the strike violence (Hartford, 2012). President Jacob Zuma and his African National Congress (ANC) government reacted to deflect public criticism by appointing a Commission of Inquiry to establish the causes of the massacre. Led by Justice Ian Farlam, the Marikana Commission of Inquiry was still sitting in February 2014 over 18 months after the killings.

¹ The Media and many people especially those on the left who followed the killings in Marikana dubbed it the Marikana Massacre and it has widely been called that.

Whatever the findings of the Commission, what was undeniably clear about the Lonmin action and the broader strike wave, of which it was a part, was that it was not led by the unions but by workers themselves. Across the platinum belt, mineworkers emphatically rejected the giant NUM (Fogel, 2013) which up to that point had not only been the leading union in the mining sector but the largest in the country, and organised themselves independently. This in turn opened the space for the small Association of Mining and Construction Union to enter the platinum industry, quickly displacing NUM as the dominant labour organisation on the platinum belt (*City Press*, March 2013).

The historic significance of the shift of workers from the once powerful and majority NUM to organising themselves outside the union through workers' committees, and eventually shifting membership to the minority newcomer AMCU, is a critical question for analysis if we are to understand the future of trade union organisation in post-apartheid South Africa. This thesis attempts to contribute to such an analysis by examining the structures that workers used to organise, mobilise and represent themselves during the strike: the independent workers' committees'. In some instances especially in Implats, the committees were also referred to as the 'strike committee' but as the strike spread to Lonmin and Amplats, they become widely known as Workers Committees. The thesis seeks to understand the driving forces behind these committees, how they were formed and how they managed to self-organise and mobilise the mine workers, and engage directly in negotiations with management. This is relevant to understanding the current nature of the South African working class and whether it is reasserting democratic control over trade union organisation and once again acting as a movement for social change. Key here is the question of whether and how far the workers' committees represent a challenge to the corporatist arrangements that have underpinned the post-apartheid 'social contract' between labour and capital mediated through the state, since 1994.

Based on intensive research conducted in Rustenburg with the mineworkers themselves, this thesis will argue that the independent committees were alternative forms of representation and control that workers chose to use in light of the continuing challenges of poor wages, poor living and working conditions and poor representation by their trade

unions. Moreover, it will argue that these forms of organisation not only have a long history in the South African labour movement but across the global working class, frequently emerging in response to the problems of trade union bureaucratisation, and that this problem has been intensified in South Africa precisely by the corporatist nature of the post-apartheid settlement between labour and capital under conditions of neoliberalism. This argument will be developed over six chapters.

Chapter 1 reviews the literature on worker control and trade union politics and explores the debates and theories that have informed the literature. The chapter shows how in a bid to achieve democratic and participatory control, workers in different parts of the world devised forms of organisation resembling the workers committees formed on the South African platinum belt. The chapter also traces the history and currents that trade unions and particularly South African trade unions have undergone and how these trends have shaped the current state of trade unions as well as how these transformations have affected democratic worker control and led to the emergence of alternative structures of representation.

Chapter 2 lays out the methodology that was used in the research and brings to the fore challenges and achievements as well as experiences encountered in the course of conducting the research.

Chapter 3 attempts to provide background to the platinum sector and argues that although the sector has experienced a rough patch in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, there is good reason to believe that it will recover as demand continues to increase for the metal in the global auto-catalyst, jewellery and other markets. The chapter also demonstrates that South Africa has a unique position in the global platinum sector as it accounts for the bulk of the world's production and therefore has significant power to shape the platinum market. The chapter also argues that despite platinum's rise to fame and replacing gold as South Africa's top mineral commodity earner, this has not translated into tangible economic gains for workers in the industry.

With the background of the platinum sector examined in chapter 3, Chapter 4 will then seek to trace the genesis of the 2012 strike wave particularly in the platinum industry and the Marikana Massacre. The chapter maintains that one of the major causes of the strike wave

was precisely that workers had not seen any tangible gains from the industry especially after 2010 when they expected that wages would be increased in relation to the rise in platinum prices on the market. Instead, workers were subjected to continuing poor wages, poor working and living conditions and had challenges with their union and mine management that did not adequately address these problems. These issues and more became the catalyst for the 2012 strike wave.

Chapter 5 discusses how labour was organised on the platinum belt during the strike wave. The chapter begins by outlining the formation of the workers committees and looks at the process that was undertaken in the formation of these committees. It argues that albeit being informal, the process and therefore the committees formed in the platinum industry were democratic and participatory structures of organisation and representation. The chapter also goes a step further and analyses the underlying reasons for the formation of these committees and the impact the presence of the committees created. The chapter argues that changes in the relationship between dominant trade union NUM, its members and its growing inability to address challenges workers were facing, which were emphasised by the impact of the industry restructuring and integrating into the global economy, led to the formation of the committees and in turn the strike wave. The chapter will then seek to discuss the status of the committees at present and will attempt to give an update on events after the strike wave to the first quarter of 2014.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion of the thesis and maintains that the workers committees were indeed a way of workers reasserting control and will re-emphasise their need to circumvent trade union bureaucracy and build structures especially amongst the rank and file that would promote democratic participation and ultimately worker control of the trade unions, which would lead to unions better representing the workers as they would be in control and perhaps avoid future Marikanas.

1. CHAPTER 1- THEORIES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Theories

1.1.1 Worker Control

Under all forms of government and political rule, workers worldwide have struggled for the right to participation in the decision making processes of the enterprises they work for and have attempted to develop forms of co-and self-management or workers control (Ness and Azzellini, 2011). Worker control can be defined and understood differently depending on the context. It could mean political control in relation to representation or indeed control of the means of production. Ness and Azzellini (2011) define worker control as participation in the management of factories and other commercial enterprises by the people who work there. Ulrich (2007:01) refers to worker control as promoting non-racial, industrial unionism and a distinct form of direct democracy on the factory floor. This thesis will however use worker control in as far as it relates to democratic control where workers create their own independent (free from political and union influences) democratic structures derived mainly from the rank and file to organise and participate from a position of strength in decision making in matters of workers welfare.

The phenomenon of worker control is not new and has been experienced in different parts of the world in different forms such as factory closures or occupations under different conditions from the origins of the industrial revolution to the present neoliberal capitalist era. The foundation of workers control is rooted in late nineteenth and early twentieth century socialism which viewed workers themselves as the most democratic force in society (Ness and Azzellini, 2011). Coates (1981:16) argues that workers have pursued one means of redress for one disability or another but that always the fundamental indignity remains. It is this indignity, translating into workers not having the right to participate in policy formulation and decision-making, that has driven workers for over a century to fight for some form of control.

Ness and Azzellini (2011) highlights examples of different forms of worker control in the Russian Revolution, in Yugoslavia, in Indonesia, including the factory occupations in Great Britain in the 1970s and in Argentina and Brazil as late as 1990-2010. Worker control took

many forms and derived mainly from the rank and file movements. According to Callinicos, A. (1995), the betrayal of specific struggles by the trade union bureaucracy in many cases had the effect of making the rank and file aware of the clash between themselves and their representatives and therefore of the need for forms of organisation more responsive to their own needs and wishes. Callinicos, A. (1995) also cites the experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917 in which workers councils (known as 'soviets') developed out of the struggles in workplaces over partial economic demands to become organs of power challenging the authority of the capitalist state. He also detected a similar trend in the British shop steward and the worker committee movements born out of the struggles of the engineering industries notably in Glasgow and Sheffield during this period.

South African workers have historically been no stranger to struggles for worker control through various forms. Ulrich (2007:04) argues that the tradition of worker control in South Africa started long ago and became particularly evident during the era of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) in the late 1970s and early 1980s.² This gave 'leadership and direction' to shop-floor struggles, and provided an organisational base for workers by creating a strong working class identity and developing the necessary confidence and political presence for a workers organisation. Ulrich (2007:124) observed that before FOSATU was formed, workers demanded that management negotiate with them en masse as a means of avoiding victimisation, and that this method was based on established social networks and collective organisation that was profoundly democratic in nature and autonomous from managerial control or influence. This method was not only a way to ensure that they had control and could participate over what was being negotiated, but also a way for workers to show their strength and solidarity in numbers so that no one person could make decisions undemocratically or be compromised. However after this initial wave of militancy, a new current came into being with workers choosing representatives to negotiate with management on their behalf. This is illustrated in the gold industry by Moodie (1986) who argues that workers in the hostels tended to choose leaders who were

² The Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) was the first South African trade union federation that organised mostly Black employees that aimed to be a national, non-racial umbrella organisation that could coordinate Black trade union movements. It was formed in April 1979 after the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and Federation of Free African Trade Unions (FFATU) disintegrated in the 1960's. In 1985 it dissolved into the newly formed Congress of South African Trade Unions COSATU. <http://www.sahistory.org.za/organisations/federation-south-african-trade-unions-fosatu>

older and perceived to be independent, to take forward a mandate and report back on the progress of the negotiations with management.

Von Holdt (2003) describes a slightly different situation in the steel industry in the Vaal Triangle in the 1980s where strike committees were organised as informal structures supplementing the role of shop stewards. Here, the strike committee's role was to keep order and discipline among workers during strikes, especially when shop stewards were negotiating with management, and to ensure that all workers attended union meetings in the hostels or the workplace. Von Holdt (2003) adds that many workers believed the strike committee was formed on the understanding that the negotiating relationship with management needed to be supplemented with more forceful action.

With respect to the platinum mining industry itself, Stewart (2012) shows that workers' committees have been an intrinsic feature of labour organisation in the industry over a long period. According to Stewart (2012:1), workers committees were formed as early as 1985 by RDOs (Rock Drill Operators) who organised and negotiated directly with management outside of official union structures. This pattern was repeated in 1988, 1992, 1993, 1995 and 1999. He posits that RDOs throughout the history of the South African mining industry have been endowed with unique structural power as a result of their critical position in the production process and that they are traditionally an elite group in the hierarchy of the mining industry and often received differential treatment from other workers (Chiguno, 2013). This has remained particularly true in the platinum industry since the distinctive geological conditions related to production have worked against mechanisation, which means the industry remains especially reliant on the particular skills-set of the RDOs. Stewart (2013) argues that when the RDOs formed their own informal committees at Anglo Platinum (Amplats) in 1999, they were accompanied by a small new trade union claiming to represent them called the Mouth Piece Workers Union, which only managed to gain a foothold among their ranks as they had not been adequately serviced by NUM. The Mouthpiece Workers Union arose out of a bloody unprotected strike at Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) in the late 1990's and ousted the NUM at Amplats for two to three years. Stewart (2013) further argues that the new way in which the Mouth Piece Workers Union came on the scene when the RDOs formed their committees, in some ways anticipated what occurred in 2012 with AMCU dramatically entering the platinum industry

during the strike wave (Stewart, 2013). These are certainly interesting parallels with AMCU, however they cannot be taken too far given that RDO workers committees had been in existence for a long time and also the fact that AMCU had begun recruiting at Impala and even Lonmin Karee before the strike began (Chiguno, 2013).

Indeed Paul Stewart's (2012) work on the 2012 Strike wave and Rock Drill Operators (RDOs) has proven very relevant in unlocking how labour has been organised in the platinum industry and provides a very important historical perspective on worker organisations in the platinum mining industry. However, despite the fact that the role of RDOs in the 2012 strike cannot be overlooked, it should also be recognised that the strike was not led by RDOs in all the mining houses, -for instance at Amplats. The workers committees that this research studied evolved from supplementing the role of shop stewards, towards committees representing specific interest groups (i.e. the RDOs), to being the driving force in worker organisation representing the interests of a much wider range of workers in the enterprise. These workers committees which worked independently of their unions and even took to negotiating with management as was evident in Amplats, became *recognised structures*³ that management had no choice but to sit with at the negotiating table despite the workers having formal union representation in the shape of NUM (Chinguno, 2013). In some instances, these workers committees also began linking community struggles with worker struggles (Ngwane and Mmope, 2012) in effect practising the kind of 'social movement unionism' that used to be associated with COSATU in the 1980s. Webster (2013, 99) explains that social movement unionism was a concept developed by Peter Waterman in the late seventies and early eighties but has since taken a life of its own, shaped by different social and historical contexts.

Ness and Azzellini (2011) argue that rank-and-file workers' and labour networks organising outside of the established business union structures have been crucial to the emergence of workers control; in some cases the established mediatory mechanisms were simply displaced by workers' spontaneous, autonomous actions. This has indeed been true for South Africa as was evidenced by the wild cat strikes led by workers' committees in the

³ These structures were only recognised during the strikes and ceased to be recognised after the recognition agreement was signed with AMCU. RDO Committees previously also managed to negotiate directly with management.

platinum mining industry. One could argue that the workers' committees formed in the 2012 strike wave became avenues through which workers were able to develop an emancipatory form of control that transformed a situation of capitalist alienation and authoritarian control into one of democratic practice (Ness and Azzellini, 2011) and indeed as will be seen in the later chapters, evidence from this research suggests the same.

At the same time, much of the South African literature has emphasised how workers have been losing trust in their unions in the post-apartheid era, and therefore have been feeling the need to organise and mobilise on their own (e.g. Buhlungu, 2010). Since this is one of the key factors that could explain the recent re-emergence of independent worker committees on the platinum belt, the following section will look more closely at the changing nature of trade union politics under apartheid and in the 'new' South Africa.

1.1.2 Trade Union Politics and Globalisation in South Africa

Historically, trade unions all over the world played a significant role in struggles for working class citizens, both in and beyond the workplace. The growth and strength of trade unions historically cannot be emphasised enough with workers finding strength in numbers and organisation under one umbrella.

South Africa is no exception in fact its history of unionisation is particularly inspiring because of the critical role organised labour played in the fight against apartheid. Since the 1970s, there were two main currents in the history of trade unionism politics in South Africa, known locally as the syndicalist or 'workerist' (industry unionism) and the populist traditions.

The Federation of South of African Trade Unions (FOSATU) encompassed the workerist unions, which grew out of the Durban strikes of 1973 and whose objective was working class struggle for socialist revolution and building strong politically independent unions (Ulrich, 2007 and Callinicos, 1992). In 1985, FOSATU combined with the federations associated with the Congress and Black Consciousness traditions to form the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) which repositioned the workers movement as part of a broader alliance concentrating on national democratic struggle against apartheid (Callinicos,

1992). This active engagement beyond the factory floor led to COSATU being described as a form of social movement unionism that involved the union organisation facilitating active engagement in factory based production politics and in community and state power issues (Lambert and Webster, 1988: 21 cited in Webster, 2013:99).

Unions such as the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) an affiliate of COSATU played a very significant role in the history of black South African labour and in the fight against apartheid and represented more of the populist current. It was through NUM in 1982 that the Chamber of Mines signed a recognition agreement that permitted, for the first time in almost 100 years, black workers to be unionised (James, 1992). NUM pursued both mine specific as well as broader societal goals and wanted to see improvements in the conditions of the mine worker particularly with regard to health, safety and remuneration and pressed for the rights of workers against unfair arbitrary managerial treatment. The Union leaders opposed the colour bar in employment (limitations in promotions due to race) and the privileged position of white miners and criticised the migrant labour system and the mine compound system for their inhuman and undesirable social consequences.

In 1990 COSATU officially became part of the tripartite alliance with the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP). This alliance was the best organised and strongest opponent in the anti-apartheid movement deriving its strength from the location of workers in the economy and their ability to disrupt it in support of their demands (Buhlungu, 2010). After 1994 a non-racial democratic order was established which saw trade unions become part of a corporatist structure through the social contract between the state, capital and labour (Buhlungu, 2006). The social contract entailed the state, capital and labour working in partnership to grow the economy. The corporatist current was evident in the noticeable shift of unions away from adversarialism and towards engagement with a wide range of issues and greater cooperation with both the state and the employers towards what was described as bargained corporatism or shifting from 'resistance to reconstruction' (Baskin, 1993). Through its position in the alliance, COSATU initiated and advocated the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in an attempt by labour to produce an accord that would tie a newly elected ANC government to a labour driven development programme (Webster, 2013:99). The relationship between labour and capital was key to the alliance who argued that cooperation between workers

and employers improved the competitiveness of the firm and both sides benefited to a greater extent (Mboweni, 1992). Advocates of the social contract pointed to the Japanese system as bearing eloquent testimony to this (Rees, 1992:26).

However, Webster (2013:99) argues that class contradictions began to emerge within the alliance as local and international economic pressures led to the ANC in 1996 making a number of concessions on macro-economic policy which culminated in the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy about which COSATU was not consulted. Thus what began as an accord to bind the ANC government to a left wing development programme ended up ensnaring COSATU in a neoliberal inspired macro-economic policy (Webster and Adler, 1999:368 cited in Webster, 2013:99).

Rees (1992) argued that COSATU, as part of the tripartite alliance, began to be criticised as compromising workers welfare and emphasising top-down leadership over worker control without challenging the politics of class compromise. Callinicos (1992) argues that the social contract essentially meant that unions became instruments of control on behalf of the state and capital which denied independent worker initiatives from the shop floor. This was very different from the FOSATU workerist current that promoted independent worker initiatives with an emphasis on strong shop steward organisation which mediated between union officials and informal organisations.

Since the late 1990s, this criticism of COSATU has intensified as trade unions have been faced with the negative effects of globalisation, with widespread retrenchments leading workers to blame unions for their inability to prevent retrenchments and in some cases unions failing to negotiate for retrenchment packages effectively (Mosoetsa, 2003 cited in Buhlungu, 2006). Globalisation has many definitions in sociology (e.g. Peet, 2009) but here, it is understood as a process characterised by growing market competition and shifts in production patterns, predicated on the drive to produce as fast and efficiently as possible and at the lowest cost. This in turn has led to de-industrialisation and downsizing as firms have outsourced and shifted production around the world to places with cheaper labour. Thus the rise of the global market and global competition has forced companies to move towards lean production, which has seen an increase in the rise of informal, temporary and precarious employment. Lean production is derived from the Japanese Toyota production

system aimed at producing quality goods at less cost and also moving from the Fordist 'just-in-case' production which was considered wasteful to 'just in time production' responding to market needs. Webster *et al* (2008) argue that in the era of globalisation, market segmentation does not only exist outside businesses, but now also exists within businesses and has been called the 'lean-and-dual' approach. Lean and Dual approach is the use of regular and irregular employment or where a few people or core of the company are in secure employment and the rest are subcontracted workers. This approach also uses complex supply chains in order to keep production costs low. In the mining industry in general, and in platinum mining in particular, the pressures of globalisation have been felt through the increasing emphasis on maximising shareholder value, which has led to the increased growth of outsourcing of non-core operations, sub-contracting and other forms of casualisation, as well as the outright closure of mines and shafts that are not deemed profitable enough (Amandla!, 2013). In addition to this, workers' wages and conditions of service have remained low in a bid for cost saving to increase even greater profitability, under the guise of efficiency (Ibid, 2013:11).

Trade unions in South Africa have been confronted with the impact of globalisation, such as a flexible labour market leading to many workers being laid off or employed on a temporary or casual basis. Sub-contracting has become the order of the day and this to date has weakened union power as workers are harder to organise when they are working under different conditions i.e. permanent, contract, casual etc. Most subcontracted workers are usually not members of any union. Mosoetsa (in Webster 2013:101) argues that the inability of trade unions to protect the most vulnerable workers in casual and temporary work has been a traditional trade union weakness and has led to a crisis of representation.

South African trade unions have however attempted to develop strategies to respond to the effects of globalisation. By 1994, in a bid to retain and provide services to their membership, some trade unions began thinking of 'business unionism' or forming union investment companies (Faulkner, 1999). The argument was that investing in the private sector would allow unions to build up resources and become financially viable organisations that could better service their members and the larger community (Vlok, 1999). In 1995 NUM setup the Mineworkers Investment Trust (MIT) under which several companies were established including the Mine workers Investment Company (MIC) and Ubank which the union co-owns

with the Chamber of Mines. According to NUM, MIT was set up as a wealth generating venture to support retrenched workers and their families. By 1996, COSATU itself had an investment arm called the *Kopano Ke Matla Trust*. The *Kopano Ke Matla Trust* which means 'Unity is Power' was an investment company set up by COSATU in 1996 and in 1998 the *Kopano Ke Matla Investment Company* was set up to provide financial services. In 2013 however the Investment Company was stripped of its licence to manage pension funds for workers after an investigation revealed financial irregularities (Business day, 2013). In April 1997, the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA) another of COSATU's big affiliates, registered the National Manufacturing Workers Investment Trust (NIT), which owned 100 percent of NUMSA's Investment Company (Vlok, 1999). By 1999 there were ten investment companies, encompassing 60 union investments amounting to tens of billions of Rand's worth of investments (Vlok, 1999).

The COSATU Central Committee (CC) adopted a number of resolutions for affiliates with investment companies to follow, in a bid to maintain COSATU traditions as well as to avoid the emergence of conflicting interests. One of these resolutions encouraged union investment companies to change the patterns of control and corporate governance and develop a model democratic and transformed workplace (Vlok, 1999:26). However, according to Vlok (1999:27), a report on union investment companies showed that whilst justifying their investments on the basis of the concept of social capital, the investment companies showed little capacity to exercise influence over corporate decision making and promote union interests.

Webster *et al* (2008) points out how workers have become more insecure as unions have moved from fighting the status quo to concession bargaining or 'strategic unionism' in order to prevent layoff and factory closures. Buhlungu (2010) argues that trade unions are faced with a dilemma in that retrenchments and flexible forms of work under globalisation have created new cleavages among workers, thus making it difficult to forge worker solidarity under the umbrella of an industrial union. Further, with the unions in partnership with corporate capital through the social contract, officials became beneficiaries with some being shareholders (Hartford, 2012).

Against this background, Buhlungu (2010) argues that workers have over the last few decades grown to mistrust trade unions because of the increasing social and class distance of the union bureaucracy. As trade union officials and leaders occupy increasingly specialised and hierarchical positions, they receive many benefits that workers do not get and this is believed to alienate the union leaders from the mass of workers. As a result of these conflicting interests, the recommendations from the September Commission,⁴ established as a response to global restructuring and to assess the future of trade unions in democratic South Africa, could not properly be implemented (Buhlungu, 2006). The September Commission had particular problems with Union Investment Companies which it found did not allow for member participation and that this could lead to widening the gap between union leaders and the members (Vlok, 1999).

Hartford, (2012) argues that COSATU and its affiliates have upheld a proud history of practising the constitutional principle of 'democratic worker control' for nearly three decades. He however argues that, the actual process through which the principle is honoured has changed significantly since the democratic transition, and in mining, this has taken the form of the collapse of real constituency based representation of members by shop stewards and basic branch level accountability. This according to Hartford has become a key driver of the pressure to account to leaders higher up in the union hierarchy, which in turn is a symptom of the emergence of a union aristocracy that promotes leadership interests above those of the rank and file members. Buhlungu (2010) likewise argues that there has been the shift from the trade unions of the 1980s which experienced trade unionism and mobilisation as a process of building solidarity through a collectivist ethos based on self-sacrifice, to the trade unions of the 1990s and 2000s where engagement in formal and bureaucratic organisational processes, have resulted in upward mobility and individual reward.

Perhaps the emergence of the workers committees could also be explained in what Silver (2003) quotes as Polanyi's theory of 'double movement'⁵ where each extension or deepening of the labour market is countered by mobilisation to regulate and constrain the

⁴ The September Commission of Inquiry was set up to make recommendations to COSATU on the future of trade union in post-apartheid South Africa. It was headed by Connie September hence the name September Commission.

⁵ This theory was developed by Karl Polanyi in his book 'The great Transformation' first published in 1944.

market for that factor of production known as labour power. It could therefore be that when labour is pushed towards commodification, it provokes a strong countermovement demanding protection. Callinicos (1995) asserted that trade union bureaucracies have become increasingly involved in managing processes of exploitation on behalf of capital, through 'social contract' type arrangements, and this could also offer an explanation for the dramatic re-emergence of independent rank-and-file organisation in the 2012 platinum strike wave. One can certainly argue that the South African economy has become even more profit-oriented under the impact of globalisation, and that the mining industry remains significant in shaping this trajectory. This has increased pressures on trade unions to 'deliver' increased productivity and minimise wage demands, in the name of international competition, and has combined with the increasing social distance of full-time officials from their members, in creating an explosive cocktail whose effects are explored in this dissertation.

1.2 Literature Review

There is substantial literature on mineworker militancy in South Africa, particularly in the gold mining industry. Most of this literature focuses on labour migrancy and especially how workers who were traditionally drawn from rural areas in the former homelands and neighbouring Southern African countries, survived and organised in the mining industry through the hostel system. Francis Wilson's (1972) seminal work, *Labour in the South African Gold mines* showed how black trade unions despite the legal restrictions grew from the late 1920s and organised workers. The struggles of mine labour in the gold industry are further highlighted by key works such as Luli Callinicos (1987) *A peoples history of South Africa*, Jonathan Crush, Alan Jeeves and David Yudelman (1991) *South Africa's Labour Empire: A History of Black Migrancy to the Gold Mines* and Dunbar Moodie (1994) *Going for Gold*.

In contrast, however, there is very little literature on labour in the platinum mining industry or indeed on the industry itself. This lacuna is explained by the fact that the South African mining industry was historically dominated by the gold sector from the 'minerals revolution' of the late nineteenth century, while platinum was a comparatively small and marginal

industry from its inception in the 1920s- a situation which only changed with the downturn of gold from the mid-1980s and the platinum boom of the late 1990s (Capps, 2012; see below).

By 2012, the work of Capps (2012a) *Victim of its own success* and *A Bourgeois Reform with Social Justice* (2012b) had begun to draw attention to the growing importance of platinum in the post-apartheid mining sector and attempted the first political economy study of the industry. However, this focussed more on the changing role of mineral property relations in the accumulation strategies of the platinum producers, and had very little to say about the conditions and struggles of platinum mine labour.

This dramatically changed with the Marikana massacre, and there has since been growing academic and media interest in workers militancy in the platinum industry. With the exception of Alexander *et al* (2012) book 'Marikana: a view from the mountain and a case to answer', 'most of the literature to date has largely taken the form of short papers and media reports on the labour unrest, wage negotiations and the rivalry between AMCU and NUM.

A key weakness of the mainstream media reporting is that it tends to speak about the other actors in the equation, and there has been little from the perspective of the workers and especially on how the workers organised and mobilised the strike action before and after the massacre. An analysis of 153 articles on Marikana from over a dozen major South African news publications, by Professor Jane Duncan of Rhodes University (SABC, 2012), found that only three percent of sources were independent mineworkers, as against 27 percent for business representatives, 10 percent for political parties and parliamentarians, 11 percent unions, 14 percent mine management and owners and 13 percent other sources (Reddy, 2013).

Reddy (2013:08) argues that, unfortunately, there was a common assumption among journalists that having spoken to the unions they had documented the worker's perspective – a totally illogical assumption given that the strike was unprotected in the first place and that independent elected worker's committees were charged with leading it .

However, there have been a few exceptions in the media with news institutions such as the *Mail and Guardian*, *Daily Maverick* and *City Press* (Reddy, 2013) trying to tell the workers

side of the story and have continued to do so even as the Farlam Commission of Inquiry continues to sit.

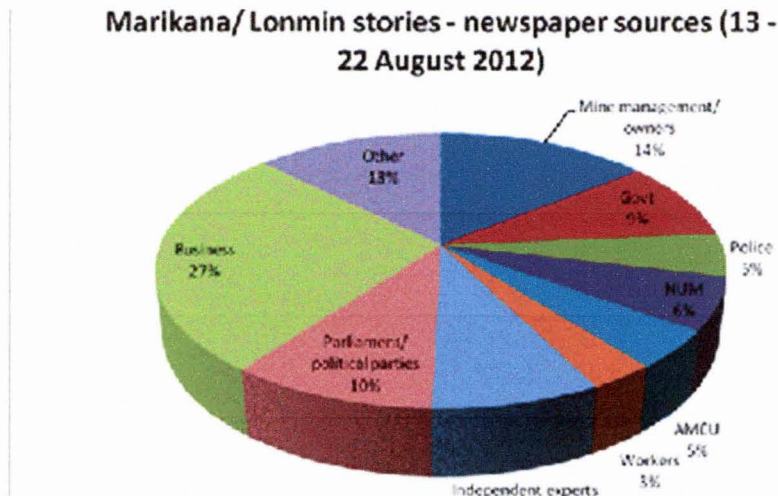


Figure 1: Source- Jane Duncan

Important examples of this include Gavin Hartford's (2012) influential 'Mining strike wave analysis' which was published in the *Mail and Guardian* in October, 2012 immediately after the massacre. This has been a key point of reference for this study in understanding the background and processes that were at play before the massacre, and the role that the migrant labour system may have played in the strike wave. However, it has to be recognised that despite many workers being migrant workers, not all workers involved in the strike wave were migrant workers and therefore other questions come to the fore. Hartford's analysis is qualified by a later piece in the *Mail and Guardian* in September 2013 by Kally Forrest which showed the extent to which the mine labour market was being restructured by labour broking and subcontracting and also highlighted how these socio economic conditions were a factor in labour militancy and worker organisation.

In addition, a seminal academic article by Paul Stewart (2012) 'Kings of the Mines' Rock Drill Operators and the 2012 Strike Wave' has proven critical in unlocking how labour has been organised in the platinum industry particularly through the workers committees. However, this focused mainly on the Rock Drill Operators (RDOs) committees, while this thesis investigates worker committees organising all workers from various occupations and recognises that there was other agency at play. Amandla Magazine has also been insightful

on the strike action and the fight for a living wage, as too has been Crispin Chinguno's SWOP Working Paper, Marikana and the post-apartheid workplace order which I consider further below.

With respect to the broader post-apartheid labour landscape, various articles in the South African Labour Bulletin (SALB) from as far back as 1990 have been very useful in illustrating the trends and debates that have developed over the years about labour and trade union currents. Sakhela Buhlungu's (2001, 2006, and 2010) work has been particularly pertinent in understanding the changes and transitions in trade unions in the last 20 years of post-apartheid South Africa. *Grounding Globalisation* by Eddie Webster, Rob Lambert and Andries Bezuidenhout (2008) provides further perspective on how precarious labour has become in the age of globalisation. Buhlungu's work with Bezuidenhout (2011) *From Compounded to Fragmented Labour* has added to this perspective by highlighting the challenges facing the labour movement, in the context of structural change brought about by neo-liberal macro-economic reforms and how these have been made manifest in the high levels of labour casualisation and outsourcing, which erodes worker rights and solidarity, deepens divisions within the workforce and presents a serious threat to the ability of unions to organise (Reddy, 2013).

The literature by Buhlungu also has the merit of highlighting the responses or strategies that unions have adopted to counter the effects of globalisation. However, Chaskalson (2013:13) argues that this does not track the changes in worker consciousness and identity, and is mainly based on studying the hostel system.

This study attempts to add to the rather small volume of literature on platinum mining and especially to bring to the fore the analysis for further debate on the forms of worker organisations that existed in the 2012 strike wave and factors that caused from the workers perspectives, the subsequent decline of the NUM in the platinum industry and what the other implications were/ are for labour organisations and the central bargaining system.

2. CHAPTER 2- METHODOLOGY

The research used qualitative research methodologies which included in-depth interviews, focused group discussions and participant observation.

I developed an open ended interview schedule to give me an opening to the workers. This did not limit me but gave me the freedom to tailor questions to the specific interview context and to the people being interviewed.

I initially began my research with an intention of primarily conducting interviews with workers and union representatives from Lonmin and Anglo Platinum (Amplats) mines. These two mines had been chosen in order to compare the form that the workers committees in the two mining houses took. The manner in which the workers committees were formed in the two mining houses was different and the forces which led to their formation were different and it was important to learn from the two in order to see the differences and how they affected the character of the workers committees. However in the course of conducting the research, workers from other mining houses such as Impala Platinum, Aquarius and Samancor were interviewed and actually provided a broader understanding of what was happening in the platinum mining belt in Rustenburg. The interviews took the form of one on one dialogue with workers, union representatives and community representatives as well as group interviews with some mine workers. Focus group discussions were also used as a way of triangulating information from the one on one in-depth interviews.

A total number of 38 people were interviewed including seven union officials from AMCU and NUM (shop stewards and branch officials), three community members, one mine official and 27 workers. The 27 workers interviewed belonged to different unions. Although the majority were AMCU members, a few were members of the NUM and the United Association of South Africa (UASA). This sample was chosen using random⁶ and purposive sampling⁷ and was initially accessed through established networks namely the Marikana

⁶ Random sampling means that every member of the population has equal chance of being included in the sample (Greenstein, 2003).

⁷ In Purposive sampling, researcher targets particular individuals and categories of individuals for investigation (Greenstein, 2003).

Support Campaign that had been established and had been working with workers in the platinum belt since the Marikana Massacre.

My being associated with the Marikana Support Campaign which had gained workers trust, put me in a unique position to gain entry into the workers world and I was able to gain a lot of insight. My being an African woman seemed to be non-threatening to the workers who readily grew to trust me. As word went round about my research, I was able to access the workers independently and used snowball sampling⁸ especially in accessing some shop stewards and union branch officials who had been key workers committee leaders during the strikes. I also used snowball sampling to access a few workers injured during the Marikana Massacre.

I also conducted participant observation by going to big workers meetings at the Khomanani shaft stadium, as well as another big workers meeting at the school grounds near one of the Amplats shafts. I was also privileged to be allowed into a workers committee meeting which included workers and AMCU shop stewards who had formerly been workers committee leaders. Participant observation provided me better understanding of how the workers committees were organised, how the workers committees organised mass meetings, how participatory the meetings were and the relations between the committees and the mass of workers. I was also able to observe the work culture and social dynamics amongst the workers.

I also did secondary research through document analysis of company, union and government documents some of which were available online and others I got from various sources.

About 80 percent of the workers interviewed from Lonmin and Impala were Xhosa migrant workers from the Eastern Cape, some of whom had set up residence in the townships near the mines such as *Seralang* and *Nkaneng*⁹ and others lived in shacks dotted around the mines and had families in the Eastern Cape. The rest were Sotho, Zulu and Tswana speaking.

⁸ Snowball sampling is used to target difficult to reach people by asking to be directed to others of the same group (Greenstein, 2003).

⁹ Seralang is a township in Rustenburg with RDP houses. Many mine workers working in surrounding shafts from different mining houses especially Impala, live in these RDP houses. Nkaneng is an informal settlement close to Lonmin Mine

AMPLATS however had a more diverse group and many of the Worker Committee leaders' interviewed were Zulu speaking from Kwa Zulu Natal.

The workers occupations ranged from Miners, RDOs, Winch operators, Pipe Transport and Ventilation (PTV) workers and so on. Most of the workers were aged between 23 and 35 years with only two respondents aged over 40 years. Most of the workers' education level was at secondary school level up to matric, especially the younger ones, whilst about five of the workers had completed some form of tertiary education. Of the total number of workers interviewed 23 percent were females and the rest were males. Only two out of the total number of workers interviewed were reluctant in the beginning to consent to the interviews, due to some violent incidents in Marikana and some workers having been subjected to intimidation and arrest by police, especially those from the Lonmin Mine. However these two workers both later agreed to be interviewed after being reassured about the purpose of the research and that their identities would be kept confidential and they would be anonymous. The rest were very open and eager, in two instances, I ended up having a group interview with four-five workers who were all eager to talk to me after I had introduced myself and explained the research topic. The names of workers quoted in this research are therefore pseudonyms and not the real names of the workers.

I also managed to speak to union officials including four shop stewards from AMCU and a branch executive, as well as two NUM shop stewards. It was difficult to speak with Lonmin mine officials as they kept insisting that they could not conduct interviews whilst the Marikana Commission of Inquiry (MCI) was still sitting. As for Amplats, their officials insisted they were busy trying to resolve the problem of retrenchments i.e. In January, 2013 Amplats announced the planned retrenchment of 14,000 workers (M & G, January, 2013) and to mothball the Khuseleka and Khomanani shafts in Rustenburg (Benchmarks, 2013). This figure was reduced to 6,000 at the beginning of May 2013 and was by September 2013 further reduced to 3,000 workers. Amplats mine officials indicated that they could not therefore conduct interviews as the situation was quite volatile with workers protesting the retrenchments. I did however manage to get one junior member of staff from Amplats to speak with me.

3. CHAPTER 3- SOUTH AFRICAN PLATINUM MINING INDUSTRY IN PERSPECTIVE

Mining is a very important industry in many countries round the globe and is a key sector for South Africa and has played a very significant role in the growth and industrialisation of the country. Mining directly contributed to the establishment of the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE) in the late 19th century, and today it still accounts for a third of its market capitalisation (Mining Intelligence Database (MID), 2013). Mining in South Africa contributes an average of 20 per cent to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), of which about 50 percent is contributed directly. Mining boasts a total annual income exceeding R330 billion, is one of the country's major employers, with more than one million people in mining-related employment and is the largest contributor by value to black economic empowerment in the economy (Ibid, 2013).

Historically South Africa was known for gold and diamond mining with gold production reaching its peak in 1970 when it contributed 68 percent of global production. However in recent decades, South Africa has also grown be the world's largest producer of chrome, manganese, vanadium, vermiculite and platinum, which in 2001 contributed 51 percent of platinum global production (MID, 2013). Platinum has become a very popular metal in jewellery but most importantly it is an innovative environmentally friendly resource in the automotive industry which requires the powerful catalytic properties of platinum for use in exhaust systems as catalytic converters – which pacify harmful gasses (such as carbon monoxide) into less harmful carbon dioxide and water vapour (Ibid, 2013).

As a result, although the platinum mining industry has witnessed significant growth since 2008, profitability has been significantly lower, prompting cuts in Lonmin's Social Labour Plans (SLP) and retrenchment plans at Anglo American Platinum (Benchmarks, 2013). It is important to understand that Platinum is only one of the family of six chemically similar elements that make up the platinum group metals (PGMs) family (Capps, 2012a:64). The others are palladium, rhodium, iridium, osmium and ruthenium and although PGM deposits are known throughout the world, commercially viable lodes are rare and intensely spatially concentrated. South Africa is estimated to hold 87 percent of the world's PGM reserves and, in 2009, accounted for 76 percent of world platinum production and 33 percent of palladium production (Chamber of Mines cited in Capps, 2012a:66).

South Africa's platinum deposits lie in a vast geological formation known as the Bushveld Igneous Complex (BIC). The BIC is comprised of three narrow, layered reefs: the Merensky Reef, the Upper Group 2 (UG2) Reef and the palladium-rich Platreef (Capps, 2012a: 66). Shaped like a large bowl, the BIC is comprised of three, semi-distinct 'limbs', which span an area of more than 66 000km² in the North West, Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces (Ibid:66). The scale and quality of ore deposits in the BIC supersedes those anywhere else in the world, with a recent geological study estimating that the region could comfortably supply the world's platinum needs for the next forty years (Ibid, 66-69). This has put South Africa in a unique position where platinum is concerned. Since the birth of the democratic dispensation under the ANC, a series of legislative reforms were put in place that would prove crucial to the retention of monopoly capital in the platinum sector, and in an effort to entice international investors, the ANC government relaxed tariff barriers and capital controls adopting a restrained approach to redistribution through the budget (Seekings and Nattrass (2005) cited in Chaskalson (2013). The government also permitted local companies to divest their capital and list on off-shore stock exchanges for the first time (Mohammed, 2010 cited in Chaskalson, 2013:19) which Fine (2008) argues signalled an ANC policy shift and a bias towards capitalism and financialisation in the Minerals Energy Complex. This shift overrode stated public and national goals on the ANC agenda developed since the beginning of the period of democracy (Ibid, 2013:19).

To this effect, the three major producers of Platinum in South Africa are Anglo Platinum (Amplats), Impala Platinum Holdings (Implats) and Lonmin. Amplats, which is listed both on the JSE and the London Stock exchange (LSE), accounts for 40 percent of the world's total platinum group metals sales (MID, 2013). The second largest producer, accounting for 25 per cent of the world's total platinum group metals sales is Impala Platinum, which has its primary listing on the JSE with its secondary listing on the LSE.¹⁰ The third largest producer is Lonmin Platinum whose shares are traded on the LSE.¹¹

¹⁰ <http://www.palladiumcoins.com/stock.html>

¹¹ Ibid

Major players in platinum mining in South Africa

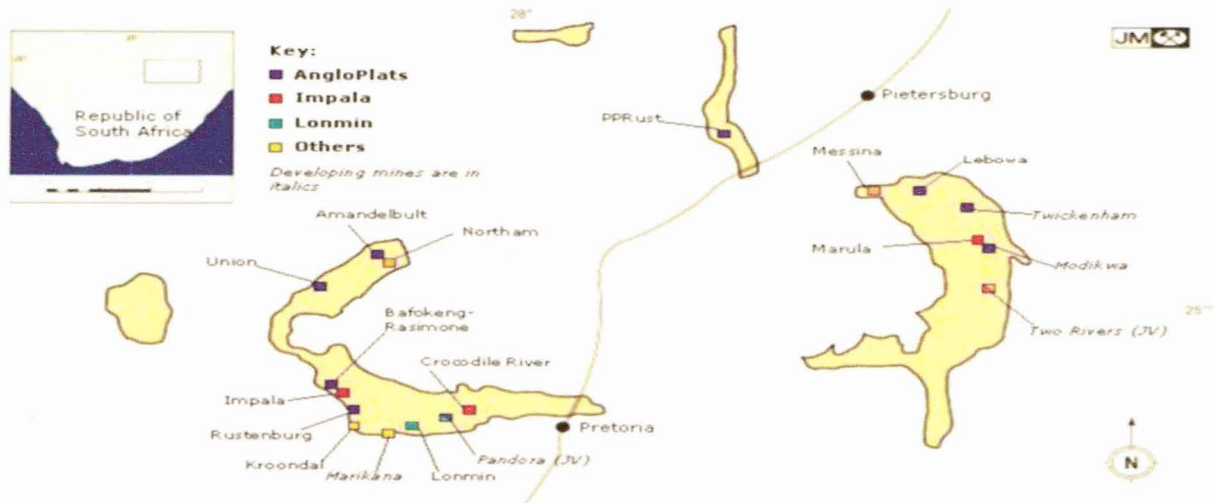


Figure 2. Source -Capps G. 'Victim of its own success'-

In the 2002/2003 financial year, South Africa's platinum sector shrunk by 27.8 percent. In spite of the ability of mining houses to regulate global supply, the industry clearly remained at the mercy of international commodity markets. Nevertheless, after 2004, platinum prices rose sharply and rapid expansion began again, with the advent of rising demand for diesel-powered automobiles in Europe and the United States (Chaskalson, 2013). By 2007, the market capitalisation of South Africa's platinum mining ventures reached a startling high of R580 billion (Ibid, 2013: 22). The rapid period of growth between 2004 and 2008 exhibited strong parallels with the previous commodity boom, in that government policy did little to disrupt the steady flow of profits out of the country or ensure sustainable development in communities surrounding the mines (Chaskalson, 2013). The boom also saw companies improve their BEE credentials and by 2007, Amplats employed eight black directors, one of whom was Mohamad Valli Moosa, former NEC member of the UDF (United democratic Front) a major anti-apartheid organisation and Mbeki's former Minister of Environmental Affairs (Ibid, 2013:22). Two years later, Lonmin would appoint former NUM General Secretary and ANC office bearer Cyril Ramaphosa to its board of directors. The undisputed losers during this period, however, were ordinary workers: average annual earnings actually dropped in real terms between 2005 and 2006 as Impala and Amplats both registered record profits (Chaskalson, 2013). As has been the general trend in the industry since 1994, the platinum sector's most successful periods have not translated into tangible economic gains for its labour force, the implications of which are explored in the next chapter.

4. CHAPTER 4- MARIKANA AND THE 2012 STRIKE WAVE.

This chapter discusses the 2012 strike wave in the platinum industry and the Marikana massacre which not only brought about renewed interest in labour issues in the platinum mining industry but brought to the fore the range and depth of socioeconomic factors that labour faces on the platinum mines and other sectors that have low wage workers such as agriculture and the fishing industry in post-apartheid South Africa.

As was the case in the past, South African mines have always relied on large numbers of unskilled labour (mainly migrant labour). The platinum mines mostly spread out across the Rustenburg belt in the North West Province have been no exception (Forrest, 2013). However, whereas mining labour in the old gold and diamond mines was disciplined through segregation and a host of other exclusionary and punitive laws under the apartheid regime to keep wages low, labour in the mining sector today, 20 years into the South African democratic dispensation, faces different kinds of internal and external controls and challenges. As previously discussed in the literature review, there have been many commentaries about what led to the 2012 strike wave in the platinum belt and the Marikana massacre. This part of the chapter will highlight events leading to the strike and the massacre according to the voices of workers who were involved in these events.

Strikes in South Africa and indeed many parts of the world are a common phenomenon and many triggers are attributed to causes related to poor working conditions, low wages, conflicts between workers and management, and even between unions and management. For South Africa the 2012 strike wave is important to study because not only did it lead to the unfortunate death of 44 people (10 in the week preceding the massacre where 34 miners were killed), or that the massacre happened in a democratic South Africa, but also that the 2012 strike wave led to a significant shift in union membership. Furthermore, the strike was led by workers through the workers committees and had a very significant impact on the country's economy. Some commentators romanticised the period as 'South Africa's Arab spring' as the strike spread to other sectors of the economy and for a short while left the country in political and economic turmoil.

The platinum mining industry is the largest employer in the mining industry with 194,979 workers (Chamber of mines 2012, cited in Chinguno, 2013). This figure involves various

occupations among which are, Rock Drill Operators, Winch operators, miners, Pipe, Transport and Ventilation assistants and many others. For Stewart (2013:01) the 2012 strike wave was initiated by Rock Drill Operators. He argues that to understand the causes of the strike, one has to begin by understanding the occupation of the rock driller, the source of their social power and their history of struggle. He argues that due to the centrality and stability of the machine rock drill as a production tool, and resulting from the stalled development of suitable mechanisation at the rock face, the continued presence of large numbers of rock drillers and other underground workers are still required to mine both gold and platinum. He further argues that as a consequence, there is a mass-based mining working class reminiscent of the scenario during the early industrial capitalism period. Stewart (2013) posits that this is the basis of the objective social power wielded by the RDOs in 2012. He highlights this argument by linking it to a case study of the struggle of a group of RDOs whose independent workers' committees have been traced back to 1985. He notes that the RDOs went out on a series of strikes in 1999 and 2004 and parallels this with the 2012 strike wave.

The problems leading to the 2012 strike wave and the massacre actually started earlier than 2012. After the 2008 financial crisis all three major mining houses (AMPLATS, IMPALA and Lonmin) registered negative rates of return for the first time in the democratic dispensation.¹² As a result the sector retrenched 12, 800 workers and dramatically slowed down production (Chaskalson, 2013). For Lonmin, this forced the company to mothball its Baobab Shaft on the Platreef near Potgietersrus and its open-cast operations near Marikana in 2009, ventures which had been producing 75 000 oz. of platinum annually (Ibid, 2013:23). Although the markets recovered to some levels by 2011, the high prices enjoyed before the crisis were not attained again. Chaskalson (2013:23) argues that despite this, real wages for workers increased more rapidly than ever before in the wake of the 2008 crisis. After 2011, workers began to get frustrated with the slowdown in increases and with their demands presented to the NUM not being met. This contributed to the build-up towards the 2012 strike wave, as the mining companies would not accede to these wage demands, claiming that high labour costs would severely dent the company's economic prospects (Chaskalson,

¹² Credit Suisse, Anglo American Peer Comparison, <https://holtlens2.credit-suisse.com/lens/ca/Compare.action?viewId=1013>

2013). Workers were aware that during the period 2008-2009 there was a financial crisis and therefore expected that after 2011, when the global economy had started to improve and platinum prices on the market were steadily growing upwards, wages and related matters would be addressed.

All of the workers interviewed, even those who joined as late as 2011, verified that even though the strike wave took place in 2012, problems had started brewing much earlier.

Liyanda¹³ who had been working for Impala Platinum since 2002 had this to say:

We had been having a lot of problems; we had grievances about money, time, retrenchments, corruption, working conditions and many other things for almost 5 years now and it seemed that our grievances were falling on deaf ears

Following a series of occupations and sit-ins beginning in 2009, the workers' frustrations escalated when in February 2012, 5000 RDOs at Impala Platinum led 12 000 other workers out on strike after they were overlooked for a wage increase. This occurred when management unilaterally decided to increase the pay of workers in a higher skill bracket, namely miners, who are responsible for supervision at the work-face and overseeing blasting, and whose wages were to be adjusted upwards by 18 percent reneging on an earlier agreement for a uniform increase across the board (Reddy, 2013). This turned into a violent, six-week long 'wild-cat' (legally unprotected) strike.

Mr. Moloi¹⁴, who has worked for Impala for over 30 years, explained in an interview that the RDOS at Impala demanded R9, 000 to which management responded that a percentage would be given. However, the workers insisted on the R9, 000 per month after deductions and would not accept a percentage. He further argued that the demands of the RDOs were legitimate and reasonable as the work they do is physically very labour intensive and they deserve the remuneration they get at the end of each month.

The problem was when NUM would meet with management they would not talk about money for RDOs because it was other people who got increments yet RDOS do very hard work and are paid per hole, for instance, one RDO has to drill 30 holes and one hole is R1 and there is bonus. Management sets a target goal for instance, R450 per month to enable one to get a bonus and if you only do 300 holes then you do not get any bonus as if you have

¹³ Pseudonyms for worker interviewed on 4th September, 2013

¹⁴ Pseudonyms for worker interviewed on 4th September, 2013 in Seralang, Rustenburg.

done no work, yet this work is very hard with 30m being worked by only 3 RDOs, this is bearing in mind that at some mines RDOs have assistants and at others they do not have assistants, that is why they demanded R9, 500.

Eventually management gave in to the pressure exerted by the RDOs and agreed to a substantial wage increase. However this victory by Impala RDOs was later to haunt other mining houses. Chiguno (2013: 22) explained that the Murray and Roberts workers at Aquarius Platinum Kwezi shaft also followed the Impala example and presented a R10, 000 wage demand to management¹⁵. Then Lonmin workers also followed suit and decided to adopt the same approach when in August, a contingent of 3000 RDOs went on strike. This eventually escalated to over 24000 workers going out on strike resulting in the Marikana Massacre (Stewart, 2013). The workers were organising and negotiating with management outside of union structures which at the time was predominantly NUM, but through the independent workers committees. However this did not last as management later refused to negotiate outside of formal bargaining structures and without the NUM (Chinguno, 2013).

At this point the NUM was very disgruntled as there was a noticeable presence of the AMCU workers during the strike which NUM believed to be the force behind the workers' actions. The AMCU was busy recruiting workers at Impala and Lonmin at the time the strikes occurred. William¹⁶ who at the time of the Lonmin strike was an NUM shop Steward explained that there was a lot of rivalry between the NUM and the AMCU especially because the AMCU had made headway with recruiting at Impala and had made a breakthrough with recruiting at Lonmin's Karee mine in 2011. There 7000 of the 9000 workers who had been dismissed were reinstated and then refused to maintain their membership with the NUM despite the union negotiating on their behalf, they later joined the AMCU (Chinguno, 2013:18).

Previously we were not so concerned about AMCU because it was a small union and we thought it was just trying to bite more than it could chew. But then at Lonmin workers decided they didn't want NUM because when workers for instance demand a 20 per cent

¹⁵ Business day on 8th August, 2012 reported that 3 people had been killed and 20 injured after a protest when a decision to dismiss 200 workers who had been involved in an illegal strike action in June 2012 was upheld by the CCMA <http://www.bdlive.co.za/articles/2012/08/01/three-dead-in-aquarius-platinum-mine-invasion>

¹⁶ Pseudonyms for worker, Interview conducted on 27 August, 2013 in Marikana, Rustenburg.

increment, NUM comes back and says 6 per cent which would only take effect after 2 years. So workers saw the union as not representing them but standing with management.

William further explained that NUM who had underestimated AMCU. NUM was infuriated by what was happening. There was apathy towards NUM by workers, who seemed cordial towards AMCU, which was seen to sympathise with the workers. NUM at the time was still the majority union whilst AMCU had gained mining recognition (Chinguno, 2013). The Lonmin workers raised the demand to a living wage of R12, 500 after careful consideration of what they considered to be the cost of living.

NUM was so upset and not only with the wage demand or the fact that workers seemed sympathetic towards AMCU, and totally refused to support the strike. But when a meeting was convened with management, the agenda was NUM led. NUM used their power and position to ensure that the workers' committee members were not allowed to speak. When this went back to the workers, they didn't want anything to do with NUM.

Management refused the wage demand of R12, 500 and said that the company could not afford the wage demand. Lonmin's management in July then decided to award RDOs with shift allowances ranging from R250-R750, however the workers demanded substantially more than what was offered and stuck to the R12, 500 demand. By August, 2012 the strike intensified as all workers went on strike and held steadfast to their demand of R12, 500. Management still continued to refuse to talk with the workers committee¹⁷ and demanded that the demands be channelled through NUM. This greatly frustrated the workers who did not wish for NUM to be involved. During this period, there was a lot of violence, with 10 people dying. According to Alexander *et al* (2012) and Chiguno (2013) this was also verified by workers interviewed, and was heard at the Farlam MCI, the first killing was on 11th August 2012 when according to Alexander *et al* (2012) and workers interviewed, NUM officials opened fire on the unarmed workers who had gone to advise NUM that they wanted to engage with management directly. Two were reported to have been killed. Sonwabile explained that when NUM opened fire on 11th August, they thought that two of their colleagues were actually dead. This became a turning point for the course of events that took place in the following days.

¹⁷ Workers interviewed confirmed that at this point the committees were representing all workers irrespective of union affiliation

Nkululeko, a Lonmin RDO, narrated what had transpired on 11th August, 2012.

On 11 August, we were very disturbed because we had just gone to the NUM offices to discuss with them that we intended to take up our grievances with management ourselves, but before we could even reach their doors to discuss, they started shooting at us and there was confusion with people trying to take cover and scampering all over and when we had settled down, we heard that two of us had been killed, but it turned out to be only one who was hacked to death and the other was injured but survived. We were so shocked that the union would kill its own members when we were not even attacking them.

It was after this incident that workers tried to reconvene at the stadium but were denied entry by mine security and decided to reconvene at the mountain or 'Koppie'¹⁸ where they stayed until 16th August, 2012. It was also after the shooting on 11th August that workers started brandishing traditional weapons. Chinguno (2013: 24) asserted that the workers decided to retreat to the mountain because it carried a lot of symbolism for many of them especially the Xhosa speaking workers who were in the majority. In Xhosa culture when there is a problem in the community, for instance a drought, elders go to the mountain to ask for rain. Similarly, if there were problems in the family, men converged at a kraal, although women are excluded from this gendered space. Chiguno further posits that the gathering at the Koppie therefore indicated a community in crisis.

On 12 August, 2012 workers armed with traditional weapons like spears and machetes again went to the NUM offices. They were stopped by mine security, kept on going. Alexander *et al* (2012:28) explains that during this process workers claimed they were shot at but managed to overpower two security officials who were both killed. Workers claims are corroborated by Chinguno (2013). By 13th August, when workers were returning from Karee Shaft K3, where they had gone to persuade contract workers to down tools, the workers were confronted by police who asked the workers to put down their weapons. The workers crouched down on the ground to indicate non-aggression and politely requested the police to allow them safe passage and to escort them to the Koppie where they would surrender their traditional weapons, as they feared for their safety and could not surrender their weapons until they reached the safety of the Koppie. This scene is depicted in Rehad Desai's (2014) film 'Miners Shot down.' After a short while, the police opened fire on the workers,

¹⁸ Koppie is Afrikaans for a small hill

causing pandemonium. Consequently two workers were shot dead and two policemen were hacked to death (Chinguno 2013 and Alexander *et al* 2012).

The following two days were marred by failed negotiations with union representatives and police trying to convince the workers to leave the Koppie and return to work, while workers insisted on having a conference with their employers and continuing to stay at the Koppie until then. On 16th August, 2012, a dark day for South Africa's new democracy, reminiscent of the notorious Sharpeville massacre, the heavily armed police, opened fire on the workers at the Koppie with live ammunition. Thirty four of them were killed and 78 injured as the South African Police Service shot down the workers on command to break the strike.

During the period of the Lonmin strike, the media captured the wage demands and debates were spurred about whether it was a realistic demand or not. After the massacre, reports in the media emerged indicating the salaries top executives earn in the mining companies compared to the many workers killed, who were on average earning between R4, 000 and R5, 000 per month. *City Press* (August, 2012), reported how three top executives of Lonmin mine had a combined salary of R38 million for the year 2011. This translated into the combined salary package for almost 4000 RDOs in a year. Further, *City Press* reported that Ian Farmer, the then CEO of Lonmin mine during the period of the strike and massacre, earned a startling figure of R1.2m per month in the year 2011. Commenting on this, Sonwabile 29, a migrant worker from the Eastern Cape working as an RDO at Implats, put forward the view, that the mine bosses were very selfish because they got huge salaries and bonuses at the expense of the many workers:

How can one person be getting a salary of over R1million a month? Can you imagine what that money could do if spread out amongst the workers in a shaft, it can really make a difference. If you look at how much we get and then compare with how much we make and what the bosses get, you can really see how exploited we are and that asking for higher wages isn't unreasonable.

It was through views such as these that many workers held the belief that the mining companies were not making losses and therefore could not understand why workers wage demands were viewed as preposterous and were not being met. Instead workers were being retrenched. Workers believed that the mining companies wanted to capitalise on their

illiteracy as well as the high unemployment rates in the country to manipulate them out of getting better wages.

All the workers interviewed expressed the view that they made a lot of money for the mining companies and yet got very little and were forced to live in poor conditions and in fear of losing their jobs. Ngwane and Mmope (2012) agree with this and posit that workers suffer exploitation and oppression in the workplace in terms of poor wages and precarious employment and in their living quarters are compelled to live in miserable slum conditions. Nathi¹⁹ a Winch driver from Impala illustrated how they make money for the mines:

When we work underground there is the locomotive that carries the platinum out, that locomotive may have 10 carriages, and out of the 10 carriages one carriage is enough to cover the entire wage bill of workers in a shaft and the nine carriages are profit for the bosses less maybe one or two carriages for bills or services like electricity. Now can you imagine the amount of money we make for these companies? We are given a target or panels to blast and if you don't blast the targets we get charged because we are told that we are losing the company R2.5million per panel. That in itself, gives us an idea of how much we make for them and even if we are not very literate, we can do the numbers so we know we make a lot of money.

A Benchmarks Report carried out on Lonmin agrees with this view and explains that in corporate discourse "unprofitable" doesn't mean loss making but means making less profit than the company can make elsewhere (2013:04). Many workers interviewed expressed the view that the mining companies were only interested in maximizing profit for their shareholders and are not really interested in the welfare of workers.

After the Marikana Massacre, In September 2012, the Amplats strike began and lasted for close to 9 weeks, from 11th September-11th November (Anglo America, Human Resources Review, 2012). The Amplats strike did not begin because of the events at Lonmin per se; it arose out of a long-running dispute between workers, NUM and Amplats. From June 2012, workers at Amplats were involved in continuous engagement with the NUM and management. They went on strike on the 11th September after deciding that the NUM was incapable of taking up their demands with management²⁰. Whereas the strike at Impala had been influenced a lot by AMCU, which at the time was recruiting members at Impala,

¹⁹ Pseudonyms for worker, interview conducted on 3rd September, 2013 in Rustenburg.

²⁰ Many workers interviewed even those from outside AMPLATS corroborated this argument and it was also captured by Amandla Magazine's Benjamin Fogel in The Amplats workers' committee dilemma

Amplats had little to no influence from AMCU. These workers organised on their own as workers through the committees.

According to a worker committee leader from Amplats Khuseleka shaft, even though the Amplats strike started after the Marikana Massacre, problems had been brewing since 2004. This finally culminated in May/June 2012 when reality dawned. Workers who had been holding out for a solution realised that they were not making headway. This was coupled with the fresh pain of losing colleagues from Lonmin Mine in the Marikana Massacre.²¹ Workers on 11th September 2012 finally decided to go on strike. Workers interviewed explained that another push for the strike in Amplats started towards the end of May 2012 when management gave RDOs a wage increment of R750 and promised a further R250 by early 2013. Chinguno (2013:23) argues that seeing what had happened at Impala when Lonmin awarded its RDOs a shift allowance, AMPLATS management also decided to do the same and awarded its RDOs shift allowances to avoid worker unrest. As stated earlier, there were a lot of issues before May 2012, including workers having to deal with a lot of retrenchments. After the RDOs were awarded the increment, a few workers started to question the wisdom of the mining management. They and felt that unilaterally awarding the RDOs an increment in the midst of so much worker discontent could not only be perceived as discrimination and undermining other workers. Thabo a worker committee leader at Amplats explained that management's act was discriminatory.

There were a lot of problems that Amplats workers were facing and workers were generally not happy as a lot of concerns were unresolved, so when the RDOs alone were awarded a shift allowance, many did not understand the logic behind it because all the workers worked very hard and deserved a wage increase not just one occupation after all the mine cannot operate with only the RDOs.

A few workers from Khuseleka Shaft working on the night shift started raising questions and having discussions about the situation. They continued to meet privately to find a solution. The numbers of workers' attending meetings began to grow and by June, 2012 a few decided to approach management. Most of these workers were Winch drivers and during the following months the discussion widened, encompassing all other occupations. A

²¹ The Massacre was not the main push towards the strike but workers were nonetheless very upset about the killings

decision was made to start holding meetings during the day to include all other workers. According to the majority of Amplats workers interviewed, Khuseleka Shaft had the highest number of non-unionised workers. In a bid to push their demands, the workers consulted with the unions but none of the unions wanted to be on board as they felt the workers' demands were sure to fail. Eventually Khomanani, Thembelani and the other Rustenburg shafts joined in and by August a memorandum was written up with a wage demand of R16, 080. Mzi²² a PTV (Pipe Track Ventilation) from Amplats explained that their wage demand was for all workers and was a demand for a living wage.

We thought about it and decided that a living wage of R16, 080 was appropriate and that was what we were pushing with management.

During this period, non-union affiliated independent workers' committees were formed and used as negotiating avenues for the workers. Management would not budge on the workers' demands. During the following weeks, workers continued to meet. Eventually a decision was made and on 11th September, workers went on an unprotected strike. The workers' committee leaders managed to convince other worker at the Amplats Northam and Amandelbult mines. Thus, the strike spread from Rustenburg to other Amplats operations outside Rustenburg.

In the course of the strike a lot of pressure was exerted on the workers to return to work. In the process, three weeks into the strike, AMPLATS announced that 12,000 workers who were on the unprotected strike were dismissed for not attending a disciplinary hearing. The 12,000 were later reinstated and on 16th November, 2012 after 9 weeks of the strike, the workers returned to work following the signing of a return-to-work agreement signed by concerned parties on 15th November, 2012.

According to Anglo American Human Resources Review (2012), a total 30, 568 employees were directly involved in the unprotected strike at Amplats. The strike lasted 66 days, which amounted to a total of 4.6 million man-hours lost in production, and a loss of R185 million in wages.

²² Pseudonyms for worker interview conducted on 4 September, 2013 at Jabula, Rustenburg.

Similar to Lonmin Mine, which saw a lot of workers become AMCU members after the massacre and when the strike had ended (Reddy, 2013); Amplats workers also joined AMCU after the strike, in line with management's request that workers be part of formal recognised union structures to represent them. Nomsa²³ a worker leader from AMPLATS explained;

After we returned to work, management requested that we either go back to our old unions or join new unions to represent us as they could not continue to have discussions with the workers committees that were not part of the recognised bargaining structure. So considering that we had many problems with NUM many of us decided to join AMCU which had made headway at Impala and Lonmin.

This shift to AMCU saw NUM lose its majority membership status in the platinum Industry. Chinguno (2013:18) illustrates that between January 2012 and November, 2012, AMCU membership increased by 500 per cent with the majority of new members being former NUM members. To date (March, 2014) tensions between the unions remain largely unresolved and the outcome of industrial bargaining agreements on the platinum mines is still uncertain (Reddy, 2013).

AMCU now has the upper hand and has signed recognition agreements with Lonmin formally recognising AMCU as the majority union at Lonmin in August 2013 (miningmix, August, 2013). Amplats and Implats also signed recognition agreements with AMCU which was estimated to speak for up to 40 per cent and 58 percent of their workforces respectively (Ibid, 2013).

What is interesting however is that during the 2012 strike, it is workers through the workers' committees who pushed and sustained the strikes in all the mining houses. This very interesting phenomenon will be explored in detail in the next chapter, including analysing the causes for the formation of the committees as well as the reasons for the strikes uncovered from the workers perspectives by the study.

²³ Pseudonyms for worker, interview conducted 3 September, 2012 in Rustenburg.

5. CHAPTER 5- ORGANISED LABOUR ON THE PLATINUM MINES

This chapter seeks to trace how labour was organised on the platinum belt during the 2012 strike wave and what apart from the Marikana massacre were the other implications of this organisation. The chapter will also analyse the underlying causes of the formation of the committees to better understand why recognised structures were not used. The chapter will conclude by highlighting some of the events/ issues that arose after the 2012 strike wave and going forward.

5.1 Evolution of workers committees

As discussed in the previous chapters, workers in the platinum mining industry decided to organise on their own through the workers' committees, despite having union representation. Whilst some mining houses organised in similar ways through workers committees, there were a lot of different variables in the manner in which these committees were formed. The study brings to the fore these different variables and what they meant for worker organisation during the strike wave, now and for future organising. A lot of questions come into play, such as, how did workers in platinum mining find themselves organising by themselves outside union structures? Why were the committees formed, how were these committees formed and what do they mean? There was a lot of agency at play during the strike wave. This chapter seeks to analyse the underlying factors leading to the formation of the workers committees, through listening to the voices of the workers.

The previous chapter provides background and perspective about how the 2012 strike wave evolved in the platinum mining industry. What is a common denominator for all the mining houses during this strike is that workers were negotiating outside of recognised union structures and through independent workers' committees. The thesis in chapter 4 illustrated how in Impala workers committees, compromising of RDOs led the process and in Lonmin we see a similar pattern, but the committees there develop a shift in their composition and the same applied to Amplats. This chapter will examine how the workers committees were formed in the platinum industry and will proceed to discuss why the

workers committees were formed. The chapter will largely focus on the development of Lonmin and Amplats workers Committees.

According to interviews conducted with workers in the platinum belt, workers committees or independent strike committees as they were known in some cases were a way of workers ensuring that their voices would be heard. Workers felt that they needed a structure independent of the unions or any other influences that would represent only the worker's needs and through which workers would be in control of demanding and fighting for their rights. Nkosinathi,²⁴ from Lonmin explained;

We wanted a structure that represented us and our demands not NUM or any other unions, we wanted just our own voices, and we felt it was time to speak for ourselves. You know sometimes when you ask others to speak for you they misrepresent you and so we were tired of being misrepresented and felt that we were not children but adults who could speak for ourselves and push our own agenda.

Whereas in Impala, the workers committee was formed by RDOs and comprised of mainly Xhosa speaking RDOs from the Eastern Cape²⁵ called the five *Madodas (Meaning men in Xhosa)*, this was not the case for Amplats and Lonmin. In Lonmin, initially the worker committees comprised largely of RDOs but later evolved. It was not very clear what the status of the workers' committees were, but many workers interviewed explained that the committees before the massacre were composed mainly of RDOs which included five men from each shaft and so the workers' committee had fifteen workers equally representative of its three shafts before the Massacre. Many of these workers were NUM members, as at the time AMCU had only made inroads at the Lonmin Karee mine and had not recruited many workers from the other two shafts.

Ben,²⁶ a Winch operator, who had been employed by Lonmin for less than a year when the massacre happened and was injured in the massacre, explained that workers were chosen from each shaft so that the committee was representative. He explained that five workers were chosen from the fifteen. These were the ones who did the talking and negotiations. 'Mambush' or 'The Man in the green blanket' was one of them.

²⁴ Pseudonyms for interview conducted on 26th August 2013 at Rustenburg Civic Centre.

²⁵ Studies have shown that the majority of RDOs are Xhosa speaking from the Eastern Cape where this skill has been honed for many years.

²⁶ Pseudonym for Lonmin worker, Interview conducted on 5 September 2012 in Rustenburg.

The workers who were representing us were chosen by us the workers, we looked at who was brave, principled and a good negotiator to be part of the committees and theses Madodas were chosen at mass meetings and all the workers had to agree on the selection because we didn't want problems with workers complaining if they had concerns about the person chosen. We wanted discipline so we had to do things together.

Unfortunately the majority of the workers committee members were killed in the massacre.²⁷ Another workers' committee was reconstituted afterwards to negotiate with management on behalf of the workers. The number of worker committee members shifted after the massacre and became fluid with estimates of between 15-25 members. These worker committee members were later elected to become AMCU shop stewards and branch officials.

In the case of Amplats, workers committees were formed in August 2012. As previously discussed in chapter 5, organising for the Amplats strike began at Khuseleka Mine with Winch drivers meeting at night and initiating talks around mobilisation for wage increases. Khuseleka mine played a pivotal role in the Amplats strike. The genesis of workers committee can also be traced there.

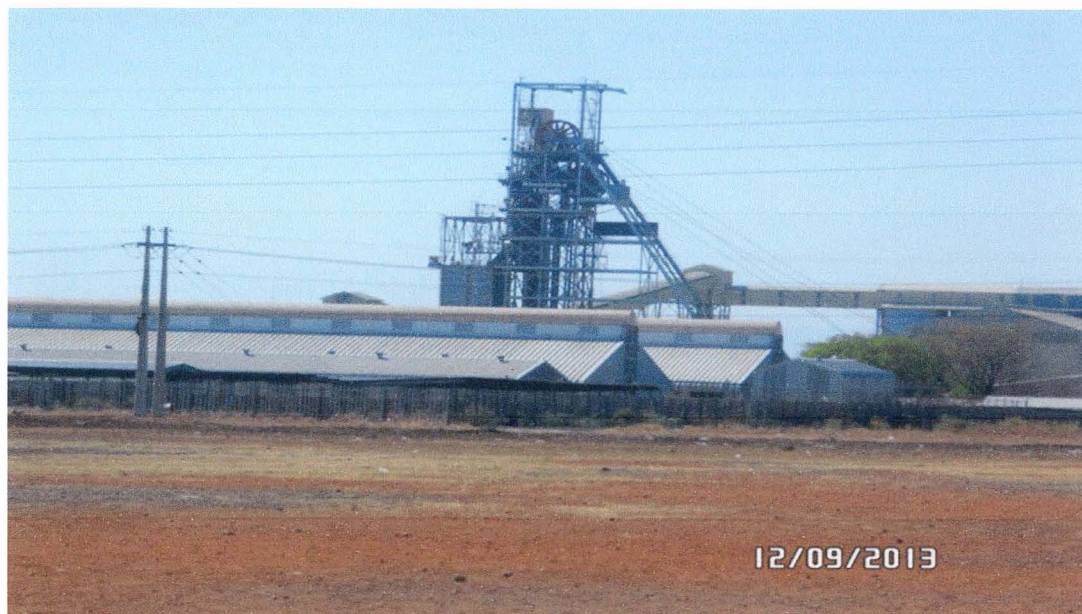


PHOTO 1: Khuseleka Shaft where organising in AMPLATS began

²⁷ Rehad Desai's film (2014) *'Miners Shot down'* shows footage which suggests that some of the strike leaders were targeted in the shooting by police with most of them being struck by as many as 6 bullets

The workers' committees were elected by all workers from all shafts with representatives being chosen from each shaft. Moroka²⁸ a PTV from Amplats explained the process that was used in forming the committees. He explained that workers who were willing had to volunteer that they wanted to represent their colleagues from their shafts. After the workers had volunteered, their names were subject to debate by all the workers at a mass meeting. They would then vote and chose the representatives from that list. The mass of workers would look at the capabilities of the workers in question based on courage, incorruptibility and good negotiating skills. The workers had to volunteer to take up the role because they did not want to just propose names and force people who were not willing to undertake the role. The committee members chosen were then mandated to take forward workers' demands.

Thabo²⁹, from Amplats, described how important it was for workers who were chosen to commit to being in the committees because workers acknowledged that they not only needed principled and skilled negotiators but also brave workers who were ready to meet the wrath of the mine bosses and other interested parties.

You had to be strong and committed to be in the workers committee, we didn't want cowards or sell outs because we already had enough of that from the NUM, so when chosen you needed to also agree that you would be committed to the struggle and only push for the workers' demands and nothing else.

The Amplats worker committee are said to have constituted between five to eight members per shaft. In total the overall committee had over 45 members³⁰. The committee was comprised of different occupations and not dominated by any single occupation as was the case with the Impala and the Lonmin committee before the Massacre, which were dominated by RDOs. Thabo further explained that because of the manner in which the workers were chosen, all occupations were incorporated. There was no doubt that the committee would represent all the workers and not any one group.

²⁸ Pseudonyms for worker, interview conducted on 5th September, 2013.

²⁹ Interview conducted in Rustenburg in September, 2013. Pseudonyms have been used for all interview participants.

³⁰ The exact figures were not very clear, a wide range of figures was given during the interviews because the numbers were flux due to the fact that these were informal structures and were formed according to context of a particular shaft

The workers committee's organised initially within their work premises. Simon explained that organizing was happening within the shafts underground, at the hostels and that when a meeting needed to take place communication was sent out by sending phone messages to people at different levels in the shafts and those in the hostels to meet at a central place. He further explained that when messages were sent, they were very short and not detailed as they did not want to reveal anything but wanted to discuss all matters *en bloc* and as a collective group so that decisions could be made by all the workers.

Further respondents explained that during negotiations with management, the committees did not always send the same people but would change depending on the demands or context. The workers tried to ensure that whatever delegation was chosen included representatives from different shafts and not just one shaft.

It was evident from the interviews conducted that 99 percent of the respondents which included both committee members and ordinary workers, that there was a lot of participation during the strike from the mass of the workers and decisions and demands were worker driven.³¹ The workers during the strike tried to practice democratic and participatory principles by ensuring that decisions were made *en mass* and workers committees were avenues used to convey workers' demands or decisions.

Webster (2013:98) posits that there are two important components to a union's approach to building democratic structures through the strategic use of power; 1) democratic process to win voluntary consent from members for mobilisation and for restraint when necessary; 2) tactical flexibility, which includes a capacity to distinguish principles and tactics and to choose those tactics most likely to succeed, including negotiation and compromise. From what was highlighted from the interviews, it was evident that the workers committees were using both of these approaches in the 2012 strike wave.

Mzi, who was a Worker Committee member from Amplats Komanani shaft, explained that the committee members were simply representatives whose duty was to go to management and table the demands of the workers and nothing else.

³¹ All but one respondent or interview participant felt that the strike was workers driven and that committees entirely represented the views and decisions of the mass of workers.

If the workers tell us to ask for R16, 080 and if management says no and gives us a lower percentage we would not agree until we report back to the workers. If the workers said no we want R16, 080, we would still go back and tell management that we want R16, 080 moreover; workers didn't trust percentages but only wanted to talk in real money term. Before we took any decision we had to discuss it in the mass meeting otherwise we would be in trouble.

This way of negotiating is testament to workers committees applying what Webster's argued as the two most important components to a union's approach of building democratic structures through the strategic use of power.

Workers interviewed said that whereas they acknowledged the importance of collective bargaining through unions, they found it refreshing to work with the workers' committee who demonstrated that they had only the interests of the workers at heart. Workers felt that this gave them control of their own destiny and that they felt that they were powerful. This ties in with Callinicos (1995) argument that the bureaucrats' betrayal of specific struggles made the rank and file aware of the clash between themselves and their representatives and therefore of the need for forms of organisation more responsive to their own needs and wishes.

What was even more interesting to note about how the workers committees were composed was that not only did each shaft have representatives who formed the larger group of workers committee (45 plus members), each shaft ensured that there were women worker committee representatives unless a particular shaft had no women workers. Asanda Benya (2012) did extensive research on women in mining and highlighted a lot of challenges that women working in the mining industry face whilst working in a highly paternalistic environment and some of these challenges included harassment and even sexual abuse. Whilst this thesis agrees with Benya that indeed women in mining face many challenges in this highly male dominated environment, research findings showed that women during the 2012 strike were not excluded but were chosen and incorporated as worker committee leaders.

The workers interviewed explained that even though there were not that many women workers in the platinum mines, they acknowledged that most of the women they worked with faced a lot of challenges, firstly their being women in mining was in itself a challenge

but that they had a huge household burden with most of them being single parents or bread winners for huge families without any other support.

You know the women who were committee members were even more aggressive and courageous than the men and we understood this because they are even harder hit by the low salaries and poor working and living conditions than us the men. So for them, it's even more painful and much closer to the heart. We had to nominate women to be part of the committees; we could not afford to isolate them because we work together.



PHOTO 3: Women worker leaders leading the protest march against proposed retrenchments

Nomfundiso³², a female workers committee member explained that it was not easy being a committee member as there were many demands on one's time but that she was happy to be part of the committee because it gave her an opportunity to relay to the committee other concerns that the men would not be aware of that affected the women in the shafts.

The men listened to us and never undermined our input and this was very good. Working in mining as women is difficult because it's looked at as a man's world and I suppose sometimes men feel like their territory has been invaded, but during this strike, there was nothing like men or women we all got together because we were all fighting for the same thing. I felt that the committees included us more than the unions, as they invited us to even table issues affecting us as women working underground.

It is through these workers committees, which would meet in private locations and have mass meetings either on mining property like the hostels or even public property like a park or football field, that management was forced to recognise the worker committee

³² Pseudonym for worker interview conducted 6th September, 2012

structures and concede to some of the demands of the workers and after a protracted nine week strike, workers returned to work. Like Lonmin, all the workers committee leaders were elected to be AMCU shop stewards or branch members after workers joined the union after the strike had ended.

It is important however to note that in the case of Amplats, according to workers interviewed, there was little to no influence from AMCU before or during the strike.

Stephen, an Amplats workers committee member explained that for Amplats before the strike started in September the workers had approached AMCU to see how they could work with them, but unfortunately could not get any support from AMCU who were by then very cautious as this was just after the massacre and when the Farlam Commission of Inquiry was instituted.

We literally handed Amplats membership to AMCU on a silver platter after we had fought our own battles, in fact, if it were not for the fact that companies are more readily able to recognise unions than structures like workers committees, we would not have joined any union.

Workers argued that they joined AMCU at management's insistence that they needed to be represented by formally recognised bargaining structures. A mine official confirmed this and indicated that it was better for workers to be represented by unions whom employers could negotiate with in accordance with legal guidelines.

5.2 Underlying causes for evolution of workers committees

Earlier chapters highlighted events and factors leading to the 2012 strike wave and the Marikana Massacre and illustrated that not all the strikes were organised or influenced by the same things. The earlier part of chapter 5 demonstrated how the worker committees were formed which included the process of their formation, their composition as well as how the committees operated or mobilised. This part of the chapter will discuss the underlying reasons for the formation of these alternative forms of organisation, in essence *why* the committees were formed.

According to research findings, what was common amongst all the workers from the different mining houses and the reason for formation of alternative forms of organisation was the workers' disdain for the NUM. As discussed in previous chapters, the majority of workers interviewed especially those from Amplats, argued that they only joined AMCU after the strike due to management's refusal to engage directly with the workers committee after the strike had ended but also because going back to NUM was not an option (Fogel, 2013). All the workers interviewed from Impala, Amplats, Lonmin and Samancor were in consensus that the demand for a living wage was paramount, but another factor that workers agreed on was that they no longer wished to be represented by the NUM and this was the primary reason for the formation of the workers committees as an avenue through which their voices and therefore their demands would be heard. This was the reason why after the strikes had ended; workers resorted to joining AMCU instead of going back to NUM.

Most workers felt that NUM was too entrenched in trade union bureaucracy to be useful to them. The workers explained that they would have liked to remain organised under workers committees as they didn't entirely trust unions but also emphasised that they understood that they needed to be under a union for collective bargaining reasons as companies' recognised unions more but felt that workers committees needed to continue to exist to curb union bureaucracy.

As illustrated earlier in Chapter One, a union like NUM had a lot of clout historically and was known for fighting for workers' rights and was even associated with social movement unionism. However despite this history, workers interviewed were of the view that the way that trade unions used to operate before the democratic dispensation has changed compared with how they operate now. Workers felt that the unions no longer upheld workers' needs and instead sided with capital. Workers claimed that union leaders became so entrenched in their bureaucracies that they actually forgot that their primary role was to serve the interests of their membership, the workers. Many workers claimed unions had lost touch with the workers because they did not work side by side with them underground and got better salaries and bonuses and could therefore not relate to the grievances of the workers.

One of the workers interviewed from Amplats explained that before the strike had started and whilst workers were having initial discussions, NUM was approached but the response from NUM was hostile.

At first when we started organising when we tried to talk to NUM they laughed at us and said we were wasting our time. When they saw that we were serious and continued to organise and mobilise then they started threatening us and told us that we were nothing and if we pushed on they would make sure we got fired.

He further explained that the response encouraged workers to be even more determined to organise on their own. He emphasised that workers wanted to show the unions that workers had the power and unions only had legitimacy because workers gave it to them.

The NUM became a mafia, look at what they did at Lonmin, they caused the massacre and here (Amplats), they were threatening us and telling us that we were nobodies and that no one would listen to us. This really angered us because without us unions would be nothing and we wanted to show them that we had the power and if we wanted we could take it away from them.

Vayise, an RDO from Amplats claimed that the union leaders from NUM were a sell out and never went to the negotiating table to really push for workers interests. He argued that the union (*NUM*) *had changed and betrayed the workers;*

Maybe it is because they sit in offices, live in nice suburbs, drive nice cars and get good salaries and bonuses, that's why they don't care when we ask for increments and better working conditions. Being a union representative these days puts you in a different class and that's why they can't relate to our struggles, they just think of how they can get better positions within the unions so that they can get more. It's a career.

This ties in with Buhlungu's (2010) argument that there has been the shift from trade unions of the 1980s which experienced trade unionism and mobilisation as a process of building solidarity through a collectivist ethos based on self-sacrifice to the trade unions of the 1990s and 2000s which experience an engagement in formal and bureaucratic organisational processes which result in upward mobility and individual reward. Chinguno (2012:14) equally advances that there is transformation going on in the unions at present and that union representatives were obsessed with getting positions and moving up the ladder and into politics.



PHOTO 4: Workers at a rally in Rustenburg carry a makeshift coffin symbolising the death of NUM in the Industry

Workers also felt that unions like the NUM, being part of COSATU, which was part of the tripartite alliance was contentious and a backbone to weakened trade union power and the change in trade unions from being pro- workerist to pro-capitalist and prioritising the interests of the mine owners before the workers. Solomon, an Amplats worker explained that they could not have confidence in the union NUM because it was more concerned about keeping COSATU's relationship in the tripartite alliance cordial than meeting the needs of workers.

COSATU and therefore union affiliates like NUM have become a branch of the ANC and the Mine bosses that is why when we ask for more money and better conditions the unions won't hear us because it's like you are creating confusion in their household. Yet these unions forget that they get paid by our subscriptions. That is why it is not strange that most union leaders end up in politics because the unions, the ANC and the mine bosses are all related, look at Kgalema Motlanthe, Cyril Ramaphosa and many other people in the ANC they all came from the unions, for them unions are just ladders to becoming presidents and ministers. I don't trust the union and for its credibility sake, it should either cease to be an affiliate of COSATU or COSATU should get out of this marriage (Tripartite alliance).

This is in contrast to what Webster (2013) indicated as COSATU's vision when joining the alliance and indeed in advocating for the RDP which was meant to tie government to a labour driven development programme.

However, many workers interviewed also shared Solomon's view and explained that their being union members was undermining their rights, as the unions themselves had become mine bosses as they had shares in the mining companies. Thabo, from Amplats accused the union representatives of enriching themselves and becoming shareholders in Mining companies and as a result having conflicting interests which lead to the workers' precarious position.

How do you expect them to give pay rises when they are also shareholders in the mining companies? That's like telling them to reduce what they will get and their selfishness won't allow it. They can't listen to us or our demands, it means less for them and so they sit in union offices not to meet our demands but to ensure that they find ways of covering our faces with lies so that they can continue getting more money. It is a very difficult situation for us, where do we run to?

This indeed is in sharp contrast to comments made by COSATU Secretary General Zwelinzima Vavi in 2011 that COSATU and its affiliates fearlessly raise issues for the downtrodden and are the 'moral compass' of the young democracy (Sikwebu, 2013:63)

Many workers interviewed also claimed that the NUM had been cheating them through the union investment companies. Most of the workers lamented that when the NUM was building investment companies, they all thought it would help workers to have access to financial and other services which would otherwise be hard to access from other institutions such as banks that demand a lot of paperwork. However, workers claimed that the NUM and its partners were only out to make profit like any other business and did not care if that profit came at the cost of workers survival and dignity.³³ Workers lamented that because their wages were too low for them to meet the cost of living per month, most resorted to getting loans from institutions such as Ubank which is owned by the NUM and the Chamber of Mines.

Zonwabele from Lonmin, explained that because their salaries were not large enough workers got unsecured loans. However, as the salaries remains stagnant when paying back the loan, it meant that the balance that remained was too low to cover costs. Hence workers are forced to get another loan to survive

³³ Focus group interview with 5 workers, 2 from Impala, one from Amplats, and 2 from Samancor mines conducted on 25th August, 2013 in Seralang, Rustenburg.

Before you realise it, you are getting a second loan before you even finish paying off the first and the tragedy is that most workers get these loans to deal with emergencies so it's not like they invest and get returns that can be used to repay the loan. I don't know of anyone who does not have garnishee orders every month and unfortunately because it's our unions that own these lending institutions you can't even get relief as they make sure the loan is cut directly from the payroll.

Lisa Steyn wrote an article (M &G, 27/09/2012) less than a month after the Marikana massacre, on the impact of high levels of credit and that this may have contributed to the cocktail of factors that led to the bloody clashes between police and Lonmin strikers. The story was corroborated by interviewed workers concerns, about how NUM had become like any other business and despite their statement about being a banking institution driven by a social consciousness that underpinned all it does, such institutions have caught on that because of the challenges of workers low salaries they will continue to seek unsecured credit and dig themselves into further indebtedness, which works for the institutions because as long as the worker is employed they can continue recovering their loans with interest and make money. The question remains, why had Cosatu not made sufficient effort to push the issue of garnishee orders to help the workers?

It is challenges like these that led many workers to further mistrust the NUM and many felt that the union had completely lost touch with the challenges workers faced and could therefore not adequately represent them at the bargaining table hence the need for independent worker driven committees. One worker from Impala went further and explained that he could not trust NUM because the union had through investments promised workers herds of cattle or R2,900 and that after making workers believe in this investment they only got R700 each and no cattle was seen and so workers felt cheated³⁴.

Another reason for workers refusal to use union structures and ultimately form workers committees to represent themselves was that workers felt that because of the tripartite alliance, the state and therefore NUM through its affiliation to COSATU was also a source of their problems and facilitated the exploitation of their labour through extant legislation as well as using state instruments like the police to crush strikes and protests. All workers who were interviewed expressed the view that unions (COSATU) and the state were one and had

³⁴ Interview with worker from Impala conducted on 5th September, 2012.

as their primary interest, pleasing the mine bosses and themselves who had become part of the capitalist regime.

Sello, an Amplats Winch driver had this to say about the unions and their relationship with the state;

The ANC state is to blame for our problems, it's like once they got into power they forgot about the people, especially the Zuma administration. They side with the capitalists because when it is election time, they get their funding from the capitalist. Look at what happened in Marikana, there is no way the police would have killed our colleagues without permission from the state. It's like we are still under the apartheid state. They don't care about us and just want to keep the capitalists and themselves happy, that is why there is so much corruption by people in government, and a very greedy trend has been set.

Sello's argument came in the wake of the fact that during the Marikana Commission of Inquiry, emails were presented involving Cyril Ramaphosa a former trade unionist and currently ANC and South Africa's Deputy President as well as Lonmin board member, calling for action against striking workers (34 of whom were shot dead by the SAPS) and what he called their dastardly criminal conduct (*Daily Maverick*, October, 2012).

However, during the research, union representatives were also interviewed and it was interesting to note that they too had what they described as their own challenges as unions. The biggest challenge highlighted was how globalisation in terms of flexible labour has not only weakened unions but also made it difficult to organise and mobilise workers as most workers who work under subcontractors are difficult to capture under unions.

A union representative from NUM expressed how difficult it was to fight for workers when mining companies are threatening retrenchments all the time because they can get cheaper labour with fewer liabilities through subcontracting. Silver (2003) asserts that globalisation indeed is widely seen as having created a vicious circle in which weakening marketplace bargaining power undermines associational power and vice versa. Mobilisation of global labour reserves has not only directly undermined workers' marketplace bargaining power but has also helped to de-legitimise existing trade union organisations and labour parties' organisations to deliver benefits to their members.

It is not that we don't want to fight for our members, the reality is that we are doing our best, it isn't easy to demand a 20 per cent increment and be stubborn about it. Firstly, we sign agreements for certain periods and workers need to understand that it is difficult to

make fresh demands when the companies are still holding us to those agreements for that given period. Plus, what do you do when the mine company tells you they can't afford it and if you insist on that percentage they then tell you that you can only get it if they retrench half of the workforce? Our primary priority is to keep our members employed and that is why if the mine company says they can only give us five per cent, we accept it if it means keeping our workers employed.

He further explained that the issue of mining companies using subcontractors had really destroyed unions' capacity to organise and mobilise.

We are losing our members and those that we still maintain think we don't care. But unfortunately this is very difficult to communicate to workers who are frustrated...

The subject of contract workers in the platinum mines featured very prominently in the interviews conducted and demonstrated the depths to which mining capital has integrated itself into the global economy and the steps it has taken to be more competitive, operate efficiently (high profits) with the lowest costs of production. Workers have experienced insecurity not only through job losses but through increased subcontracting where workers have very insecure contracts and can be fired anytime, receive low wages and have no benefits. Mining companies, in a bid to reduce costs as well as liabilities, have resorted to subcontracting/outsourcing most of their non-core and some core services.

Subcontracting is not a phenomenon unique to platinum mining but has since the post Fordist era³⁵ become a common feature amongst many companies especially multinational companies which felt such techniques protected them from market fluctuations. Gerreffi (1994) argues that a Global Commodity Chains GCC speaks to this as an emergence of a global manufacturing network characterised by internationally coordinated trade and dispersed production capacity. A study conducted by Southern African Mining Project (SAMP) in 1999 showed that more than one in ten miners in South Africa are now on a short-term contract and are routinely required to work longer hours, under more dangerous conditions than ordinary miners. This figure has been said to have increased over the years, in 2012, Lonmin's contract labour stood at 23percent (Benchmarks, 2013).

³⁵ Post-Fordism is a system of industrial production that marked the transition from mass production in big factories as championed by American car manufacturer, Henry Ford, to a more specialised and flexible manufacturing and labour regime. It is also referred to as flexible accumulation (Harvey, 1989).

The NUM on the gold mines slowed down the pace of retrenchments and obtained fairly decent packages for workers in an industry that was nearing the end of its life. In this regard, the platinum mines were much more ruthless and seem to have laid workers off in response to variations in the market. Sub-contracting was also more wide spread in platinum than in gold. Centralised bargaining in the gold sector perhaps placed some limits on management prerogatives although different mining houses adopted very different policies.

Workers also identified the problem of labour flexibility in the form of casualisation of labour and subcontracting as a challenge and threat to their job security. Silver (2003) argues that globalisation has led to a lot of casualisation of labour through the use of contract workers which has also made it more difficult to organise labour.

Mr Moloi, lamented how in his 33 years of working in the mines he now has to contend with working with subcontracted workers who were on very insecure short term contracts;

Most of the people I worked with before were retrenched and now work under subcontractors whose conditions are even more appalling. They are paid very little, most of the money goes to the supervisors and the contractors don't even want workers to get into unions or even to go to the hospital or disclose when they are injured because they fear losing their licences, yet they don't provide safety for the workers or even proper equipment and gear to do the work. It really angers me that such things are happening now; I ask myself, what were we fighting for during apartheid?

Many of the workers interviewed expressed concern about the commodification of labour and the increasing number of workers under casual or short term contracts and the high levels of instability they faced. As described earlier by Mr Moloi, a lot of people who get retrenched and even those who were previously unemployed, often out of desperation seek employment under companies subcontracted by the mines. The Benchmarks Report on Lonmin from 2008-2012 illustrates how big the use of subcontractor and contract workers has become in mining companies and Lonmin in particular. The table below illustrates the total workforce and contract worker share.

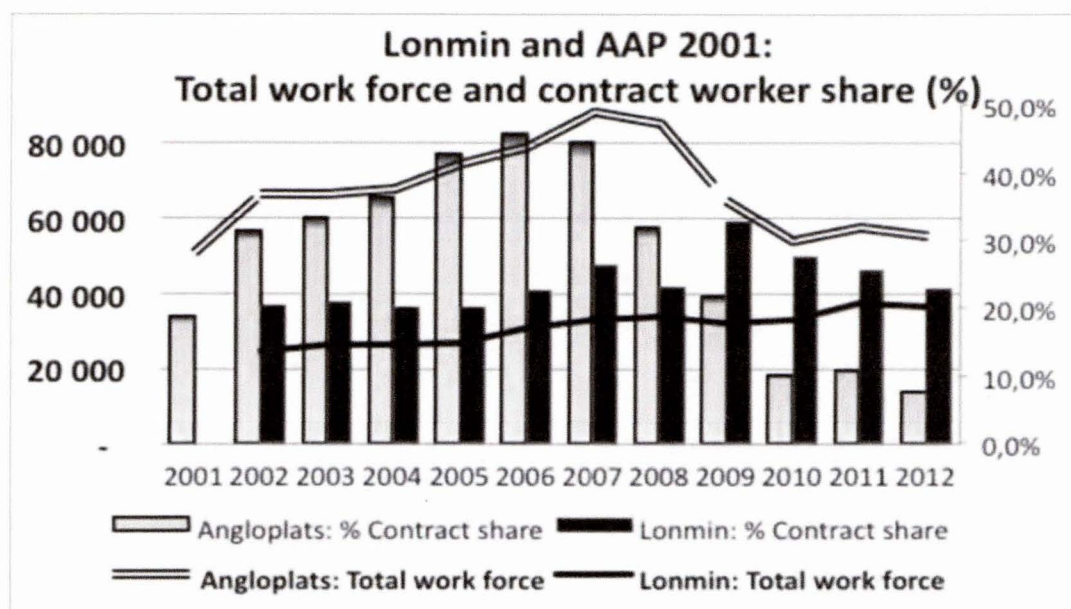


Figure 3: Source Benchmarks policy gap 7

Bongani³⁶, employed as a PTV in Impala since 2002, explained how his friends working for subcontractors were on a three month contract system and how the subcontractor would keep changing their company names such that workers could not keep track of who employed them.

The subject of subcontractors is really worrying especially in Samancor mines, first the contracting company keeps changing names yet it is the same people from Berfiels to Platco and many more. They give workers contracts for three months after that you are out of a job and then you stay home and get called back again maybe after a month or two but still get another three month contract. There is no security with these contracts sometimes before the three months elapses they tell you to go and there are no benefits at all. You can't even access hospital treatment when sick or injured. Some other people are on longer contracts for one year but so far I am aware of over 200 who were dropped before their contracts ended under false pretences like they missed work or are on medical leave.

Mr Mzech, a 50 year old migrant worker from the Eastern Cape working for a contractor on a one year contract explained how he got sick after five months of employment, followed proper procedure and went to the hospital and got the right documentation for human resources. However upon his return from sick leave a few days later, he was advised to go back home and continue his sick leave and was told he would be called back for work. However after a few days he was informed that he was dismissed. He decided to seek legal recourse and went to the municipality who referred his case to the Commission for

³⁶ Pseudonym for worker, Interview conducted on 26th August, 2013.

Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). Mr Mzechi however explained that he kept being pushed back and forth without anything being resolved and at the time of the interview, 6 months had elapsed without any progress or outcome.

I don't know what else to do, I keep going to the CCMA, and they refer me to the municipality, union or the company, meanwhile when I go to these places they all keep sending me back to the others. I thought the CCMA would sort this out for me but nothing has transpired. The funny thing is when I go the mine my card is still active and in the system it shows that I am still an active employee on the payroll and getting paid yet I have not received anything for over six months, so I don't know who has been getting my money. My wife just gave birth three months ago and I am really feeling the pressure and so disappointed that the CCMA seems to side with the company. Now I have found out that a lot of my colleagues, about 200, were also laid off during the same period as me with strange reasons. The problem is we were not under a union and fighting individually is hard.

In addition workers expressed concern that in some cases, subcontracting created tensions between permanent workers and short term workers. Many workers interviewed expressed that they were unhappy about the bad conditions that subcontracted workers were subjected to but at the same time felt that it was because of the increase in the number of subcontract workers who they had to work side by side with that made their jobs precarious, as it became very difficult to mobilise with contract workers who were not allowed by their employers to get involved in unions or strikes. Workers also claimed that management sometimes used the example of the employment conditions of subcontract workers to discipline permanent workers by reminding them that they could be replaced by subcontract workers and that they should be grateful for their current status which was better than that of subcontracted workers.

Thobile, a Lonmin mine Winch operator lamented that he felt very sorry for subcontracted workers but at the same time felt threatened by them and that they were a constant reminder of how easily he too could become one of them, which he described as a very powerless situation and almost slave like.

The situation is really bad for contract workers, long ago when this business of subcontractor started, they mainly hired foreigners like Mozambicans who were desperate and accepted the low wages and poor working conditions, now even South Africans are in the same boat. These people have no rights, they get fired anytime and when they get injured on duty they can't even go to the mine hospital or report the accident because contractors are scared of losing their licences, their employers don't allow them to join the unions to get representation to fight for them, the unfortunate part is that the mines seem to like

subcontractors because they do not want to be bothered with recruitment problems and having to deal with providing the basics and benefits that permanent workers get.

This underscores what Harvey (1989) describes as the radical restructuring of the market where in the face of strong market volatility, heightened competition and narrowing profit margins employers have taken advantage of weakened union power and the pools of surplus labour to push for much more flexible work regimes and contracts. The instability of contract workers is even more evident in that Amplats which had in January 2013 announced the planned retrenchment of 14,000 workers has now after pressure from workers and the union reduced the number to 3,000. The reduction however has been at the expense of contract workers which the mine has decided to get rid of instead. The Union for the permanent workers may perceive the fact that a substantive number of permanent (unionised) workers will not be retrenched as a victory; however it is at the expense of contract workers. This could be what Webster *et al* (2008) refers to as institutions of collective bargaining now utilising concession bargaining or 'strategic unionism' under the threat of factory closures or layoffs. Instead of unions mobilising and organising both categories of workers to fight retrenchment, they have to make concessions to save their membership. The instability of contract workers does not only reflect how the working class has been fragmented but also demonstrates how workers' rights have been reduced from citizens to denizens, a status almost akin to serfs, in that they have a more limited range of effective rights than citizens (Standing, 2011).

One school of thought on the 2013 Amplats retrenchments and an article in *Amandla* magazine 'Amplats are lying; no need for retrenchments,' captures this school of thought and argues that there was no need to retrench workers as retrenching workers and closing down of the companies most productive shafts (Khuseleka and Khomanani) was done in a bid to reduce production and raise profitability. Another school of thought to which many of the worker committee leaders subscribe, argues that whereas they agree that the closing of the two shafts is meant to reduce production and raise profitability, they argue that the retrenchment and closing down of these particular shafts was meant to demobilise worker organisations especially that Khuseleka and Khomanani had the most militant workers as it is from there that the 2012 strike in Amplats began.

At a rally held in Rustenburg in October 2013, workers (both permanent and contract) protested the retrenchment of 3,000 permanent workers as well as the proposed cut back of contract workers. One permanent worker Ayanda³⁷ expressed his dissatisfaction with management's decision to still go ahead and retrench 3,000 permanent workers and in addition contract workers.

There is no need for Amplats to shut down these shafts as it is not true that the shafts are not making profit. If you check the financials, Khuseleka and Komanani shafts are the most productive shafts in Amplats, Rustenburg. They just want workers to suffer especially because most of the militant or vocal workers (Workers Committee leaders) come from these shafts. They thought that if they say they will only fire 3,000 and then fire contract workers that this would make us happy. How can we be happy that they fire contract workers who are even more helpless than us, just because they are not adequately represented? Workers are workers whether contract or permanent so we cannot be happy that our skins as permanent workers have been saved at the expense of contract workers.



PHOTO 5: Workers in a protest march against retrenchments in Rustenburg, October 2013.

Mr Mzechi, formerly a contract worker, explained that solidarity amongst all the workers was very important and lamented that sometimes there was fragmentation amongst workers. He explained that when subcontracted workers organised they did not get much

³⁷ Pseudonym for worker, Interview conducted 3 October, 2013

support from the permanent workers, yet when permanent workers went on strike they expected contract workers to support the strike. He cited the example of how at Lonmin a delegation of striking workers before the massacre on 13th August had gone to Karee Shaft K3 to persuade contract workers to join the strike and yet he was not sure if permanent workers would all stop work to support an action only affecting contract workers.

A workers' committee leader interviewed, explained that former worker committee leaders who were absorbed into AMCU structures, were pushing for the unionisation of contract workers not only to ensure solidarity amongst workers but for contract workers to have the protection and support of the union and the mass of workers behind it.

A union representative interviewed explained that the problem was the new labour laws which they viewed as giving more legitimacy to labour brokers who facilitated the continued subcontracting of workers. The union representative claimed mines used brokers to avoid having workers who were unionised. This is captured by Forrest (2013) who argues that mines use labour brokers to circumvent unions and young workers, in particular, are recruited by the unregistered "bakkie brigade", who pay as little as R60 a day and may demand a R150 registration fee. Workers recruited in this way enter very short-term work situations, making union recruitment impossible.

Forrest (2013) argues that mines now have to accommodate the Labour Relations Act, but employers see the Act as giving legitimacy to brokers, who become the primary employer. Permanent labour employed directly by mines is extensively unionised, so it appears that mines are adhering to labour laws, whereas in fact a large part of their workforce is weakly organised or unorganised, brokered workers. She further argues that through brokers, management has fragmented the labour force. When permanent rock drillers revolted against the NUM and demanded higher wages last year, brokered labour was not included in their demands.

It is evident that labour brokers methods of recruitment and contracts as well as the issue of having permanent and contract workers has fragmented worker solidarity because of labour subjectivity and weakened the union's bargaining power, testament to Mr Mzechi's argument. Forrest (2013) asserts that 'Permanents' fear that, if unions negotiate for all mine workers, this will lower their wages and so they lack the resolve to fight for brokered labour.

Further, workers highlighted that the committees were necessary because there were so many challenges that they experienced which had become like a norm and to which the unions did not bother to find solutions and just accepted the situation. The workers explained that every day they have to grapple with challenges in the communities such as unemployment to which unions are doing nothing about.

Mr Moloi explained that a long time ago, unions did not just restrict their work to workplaces but also got involved in community struggles as problems in the communities ultimately affected workers. He further explained that this link unified union struggles with community struggles; he however argued that unions like the NUM were so 'bourgeois' that they did not care to be in touch with what was happening in the movements and that the formation of workers committees was also an attempt to build solidarity and linkages with the community. Chinguno illustrates the Lonmin workers committee's attempt to link worker and community struggles when he reveals that during the period of the Lonmin strike when workers were camped at the Koppie, all the men including those not employed by Lonmin but were community members were required to go to the Koppie every morning to be part of discussion after the whistle was blown. This explains why not all the 34 who died on the day of the massacre were Lonmin employees as one of them was an unemployed community member (Chinguno, 2013).

It is important to note that the South African economy like many other economies in many parts of the world has experienced a process of deindustrialisation in the last few years characterised by the commodification of labour, retrenchments, factory closings, and the subcontracting and casualisation of labour which companies feel protects them from market fluctuations.

This has created tensions in the work place because it forms an evidently unequal and exploitative hierarchy of work in the company and amongst workers. The process has also transformed the way of life that workers were used to and has brought about feelings of insecurity and desperation within workers, because without stable jobs and wages, people are 'forced' to resort to survivalist measures in order to cope.

It is clear that the manner in which global capital has grown and evolved is not something that workers are in control of. Yet it threatens not only their livelihoods but has had a

profound effect on the social, cultural and political lives of workers as well as their workless neighbours.

This was evident from the responses from workers interviewed in the platinum belt. Many workers felt that before they could complain about their poor wages, their paramount worry was job insecurity, as how long they would have secure job was no longer guaranteed. This was another bone of contention with the NUM whom they felt did not adequately address these problems. Workers felt that every time that the mining companies announced retrenchments reminded them of how unstable their situation was as they could be retrenched anytime. Tumelo from Samancor had this to say;

It is very hard to work in the mine first of all we get very little money and yet make these mining companies very rich with our hard work, as if that is not enough we live in fear of being retrenched every day. I fear for my family as it is very hard to get a job in this country and since I get very little it has been hard to save, I live hand to mouth and if I get retrenched today, I don't know what I will do and how my family will survive.

Mr Moloi, described how things have changed in mining in recent years and lamented that even though mining has always been about the exploitation of labour to make profits, the situation pre 1994 was more tolerable because workers understood the oppressive nature of the apartheid regime where as now, it was even more painful because workers had to face bad working conditions, low wages, poor living conditions and lack of confidence in their union representation in the democratic era.

I have worked in the mines since 1980, things were hard back then because under apartheid if the employers felt you were a problem they would simply discharge you by crossing with a red pen in the then South African ID which meant no one could employ you as you were blacklisted, but we understood the oppression of the apartheid system. Now we are under the ANC and we just hear announcements that so many people are being retrenched. Most workers because of low wages survive by borrowing money from 'Mashonisas' (loan sharks), but of course this means they are perpetually in debt and can't even build a house or buy cattle back home. Workers live in shacks because that means they can get a little bit more to help them survive and now you see we have so many informal settlements around with very poor living conditions, it is very sad indeed.

Mr Moloi's quote above adequately highlights and summarises the underlying causes not just to the formation of the workers committees and/or the 2012 strike, but clearly reveals how acute workers problems are and the failure of the NUM to pick up on these concerns

and act on them, leading to the union losing its hold in the platinum belt. It also underlines what a ticking time bomb the country is sitting on if these highlighted issues are not addressed

5.3 Status-From the 2012 strike wave to 2014

As discussed in previous chapters, members of the workers committees that were formed in 2012 were absorbed by AMCU and were elected to positions of shop stewards and branch officials after the strike.

However, according to various responses from the interviews, the structures of the workers committees continued to exist in the background even though most of the members were absorbed into the new AMCU union structures. Workers indicated that they continued to meet twice a month as workers committees to share information and would report back to the workers.

Nomfundiso a former workers committee leader and now an AMCU member, indicated that the new union leadership had been showing signs that they could be trusted as they always reported the truth to the workers even if it was bad news and did not sugar-coat things. However, one of the fears workers expressed was that AMCU was new to them and they were yet to be entirely convinced that it could not end up being swallowed-up in union bureaucracies like the other unions. The workers committee leaders indicated that they had tried to take steps to ensure that the committees do not completely vanish but remain in the background as watchdogs. Fogel (2013) confirms this, as workers in his interviews have expressed 'We go on strike as AMCU but will remain in workers' committees.' Mzi a workers committee member and now an AMCU shop steward explained that even though he was an AMCU shop steward, he still wears the hat of a worker committee and when he is not happy with what the union is trying to push for he takes off his union hat and speaks as a workers committee representative to ensure the workers mandate is taken forward.

Another strategy we are trying to use to keep union members in touch with workers is by having some union members still working underground with the workers. Before when you become a union member you are taken to the surface, but now we are advocating for some

members to stay underground so that they can be the link between workers and union representatives on the surface. Hopefully this will help AMCU to remain sober.

Another workers committee member, Sam, indicated that they as part of workers committees were not only trying to push for the unionisation of all contract workers in order to bring workers together as well as build consciousness among workers, but to improve organising, mobilising and building consciousness in the surrounding communities.

During the strikes the community supported us and it was like back in the old days when workers struggles linked with community struggles we want to continue working like this because the challenges of the communities are ours and the workers challenges affect the communities.

During interviews, workers and worker committee leaders were asked what they had achieved through the workers committees, and they responded that they were able to show the world and remind unions that power lay not in the union leadership but in the workers. They argued that they were in control as workers because the workers committees gained their legitimacy from the workers, and it was through workers mass solidarity that they were able to exist in the first place and later on negotiate with management.

We felt in control and knew that whatever outcome came was what we fought for on our own. We were able to show our class power as workers. It was a tough period but it brought us together because we all identified with each other and the workers committees consolidated this identity.

They also indicated that they felt for the first time in a long time a sense of dignity as they felt that working through workers committees gave them respect as workers, adults and human beings not just 'labour', which they indicated was how the mine bosses and their former union the NUM, perceived them. They further explained that their expectation was for the same culture to be entrenched in AMCU so that workers are respected and included in all matters concerning their welfare.

Yes we didn't get the R16, 080 and we will continue to fight for it. But we wanted the bosses and the unions to appreciate that we were not small children who could just be pushed around anyhow. They say the mines don't make money, but have you noticed that when we go on strike all they talk about in the media is how much money the company is losing each day that we are on strike and its usually millions of Rands. So why not just give us decent

living wages so that we can live with dignity as human beings? If they lose R40million for one day that we strike, surely they (Mine bosses) can get that money that we make for them in a day and give us decent wages, this is where we do not agree with the mines and the unions.

Despite this small victory for the workers, the Workers committees have been met with problems of opposition from unions who view them as a threat to union power and the central bargaining system. In Lonmin, a very strong workers council consisting mainly of older workers over 40 existed, even after the strike ended, and continued to be militant pushing the unions to continue fighting community struggles as well as for the R12,- 500, as the percentages that Lonmin had promised after the massacre had not materialised and workers felt cheated. Despite the fact that AMCU had been welcomed by workers, interviewed workers indicated that the union decided to disband the Workers Council citing it as a divisive element. Thobile from Lonmin explained;

We are very worried about the way the union is acting, this workers council of the madalas (old men) was a good thing as it kept the union in check but now AMCU has come and said it and all other workers committees structures existing in the mines should be disbanded because they are dividing workers. The truth is that the unions are threatened by the workers council and committees because they know that these are building consciousness among workers to call for accountability. Imagine the union is saying that workers should only talk about issues of workers and not the community, yet we spend twelve to - sixteen hours of the day in the community and eight to - twelve hours at work, how can we not talk about problems affecting the communities? The union is now oppressing people.

Fogel (2013) in an analysis on the committees and strike adds that at Lonmin, AMCU generally views independent worker organisation as a threat to its leadership, and is largely hostile to attempts to reorganise AMCU on the basis of a more democratic, participatory structure after the mass influx of members following Marikana. He further adds that the fear is that this will 'politicise' AMCU in the sense that it will make the militancy of workers routine and embedded within the union which would jeopardise their relations with a hostile mine management.

It was clear at the time of the study that workers were worried about AMCU's stance to disband all workers' committee structures functioning as an independent body. Workers felt their watchdog role was being taken away and as such there was a danger of AMCU becoming like NUM in future and not listening to the workers.

We must remember that NUM too was once militant and focused on workers like AMCU, but overtime their focus changed and they are in bed with big business, if the workers committees are completely disbanded, it will be difficult for workers to keep AMCU on track and accountable to workers. Nkululeko said.

Nkululeko like many other workers interviewed also expressed concern that currently AMCU was not doing much to build the union especially the rank and file and that the union was centred around one person i.e. the President, Joseph Mathunjwa.

AMCU needs to build people in the union structures who can handle things in the absence of Mathunjwa, but it seems, the leaders are threatened by the young men who are shop stewards instead of building them, if Mathunjwa isn't there then things won't happen, this is not how we were organising as workers committees, it should not be about the presence or voice of one person but that of the workers. AMCU needs to build other people.

AMCU to its credit amongst the workers pushed for a strike in January 2014 in protest against retrenchments and also continued to push for the R12, 500 living wage and therefore carrying forward the workers mandate. However, AMCU has been met with a lot of pressure in response to the strike not only from all three big mining companies with Amplats going a step further and suing the union leadership (IOL Business Report, February, 2014), but also with factions of workers within the union plotting to form another union (IOL News, February, 2014). Mathunjwa has also been under fire with corruption charges which many workers believe is a ploy to get rid of him and destabilise the union. In addition in February, 2014, AMCU branch chair Simphamandla Makhanya and Jacob Koh who were very active in the workers committees were arrested on attempted murder charges (Ibid, February, 2014), to which AMCU and its sympathisers are calling trumped up charges meant to demobilise the strike action and ultimately the credibility of the union.

This is a clear attempt to neutralise one of the key leaders of the strike at Amplats through spurious charges. Said the Democratic Left Front (DLF) to which Makhanya is a member.

Many of the workers expressed that workers committees represented democratic, participatory structures and have the potential of being social movements for change necessary both at work and in the committees. The workers interviewed also indicated that

it was important to start looking at alternative movements for change both at work and in the communities, as the instability faced by workers was leading to the formation of a huge informal sector which could easily be exploited if consciousness is not built to help them organise and mobilise to demand their rights and a better life.

6. CHAPTER 6 -CONCLUSION

Whilst the 2012 strike wave and indeed the Marikana massacre was centred around a living wage, it is clear that there were many underlying issues that had been crystallising for a long time before the rupture in 2012. The failure of the NUM to service its numbers led not only to the union losing its legitimacy amongst the workers, but also to the formation of militant structures of worker representation that not only challenged capital but built a lot of consciousness amongst the working class. This was evidenced with the strike spreading to the transport sector and agriculture in the Western Cape with workers also organising outside union structures and- demanding a living wage.

Clearly the working class has regained consciousness. It is becoming more and more aware of its power and trying to assert some control in the labour movement. The 2012 strike wave and the Marikana massacre are believed to have contributed to what is currently referred to as the NUMSA moment.³⁸ The breaking away of NUMSA, one of COSATU's largest affiliates from the tripartite alliance with the intention of forming new alliances with workers and communities, is an indication that there has been an awakening amongst the working class who are trying to take charge of a highly explosive capitalist system that has exploited workers for a long time.

Workers in the platinum mining industries are faced with many challenges and different levels of instability. They have tried to devise counter movements to change their circumstances and workers committees were a testament to this. The case of the workers in the platinum mines has highlighted that the challenges workers face are at many different levels. The causes are not only global capital, but are at other levels, the unions, the state, and even the law or legal framework. However it is also interesting to note that even the institutions that workers perceive to be the cause of their precariousness, equally suffer from their own insecurities. Unions for instance, feel insecure because of the commodification of labour or how the flexible labour market has reduced union membership and power. At another level, unions feel workers' committees also pose a threat to their power and future of the central bargaining system. At the same time, the neo-liberal state, which does not hesitate to unleash its oppressive arms on militant citizens,

³⁸ NUMSA at its special National congress held 13-16 December 2013 announced that it was breaking away from the alliance.

appears to be under pressure to facilitate the integration of the economy into the market system. At the same time, it is faced with challenges of how to keep its citizens' rights within the context of global market competition.

Neilson and Rossiter (2008) argue that flexible labour is the norm of capitalist production and reproduction. It might therefore contribute to new forms of political organisation that stretch across divisions established by the speeded-up and flexible conditions of contemporary capitalist accumulation. Workers are still fighting for a living wage 18 months after the Marikana Massacre. The research paper has demonstrated that the South African working class is frustrated, mobilising and organising. It is beyond question that if the state and capital do not wake-up and begin to seek solutions to the many problems the majority of South Africans are facing, then Marikana and the 2012 strike wave will not just be something that happened at some point in the recent past. It will be the beginning potentially of an uprising. If so, the fantasy that some held during the 2012 strike wave that South Africa was having 'an Arab spring' may not be a fantasy for much longer but reality.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books and Journal Articles

Alexander, P, Lekgowa, T, Mmope, B, L, Sinwell and Xezwi B. (2012). *Marikana: A view from the mountain and a case to answer*. Jacana. Johannesburg.

Amandla!. (2013). 'Amplats are lying; No need for retrenchments.' April/May 2013. Issue No 30

Amandla!. (2013). 'The strike committee; Organising against all odds,' December, 2013. Issue No 28/29

Barchiesi, F. (2011). *Precarious Liberation; Workers, the state and contested Social citizenship in post-apartheid South Africa*. Durban. UKZN Press

Baskin, J. (1993). 'The trend towards bargained corporatism.' *South African Labour Bulletin*. May/June, Vol 17 No 3. Pg. 64-69

Benchmarks Foundation. (2013). '*Coping with Unsustainability*' Policy Gap 7, Lonmin 2003-2012. Benchmarks.

Bezuidenhout, A. and S. Buhlungu, S. (2011). 'From Compounded to Fragmented Labour: Mineworkers and the Demise of Compounds in South Africa' in *Antipode*. Vol 43. Issue 2. Pgs. 237-263

Buhlungu, S. (2001). 'A question of power: Co-determination and trade union Capacity,' in G. Adler, (Eds) *Engaging state and Business: The labour Movement and Co-determination in contemporary South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press. Pgs. 178-200

Buhlungu, S. (2006). *Trade Unions and Democracy; Cosatu workers' political attitudes in South Africa*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Buhlungu, S. (2010). *A paradox of Victory. Cosatu and the democratic transformation in South Africa*. Scottsville: UKZN Press

Butler, Judith. (2009). "Performativity, Precarity and sexual politics" in AIBR. *Revista de Anthropologia I breroamericana*. www.airb.org Vol. 4 (3), pp. i-xiii.

- Burawoy, M. (1979). *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process under Monopoly Capitalism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Callinicos, A. (1992). *Between Apartheid and Capitalism: Conversations with South African Socialists*. London: Bookmarks.
- Callinicos, A. (1995). *Socialists in the trade unions*. London. Bookmarks
- Callinicos, L. (1987). *A People's History of South Africa, Volume II - Working Life: Factories, Townships and Popular Culture on the Rand, 1886-1940*. Cape Town: Ravan Press,
- Capps, G.J. (2012a). Victim of its Own Success? The Platinum Mining Industry and the Apartheid Mineral Property System in South Africa's Political Transition," *Review of African Political Economy* 39, no. 169
- Capps, G.J. (2012b). A bourgeois reform with social justice? The contradictions of the Minerals Development Bill and black economic empowerment in the South African platinum mining industry, *Review of African Political Economy*,39:132, 315-333
- Chinguno, C. (2012). 'Impala platinum strike; lessons and implications.' *South African Labour Bulletin*. Vol 36 No. 5, December 2012/January 2013
- Chun, J. (2009). *Organizing at the Margins: The Symbolic Politics of Labour in South Korea and the United States*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Chun, j and Michelle Williams. (2013). Labour as a democratizing force; Lessons from South Africa and beyond. *Rethinking Development and Inequality*. Vol 2 .Pg. 2-9
- Coates, K. (1981). *Work-ins, Sit-ins and industrial democracy. The implications of factory occupations in Great Britain in the early Seventies*. Nottingham: Spokesman
- Crush, J, Jeeves, Alan and David Yudelman. (1991). *South Africa's Labour Empire: A History of Black Migrancy to the Gold Mines*. Johannesburg: Westview Press
- Faulkner, S. (1999). 'Investing in ourselves.' *South African Labour Bulletin*. August, Vol 23 No 4. Pg. 18-22

- Fine B and Zavareh Rustomjee. (1996). *The Political Economy of South Africa; From Minerals-Energy Complex to Industrialisation*. London. Westview Press
- Fine, J. (2007). "Worker Centers and Immigrant Women". In *The Sex of Class*. Dorothy Sue Cobble (Eds). Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press. Pp. 211-230.
- Gerreffi, G. (1994). "The organization of Buyer-driven Commodity Chains: How the US retailers shape overseas production networks" In *Commodity Chains and Global Capitalism*. Ed Gerreffi and Kornzeniewicz. Pgs. 95-122.
- Greenstein, R. (2003). Introduction to quantitative methods. *Research Methods*. Pp 1-39
- Hattingh, S. (2010). Mineworkers' direct action: Occupations and sit-ins in South Africa. *WorkingUSA*, 13: 343–350. doi: 10.1111/j.1743-4580.2010.00294.x
- Harvey, D. (1989). Chapter 9, The condition of post modernity. London: Basil Blackwell, pp.141-172
- James, W.G. (1992). *Our precious metal; African labour in South Africa's Gold Industry, 1970-1990*. Capetown: Belmor Book printers.
- Malabela, M. (2013). 'Marikana and the end of honeymoon.' *South African Labour Bulletin*. March/April, Vol 37, No 1
- Mboweni, T, 1992. 'The role of the trade union movement in the future South Africa.' *South African Labour Bulletin*. Nov/Dec, Vol 16 No. 8
- Mohamed, Seeraj. (2010). "The Effect of a Mainstream Approach to Economic and Corporate Governance in South Africa," In *Constructing a Developmental State in South Africa: Potentials and Challenges*, edited by Edigheji, Omano, 169-183. Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- Moodie, T. Dunbar and Vivienne Ndatshe. (1994). *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration*. Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Moodie, T. Dunbar. (1986). "The Moral Economy of the Black Miners' Strike of 1946." *Journal of Southern African Studies*. Vol 13, no. 1.pgs 1-35.

- Ness, I and Dario Azzellini. (2011). *Ours to Master and to own. Workers; control from the commune to the present*. Chicago Illinois: Haymarket Books.
- Neilson, Brett and Ned Rossiter. (2008). "Precarity as a political concept or Fordism as exception" in *Theory Culture Society*, Vol 25 (7-8):51-7
- Ngwane, T and Botsang Mmope. (2012). 'Impala strike Linking workplace with community struggles. *South African Labour Bulletin*, Vol 36 No. 5, December 2012/January 2013
- Peet, R. (2009). *Unholy Trinity; The IMF, World Bank and WTO*. London. Zed Books
- Rees, R. (1992). 'More workers control needed.' *South African Labour Bulletin*. September/October, Vol 16 No 7
- SAMP. (1999). *Undermining Labour: Migrancy and Subcontracting in the South African Gold Industry*. Institute for Democracy in South Africa
- Schmiz, A. (2013). Migrant self-employment between precariousness and self-exploitation. *Ephemera theory and politics in organization*. Vol 13 (1). Pp. 53-74
- Seekings, Jeremy and Nicoli Nattrass. (2005). *Class, Race and Inequality in South Africa*. New Haven and London: Princeton University Press.
- Sikwebu, D. (2013). Notes from a Trade Unionist: Cosatu and its Affiliates as Democratising Agents or Contingent Democrats? *Rethinking Development and Inequality*. Vol 2 .Pg. 63-67
- Silver, B. (2003). *Forces of Labour: Workers' Movements and Globalization since 1870*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 75-123.
- Stewart, P. (2013). The 2012 Strike wave, Marikana and the history of the Rock Drillers in South Africa. *Global Labour Column*. pp. 1-2, No 121, January 2013 (<http://column.global-labour-university.org/>)
- The Mineworker. (2014). 'Worker unity will beat bosses unity'. Issue No 4. January 29, 2014.
- Vlok, E. (1999). 'Plant Now, Harvest Later: Pressures facing union investment companies'. *South African Labour Bulletin*. August, Vol 23 No 4. Pg. 23-29

Von Holdt, K (2003). *Transition from Below: Forging Trade Unionism and Workplace Change in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.

Webster, E. (2013). Sword of Justice or defender of vested interest: South African Labour in comparative perspective. *Rethinking Development and Inequality*. Vol 2. Pg. 97-108

Webster, E, Lambert, R. & Bezuidenhout, A. (2008). *Grounding Globalization: Labour in the Age of Insecurity*. London: Blackwell Publishing.

Webster, E (1985). *Cast in a Racial Mould: Labour Process and Trade Unionism in the Foundries*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Wilson, F. (1972). *Labour in the South African Gold Mines 1911-1969*. Cambridge and London: Cambridge University Press

Wolpe, H. (1972). Capitalism and cheap labour-power in South Africa: from segregation to apartheid. *Economy and Society*. Vol 1. No 4. pgs 425-456

DISSERTATIONS AND UNPUBLISHED PAPERS

Benya, A. (2009). Women in Mining: A challenge to occupational cultures in Mines. Masters dissertation, University of Witwatersrand

Chaskalson, R. (2013). Platinum, Politics and Popular resistance: Changing patterns of worker organization on South Africa's Bushveld Igneous Complex, 1994-2012. Honours Dissertation, University of Cape Town

Chinguno, C. (2013). Marikana and the post-apartheid workplace order. SWOP working paper 1, April 2012

Crankshaw, O (1994). Race, Class and the Changing Division of Labour under Apartheid. PhD Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand.

Fine, B. (2008). Engaging the MEC: Or a Lot of My Views on a Lot of Things (Paper for Workshop at University of KwaZulu Natal, 2008)

Hartford, G. (2012). The mining industry strike wave: What are the causes and what are the solutions.

Reddy, M. (2013). Unrest on South Africa's Platinum Mines and the Crisis of Migrancy. Masters dissertation, African Studies Centre, University of Oxford

Stewart, P. (2013). 'Kings of the Mine' Rock Drill Operators and the 2012 *Strike wave* on South African mines

Ulrich, N. (2007). Only the workers can free the workers: the origin of the workers control tradition and the Trade Union Advisory Coordinating Committee (TUACC) 1970- 1979. Masters dissertation, University of Witwatersrand

NEWS SOURCES AND REPORTS

'Alienation, paucity and despair, make for toxic catalysts' *Mail and Guardian*, 12 October, 2012. Pp. 14-16 <http://mg.co.za/article/2012-10-11-alienation-paucity-and-despair-make-for-toxic-catalysts/>

"AMCU drops its 12, 500 Marikana pay" *Business day*, 14 November, 2013
<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/labour/2013/11/14/amcu-drops-its-r12500-marikana-pay-demand>

"AMCU moves closer to strike in Amplats wage row" *Business Day*, 23 October, 2013
<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/labour/2013/10/23/amcu-moves-closer-to-strike-in-Amplats-wage-row?crmid=crm2>

"Amplats plans to close shafts, sell mine to cut costs" *Mail and Guardian*. 15 January, 2013.
<http://mg.co.za/article/2013-01-15-Amplats-plans-to-close-shafts-sell-mine-to-cut-costs/>

'Amplats sues AMCU leaders for contempt' *IOLbusiness* report. 24 February, 2014.
<http://www.iol.co.za/business/news/amplats-sues-amcu-leaders-for-contempt-1.1651492#.UylZR9tBtjo>

'Kopano Ke Matla fiasco casts Cosatu in a poor light'

<http://www.bdlive.co.za/national/labour/2013/06/04/news-analysis-kopano-ke-matla-fiasco-casts-cosatu-in-a-poor-light>

'Labour tensions 'result from workers' real wages falling' AIDC. 2013.

<http://www.aidc.org.za/programmes/political-economy/political-economic-debates/37-labour-tensions-result-from-workers-real-wages->

'Lonmin seals recognition pact with AMCU' by David McKay | Wed, 14 Aug 2013

www.miningmx.com

'Marikana and the Problem of Pack Journalism', *SABC*, 07/09/2012, Jane Duncan,

<http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/00f7e0804cfe58899b00bf76c8dbd3db/Marikana-and-the-problem-of-pack-journalism-20121007>

'Marikana Commission: More sides pitch in, more mud flung in Ramaphosa face' *Daily Maverick*, 24 October, 2012' <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2012-10-24-marikana-commission-more-sides-pitch-in-more-mud-flung-in-ramaphosas-face/#.UyZJONtBtjo>

"Marikana miners in debt sinkhole" *Mail and Guardian*, 7 September, 2012

<http://mg.co.za/article/2012-09-07-00-marikana-miners-in-debt-sinkhole>

"Marikana was not just about migrant labour" *Mail and Guardian*, 13 September, 2013. Ruth First Memorial paper <http://mg.co.za/article/2013-09-13-00-marikana-was-not-just-about-migrant-labour/>

"NUM burns: The mighty have fallen" *Mail and Guardian*, 19 July, 2013

<http://mg.co.za/article/2013-07-19-00-num-tumbles-from-top-spot-in-cosatu>

"No quick end to NUM-AMCU enmity" <http://www.miningmx.com/opinion/columnists/ian-de-lange/No-quick-end-to-Num-Amcu-enmity.htmHe>

"Policy Gap 7: Lonmin 2003-2012" *The Bench Marks Foundation*, October 2013.

<http://www.bench-marks.org.za/>

“Subcontracting in South African mines undercuts workers' wages and conditions” World Socialist Website 14 October, 1999 <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/1999/10/aud-14o.html>

‘Strike leader arrest part of plot.’ *IOLnews*. 26 February, 2014.
<http://www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/strike-leader-arrest-part-of-plot-1.1653004#.UyIPqNtBtjo>

“The brutal history of South Africa’s Platinum Industry” *Amandla!*, 23 August, 2012
<http://www.amandla.org.za/special-features/markikana--lonmin-massacre/1553-the-brutal-history-of-south-africas-platinum-industry--by-gavin-capps>

‘The great R1.2m divide. *City Press*. 25/08/2012. <http://www.citypress.co.za/business/the-great-r12m-divide-20120825/>

FILMS/DOCUMENTARIES

‘Miners Shot Down’ produced by Rehad Desai. 2014 ©Uhuru Productions

ONLINE DATA SOURCES

<http://www.angloreports.co.za/human-resources-review/>

<http://www.projectsia.co.za/mining-in-south-africa.htm>

<http://www.palladiumcoins.com/stock.html>

<http://www.sahistory.org.za/organisations/federation-south-african-trade-unions-fosatu>

<http://www.tradingeconomics.com/south-africa/unemployment-rate>

INTERVIEWS

Anonymous Marikana Community member, interview conducted 11 August, 2013

Anonymous Union official, interview conducted 26th August, 2013 at Rustenburg civic centre

Anonymous activist interview conducted on 26th August 2013 at Rustenburg Civic Centre.

Anonymous worker Interview conducted on 27 August, 2013 in Marikana.

Anonymous Community member interview conducted 27th August 2013 in Marikana.

Anonymous union official Interview conducted on 27 August, 2013 in Marikana.

Focused group discussions conducted on 27th August and 29th August, 2013 in Seralang, Rustenburg.

Anonymous worker interview conducted on 30th August in Pretoria (MCI).

Anonymous worker, interview conducted 3 September, 2013 in Rustenburg.

Anonymous union official conducted on 3rd September, 2013 in Rustenburg.

Anonymous worker interview conducted on 3rd September, 2013 in Rustenburg.

Anonymous interview conducted on 4 September, 2013 at Jabula, Rustenburg.

Anonymous worker interviewed on 4th September, 2013 at Jabula, Rustenburg

Anonymous worker interview conducted on 4th September, 2013 in Seralang, Rustenburg.

Anonymous worker, interview conducted on 5th September, 2013 at Khuseleka, Rustenburg

Anonymous union branch official, interview conducted 6th September, 2013 at Khuseleka, Rustenburg

Anonymous worker interview conducted on 6th September, 2013. Rustenburg

Anonymous researcher interview conducted 11th October, 2013 Johannesburg

Anonymous worker interview conducted, 13th October, 2013. Johannesburg