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Trade Union Strategy And The Labour Process: Tucsa Trade Unions In The Transport And Building Industries, 1955-1977.

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by 1957 it had established the White Building Workers' Union.[120] The success of the WBWU in its attempts to eclipse the mixed unions can be gauged by the fact that by 1976 it was the largest building union on the Witwatersrand.[121] So, from the mid-fifties at least, these opposing factions in the building industry struggled for the allegiance of white building artisans. Throughout this period the journal of the ASW bears testimony to the poaching of its members by the WBWU,[122] and carries numerous articles countering WBWU propaganda and testifying to the folly of leaving the ASW for the "opposition".[123] There is also evidence of ASW officials defecting to the WBWU,[124] and of splits within the ASW leadership over the policy of job reservation.[125] There can be no doubt that the activities of the WBWU must have mitigated against the possibility of persuading white artisans of the virtues of organising, rather than excluding African and coloured workers.

So, during a period in which the labour process was restructured to the extent that semi-skilled labour became the numerically dominant class of workers in the industry, the ASW and AUBTW retained their traditional craft-based style of unionism which excluded all except skilled workers. The response of these unions to undercutting by coloured skilled labour however, was quite different.

5. Trade Union Responses to Undercutting by Skilled Coloured Labour

In early 1971 the Minister of Labour granted a general exemption to all employers from work reservation determinations Nos. 6 and 13 to allow them to employ Coloured and Indian artisans in the bricklaying and plastering trades.[126] It is instructive to note how the three major unions responded to this exemption. The WBWU militantly rejected the employment of coloured artisans, and even

went so far as to call for a protest strike.[127] Although the AUBTW initially supported this position, it later joined ranks with the ASW[128] which had publicly condemned this call for a strike.[129] By February, the AUBTW had committed itself to organising coloured artisans in the Transvaal,[130] and discussions between itself and the weak CM+ABWU[131] on the question of the organisation of coloured artisans[132] led to the amalgamation of these two unions in May 1971.[133] Although both the ASW and the AUBTW were mixed unions, their coloured members had previously been restricted to the Cape. With the exemption in 1971 however, the Transvaal branches of both unions opened their membership to coloured artisans for the first time.[134] Table 3.5 shows how the coloured membership of both the mixed unions increased during this period. The rationale for this strategy as advanced by the leadership of the ASW is worth repeating in full:

> "On some building sites these Coloured artisans were encountered. Here they were doing artisans work, but did not get the artisans rate of pay, nor the fringe benefits. In short they were a source of cheap labour. The position worsened after the Honourable Minister of Labour made it possible for employers to apply for exemption to employ these Coloured artisans in the Building Industry. Then the question arose, should they receive the rate for the job, i.e. the same conditions as White artisans or must they be paid on a different method? This we opposed, as it would have been the thin edge of the wedge. There were those in the Trade Union Movement who strongly opposed us, as they felt that the Coloured should be paid on a different scale. Our society, being in existence for longer than the other, and having had previous experience of a similar nature in the past, fought for the rater for the job and was successful in obtaining the same. As they [the coloured artisans] must be represented on the Industrial Council they had to belong to a Trade Union and we were requested by them to organise them, and make them members of our society."[135]

By organising coloured artisans into their ranks and demanding that they be employed under the same conditions as their white members, the mixed building unions were therefore able to prevent undercutting by potentially cheaper skilled labour. Later in 1973, both the ASW and the AUBTW even went so far as to support BIFSA's attempt to indenture coloured artisans in the Transvaal.[136]

TABLE 3.5

Racial Composition of the Mixed Building Unions, 1955-1977

Year	AUBTW			ASW		
	White	Coloured	Total	White	Coloured	Total
1955	-	-	4554	-	-	4680
1956	-	-	4895	-	-	4680
1957	-	-	4895	-	-	4680
1958	-	-	5325	-	-	4680
1959	-	-	5325	-	-	4680
1960	4572	1172	5325	-		4680
1961	-	-	-	-	-	4680
1962	-	-	-	-	-	4680
1963	-	-	3618	-	-	3116
1964	-	-	3618	-	-	3116
1965	-	-	5773	-	-	3146
1966	-	-	3500	-	-	2691
1967	-	-	3500	-	-	3146
1968	-	-	5595	-	-	2398
1969	-	-	-	-	-	-
1970	-	-	-	-	-	-
1971	-	-	-	-	-	-
1972	-	-	-	-	-	-
1973	4250	6896	1146	2943	932	3875
1974	4250	6896	1146	2843	923	3866
1975	-	-	-	-	-	-
1976	-	-	-	-	-	-
1977	-	-	-	3200	1274	4474

SOURCES:

CPSA, TUCSA, Membership Returns 1955-1977 (Ab3).

CPSA, TUCSA, Report of Proceedings, Annual Conferences 1955 to 1977 (Ad1.1-1.26), National Executive Committee Reports, Affiliated Unions.

Hendrie, D. and Kooy, A.(1979), "Trade Unions in South Africa: Some statistics", South African Labour and Development Research Unit, Working Paper No.22, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch.

Horner, D.(1974), *Registered Trade Unions in South Africa*, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg.

6. Summary and Conclusion

Through an analysis of the changing labour process in the building industry and the responses by trade unions to these changes, I have argued that the relations of production embodied in particular labour processes both create the conditions for and set the limits to the types of organisational strategies that can be successfully implemented by trade unions and employers. Because of the obstacles posed to the mechanisation of the skilled building trades, attempts by employers to overcome the skilled labour shortage and to raise productivity took the form of the fragmentation of the skilled trades without the large-scale introduction of machinery.

The exclusive style of craft unionism exhibited by the major building unions bears testimony to the traditional skilled/unskilled division of labour which dominated the building industry prior to the fragmentation of the skilled trades in the sixties and seventies. As a direct response to the fragmentation of their trades, the craft unions adopted different forms of closed unionism.

On the one hand, the WBWU committed itself to the State policy of job reservation and uni-racial trade unionism for coloureds and whites. Rather than organise coloured artisans and African operatives, this Union turned to the State to prevent undercutting by cheap skilled and semi-skilled workers. On the other hand, the ASW and AUBTW, despite opposition from the WBWU and the State, continued to organise coloured artisans to prevent undercutting. As a result of their efforts these unions secured the same conditions of employment for their coloured and white members. These mixed unions did not, however, organise African operatives. In the context of competition with the WBWU, and strong opposition by the State to the organisation of African workers, the politically conservative and

largely Afrikaner membership opposed any moves towards the organisation of African operatives.

During the late sixties, when TUCSA's drive to organise African unions provoked a confrontation with the Minister of Labour, the building unions were being faced (for the first time) with the threat of large-scale undercutting by African operatives. The dual impact of these developments, combined with the fact that a confrontation with the State would have alienated their pro-Nationalist Party membership, the mixed TUCSA unions rejected the Council's policy of organising African unions.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

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[1] Cortis, L., Welch, P. Blake, R., Skawran, R. and van Rooyen, J.(1962), *The Utilization of Bantu Labour in the Building Industry*: Report of a study undertaken by the National Institute for Personnel Research of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for the National Development Fund for the Building Industry (Inaugurated by the National Federation of Building Trade Employees in South Africa), National Development Fund for the Building Industry, Johannesburg, p.10

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Scheiner, P.(1976), "The Occupational mobility of Black Workers in the Witwatersrand Building Industry from 1960 with Some Reference to the Occupational Mobility of the Coloured People in the Western Cape Building Industry", Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, p.81

The South African Builder 47(6), June 1969, "Second South African Building Research Congress: Review of Congress papers", p.26

idem, 52(11), November 1974, "Presidential Addresses: Reports from Affiliated Associations", p.18

[2] Grotsius, J.(1978), *ibid*

[3] Scheiner, P.(1976), *op cit*

[4] *ibid*, pp.81 and 77

Cortis, L. *et al*, (1962), *ibid*, pp.10-12

Foster, N.(1978), "Labour in the South African Building Industry", Unpublished MA Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, p.iv

Grotsius, J.(1978), *op cit*, p.16

The South African Builder 41(11), November 1963, "A Call for Maximum Efficiency in Building: A Presidential Report", p.31

[5] Cortis, L. *et al*, (1962), *op cit*, pp.10-12

[6] Scheiner, P.(1976), *ibid*

[7] Cortis, L. *et al*, (1962), *op cit*, pp.10-12

The South African Builder 48(4), April 1970, "Presidential Addresses: Reports from Affiliated Associations"(Durban MBA, W. Short), p.37

[8] Grotsius, J.(1978), *op cit*, p.17

Scheiner, P.(1976), *op cit*, p.86

[9] Cortis, L. *et al*, (1962), *op cit*, pp.62-70

Scheiner, P.(1976), *op cit*, p.85

The South African Builder 41(8), August 1963, "Latest Trends in Machines for Building Site Work", p.32

The South African Builder 42(11), November 1964, "SA Development Techniques", p.39

[10] Scheiner, P.(1976), *ibid*, p.86

[11] Clarke, M.(1982), "Industrialised Building and its Impact on Labour", SALDRU Working Paper No.44, South African Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, p.14

[12] Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (1964), *Studies of Manpower in the Building Industry*, Industrial Economics Division, CSIR, Pretoria.

[13] *ibid*, see preface

[14] *ibid*, pp.138-141

[15] *ibid*, p.142

[16] *ibid*

[17] Renamed the Building Industries Federation (South Africa)(BIFSA) in November 1967, *The South African Builder* 45(11), November 1967, "Editorial: Sixty-second Annual Congress", p.25

[18] *The South African Builder* 41(11), November 1963, "Three Motions on Industrial Manpower Problem", p.46

[19] University of the Witwatersrand, Church of the Province of South Africa Archives Collection (henceforth CPSA), Records of the Trade Union Council of South Africa (AH 1426)(henceforth TUCSA), Correspondence with Individual Unions, File 2. AUBTW (Ab4.2.12), "Transvaal Negotiations, Stabilisation of the Labour Force: Memorandum by the employer organisations represented on the Industrial Councils for the Building Industry (Transvaal)", 3 March 1965, Johannesburg, p.1

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CPSA, South African Institute of Race Relations Clippings Collection (hereafter SAIRR), Box 641 (Job Reservation), *The Star* 19 January 1965, "Builders Want Job Law to Go"; and
The Star 15 April 1965, "Builders may follow Mine Labour Trend"; and also
The Friend 14 April 1965, "Building Industry's Suggestion: Responsible Jobs for Africans Now"

CPSA TUCSA, Correspondence with Individual Unions, File 2. AUBTW (Ab4.2.12), "Memorandum from the General Secretary to the Chairman of the Industrial Council for the Building Industry (Transvaal) on the negotiations taking place between the parties and an endeavour to coordinate common factors in the memoranda of both parties and translate these, in principle, into practice", circa March/April 1965.

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The South African Builder 41(12), December 1963, "Editorial: Labour Matters", p.11; and "Federation Jottings", p.41

The South African Builder 42(11), November 1964, "Presidential Address: Report of a speech by the Congress President, Mr H. McCarthy, during the official opening", p.17

The South African Builder 43(1), January 1965, "Editorial: 1965", p.11

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The Woodworker 69, December 1964, "The Big? - Sincerity of Purpose", p.2

The Woodworker 70, January 1965, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.6

[20] *Government Gazette* CLII (Regulation Gazette No.3965), 23/4/48, "Government Notice No.839, Building and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal", pp.258-259

Government Gazette (Extraordinary) CLXXII(5079), 12/6/53, "Government Notice No.1235 Building and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal, Main Agree ", pp.4-5

[21] *Government Gazette* (Ext dinary) CXCV(6176), 6/2/59, "Government Notice No.202, Buil ng and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal, Main Agreement", pp.4-6

[22] *ibid*, p.4

[23] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) V(313), 17/8/62, "Government Notice No.1323, Building and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal, Main Agreement", p.5

[24] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) XI(689), (Regulation Gazette No.277), 3/1/64, "Government Notice No.R36, Building and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal, Amendment of Main Agreement", p.13

[25] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) CLXXIII(5091), 3/7/53, "Government Notice No.1441, Building Industry, Durban", p.4

[26] *Government Gazette* CLIL(3968), 30/4/48, "Government Notice No.903, Building Industry, Durban", pp.377-378

[27] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 19(1355), (Regulation Gazette No.619), 28/1/66, "Government Notice No.R142, Building and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal, Main Agreement"

[28] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 23(1673), (Regulation Gazette No.1673), 3/3/67, "Government Notice No.R293, Building Industry, Durban, Agreement"

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Government Gazette (Extraordinary) 37(2136), (Regulation Gazette No.997), 26/7/68, "Government Notice No.R1295, Building Industry, Western Province, Agreement for the Country Districts"

[29] *The South African Builder* 44(4). April 1966, "Annual General Meetings, Views of Association Presidents: This article presents some views expressed by Presidents of affiliated associations on the occasion of annual general meetings held in several centres since the beginning of the year", Mr T. Lamb - Pretoria MBA, p.19

[30] *Financial Mail* 4 February 1966, "Building Trade: Costly Settlement", p.251

[31] So, for the first time, skilled work was closely defined in the Agreement. *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 19(1355), (Regulation Gazette No.619), 28/1/66, *op cit*, p.3

[32] CPSA, SAIRR, Box 641 (Job Reservation), *Rand Daily Mail* 6 October 1965, "10,000 Workers Face R330,000 Bonus Loss"

Financial Mail 4 February 1966, *op cit*, p.251

The South African Builder 43(6), June 1965, "Federation Jottings", p.45

The South African Builder 44(2), February 1966, "New Industrial Agreement: An Official Statement", p.43; and "Notes from Affiliated Associations", p.49

The Woodworker 75, July 1965, "Industrial Council for the Building Industry (Transvaal), Press Statement", p.10-11

[33] Scheiner, P.(1976), *op cit*, p.168

[34] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 19(1355), (Regulation Gazette No.619), 28/1/66, "Work Reservation Determination No.6 - Building Industry, Transvaal and Orange Free State. Exemption in Respect of Certain Areas in Transvaal", p.38

[35] *The South African Builder* 44(2), February 1966, "New Industrial Agreement: An Official Statement", p.43

[36] Scheiner, P.(1976), *op cit*, p.181

[37] *The Woodworker* 104, December 1967, "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.7

The Woodworker 105, January 1968, "Editorial: The New Year", p.3; and "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.7

[38] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 48(2432), (Regulation Gazette No.1143), 13/6/69, "Government Notice No.R953, Building and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal, Main Agreement".

[39] "Blocks" are larger than bricks, being approximately 50 cm.^{3} in size, and weighing over 5kg. Made from cement and cast in a mould, they have a built-in air space which means that a single row of blocks can be used in the construction of external walls instead of two parallel rows of bricks. This therefore reduces the amount of skilled labour necessary in the construction of brick walls.

[40] A jig is a metal frame which guides the placement of the blocks.

[41] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 48(2432), (Regulation Gazette No.1143), 13/6/69, *op cit*, p.3

[42] *ibid*, p.7

[43] Scheiner, P.(1976), *op cit*, p.170

[44] Bester Homes, for example, were the first to use this method to construct hundreds of houses for the Iron and Steel Corporation of South Africa in Newcastle, *The Argus*, 17 June 1971 (cited in *ibid*, p.170)

[45] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 48(2432), (Regulation Gazette No.1143), 13/6/69, *op cit*, p.7

[46] *ibid*, pp.6-7

[47] *ibid*, p.4

[48] CPSA, TUCSA, Correspondence with Individual Unions. File 2. AUBTW (Ab4.2.12), "Special Statement to the Durban Building Workers", circa July 1966 (probably issued by the WBWU), pp.1-2

[49] *The Woodworker* 61, April 1964, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.7

[50] *The Woodworker* 64, July 1964, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.10

[51] CPSA, SAIRR, Box 1160 (Trade Unions), *Rand Daily Mail* 5 August 1966, "Division in Union Ranks over Reservation of Jobs"

CPSA, TUCSA, Correspondence with Individual Unions, File 2 AUBTW (Ab4.2.12), "Special Statement to Durban Building Workers", circa July 1966 (probably issued by the WBWU), p.1

South African Institue of Race Relations (1967), *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa 1966*, South African Institute of Race Relations, Braamfontein, p.220

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[52] CPSA, SAIRR, Box 1160 (Trade Unions), *Rand Daily Mail* 5 August 1966, "Division in Union Ranks Over Reservation of Jobs"

[53] *The Woodworker* 99, July 1967, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.9

The Woodworker 102, October 1967, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.4

[54] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 37(2132), (Regulation Gazette No.994), 19/7/68, "Government Notice No.R1226, Building Industry, Durban, Agreement"

[55] These operations were identical to those agreed to by the Transvaal Industrial Council in 1959 under operator grade 2; *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) IX(605), 13/9/63, "Government Notice No.1428, Building Industry, Durban", p.6; and

Government Gazette (Extraordinary) 23(1673), (Regulation Gazette No.1673), 3/3/67, "Government Notice No.R293, Building Industry, Durban, Agreement", p.6

[56] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) CLXXIII(5091), 3/7/53, "Government Notice No.1441, Building Industry, Durban", p.4

Government Gazette (Extraordinary) CLXXXVIII(5881), 29/5/57, "Government Notice No.795, Building Industry, Durban", p.4

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Government Gazette (Extraordinary) 23(1673), (Regulation Gazette No.1673), 3/3/67, "Government Notice No.R293, Building Industry, Durban, Agreement", pp.6-7

[57] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 37(2132), (Regulation Gazette No.994), 19/7/68, "Government Notice No.R1226, Building Industry, Durban, Agreement", pp.3 and 6

[58] *ibid*, pp.6 and 7

[59] *ibid*, p.5

[60] *Government Gazette*, 37(2132), (Regulation Gazette No.994), 19/7/68, "Work Reservation Determination No.13 - Building Industry, Cape Province and Natal, Exemption in Respect of Certain Areas in Natal"

[61] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 37(2132), (Regulation Gazette No.994), 19/7/68, *op cit*, p.3

[62] *ibid*, p.6

[63] *ibid*, p.3

[64] *ibid*, p.6

[65] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) CLXVII(4806), 14/3/52, "Government Notice No.503, Building Industry, Western Province - Peninsula Agreement"

Government Gazette (Extraordinary) 2(126), 1/12/61, "Government Notice No.1146, Agreement for the Cape Peninsula"

[66] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 26(1810), (Regulation Gazette No.819), 11/8/1967, "Government Notice No.1213, Building Industry, Western Province, Agreement for the Cape Peninsula", pp.4-5

Government Gazette (Extraordinary) 37(2136), (Regulation Gazette No.997), 26/7/68, "Government Notice No.R1295, Building Industry, Western Province, Agreement for the Country Districts", p.5

[67] Provided that an artisan did the setting out of both brick walls and tiled surfaces, and also built the corners of brick walls, *ibid*.

[68] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 26(1810), (Regulation Gazette No.819), 11/8/1967, *op cit*, p.5

[69] *ibid*; and

Government Gazette (Extraordinary) 37(2136), (Regulation Gazette No.997), 26/7/68, *op cit*, p.5

[70] *The South African Builder* 48(11), "Presidential Address" - Mr B. Herd, p.27

[71] *The Woodworker* 3, March 1969, "Editorial: 'The Bait'", p.2

The Woodworker 10, October 1969, "Editorial: Shortage of Artisans", p.2

The Woodworker 35, June 1972, "Editorial - Your Choice", p.2

The Woodworker 36, September 1972, "Editorial: We Shall See", pp.2-3

The Woodworker 37, December 1972, "Editorial: TO BE", p.4

[72] CPSA, SAIRR, Box 642 (Job Reservation), *Rand Daily Mail* 28 October 1969, "Lifetime Guarantee for Whites Proposed"

CPSA, SAIRR, Box 643 (Job Reservation), *Rand Daily Mail* 24 December 1970, "Apartheid - Building Workers Assured"

South African Institue of Race Relations (1970), *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa 1969*, South African Institute of Race Relations, Braamfontein, p.107

The South African Builder 47(11), November 1969, "Editorial: Sixty-fourth Annual Congress", p.17; and "Congress Presidential Address" - Mr M. Lipshitz.

[73] *The South African Builder* 49(4), April 1971, "Presidential Addresses: As in the past the South African Builder this month publishes Presidential addresses delivered at annual general meetings of affiliated associations", p.47

See also
The Woodworker 13, January 1970,

The Woodworker 32, September 1972, "Artisans Awake", p.2 "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.6

[74] *The South African Builder* 50(4), April 1972, "MBA Presidential Addresses: Extracts from Presidential addresses delivered at the various annual general meetings of affiliated associations", p.40

The Woodworker 30, March 1972, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.3

[75] *The Woodworker* 41, December 1974, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.7

[76] *Cape Times* 27 July 1974, cited in Scheiner, P.(1976), *op cit*, p.174

[77] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 124(4875), (Regulation Gazette No.2216), 17/10/75, "Government Notice No.R1956, Building and Monumental Masonry Industries, Transvaal - Main Agreement", p.6

[78] Scheiner, P.(1976), *ibid*, p.175

[79] *Government Gazette* (Extraordinary) 124(4875), 17/10/75, *op cit*, p.6

[80] *ibid*, p.7

[81] *ibid*, p.6

[82] *ibid*, p.7;

See also, *South African Builder* 54(3), March 1976, "New Conditions of Employment for Pretoria, Witwatersrand", pp.16 and 35)

[83] *Government Gazette* 124(4880), (Regulation Gazette No.2218), 24/10/75, "Government Notice No.R1995, Building Industry, Durban - Agreement", pp.4-8

[84] *ibid*, p.9, The task of "feeding materials to mechanically fed woodworking machines".

[85] *Government Gazette* 88(3690), (Regulation Gazette No.1683), 27/10/72, "Government Notice No.R1963, Building Industry, Western Province - Agreement for the Cape Peninsula", pp.5-6

Government Gazette 94(3857) (Regulation Gazette No.1775), 13/4/73, "Government Notice No.R583, Building Industry, Western Province - Agreement for the Boland", pp.4-6

[86] *Government Gazette* 88(3690), 27/10/72, *ibid*, p.5

Government Gazette 94(3857), 13/4/73, *ibid*, p.5

[87] *Government Gazette* 136(5308), (Regulation Gazette No.2378), 8/10/76, "Government Notice No.R1780, Building Industry, Western Province - Agreement for the Cape Peninsula", p.6

[88] The small and relatively insignificant all-white Operative Plasterers' Trade Union of South Africa (OPTUSA) was the only other TUCSA representative on the Industrial Council.

[89] Republic of South Africa, Department of Manpower, "Certificate of Registration", Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers of South Africa.

[90] The ASW was registered to organise only artisans in the woodworking trades across a wide range of industries (carpenters, joiners, shopfitters and woodworkers). Republic of South Africa, Department of Manpower, "Certificate of Registration", Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers of South Africa; and

CPSA, Hartwell Labour Collection, Building Trade Unions (1.1), "Memorandum submitted to the Industrial Tribunal by the ASW of SA on the subject of the Investigation into the building industry, OFS and TVL", 18 July 1958; and also

The Woodworker 109, May 1968, "Editorial: The Craft Union", p.3

[91] CPSA, SAIRR, Box 641 (Job Reservation), *The Star* 13 April 1965, "Builders May Follow Mine Labour Trend"

CPSA, TUCSA, Report of Proceedings, Twelfth Annual Conference, May 1966 (Ad1.13), Minutes of Proceedings, pp.228-229

The Woodworker 90, October 1966, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.8

[92] *The Woodworker* 50, May 1963, "OFS and EP Organiser's Report", p.11

The Woodworker 62, May 1964, "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.6

The Woodworker 64, July 1964, "Natal Organiser's Report", p.10

The Woodworker 73, April 1965, "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.5

[93] *The Woodworker* 69, December 1964, "The Big? - Sincerity of Purpose", p.2

[94] *The Woodworker* 67, October 1964, "Changes in the Building and Construction Industry", p.3

[95] *The Woodworker* 10, October 1969, "Editorial: Shortage of Artisans", p.2

[96] In the urban areas of the Cape, the following trades remained open to coloured artisans. South African Institute of Race Relations (1964), *A Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1963*, South African Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, p.194

[97] *The Woodworker* 69, December 1964, "The Big? - Sincerity of Purpose", p.2

[98] *The Woodworker* 67, October 1964, "Changes in the Building and Construction Industry", pp.2-3

The Woodworker 73, April 1965, "OFS and EP Organiser's Report", p.10

The Woodworker 74, May 1965, "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.4

[99] CPSA, SAIRR, Box 641 (Job Reservation), *The Friend* 14 April 1965, "Building Industry's Suggestion: Responsible Jobs for Africans Now"

[100] CPSA, TUCSA, Correspondence from Individual Unions, File: 2 AUBTW (Ab4.2.12), "Trade Union's Comments and Replies, as Requested by the Employers' Organisations, on their Memorandum dated 3rd March, 1965", 7 April 1965, Johannesburg (submitted on behalf of the ASW, AUBTW, OPTUSA AND WBWU), p.4

[101] *The Woodworker* 74, May 1965, "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.4

[102] Evidence of support for this policy by the ASW
CPSA, SAIRR, Box 642 (Job Reservation), *Rand Daily Mail* 24 June 1969, "Colour Set-up in Building 'Dangerous'"

The Woodworker 13, January 1970, "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.6

The Woodworker 16, May 1970, "Editorial: Sincerity", p.2

The Woodworker 31, June 1972, "Transvaal Organiser's Report", p.4

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CHAPTER FOUR

UNIONS IN THE MOTOR TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

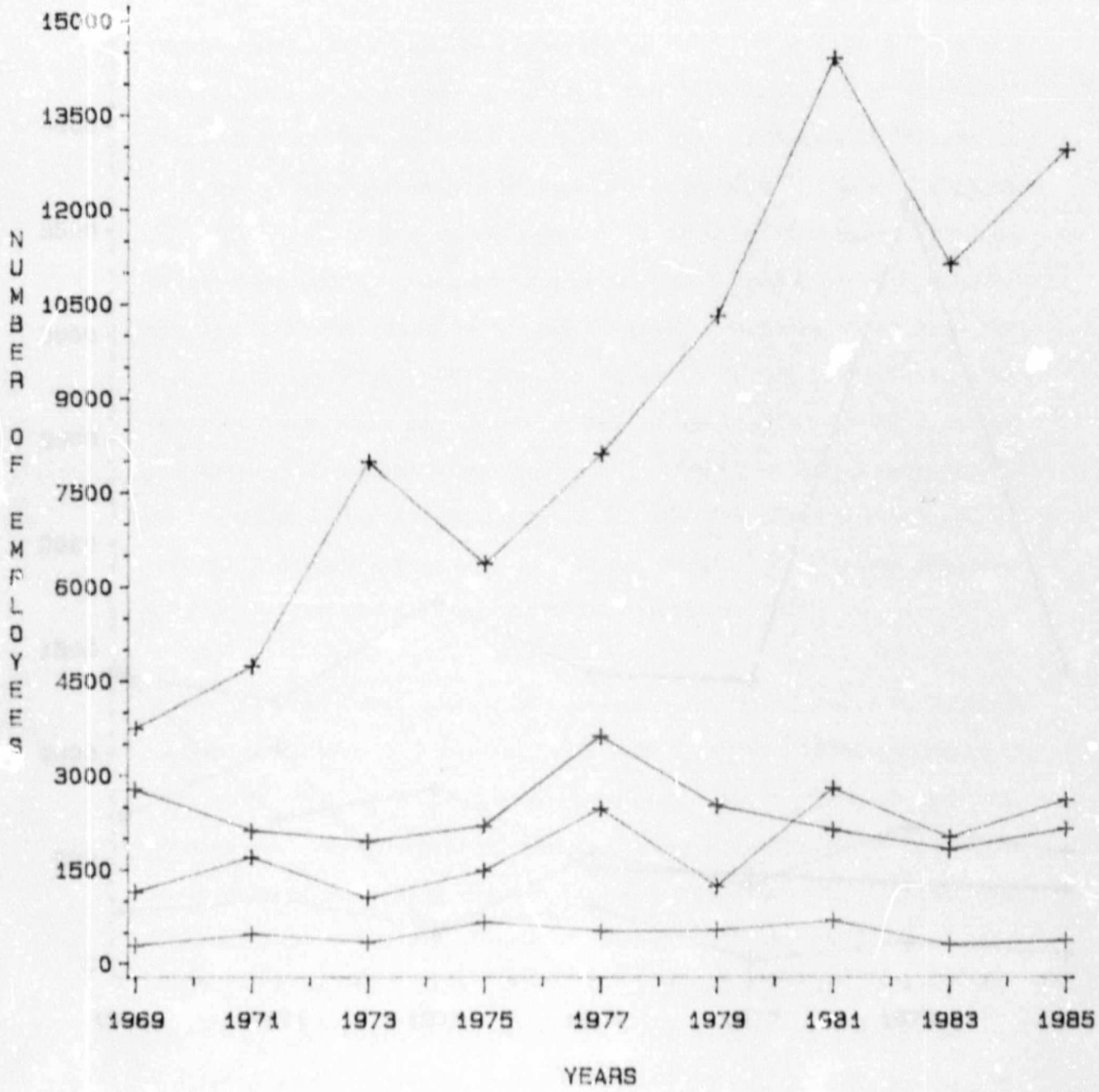
1. Introduction

As in the case of the building industry, changes in the labour process and racial division of labour in the motor transport industry were prompted by a chronic shortage and high turnover of white labour. Both management and the transport unions agreed that the labour shortage was caused by the characteristics of an urban passenger transport system; the necessity of shift-work, strict time-keeping and arduous driving conditions due to heavy city traffic were cited as examples of why this occupation was not favoured by white workers.[1] However, their opinions diverged sharply on the question of how this shortage of labour could be overcome. As far as management was concerned, higher wages would not resolve the shortage because it was these inherent conditions of urban passenger transport driving which "did not appeal to whites".[2] Because whites could find jobs with regular office hours at equivalent rates of pay, it was inevitable that they would prefer such occupations.[3] In contrast, the unions argued that improved wages and conditions of work would resolve the labour shortage. Issues such as a six-day week, inadequate running times,[4] poor maintenance of vehicles,[5] inadequate rest-room facilities,[6] choice of shifts according to seniority,[7] unrealistic acceptance criteria,[8] poor traffic flow,[9] poor housing provision,[10] and low wages,[11] could all be addressed in order to attract white labour.

Whatever the respective merits of these opposing positions are, they formed the rationale whereby certain interests were advanced. Rather than increase wages to the satisfaction of the unions, management embarked on a wide variety of other schemes to alleviate the labour shortage. These included new training schemes, overseas recruiting campaigns, lowered acceptance criteria, part-time employment and extended overtime. However, the schemes which achieved the greatest success were those which were also aimed at reducing the wage bill. During this period, the introduction of labour-saving technology almost completely eliminated the job of conducting, while intensifying the work-load of driving to include the issuing of tickets. Figure 4.2 shows how the numbers of inspectors, conductors and ticket examiners decreased during the seventies, while Figure 4.1 shows that the number of bus, tram and trolley-bus drivers actually increased. Further reductions in the wage bill were achieved through the employment of African and coloured labour at lower rates of pay. In the 1950s passenger transport driving was almost a completely white occupation. By the late seventies, however, bus drivers were predominantly African (Figure 4.1).

FIGURE 4.1

Bus, Tram and Trolley-bus Drivers by Race, and Gender, 1969-1985

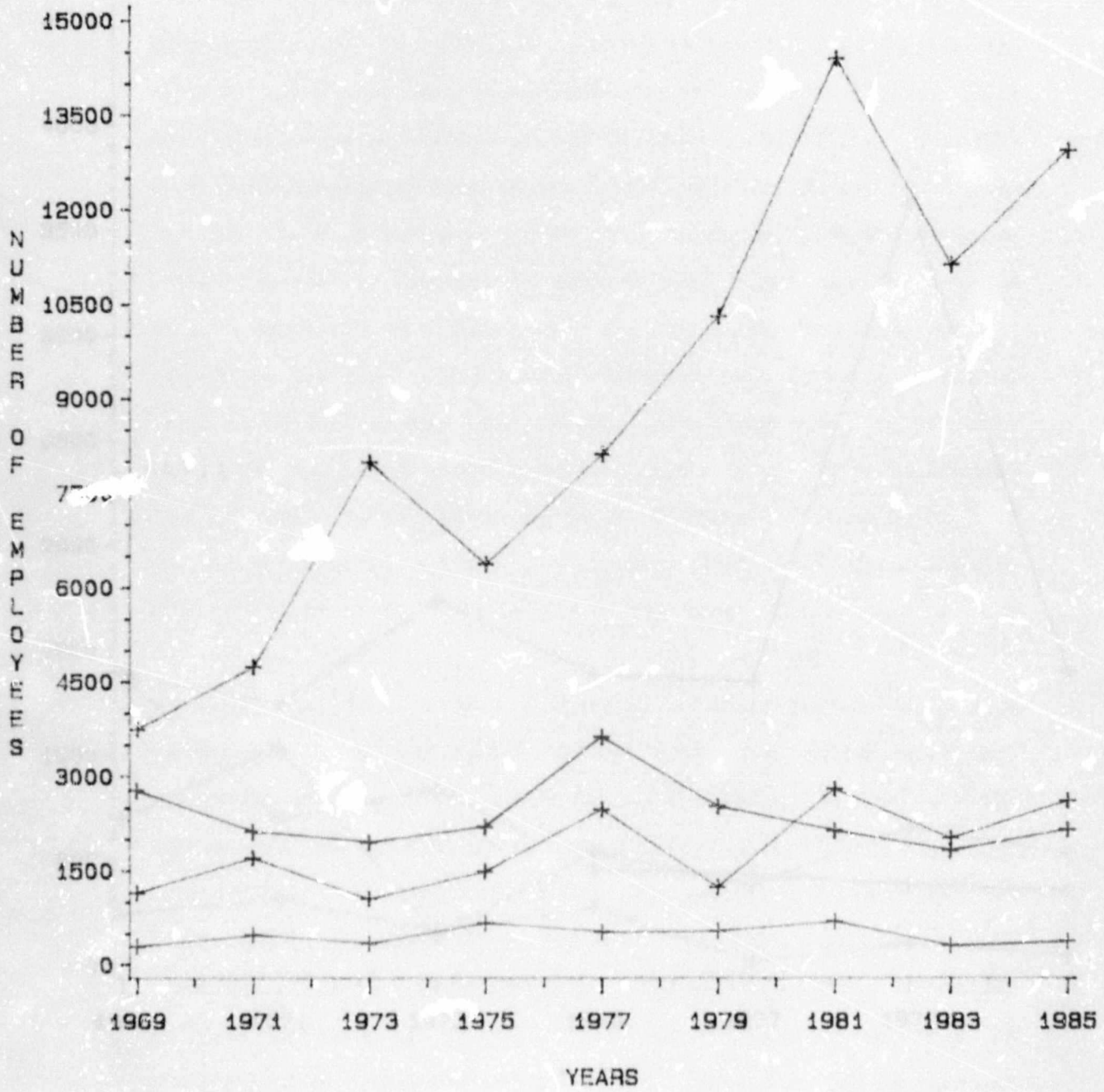


KEY
white coloured Indian African

SOURCE:
See Table 4.1 (Appendix)

FIGURE 4.1

Bus, Tram and Trolley-bus Drivers by Race, and Gender, 1969-1985

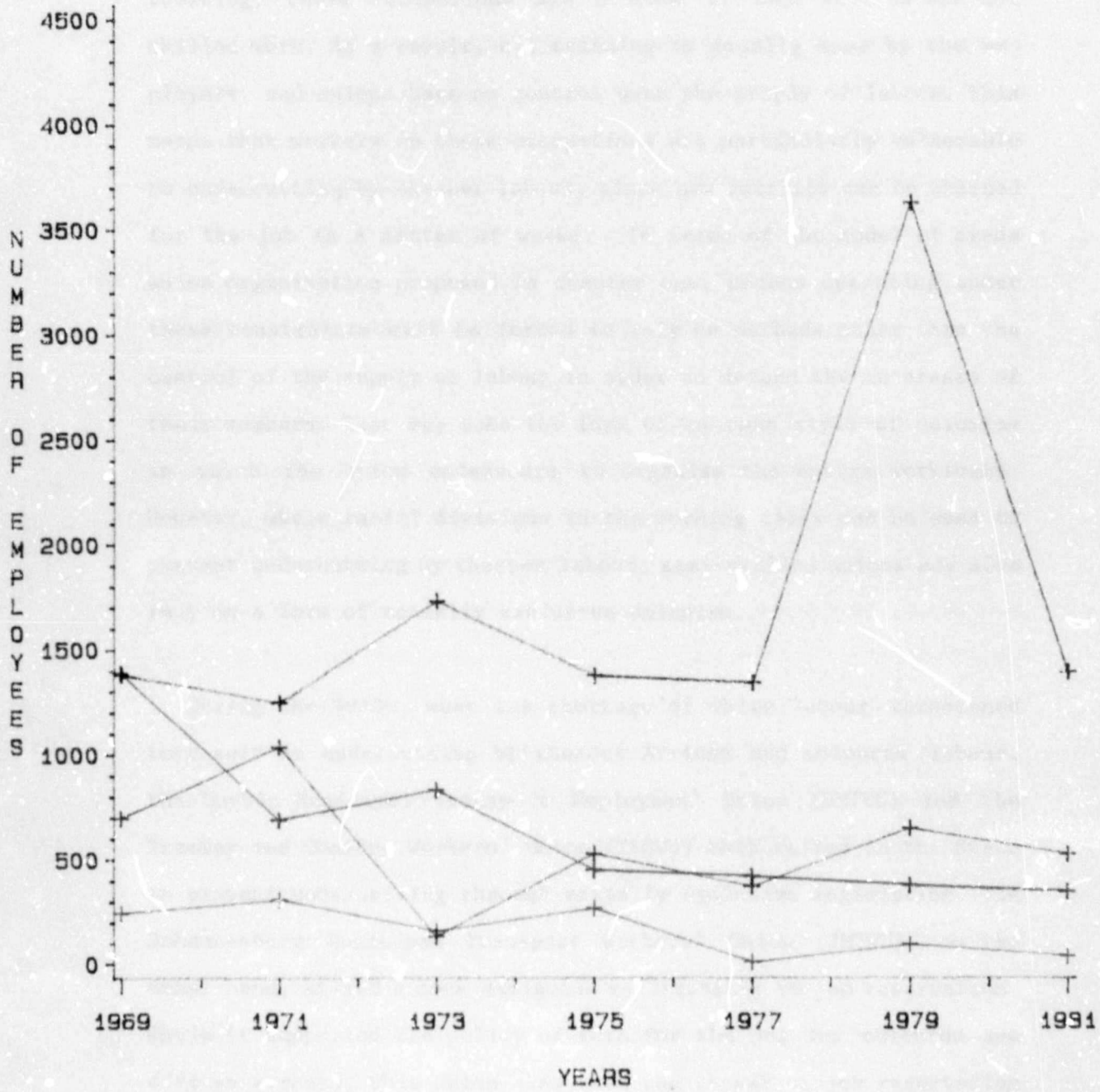


KEY
white coloured Indian African

SOURCE:
See Table 4.1 (Appendix)

FIGURE 4.2

Inspectors, Conductors and Ticket-examiners by Race and Gender, 1969-1985



KEY
white coloured Indian African

SOURCE:
See Table 4.2 (Appendix)

2. Trade Union Organisation and the Labour Process

Because bus driving and conducting require no apprenticeship training, these occupations are classed as semi-skilled and not skilled work. As a result, all training is usually done by the employers, and unions have no control over the supply of labour. This means that workers in these occupations are particularly vulnerable to undercutting by cheaper labour, since new recruits can be trained for the job in a matter of weeks. In terms of the model of trade union organisation proposed in chapter one, unions operating under these constraints will be forced to rely on methods other than the control of the supply of labour in order to defend the interests of their members. This may take the form of an open style of unionism in which the union endeavours to organise the entire workforce. However, where racial divisions in the working class can be used to prevent undercutting by cheaper labour, semi-skilled unions may also rely on a form of racially exclusive unionism.

During the 1960s, when the shortage of white labour threatened to result in undercutting by cheaper African and coloured labour, the Durban Municipal Transport Employees' Union (DMTEU) and the Tramway and Omnibus Workers' Union (T&OWU) both relied on the State to prevent undercutting through racially exclusive legislation. The Johannesburg Municipal Transport Workers' Union (JMTWU), on the other hand, shared a more ambiguous relationship to job reservation. While it supported the policy of rate for the job for coloured and African workers, this Union also used the threat of job reservation to protect the interests of its members.

The semi-skilled character of the tasks of bus driving and conducting also has implications for strategies adopted by employers. Because these tasks are not skilled, it is not necessary for em-

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